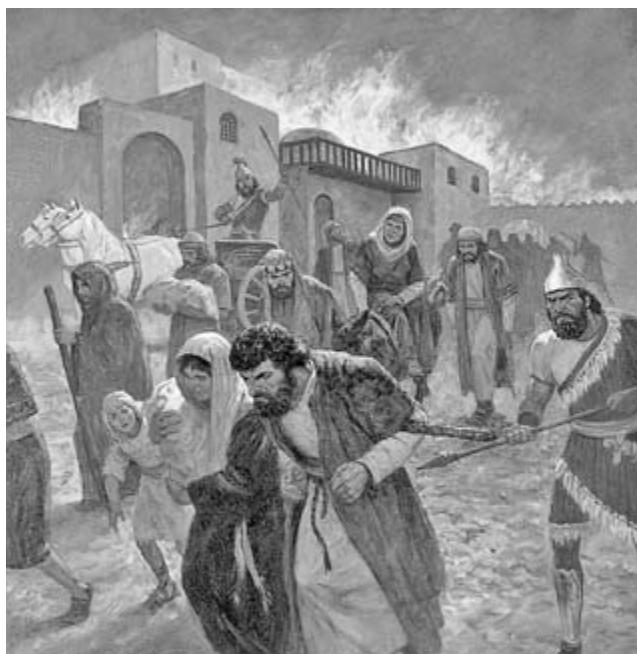


CHAPTER 7

2 Nephi 1–3

Introduction

Lehi's final words of advice and counsel to his children are tender and powerful. In a clear and effective way he taught his son Jacob the relationship between the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement of Jesus Christ. He gave his son Joseph his prophetic declaration of Joseph the son of Israel, including his witness of the Restoration of the gospel through his latter-day namesake, Joseph Smith Jr. As you study the details of the plan of salvation, as well as the fulfillment of the prophecies regarding the Restoration of the gospel in the latter days, your testimony of God's love and care for all His children will grow.



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Commentary

2 Nephi 1:5–11. “A Land of Liberty”

- President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) testified that America is a land of liberty set apart for the Restoration of the gospel: “Our Father in Heaven planned the coming forth of the Founding Fathers and their form of government as the necessary great prologue leading to the restoration of the gospel. Recall what our Savior Jesus Christ said nearly two thousand years ago when He visited this promised land: ‘For it is wisdom in the Father that they should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, that these things might come forth’ (3 Nephi 21:4). America,

the land of liberty, was to be the Lord’s latter-day base of operations for His restored church” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 3; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 4).

- Elder Eduardo Ayala of the Seventy explained that the blessings of the gospel are now available wherever faithful members live: “The conditions of peoples and of nations change due to progress in the world; nevertheless, in many such places, be it in the frosty mountain heights, in the warm valleys, at the rivers’ edges, or in the desert places, wherever members of our church are found, there will always be those who live these basic principles, and by so doing they bless the rest of the people” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 39; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 30).

2 Nephi 1:10–11

Under what conditions will the Lord allow the children of Lehi “to be scattered and smitten”?

2 Nephi 1:13–23. Awake from “the Sleep of Hell”

- Disobedience to the Lord’s commandments allows Satan to deceive us, and we forget the light and truth we have previously learned. President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency described this dangerous condition: “One of the effects of disobeying God seems to be the creation of just enough spiritual anesthetic to block any sensation as the ties to God are being cut. Not only [does] the testimony of the truth slowly erode, but even the memories of what it was like to be in the light [begin] to seem . . . like a delusion” (“A Life Founded in Light and Truth,” *Brigham Young University 2000–2001 Speeches* [2001], 81).

2 Nephi 1:22. Eternal Destruction

- Verse 22 in 2 Nephi 1 does not mean that the spirit and the body of the wicked will be annihilated or become extinct. Our spirits are eternal in nature, and all people born on earth will have a physical resurrection (see Alma 11:43–44). President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972) explained the meaning of the destruction of the soul, as Nephi used it:

"Destruction does not mean annihilation. We know, because we are taught in the revelations of the Lord, that a soul cannot be destroyed.

