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Lesson X. The Savior Upon the American Continent

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Satan has now some two thousand fewer years to operate in than in the days of Samuel. No doubt he is waging a vigorous campaign against the souls of men—there is evidence that he is now “getting great hold” upon some of the children of men. May we not, therefore, ponder well the modern significance of the “call” of Samuel.

OUTLINE LESSON NINE.

Historical summary to date.

A bird's eye view of the narrative ahead.

Religious conditions during the reign of the judges.

The mission of Samuel.

The divine favor in which he was held.

His message.

His reception.

His “call” to us.

QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1. Have some one familiar with the Book of Mormon summarize the books Alma and Helaman.

2. Assign special readings and reports on such subjects as:

A. The sons of Mosiah and their mission among the Lamanites.

B. The people of Anti Nephi-Lehi.

C. Korihor.

D. The two thousand sons of Helaman.

E. Teancum.

F. The Gadanton Robbers.

G. The ships of Hagoth.

3. Compare the labors of Samuel, the Lamanite, with those of the Prophet Jonah.

4. What changes in civilization among the Lamanites made possible the appearance of such a character as Samuel?

5. To what extent is the message of Samuel applicable to the world today?

LESSON X.

The Savior Upon the American Continent.

(For Tuesday, January 11, or Sunday, January 16.)

It is fitting that this concluding chapter on the purely appreciative aspect of the Book of Mormon should be devoted to that greatest of all subjects, Jesus Christ. To know Him is life eternal—to study about Him is one of the rarest privileges given to man. His appearance and ministry among the Nephites are so full of significance that a single chapter can at best serve but as an introduction to a life time contemplation. Then too, His ministry is so interwoven with prophecies that really to appreciate His American mission we ought to link together all available material in one big comprehensive presentation. In view of the fact, however, that the remaining lessons of this year's work are to be given over to

Book of Mormon prophecies, let us leave the Messianic predictions to the succeeding chapter and in this lesson contemplate some of the outstanding features of Jesus' ministry here on this continent.

First of all there was the advent itself—that first wonderful appearance. The one cherished hope of the Nephites from the first promise of Nephi—a hope enriched by the expectancy of more than six hundred years—was that the Master would come. And when that hope was realized—when the Savior appeared—it is little wonder that the Nephites were moved beyond description.

Thrilling as is the story, “And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keep-

ing watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," (Luke 2:8-11) there is even greater wonderment attached to the account of His coming among the Nephites. In Judea He came as a child; in Bountiful He came as an immortalized God, triumphant over death and the grave. What a glorious announcement proclaimed Him! When Zarahemla and the cities thereabout had been destroyed in that terrible tempest which in three hours fairly remade western America, and when the people stood terrified in a darkness so thick that they "could feel the vapor of darkness", behold this Voice:

"O all ye that are spared because ye were more righteous than they, will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins and be converted, that I may heal you? Yea, verily I say unto you, if ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come him will I receive; and blessed are those who come unto me. Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me: and in me hath the Father glorified his name. I came unto my own, and my own received me not. And the scriptures concerning my coming are fulfilled. And as many as have received me, to them have I given to become the sons of God; and even so will I to as many as shall believe on my name, for behold, by me redemption cometh, and in me is the law of Moses fulfilled. I am the light and the life of the world.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." (Book of Mormon III Nephi 9:13-18).

And then after the darkness had passed away and peace and quiet were restored, there came out of the very presence of God the long looked for Savior of mankind.

"And it came to pass while they were thus conversing one with another, they heard a voice as if it came out of heaven; and they cast their eyes round about, for they understood not the voice which they heard; and it was not a harsh voice, neither was it a loud voice; nevertheless, and notwithstanding it being a small voice, it did pierce them that did hear to the centre, insomuch that there was no part of their frame that it did not cause to quake; yea, it did pierce them to the very soul, and did cause their hearts to burn.

"And it came to pass that again they heard the voice, and they understood it not;

"And again the third time they did hear the voice, and did open their ears to hear it; and their eyes were towards the sound thereof; and they did look steadfastly towards heaven, from whence the sound came;

"And behold the third time they did understand the voice which they heard; and it said unto them,

"Behold my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name; hear ye him.

"And it came to pass as they understood, they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a man descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe, and he came down and stood in the midst of them, and the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what it meant, for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them.

"And it came to pass that he stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people saying,

"Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world;

"And behold, I am the light and

the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.

"And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words, the whole multitude fell to the earth, for they remembered that it had been prophesied among them that Christ should show himself unto them after his ascension into heaven.

"And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto them saying,

"Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world."—III Nephi 11:3-14.

Surely this is one of the rarest scenes in all literature. To be in the very presence of Jesus Christ—to know that He had just achieved that greatest of miracles, the resurrection from the dead—and to hear from Him that wonderful testimony, "I am Jesus Christ," is as near a heavenly experience as any one is likely to enjoy in this good world of ours.

Concerning His ministry we shall necessarily have to be brief. It is significant that He virtually repeated to the Nephites the teachings which He gave to His followers in the Holy Land. Evidently the truths there declared are the eternal truths by which all of His children are to live—hence they remain unchanged for people on both continents. It is those truths that make the third Book of Nephi one of the choicest books in all scripture—a book to be read and re-read by all Latter-day Saints. There are the Beatitudes, and all of the other teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, together with countless oth-

er admonitions to him who would follow the Christ life.

As in the case of His Judean ministry there is the call of the Twelve (See III Nephi 12:1; 13:25) and their appointment to minister unto the people.

There is exhibited too, that same power and compassion in the healing of the sick and in the restoration to normal life of those maimed and unfortunate.

