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## Lesson XV. A Group of Six Prophecies

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# LESSON DEPARTMENT

## An Appreciation of the Book of Mormon.

Senior Course of Study.

### LESSON XV.

#### A GROUP OF SIX PROPHECIES.

(For Tuesday, March 1. or Sunday, March 12.)

To date we have considered four major prophecies:

1. The prediction relative to the establishment and preservation of America as The Promised Land.

2. The announcement of the birth and ministry of Jesus Christ.

3. The declaration pertaining to the scattering and persecution of Israel.

4. The proclamation that the Jews should be restored to the land of their fathers.

There are very many others that merit full consideration, but, in view of the fact that we have ahead of us only three more lessons, it is obvious that some of these predictions will have to be grouped or be eliminated altogether from the present study. Let us therefore turn in this lesson to a group of some six prophecies which have been fulfilled, leaving the last two lessons of the year's work for a presentation first, of those having to do with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the consequent establishment of this latter-day work, and second, of those which herald the approach of the last days.

In an earlier lesson, the one on Abinadi, reference was made to the predictions he uttered relative to the fate that awaited Noah and his people because of their wickedness and

their refusal to listen to the word of the Lord. Abinadi's prediction is found in the twelfth chapter of Mosiah verses 2-5:

"Yea, wo be unto this generation. And the Lord said unto me, Stretch forth thy hand and prophesy, saying, Thus saith the Lord: it shall come to pass that this generation, because of their iniquities, shall be brought into bondage, and shall be smitten on the cheek; yea, and shall be driven by men, and shall be slain; and the vultures of the air, and the dogs, yea, and the wild beasts, shall devour their flesh.

"And it shall come to pass that the life of King Noah shall be valued even as a garment in a hot furnace; for he shall know that I am the Lord.

"And it shall come to pass that I will smite this my people with sore afflictions; yea, with famine and with pestilence; and I will cause that they shall howl all the day long.

"Yea, and I will cause that they shall have burdens lashed upon their backs; and they shall be driven before like a dumb ass."

That these prophecies were fulfilled is perfectly clear from a reading of Mosiah 19:20 and Mosiah 21:3-15.

Another prophecy that had its fulfillment in the Book of Mormon—one of the first prophecies encountered in the book—is that one relative to the relationship that should exist between the Nephites and Lamanites. After Nephi had been prom-

ised by the Lord that if he would keep His commandments he should be made a ruler and teacher over his brethren, he was shown that the Lamanites, because of rebellion, would be a scourge unto his people.

"For behold, in that day that they shall rebel against me, I will curse them even with a sore curse, and they shall have no power over thy seed, except they shall rebel against me also.

"And if it so be that they rebel against me, they shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in the ways of remembrance."—I Nephi 2:23, 24.

The same thought is given even more forceful expression in II Nephi 5:25.

"And the Lord God said unto me, they shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in remembrance of me; and inasmuch as they will not remember me, and hearken unto my words, they shall scourge them even unto destruction."

Jacob 3:3 declares the same truth.

Not only is the prediction made that the Lamanites should scourge the Nephites but it is set forth in unmistakable terms that the Nephites should be utterly destroyed. Even the date of the consummation of the destruction was foreseen and declared:

"And these are the words: Behold, I perceive that this very people, the Nephites, according to the Spirit of Revelation which is in me, in four hundred years from the time that Jesus Christ shall manifest himself unto them, shall dwindle in unbelief;

"Yea, and then shall they see wars and pestilences, yea, famines and bloodshed, even until the people of Nephi shall become extinct;

"Yea, and this because they shall dwindle in unbelief, and fall into the works of darkness, and lasciviousness, and all manner of iniquities; yea, I say unto you, that because they shall sin against so great light and knowledge; yea, I say unto you, that from that day, even the fourth generation shall not all pass away, before this great iniquity shall come;

"And when that great day cometh, behold, the time very soon cometh that those who are now, or the seed of those who are

now numbered among the people of Nephi, shall no more be numbered among the people of Nephi.