"Every soul born into this world shall receive the resurrection and immortality and shall endure forever. Destruction does not mean, then, annihilation. When the Lord says they shall be destroyed, he means that they shall be banished from his presence, that they shall be cut off from the presence of light and truth, and shall not have the privilege of gaining this exaltation; and that is destruction" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:227–28). Wickedness destroys the opportunity for a resurrection into a higher degree of glory (see D&C 88:30–31).

2 Nephi 2:2. Consecrate Afflictions for Gain

- In 2 Nephi 2:2 Lehi stated that the trials we endure can turn to our benefit (see also D&C 98:3). Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained how a sense of gratitude enables us to see our hardships in the context of our purpose here on earth: "When we give thanks in all things, we see hardships and adversities in the context of the purpose of life. We are sent here to be tested. There must be opposition in *all* things. We are meant to learn and grow through that opposition, through meeting our challenges, and through teaching others to do the same" (in Conference Report, Apr. 2003, 103; or *Ensign*, May 2003, 97).

- Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that God provides us with challenges that are designed to help us grow spiritually: "Just when all seems to be going right, challenges often come in multiple doses applied simultaneously. When those trials are not consequences of your disobedience, they are evidence that the Lord feels you are prepared to grow more (see Proverbs 3:11–12). He therefore gives you experiences that stimulate growth, understanding, and compassion which polish you for your everlasting benefit. To get you from where you are to where He wants you to be requires a lot of stretching, and that generally entails discomfort and pain" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 18; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 16–17).

2 Nephi 2:4. "Salvation Is Free"

- Salvation means "to be saved from both physical and spiritual death. All people will be saved from physical death by the grace of God, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Each individual can also be saved from spiritual death as well by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ. This faith is manifested in a life of obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel and service to Christ" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Salvation").

- Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ, the plan of salvation is freely available to everyone. This does not mean that all men and women will receive the same reward. As Alma testified, "Whosoever will come may come and partake of the waters of life freely." But he added this warning: "Whosoever will not come the same is not compelled to come; but in the last day it shall be restored unto him according to his deeds" (Alma 42:27). Salvation is free in the sense that it is provided by the grace of God through the Atonement of Christ for all who will receive it. It is not free in the sense that it is given to all regardless of what they believe or how they choose to live their lives.

2 Nephi 2:6–30. Creation, Fall, and Atonement

- Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shared the following insights about the interrelationship between the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement: "It is not possible to believe in Christ and his atoning sacrifice, in the true and full sense required to gain salvation, without at the same time believing and accepting the true doctrine of the fall. If there had been no fall, there would have been no need for a Redeemer or Savior. And it is not possible to believe in the fall, out of which immortality and eternal life come, without at the same time believing and accepting the true doctrine of the creation: If there had been no creation of all things in a deathless or immortal state, there could have been no fall, and hence no atonement and no salvation. The Father's eternal plan called for the creation, for the fall, and for the atonement, all woven together into one united whole" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 82).



- On another occasion Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained:

"The most important events that ever have or will occur in all eternity . . . are the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement.

"Before we can even begin to understand the temporal creation of all things, we must know how and in what manner these three eternal verities—the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement—are inseparably woven together to form one plan of salvation. . . . No one of them stands alone; each of them ties into the other two; and without a knowledge of all of them, it is not possible to know the truth about any one of them. . . .

"But, be it remembered, the Atonement came because of the Fall. Christ paid the ransom for Adam's transgression. If there had been no Fall, there would be no Atonement with its consequent immortality and eternal life. Thus, just as surely as salvation comes because of the Atonement, so also salvation comes because of the Fall" ("Christ and the Creation," *Ensign*, June 1982, 9).

2 Nephi 2:5–6. "By the Law No Flesh Is Justified"

- Justification means "to be pardoned from punishment for sin and declared guiltless. A person is justified by the Savior's grace through faith in him. This faith is shown by repentance and obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. Jesus Christ's atonement enables mankind to repent and be justified or pardoned from punishment they otherwise would receive" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Justification, Justify").