"And it came to pass that when he had thus spoken, all the multitude, with one accord, did go forth with their sick, and their afflicted, and their lame, and with their blind, and with their dumb, and with all they that were afflicted in any manner; and he did heal them every one as they were brought forth unto him."—III Nephi 17:9.

Then too there is the institution of the Sacrament and the purpose it is to serve.

"And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done, even as I have broken bread, and blessed it, and gave it unto you.

"And this shall ye do in remembrance of my body, which I have shewn unto you. And it shall be a testimony unto the Father, that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me, ye shall have my Spirit to be with you."—III Nephi 18:6, 7.

In this connection, surely the Book of Mormon makes a contribution to the Bible for we read in the Book of Moroni Chapters 4 and 5, the actual words which the Master commanded us to use in this holy ordinance.

As a further contribution from the Book of Mormon, the matter of Baptism is made perfectly clear. Jesus not only gave the Nephites explicit instructions as to the mode of baptism but also gave them the

words which are to accompany the ordinance.

"Verily I say unto you, that whoso repenteth of his sins through your words, and desireth to be baptized in my name, on this wise shall ye baptize them; behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water, and in my name shall ye baptize them.

"And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them by name, saying,

"Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

"And then shall ye immerse them in the water, and come forth again out of the water.

"And after this manner shall ye baptize in my name, for behold, verily I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one; and I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one."—III Nephi 11:23-27.

Another matter made perfectly plain in the American teachings of Jesus is that much disputed passage John 10:16, "Other sheep have I." Witness III Nephi 15:21 "And verily I say unto you, that ye are they of whom I said, other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

Chapters 16 and 17 are also a fascinating contribution in their reference to the Lost Tribes of Israel and chapter 21 is of great interest because of its predictions relative to the second coming of the Master.

Space will not allow of a full discussion of these matters or of the numerous other wonderful truths of this third book of Nephi. We must turn in conclusion, however, to that remarkably dramatic scene contained in the seventeenth chapter. We are told at the beginning

of that chapter that Jesus would have departed, but seeing the devotion of the people and yielding to their plea that He should tarry a little longer, He had compassion upon them, called for and healed their sick, and then bade them bring their children to Him for a blessing.

"And it came to pass that when they had all been brought, and Jesus stood in the midst, he commanded the multitude that they should kneel down upon the ground.

"And it came to pass that when they had knelt upon the ground, Jesus groaned within himself, and saith, Father, I am troubled because of the wickedness of the people of the house of Israel.

"And when he had said these words, he himself also knelt upon the earth; and behold he prayed unto the Father, and the things which he prayed cannot be written, and the multitude did bear record who heard him.

"And after this manner do they bear record: the eye hath never seen, neither hath the ear heard, before, so great and marvelous things as we saw and heard Jesus speak unto the Father;

"And no tongue can speak, neither can there be written by any man, neither can the hearts of men conceive so great and marvelous things as we both saw and heard Jesus speak; and no one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us unto the Father.

"And it came to pass that when Jesus had made an end of praying unto the Father, he arose; but so great was the joy of the multitude that they were overcome.

"And it came to pass that Jesus spake unto them, and bade them arise.

"And they arose from the earth, and he said unto them, Blessed are ye because of your faith. And now behold, my joy is full.

"And when he had said these words, he wept, and the multitude bear record of it, and he took their little children, one by one, and blessed them, and prayed unto the Father for them.

"And when he had done this he wept again.

"And he spake unto the multitude, and saith unto them, behold your little ones.

"And as they looked to behold, they cast their eyes toward heaven, and they saw the heavens open, and they saw angels descending out of heaven as it were, in the midst of fire; and they came down and encircled those little ones about, and they were encircled about with fire; and the angels did minister unto them."—III Nephi, 17:13-24.

What a wonderful spectacle! Jesus Christ, the Son of God, so touched by the love of His children that "He wept" for joy. What an inspiration to us to serve Him!

OUTLINE LESSON X.

The significance of a study of the work of the Savior.

His appearance upon this continent.

His testimony of His divinity.

The Father's proclamation.

Jesus' ministry.

A. The same teachings as given in Palestine.

B. The healing of the sick.

C. The institution of the Sacrament.

D. The proper method of baptism.

E. The gathering of Israel.

F. The blessing of the little children.

QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1. Contrast the coming of the Savior among the Nephites and His nativity among the Jews.

2. Quote passages from the Book of Mormon proving His divinity.

3. Compare the Sermon on the Mount as given in the Holy Land and as given in America.

4. Discuss the proper method of baptism as taught by Jesus Christ.

5. What is His promise relative to the Lost Tribes of Israel?

6. What are the signs which are to precede His second coming?

7. Relate the incident of His blessing little children.

LESSON XI.

Predictions Fulfilled in the Coming of the Savior.

(For Tuesday, January 18, or Sunday, January 23.)

Thus far we have considered the Book of Mormon in its purely literary aspects. We are happy in the thought that for the truths it contains, for the characters it portrays, for the incidents it depicts, it is entitled to a place among the choicest books of all time. But there is still another factor in the greatness of the Book of Mormon. Its prophecies give it a sacredness that can belong only to those books which record the work of the Lord. Surely, fulfilled prophecies give a book a place which few other things could guarantee. The Book of Mormon is the result of revelation and it is full of prophetic utterances, entirely in keeping with the spirit of its coming forth.

As we turn to the prophecies of the Book of Mormon we must be impressed first of all with the number of them that have already been fulfilled and secondly with the explicit detail in which they are set forth. More than sixty major prophecies have been literally fulfilled. So clearly have they come to pass that they inspire an unshakable confidence in those that relate to events that lie ahead of us in the future.

An examination of these prophecies reveals the fact that there are three distinct classes. First of all, there are those predictions which had their fulfillment in the Book of Mormon record itself—those prophecies relative to Nephite his-