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## Characters and Teachings of the Book of Mormon: Lesson 4—The Migration (Continued)

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## *Theology*—Characters and Teachings of The Book of Mormon

### Lesson 4—The Migration (Continued)

*Elder Leland H. Monson*

(Text: The Book of Mormon: Ether, chapters 1-7.)

For Tuesday, January 8, 1952

Objective: To show the purpose and promises of the Lord regarding the land of promise, applying them to our own day.

**F**OLLOWING the instructions of the Lord, given at the time he requested divine guidance concerning where they were to go, the brother of Jared was told to “gather together thy flocks, both male and female, of every kind; and also of the seed of the earth of every kind; and thy families; and also Jared thy brother and his family; and also thy friends and their families, and the friends of Jared and their families” (Ether 1:41) and go into the valley of Nimrod, which was northward. In preparation for this journey they had also laid snares and caught birds, prepared a vessel in which they could carry fish, and collected swarms of bees.

It was in this valley of Nimrod that the Lord came down and talked with the brother of Jared, but he was in a cloud and the brother of Jared did not see him. The Lord commanded the little colony to go into a wilderness where “there never had man been.” Under the

Lord’s guidance they crossed many waters in barges until they were brought “forth even to that great sea which divideth the lands.” Here they pitched their tents and remained for some years. They named the place Moriancumer.

At the end of four years, the Lord directed the colony to prepare to cross the ocean to the land of promise. Concerning this land to which they were being guided, Moroni wrote that God,

had sworn in his wrath unto the brother of Jared, that whoso should possess this land of promise, from that time henceforth and forever, should serve him, the true and only God, or they should be swept off when the fulness of his wrath should come upon them. . . . Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written (Ether 2:8, 12).

The knowledge given in this revelation was of inestimable value to the brother of Jared. And it is a power to modern Americans if we have the genius to use it. The promise is as valid today as it was at that time about forty-two centuries ago.

In preparation for the voyage to the land of promise, the Lord instructed the leaders of this little group to build eight barges after the manner of those they had constructed in the wilderness. These barges were as long as a tree, were peaked on the ends, and were constructed in a manner to prevent the entrance of water when they should be submerged, for the Lord knew the vessels would be immersed from time to time. To prevent the entrance of water they had to be airtight.

When the vessels were finished, the brother of Jared inquired of the Lord concerning the manner in which air and light were to be supplied. In humble prayer to the Lord, he said:

O Lord, in them there is no light; whither shall we steer? And also we shall perish, for in them we cannot breathe, save it be the air which is in them; therefore we shall perish (Ether 2:19).

The brother of Jared was instructed:

Behold, thou shalt make a hole in the top, and also in the bottom; and when thou shalt suffer for air thou shalt unstop the hole and receive air. And if it so be that the water come in upon thee, behold, ye shall stop the hole, that ye may not perish in the flood (Ether 2:20).

In answer to Moriancumer's question, "Behold, O Lord, wilt thou

suffer that we shall cross this great water in darkness?" (Ether 2:22) the Lord, in turn, asked him a question, "What will ye that I should prepare for you that ye may have light, when ye are swallowed up in the depths of the sea?" Then, we are told, the brother of Jared ascended Mount Shelem, and molted out of a rock sixteen small, white stones, which were as clear as transparent glass. Carrying them in his hands upon the top of the mountain, he presented them to the Lord, and cried:

I know, O Lord, that thou hast all power, and can do whatsoever thou wilt for the benefit of man; therefore touch these stones, O Lord, with thy finger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness; and they shall shine forth unto us in the vessels which we have prepared, that we may have light while we shall cross the sea (Ether 3:4).

"The Lord stretched forth his hand and touched the stones one by one with his finger" (Ether 3:6). After the Lord had prepared the stones, the brother of Jared placed one in each end of the barges, and they gave light to the vessels.

So great was the faith of the brother of Jared upon this occasion that the veil which separates the human from the divine was lifted from his eyes, and he beheld the finger of the Lord. Struck with fear, he fell down before the Lord. "Never has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast," said the Lord, "for were it not so ye could not have seen my finger" (Ether 3:9).

Then it was that the brother of Jared asked the Lord to show himself unto him. After the brother of Jared declared, "I know that thou



speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth and canst not lie," the Lord showed himself and said:

Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore ye are brought back into my presence . . . Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son. In me shall all mankind have light, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and my daughters. And never have I shown myself unto man whom I have created, for never has man believed in me as thou hast. Seest thou that ye are created after mine own image? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning after mine own image. Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh (Ether 3:13-16).