Elder Dallin H. Oaks instructed us that the Book of Mormon teaches that "salvation does not come by keeping the commandments alone. 'By the law no flesh is justified' (2 Nephi 2:5). Even those who serve God with their whole souls are unprofitable servants (see Mosiah 2:21). Man cannot earn his own salvation.

"The Book of Mormon teaches, 'Since man had fallen he could not merit anything of himself' (Alma 22:14). 'There can be nothing which is short of an infinite atonement which will suffice for the sins of the world' (Alma 34:12; see also 2 Nephi 9:7; Alma 34:8–16). 'Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; . . . he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law' (2 Nephi 2:6–7). And so we 'preach of Christ . . . that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins' (2 Nephi 25:26)" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 78; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 67).

2 Nephi 2:8. "The Merits, and Mercy, and Grace of the Holy Messiah"

- Prior to his call to the Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Bruce C. Hafen explained that the Atonement is not simply God's method for righting wrongs and satisfying the demands of justice. The Atonement is rehabilitative, a miraculous power that can help us change who we are: "I once wondered if those who refuse to repent but who then satisfy the law of justice by paying for their own sins are then worthy to enter the celestial kingdom. The answer is no. The entrance requirements for celestial life are simply higher than merely satisfying the law of justice. For that reason, paying for our sins will not bear the same fruit as repenting of our sins. Justice is a law of balance and order and it must be satisfied, either through our payment or his. But if we decline the Savior's invitation to let him carry our sins, and then satisfy justice by ourselves, we will not yet have experienced the complete rehabilitation that can occur through a combination of divine assistance and genuine repentance. Working together, those forces have the power permanently to change our hearts and our lives, preparing us for celestial life" (*The Broken Heart: Applying the Atonement to Life's Experiences* [1989], 7–8).

- Elder Richard G. Scott shared his feelings about Christ's mercy in paying our debts: "Jesus Christ possessed *merits* that no other child of Heavenly Father could possibly have. He was a God, Jehovah, before His birth in Bethlehem. His Father not only gave Him His spirit body, but Jesus was His Only Begotten Son in the flesh. Our Master lived a perfect, sinless life and therefore was free from the demands of justice. He was and is perfect in every attribute, including love, compassion, patience, obedience, forgiveness, and humility. His *mercy* pays our debt to justice when we repent and obey Him" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 77–78; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 53).

2 NEPHI 2:11–13

Why is opposition necessary?

2 Nephi 2:11–14. "There Is an Opposition in All Things"

- President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained that opposition helps us grow stronger: "Life will not be free from challenges, some of them bitter and hard to bear. We may wish to be spared all the trials of life, but that would be contrary to the great plan of happiness, 'for it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things' (2 Nephi 2:11). This testing is the source of our strength" (in Conference Report, Apr. 2004, 81; or *Ensign*, May 2004, 80).
- President Ezra Taft Benson explained that opposition provides choice:

"The Book of Mormon teaches that 'it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things' (2 Nephi 2:11)—and so there is. Opposition provides choices, and choices bring consequences—good or bad.

"The Book of Mormon explains that men 'are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil' (2 Nephi 2:27).

"God loves us; the devil hates us. God wants us to have a fulness of joy as He has. The devil wants us to be miserable as he is. God gives us commandments to bless us. The devil would have us break these commandments to curse us.

"Daily, constantly, we choose by our desires, our thoughts, and our actions whether we want to be blessed or cursed, happy or miserable" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1988, 5; or *Ensign*, May 1988, 6).

- Elder Neal A. Maxwell (1926–2004) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles commented on how opposition relates to happiness: "Indeed, without the existence of choices, without our freedom to choose and without opposition, there would be no real existence. This is so much like Lehi's metaphor of how, in the absence of agency and opposites, things would have resulted in a meaningless, undifferentiated 'compound in one' (2 Nephi 2:11). In such a situation the earth would actually have 'no purpose in the end of its creation' (2 Nephi 2:12). It is a fact that we can neither grow spiritually nor thereby be truly happy unless and until we make wise use of our moral agency" (*One More Strain of Praise* [1999], 80).