"But whosoever remaineth, and is not destroyed in that great and dreadful day, shall be numbered among the Lamanites, and shall become like unto them, all, save it be a few, who shall be called the disciples of the Lord; and them shall the Lamanites pursue, even until they shall become extinct. And now, because of iniquity, this prophecy shall be fulfilled."—Alma 45:10-14.

Compare with these verses:

I Nephi 12:11-15.

II Nephi 26:9, 10, 11.

Helaman 12:5, 9, 10.

That the Lamanites were a scourge to the Nephites is a fact that stands out in almost every chapter of the Book of Mormon. That the Nephites were destroyed is equally a matter of record. Moroni's lament over the destruction of his people brings to a close the fulfillment of this prediction:

"And now it came to pass that after the great and tremendous battle at Cumorah, behold, the Nephites who had escaped into the country southward, were hunted by the Lamanites, until they were all destroyed.

"And my father also was killed by them, and I, even remain alone to write the sad tale of the destruction of my people. But behold, they are gone, and I fulfil the commandment of my father. And whether they will slay me, I know not;

"Therefore I will write and hide up the records in the earth, and whither I go it mattereth not.

"Behold, my father hath made this record, and he hath written the intent thereof. And behold, I would write it also, if I had room upon the plates; but I have not; and ore I have none, for I am alone; my father hath been slain in battle, and all my kinsfolks, and I have not friends nor whither to go; and how long the Lord will suffer that I may live, I know not.

"Behold, four hundred years have passed away since the coming of our Lord and Savior.

"And behold, the Lamanites have hunted my people, the Nephites, down from city to city, and from place to place, even until they are no more; and great has been their fall; yea, great and marvelous is the de-

struction of my people, the Nephites."—Mormon 8:2-7.

A third prophecy—one of particular significance when considered in connection with the destruction of the Nephites—is that one which declares that the Lamanites should not utterly be destroyed.

"Neither will he suffer that the Gentiles shall destroy the seed of thy brethren."—I Nephi 13:31.

It is interesting to turn to other statements of this same promise such as those found in III Nephi 16:8-16 and Mormon 5:17-20.

At the time of the recording of these promises it must have appeared almost a certainty that if either the Nephites or the Lamanites should be preserved it would be the former. But just as the Book of Mormon predicts, we now see the prophecy fulfilled—there are no Nephites, but the Lamanites still exist as our Indian friends.

That the fourth prophecy to be considered in this lesson has been fulfilled, is attested to by the Lord Himself. When the Prophet Joseph Smith inquired of his Heavenly Father, which, of all churches in the world was correct, he was told that none of them was His Church.

"The answer was: 'You must join none of them! They are all wrong. Their creeds are an abomination in my sight. The professors thereof are all corrupt. They draw near me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They teach for doctrine the commandments of men. Having a form of godliness, they deny the power thereof.'

Book of Mormon prophets foresaw that such should be the case—that Christ's doctrine should be modified and that the "great and abominable Church" should teach as its principles the notions of men. A study of the practices and teachings of the Catholic church from the days of its

origin lends significance to the following predictions:

"And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the foundation of a great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb, many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.

"And all this have they done, that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord; that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men;

"Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God."—I Nephi 13:26-28.

"And it came to pass that he said unto me, Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose foundation is the devil.

"And he said unto me, Behold there are, save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God, belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.

"And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people.

"And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the Saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

"And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God.

"And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that

it descended upon the Saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

"And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon the great and abominable church, inasmuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth."—I Nephi 14:9-15.

"And the righteous need not fear, for they are those who shall not be confounded. But it is the kingdom of the devil which shall be built up among the children of men, which kingdom is established among them which are in the flesh;

"For the time speedily shall come, that all churches which are built up to get gain, and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil, are they who need fear, and tremble and quake; they are those who must be brought low in the dust; they are those who must be consumed as stubble; and this is according to the words of the prophet."—I Nephi 22:22, 23.

Surely such declarations add to our testimony that we are of the Church of Jesus Christ and gives us wonderful assurance even though our numbers may be few as compared with the membership of other churches.