Having prepared all manner of food for their sustenance on the voyage, and also food for their fowls and animals, they set forth from Moriancumer in the eight barges, commending themselves unto the Lord their God. Many times they were buried in the depths of the sea as the waves broke over them when tempests stirred the turbulent water.

For three hundred forty-four days they were driven forth upon the water by furious winds.

And they did land upon the shore of the promised land. And when they had set their feet upon the shores of the promised land they bowed themselves down upon the face of the land, and did humble themselves before the Lord, and did shed tears of joy before the Lord, because of the multitude of his tender mercies over them. . . . And it came to

pass that they began to spread upon the face of the land, and to multiply and to till the earth; and they did wax strong in the land (Ether 6:12, 18).

At the height of their civilization "the whole face of the land northward was covered with inhabitants" (Ether 10:21).

The nature of their civilization is explicitly given by Moroni, who writes that during the reign of Lib:

They were exceedingly industrious, and they did buy and sell and traffic one with another, that they might get gain. And they did work in all manner of ore, and they did make gold, and silver, and iron, and brass, and all manner of metals; and they did dig it out of the earth; wherefore, they did cast up mighty heaps of earth to get ore, of gold, and of silver, and of iron and of copper. And they did work all manner of fine work. And they did have silks, and fine-twined linens; and they did work all manner of cloth, that they might clothe themselves from their nakedness. And they did make all manner of tools to till the earth . . . And they did make all manner of tools with which they did work their beasts. And they did make all manner of weapons of war. And they did work all manner of work of exceedingly curious workmanship. And never could be a people more blessed than they, and more prospered by the hand of the Lord (Ether 10:22-28).

The promise made by the Lord to the brother of Jared, that he would raise up unto the seed of the members of this colony a great nation, so much so that there would be none greater, was literally fulfilled. In extent and in nature, it was a civilization that looms large in the eyes of those who understand.

Because of his faith and his steadfastness, the Lord blessed the brother of Jared and his posterity, despite the fact that wickedness ulti-

mately brought about the decline and fall of the empire.

Knowing that the time of his death was near, the brother of Jared encouraged Jared to call the people together to ask them what they most desired of them before they departed from this life. The people clamored for a king, and Orihah, son of Jared, was anointed king over the people.

Soon after the establishment of this monarchical form of govern-

ment, "it came to pass that Jared died, and his brother also."

### *Questions for Discussion*

1. How does this lesson establish the fact that God rules the destiny of nations?
2. How can we help to keep America a land of freedom?
3. What does this lesson teach us of the personality of Jesus Christ (Ether 3:14; 4:7)?
4. What was the nature and extent of the Jaredite civilization?

## *Visiting Teacher Messages*

### Book of Mormon Gems of Truth

Lesson 4—"Look Unto God With Firmness of Mind, and Pray Unto Him With Exceeding Faith, and He Will Console You in Your Afflictions . . ." (Jacob 3:1).

*Leone O. Jacobs*

For Tuesday, January 8, 1952

Objective: To remind us that God is ever willing to comfort us in trial.

**T**HERE are times in the life of every individual when he is in dire need of comfort, encouragement, or relief from mental or physical anguish. In the above quotation, a Book of Mormon prophet Jacob, tells us how we may receive consolation in our afflictions.

How wonderful it is to know that we have a sure source of comfort—someone to whom we can turn for help with implicit trust. When we encounter trials our greatest consolation is received from God. He alone can ease the pain, can give us hope in the future, the courage to continue. No earthly power or influence is comparable. The words of the following song express the feeling of confidence we have in his help:

I know my heav'nly Father knows  
The storms that would my way oppose;  
But He can drive the clouds away,  
And turn my darkness into day.

I know my heav'nly Father knows,  
The balm I need to soothe my woes,  
And with His touch of love divine,  
He heals this wounded soul of mine . . .  
He knows, He knows, and tempers ev'ry  
wind that blows.

Sometimes we look at certain of our friends who have recently undergone great sorrow, and we wonder at the serenity of spirit they possess. We marvel that they are able to bear up under the heavy blows that have befallen them. And then we realize that God has come to their aid. He it is who has given them support, cheered their hearts, made them equal to their afflictions.