2 Nephi 2:15. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life

- Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained the meaning of the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil: "As to the fall, the scriptures set forth that there were in the Garden of Eden two trees. One was the tree of life, which figuratively refers to eternal life; the other was the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which figuratively refers to how and why and in what manner mortality and all that appertains to it came into being" (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, 86).

2 Nephi 2:15. What Was Forbidden?

- President Joseph Fielding Smith showed how the book of Moses helps us understand why the Lord commanded Adam to not partake of the fruit: "Just why the Lord would say to Adam that he forbade him to partake of the fruit of that tree is not made clear in the Bible account, but in the original as it comes to us in the Book of Moses it is made definitely clear. It is that

the Lord said to Adam that if he wished to remain as he was in the garden, then he was not to eat the fruit, but if he desired to eat it and partake of death he was at liberty to do so” (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., 5 vols. [1957–66], 4:81).

2 Nephi 2:15–16, 26–27. Man Should Act for Himself

- President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) taught that agency is necessary for us to grow:

“Our Father in Heaven wanted our growth to continue in mortality and to be enhanced by our freedom to choose and learn. He also wanted us to exercise our faith and our will, especially with a new physical body to master and control. But we know from both ancient and modern revelation that Satan wished to deny us our independence and agency in that now-forgotten moment long ago, even as he wishes to deny them this very hour. Indeed, Satan violently opposed the freedom of choice offered by the Father, so violently that John in the Revelation described ‘war in heaven’ (Revelation 12:7) over the matter. Satan would have coerced us, and he would have robbed us of that most precious of gifts if he could: our freedom to choose a divine future and the exaltation we all hope to obtain.

“Through Christ and his valiant defense of our Father’s plan, the course of agency and eternal aspirations prevailed. . . .

“So we came to our mortality, like Jeremiah [see Jeremiah 1:5], known by God as his literal spirit children, having the privilege to choose our personal path on matters of belief and religious conviction. With Christ’s triumph in heaven in overcoming Lucifer, and later his triumph on earth in overcoming the effects of Adam’s fall and the death of all mankind, ‘the children of men’ continue ‘free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not be acted upon.’ . . .

“To fully understand this gift of agency and its inestimable worth, it is imperative that we understand that God’s chief way of acting is by persuasion and patience and long-suffering, not by coercion and stark confrontation. He acts by gentle solicitation and by sweet enticement. He always acts with unfailing respect for the freedom and independence that we possess.

He wants to help us and pleads for the chance to assist us, but he will not do so in violation of our agency. He loves us too much to do that, and doing so would run counter to his divine character” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1989, 21; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 17–18).

2 Nephi 2:17–18. “An Angel of God . . . Became a Devil”

- President James E. Faust (1920–2007) of the First Presidency explained how Lucifer fell from his position of authority: “Because of his rebellion, Lucifer was cast out and became Satan, the devil, ‘the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice’ (Moses 4:4). And so this personage who was an angel of God and in authority, even in the presence of God, was removed from the presence of God and his Son (see D&C 76:25). This caused great sadness in the heavens, ‘for the heavens wept over him—he was Lucifer, a son of the morning’ (D&C 76:26)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 42; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 35).



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2 Nephi 2:22. “All Things” Were Affected by the Fall of Adam

- Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained how all things were connected to the Fall of Adam: “Then comes the Fall; Adam falls; mortality and procreation and death commence. Fallen man is mortal; he has mortal flesh; he is ‘the first flesh upon the earth.’ And the effects of his fall pass upon all created things. They fall in that they too become mortal. Death enters the world; mortality reigns; procreation commences; and the Lord’s great and eternal purposes roll onward” (“Christ and the Creation,” *Ensign*, June 1982, 14).

“Mortality and procreation and death all had their beginnings with the Fall. . . .

“. . . An infinite Creator, in the primeval day, made the earth and man and all forms of life in such a state that they could fall. This fall involved a change of

status. All things were so created that they could fall or change. . . .

