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Miracles and the Book of Mormon

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Guide Lessons.

LESSON I.

Theology and Testimony.

FIRST WEEK IN DECEMBER.

MIRACLES AND THE BOOK OF MORMON.

In IV Nephi we are told that thirty and eight years did pass away "and also the thirty and ninth and forty and first, and the forty and second: yea, even until forty and nine years had passed away, and also the fifty and first and the fifty and second: yea, and even until fifty and nine years had passed away.

And at that time we are told that "there were great and marvelous works wrought by the disciples of Jesus, insomuch that they did heal the sick and raise the dead, and cause the lame to walk, and the blind to receive sight, and all manner of miracles did they work among the children of men: and in nothing did they work miracles save it were in the name of Jesus."

To be sure the miracles wrought among the Nephites were similar to those wrought among the Jews, for their needs were similar.

They, too, had their blind, who received their sight, their lame who were made to walk, their sick who were suffering from innumerable bodily ills, all of whom were ministered to at various times by those bearing God's holy Priesthood.

Our attention, on more than one occasion has been arrested by miracles performed in the Book of Mormon to the confounding of those who railed against God. Sherem and Korihor the anti-Christ's being notable examples.

In fact, all the miracles in the Book of Mormon have been classified under three heads: the healing of the sick, (and in this class we have some instances of raising of the dead, as witness the case of Timothy stoned to death and raised by his brother Nephi), the deliverance of God's servants, and the punishment of the wicked, making three classes in all.

Miracles in the Book of Mormon come distinctly into the lime light towards the close of the history, when there was the sharpest possible cleavage between the Church of Christ and the churches of the devil, for the Book of Mormon tells us that "there was another church which denied the Christ; and they did persecute the true Church of Christ, because of their humility, and their belief in Christ; and they did despise them, because of the many miracles which were wrought among them. Therefore they did exercise power and authority over the disciples of

Jesus who did tarry with them, and they did cast them into prison: but by the power of the word of God, which were in them, the prisons were rent in twain, and they went forth doing mighty miracles among them; nevertheless and notwithstanding all these miracles the people did harden their hearts, and did seek to kill them, even as the Jews at Jerusalem sought to kill Jesus, according to his word:

“And they did cast them into furnaces of fire, and they came forth receiving no harm:

“And they also cast them into dens of wild beasts, and they did play with the wild beasts, even as a child with a lamb: and they did come forth from among them, receiving no harm.

“Nevertheless the people did harden their hearts, for they were led by many priests and false prophets to build up many churches and to do all manner of iniquity. And they did smite upon the people of Jesus; but the people of Jesus did not smite again, and thus they did dwindle in unbelief and wickedness from year to year, even until two hundred and thirty years had passed away.”

Now here are miracles of a very unusual sort, for they had three among them whom they could not put to death, three who had power to minister unto them in sickness and in dire distress of any sort.

Nothing could so testify to the wickedness of these people as the fact that they sought to kill these immoral beings who wrought nothing except what was for their good and their salvation here and in the great eternity before them.

The wickedness of these people has seldom been paralleled, and only surpassed in the case of the Jews who deliberately chose to crucify the Christ after all the mighty works he had wrought among them.

The lesson forces itself upon us, as we recite the horrors to which these Nephites were subjected, that the only effect virtue has upon the wicked is to incense them. There was nothing in the miracles wrought through Moses that brought salvation to the Egyptians: those miracles were wrought first for the children of Israel and, secondly, for the good of all those who believe in every generation, but they were the condemnation of the Egyptians.

So with the Nephites, time and time again, they sought to put to death these servants of the living God, these special witnesses of Christ. Surely they openly defied God, and showed that they loved darkness rather than light. But these holy men survived, and have survived to the blessing of mankind in all ages since the Christian Era.

When the story of their experiences are brought together, what a wonder tale it will be. Let your mind run over all the

marvelous events of history since the destruction of the last Nephite, and think what the Three Nephites have witnessed. No one can possibly conceive the wealth of their knowledge and understanding.

We once heard a member of the council of Twelve say that the three Nephites have been witnesses of all the changing scenes of earth, and that they will some day and rect history where it is wrong and be our ready reference on matters of long ago.

John the beloved, and the three Nephites have gone on with their work. It is not possible that we should understand its full significance. More than one testimony from missionaries is extant testifying to the fact that they have been assisted in their work by one who has appeared mysteriously and as mysteriously disappeared.

During the present war the soldiers were constantly testifying of the presence of persons to them supernatural, walking among the dead and the dying. So persistent was this testimony that magazines in Europe and America published the testimonies of these soldiers. We do not intimate that these persons saw any of the three Nephites for we do not know; it would be more than strange if the Nephites had not watched that terrible conflict and made record of it in a way that will some day redound to the future benefit of the world.

QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS.

1. Classify the miracles of the Book of Mormon.
2. Give an example under each head. Tell something of the miracles performed during Christ's ministry among the Nephites.
3. Give an account of the miracle that heralded the birth of Christ.
4. Give an account of the miracle wrought at his crucifixion.
5. Discuss the statement: Miracles are wrought to the condemnation of some. Tell why?
6. Discuss the statement: Miracles are wrought to the eternal salvation of others. Tell why?
7. Can you find examples of miracles in these latter days which have encouraged people?
8. Tell some of the blessings that have come and may come to this earth because the three Nephites have tarried.

Note.—Concerning the answers to questions in the last theology lesson about the tabernacle organ, students may purchase for 25c a beautifully illustrated booklet about the organ from the Bureau of Information, Salt Lake City.