A fifth prophecy has reference to the fate of the Jaredites. The Book of Ether, chapter thirteen, verse twenty-one records concerning that people:

"Otherwise they should be destroyed, and all his household, save it were himself, and he should only live to see the fulfilling of the prophecies which had been spoken concerning another people receiving the land for their inheritance; and Coriantumr should receive a burial by them; and every soul should be destroyed save it were Coriantumr."

For a simple yet significant statement of the fulfillment of this prediction turn to Omni 1:20, 21, 22:

"And it came to pass in the days of Mosiah, there was a large stone brought unto him with engravings on it; and he did interpret the engravings by the gift and power of God.

"And they gave an account of one Coriantumr and the slain of his people. And Coriantumr was discovered by the people of Zarahemla; and he dwelt with them for the space of nine moons.

"It also spake a few words concerning his fathers. And his first parents came out from the tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people; and the severity of the Lord fell upon them according to his judgments, which are just; and their bones lay scattered in the land northward."

Prophecy number six, though largely a promise, has been written large in prophetic richness since the publication of the Book of Mormon. Moroni, in sealing up the records of his people, gave to those who might subsequently read them this admonition:

"And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost."—Moroni 10:4.

Only within the past weeks, a young lady, newly converted to Mormonism, testified that the reading of the Book of Mormon was what had carried to her soul the conviction of truth. Even in the relating of her conversion, she beamed with that light which is the outward manifestation of the Spirit of the Lord—"He had manifested the truth of it unto her."

Such a testimony is only typical of thousands of others. Surely the greatest testimony that ever comes to the reader of the Book of Mormon is that burning of soul which tells him that the book is true. And all this is in fulfillment of prophecy.

## OUTLINE

Prophecies considered to date.

The six that make up this lesson:

1. Abinadi's prediction concerning Noah and his people.
2. The Nephites to be scourged and destroyed by the Lamanites.
3. The Lamanites not to be destroyed.
4. The corruption of "the great and abominable church."
5. The destruction of the Jaradites.
6. The promise to sincere seekers after truth who read the Book of Mormon.

## QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.

1. Review the prophecies presented in the last four lessons.

2. Discuss the force of the law of compensation as illustrated in the life of Noah.

3. How do you justify the preservation of the Lamanites rather than the Nephites?

4. Have some one present in the class vital facts relative to the teachings and worship of the Catholic church as bearing upon the fourth prophecy of this lesson.

5. Review the story of the Jaredite colony.

6. Have members of the class present cases in illustration of the fulfillment of the prophecy number six.

7. Consider the prophecy contained in Helaman 13:18 and its fulfillment in Mormon 1:18.

## LESSON XVI.

## BOOK OF MORMON PROPHECIES.

(For Tuesday, March 8, or Sunday, March 20.)

## THE PRESERVATION OF THE NEPHITE RECORDS AND THE COMING FORTH OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

Surely "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." The manner in which He has preserved His people and His prophets is a remarkable testimony to His overruling providence. One of the most conclusive bits of evidence of such a providence is the remarkable preservation of the Nephite records that they might come forth in these latter days through the Book of Mormon.

From the time they were called to leave Jerusalem, the Nephites were instructed of the Lord that they should carefully safeguard both their own history and the history of their forefathers. You will recall how Nephi labored to obtain the Brass Plates—how he had to take human life to secure them—and how he responded to the obligation imposed upon him by the Lord to make and keep gold plates upon which the achievements of his own people might be inscribed. It is inspiring to note the zeal with

which these plates were preserved and handed down from generation to generation through a period of a thousand years. And then what significance in the thought that they were hidden away under the supervision of the Lord for fourteen hundred years to be brought forth according to His purposes, in these days of the gospel's restoration. To read in prophecy of the preservation of these records and of their being brought forth—and then to read in history the actual fulfillment of those prophecies—is a stirring testimony to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

At least eight distinct groups of prophecies proclaim the preservation and coming forth of the Book of Mormon. As the reader turns through them as they are here briefly set forth he should turn also to a history of the Church or to Evans' "One Hundred Years of Mormonism" for a more complete statement of their fulfillment.

1. In the first place, Nephi was shown a thousand years before the