“. . . In the primeval and Edenic day all forms of life lived in a higher state than now prevails. . . . Death and procreation had yet to enter the world” (*Ensign*, June 1982, 9).

2 Nephi 2:22–23. What Is the Difference Between Sin and Transgression?

- Elder Dallin H. Oaks explained the difference between sin and transgression: “[The] contrast between a *sin* and a *transgression* reminds us of the careful wording in the second article of faith: ‘We believe that men will be punished for their own *sins*, and not for Adam’s *transgression*’ (italics added). It also echoes a familiar distinction in the law. Some acts, like murder, are crimes because they are inherently wrong. Other acts, like operating without a license, are crimes only because they are legally prohibited. Under these distinctions, the act that produced the Fall was not a sin—*inherently wrong—but a transgression—wrong because it was formally prohibited.* These words are not always used to denote something different, but this distinction seems meaningful in the circumstances of the Fall” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 98; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 73).

2 NEPHI 2:22–23

Why was the Fall of Adam essential for our salvation?

2 Nephi 2:22–25. “Adam Fell That Men Might Be”

- Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained why the Fall was necessary:

“The Creation culminated with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. They were created in the image of God, with bodies of flesh and bone. Created in the image of God and not yet mortal, they could not grow old and die. ‘And they would have had no children’ [2 Nephi 2:23] nor experienced the trials of life. . . . The

creation of Adam and Eve was a *paradisiacal creation*, one that required a significant change before they could fulfill the commandment to have children and thus provide earthly bodies for premortal spirit sons and daughters of God.

“. . . The Fall of Adam (and Eve) constituted the mortal creation and brought about the required changes in their bodies, including the circulation of blood and other modifications as well. They were now able to have children. They and their posterity also became subject to injury, disease, and death” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 44–45; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 33).

- President James E. Faust added to the description of how the Fall affected Adam and Eve as well as all their posterity:



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“Because of their transgression, Adam and Eve, having chosen to leave their state of innocence (see 2 Nephi 2:23–25), were banished from the presence of God. This is referred to in Christendom as the Fall, or Adam’s transgression. It is a spiritual death because Adam and Eve were

separated from the presence of God and given agency ‘to act for themselves and not to be acted upon’ (2 Nephi 2:26). They were also given the great power of procreation, so that they could keep the commandment to ‘multiply, and replenish the earth’ and have joy in their posterity (Genesis 1:28).

“All of their posterity were likewise banished from the presence of God (see 2 Nephi 2:22–26). However, the posterity of Adam and Eve were innocent of the original sin because they had no part in it. It was therefore unfair for all of humanity to suffer eternally for the transgressions of our first parents, Adam and Eve. It became necessary to settle this injustice; hence the need for the atoning sacrifice of Jesus in His role as the Savior and Redeemer. Because of the transcendent act of the Atonement, it is possible for every soul

to obtain forgiveness of sins, to have them washed away and be forgotten (see 2 Nephi 9:6–9; Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, p. 89). This forgiveness comes about, however, on condition of repentance and personal righteousness” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 13–14; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 12).

- President Brigham Young (1801–77) and President Joseph Fielding Smith help us understand that the Fall of Adam was part of our Heavenly Father’s plan:

“Did they [Adam and Eve] come out in direct opposition to God and to his government? No. But they transgressed a command of the Lord, and through that transgression sin came into the world. The Lord knew they would do this, and he had designed that they should” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 103).

“Adam did only what he had to do. He partook of that fruit for one good reason, and that was to open the door to bring you and me and everyone else into this world. . . .

“. . . If it hadn’t been for Adam, I wouldn’t be here; you wouldn’t be here; we would be waiting in the heavens as spirits” (Joseph Fielding Smith, in Conference Report, Oct. 1967, 121–22).

We learn from Moses 5:10–11 that Adam and Eve also recognized blessings from the results of the Fall. They understood the following concepts:

“My eyes are opened.” They knew good from evil (v. 10).

“In the flesh I shall see God.” The Resurrection could take place from the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (v. 10).

“We . . . should have . . . seed.” Procreation came into the world (v. 11).

“We . . . have known good and evil.” Adam and Eve had the agency to choose between good and evil (v. 11).

“We . . . have known . . . the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient.” The Atonement could take place (v. 11).

2 Nephi 3:4–5. “Great Were the Covenants of the Lord”

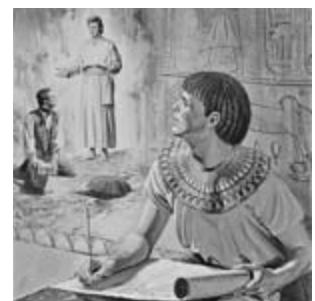
- In the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible, we read that “the Lord hath visited” Joseph, the son of Jacob spoken of in the Old Testament, and that Joseph was given great promises concerning his posterity (JST, Genesis 50:24). As Lehi testified, “Joseph truly saw our day” (2 Nephi 3:5), meaning the day of Lehi and his posterity, and knew that in the future God would raise up “a choice seer” (v. 7), namely the great prophet who was his namesake (see v. 15). Joseph knew also that it would be primarily his descendants whom the Lord would call upon first in these last days to carry the gospel to additional lost members of the house of Israel scattered among the nations of the earth, in compliance with the covenant God made with Abraham (see Bible Dictionary, “Joseph,” 716–17; Guide to the Scriptures, “Joseph, Son of Jacob”). Obviously, since the Lord kept His covenant with Joseph, He will also keep His covenants with us if we are righteous as well.

Lehi’s teaching is a great example of how Heavenly Father honored the covenant He made with Joseph. We can have the confidence that God will always honor His covenants.

2 Nephi 3:6–9. “A Choice Seer”

- A seer is “a person authorized of God to see with spiritual eyes things which God has hidden from the world (Moses 6:35–38). He is a revelator and a prophet (Mosiah 8:13–16). In the Book of Mormon, Ammon taught that only a seer could use special interpreters, or a Urim and Thummim (Mosiah 8:13; 28:16). A seer knows the past, present, and future. Anciently, a prophet was often called a seer (1 Sam. 9:9; 2 Sam. 24:11).

“Joseph Smith is the great seer of the latter days (D&C 21:1; 135:3)” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Seer”). The Prophet Joseph Smith is the “choice seer” described in 2 Nephi 3:6 as a descendant of Joseph, son of Israel.



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- President Brigham Young (1801–77) bore witness of the “choice seer” Joseph Smith, who was known not only in the days of Joseph in Egypt, but even before the



creation of the earth: “It was decreed in the counsels of eternity, long before the foundations of the earth were laid, that he, Joseph Smith, should be the man, in the last dispensation of this world, to bring forth the word of God to the people, and receive the fulness of

the keys and power of the Priesthood of the Son of God. The Lord had his eyes upon him, and upon his father, and upon his father’s father, and upon their progenitors clear back to Abraham, and from Abraham to the flood, from the flood to Enoch, and from Enoch to Adam. He has watched that family and that blood as it has circulated from its fountain to the birth of that man. He [the Prophet Joseph Smith] was fore-ordained in eternity to preside over this last dispensation” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 108).

- Elder Neal A. Maxwell suggested several examples of truths that the Seer Joseph Smith could see with spiritual eyes that had previously been hidden from the world:

- Revelation about the extent and expanse of the universe (see Moses 1:33; D&C 76:24)
- Revelation about God’s central purpose (see Moses 1:39)
- Revelation about us as God’s children (see D&C 93:29)
- Revelation about man’s destiny (see D&C 84:38)
- Revelation about God’s personal involvement with his children (see Alma 18:32)
- Revelation about the expanse of the Savior’s Atonement (see 2 Nephi 9:7; D&C 88:6)

(See Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 105–7; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 100–101.)

2 Nephi 3:6–15. The Prophecies of Joseph

- The following chart helps explain the specific prophecies that Joseph of Egypt made regarding the Prophet Joseph Smith and their subsequent fulfillment:

Prophecy in 2 Nephi 3	Possible Fulfillments
“A seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins” (v. 6).	The Lord said Joseph Smith Jr. was to “be called a seer, a translator, a prophet” (D&C 21:1) and that Joseph was appointed to stand at the head of this dispensation (see D&C 110:16; 112:32).
“He shall be esteemed highly among the fruit of thy loins” (v. 7).	There are millions of descendants of the Book of Mormon people who recognize Joseph Smith as the prophet of the Restoration.
“He shall do a work for the fruit of thy loins . . . , which shall be of great worth unto them” (v. 7).	Many of the children of Lehi have been blessed by the light of the gospel that was restored by the Prophet Joseph Smith.
“He shall do none other work, save the work which I shall command him” (v. 8).	Joseph Smith’s life focused upon doing the will of the Lord. For example, in the beginning of his ministry he was commanded to translate the Book of Mormon: “And you have a gift to translate the plates; and this is the first gift that I bestowed upon you; and I have commanded that you should pretend to no other gift until my purpose is fulfilled in this; for I will grant unto you no other gift until it is finished” (D&C 5:4).
“He shall be great like unto Moses” (v. 9).	Moses gathered Israel from Egypt to the promised land. Joseph Smith was given keys by Moses to gather Israel: “Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel” (D&C 103:16). This is one of many ways that Joseph was like Moses.
“I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins” (v. 11).	Joseph Smith translated and gave the children of Lehi the record of their ancestors (see D&C 3; 5; 10), as well as many other revelations.

Prophecy in 2 Nephi 3	Possible Fulfillments
“The fruit of thy loins . . . shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines” (v. 12).	The Book of Mormon and other modern revelations give plain and authoritative clarification on many principles and doctrines of the gospel in the Bible (see D&C 20:8–15; 42:12).
“Out of weakness he shall be made strong” (v. 13).	A humble farm boy became the prophet of the Restoration.
“They that seek to destroy him shall be confounded” (v. 14).	As promised by the Lord (see 3 Nephi 21:10), the Prophet Joseph Smith was preserved until he had accomplished his mission (see D&C 121:16–22).
“His name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father” (v. 15).	Joseph Smith Jr., the third son of Joseph Smith Sr., was named after his father (see Joseph Smith—History 1:4).
“For the thing [the gospel and its ordinances], which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation” (v. 15).	It is through the Restoration of the Church and the Lord’s ordinances that the Prophet Joseph Smith showed us how to obtain eternal life.

2 Nephi 3:12. The Book of Mormon and the Bible “Shall Grow Together”

- President Boyd K. Packer explained how the Book of Mormon and the Bible have grown together: “The Old Testament and the New Testament . . . and . . . the Book of Mormon . . . are now woven together in such a way that as you pore over one you are drawn to the other; as you learn from one you are enlightened by the other. They are indeed one in our hands” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1982, 75; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53).



2 Nephi 3:18. Who Are the Different People Spoken of?

- Elder Bruce R. McConkie identified the people spoken of in 2 Nephi 3:18 as follows: “Note these words of the Lord: ‘And I, behold, I will give unto him

[Mormon] that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins [the Nephites], unto the fruit of thy loins [the Lamanites]; and the spokesman of thy loins [Joseph Smith] shall declare it.’ That is, Mormon wrote the Book of Mormon, but what he wrote was taken from the writings of the Nephite prophets; and these writings, compiled into one book, were translated by Joseph Smith and sent forth by him unto the Lamanites” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 426).

Points to Ponder

- In what ways do the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement interrelate?
- What can we learn about the tactics of Satan from the phrase “the sleep of hell”? (2 Nephi 1:13).
- What is the relationship between the trials, adversity, and afflictions we encounter and what our Heavenly Father knows we can become? (see 2 Nephi 2:2).

Suggested Assignments

- Write a paragraph describing the relationship between the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement.
- Based on what you learn from 2 Nephi 2:5–10, how would you explain to someone not of our faith the need for the Atonement of Jesus Christ?
- List at least six prophecies in 2 Nephi 3 that relate directly to the Prophet Joseph Smith.