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Come to Understanding and Learn Doctrine

Monte S. Nyman

Isaiah prophesied that through the coming forth of the Book of Mormon those “that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine” (29:24; also in 2 Nephi 27:35). That the Book of Mormon is the primary source of the doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was confirmed by the Lord in a revelation concerning the organization of the Church given on 6 April 1830. There the Lord specified the many doctrines that the Book of Mormon established as truth (D&C 20:17-36). Second Nephi is one of the most doctrinal books of the entire Book of Mormon. My purpose here is to give a chapter by chapter overview of the main doctrines found in 2 Nephi.

2 Nephi 1

Chapter 1 contains Lehi’s final admonitions to all of his sons, the sons of Ishmael, and to Zoram, the former servant of Laban. It confirms the earlier teaching that the Americas are a land choice above all other lands, to which no one will come except they are brought by the hand of the Lord. This land was

given by covenant to Lehi and his posterity forever and also to all others that the Lord would bring. It will be a prosperous land of liberty on the condition that its inhabitants keep the commandments of God. If they reject the true Messiah, the Holy One of Israel, they will be scattered and smitten (2 Nephi 1:5-11, 20).

The doctrine that people may have their callings and elections made sure in this life is found in Lehi's declaration that the Lord had redeemed his soul from hell, that Lehi had beheld His glory and was eternally encircled in the arms of His love (v. 15).

2 Nephi 2

Chapter 2 is a father's-blessing chapter wherein Lehi teaches great and important doctrines. In giving a final blessing to Jacob, his firstborn son in the wilderness, Lehi teaches us many things regarding the fall and agency of man.

The doctrine that the Lord will turn suffering and tribulation into blessings is taught in Lehi's pronouncement to Jacob that God "shall consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain" (v. 2; compare D&C 122:1-7). Since all people experience adversity, they should know this is doctrine.

Lehi also taught Jacob that the Spirit is "the same yesterday, today, and forever" (v. 4; see also 2 Nephi 27:23; 29:9). From the context of the passage, the Spirit referred to in chapter 2 is Jesus Christ, and this confirms a doctrine of the Bible (see Heb. 13:8). Both scriptures teach that truth is absolute and not relative. Situations may be altered and thus make it appear to man that truth is relative, but where two conditions are identical, the same solution will be dictated by that Spirit. This doctrine is also confirmed in the Doctrine and Covenants (93:30-31).

Furthermore, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught this doctrine:

That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another. . . . This is the principle on which the government of heaven is conducted—by revelation adapted to the

circumstances in which the children of the kingdom are placed. Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* 256; hereafter *TPJS*).

The agency of man is what brings about variances, not the Spirit.

Apparently quoting from the plates of brass, Lehi said that the cause of Satan's fall was his seeking "evil before God" (v. 17). He also noted Satan's objective is to bring about "the misery of all mankind" (v. 18; see also chapters 1 and 16 herein for a fuller discussion).

2 Nephi 3

In chapter 3, Lehi quotes prophecies originally made by Joseph, who was sold into Egypt. These prophecies were lost from the Bible when many "plain and precious parts" were taken away (see 1 Nephi 13:24-29), but were on the plates of brass (see 2 Nephi 4:2). The main doctrine in chapter 3 is that Joseph Smith was a choice seer foreordained to come forth in the latter days.

Lehi blessed his son Joseph that his "seed [should] not utterly be destroyed" (v. 3), even though the Nephite nation was destroyed. The doctrine that there are descendants of Joseph among today's descendants of those whom the Book of Mormon calls Lamanites was verified in a modern revelation to Joseph Smith (D&C 3:16-18). The Book of Mormon confirms that the Lord made great covenants with Joseph of Egypt (2 Nephi 3:4). The loss of these covenants from the biblical record has caused the Gentile world to stumble over the truths restored to Joseph Smith, as well as over the Bible, as Nephi saw and prophesied (see 1 Nephi 13:29; 2 Nephi 26:20). Neither does the world know that the Lord raised up Moses to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt in fulfillment of a covenant He had made to Joseph of Egypt (3:10, 17).

One promise made to Joseph of Egypt was that a branch of his seed that was to be broken off¹ would be delivered “out of captivity unto freedom in the latter days,” that is “out of [spiritual] darkness unto light” (v. 5). When the Savior visited the Nephites, he enlarged upon how the promised deliverance of this branch this would come to pass (3 Nephi 21:12-22).

The final doctrinal contribution to note here is Lehi’s prophecy concerning a mighty one among the seed of Joseph, a son of Lehi, who would bring “much restoration unto the house of Israel, and unto the seed of thy brethren” (2 Nephi 3:24). Presidents Joseph Fielding Smith and Spencer W. Kimball as members of the Quorum of the Twelve have said this will be a future prophet yet to be raised up among the Lamanite people (Smith, *Doctrines* 2:251; Kimball 765; and Nyman 67). The far-reaching extent of this prophecy will be better understood when it is fulfilled.

2 Nephi 4-5

Lehi blessed the posterity of both Laman and Lemuel that if they came to be cursed in the future because they followed the teachings of their parents, the curse would be taken from them and “answered upon the heads of [their] parents” (4:6). Lehi based this blessing on the doctrine that children who are brought up in the way they should go would “not depart from it” (v. 5), but because Laman and Lemuel had not taught their children correctly, their sins will be upon their heads. The slight variations between Proverbs 22:6 and Lehi’s teaching would seem to indicate that he was paraphrasing from the plates of brass

¹ The branch of Joseph was the Lehi-Ishmael migration to the Americas about 600 BC. Lehi was a descendant of Manasseh (Alma 10:3) and Ishmael was a descendant of Ephraim (Snow 23:184) and thus descendants of both of Joseph of Egypt’s sons were among the inhabitants of the Nephite-Lamanite nation. This branch was also prophesied of by Jacob the father of the House of Israel (Gen. 49:22-26), and the Lord confirmed to the Nephites that they were the righteous branch promised to Joseph of Egypt (Jacob 2:25).

(biblical) account. This doctrine was also revealed to Joseph Smith in November 1831 (see D&C 68:25).

The main doctrinal point of chapter 5 is the curse that came upon the Lamanites (for a fuller treatment of this subject see chapter 7 herein). Another point of doctrine is Nephi's conferral of the priesthood upon the heads of Jacob and Joseph. As a descendant of Manasseh, Nephi was not commissioned to administer as a Levite or to officiate in the Aaronic Priesthood. The Nephites operated under the Melchizedek Priesthood and this fits with Joseph Smith's teaching that "all the [Old Testament] prophets had the Melchizedek Priesthood and were ordained by God himself" (*TPJS* 182; see also Smith, *Answers* 1:123-26). Jacob refers to being "called of God, and ordained after the manner of this holy order" (2 Nephi 6:1-2). Alma 13 and Doctrine and Covenants 107:1-3 support the doctrine that this "holy order" is the Melchizedek Priesthood.

2 Nephi 6-8

After making an introduction, Jacob quotes Isaiah (49:22-52:2) and probably Zenos (compare 1 Nephi 22:15-17 and 2 Nephi 6:14-15; see also chapter 8 herein for fuller discussion).

Jacob states that Isaiah spoke "concerning things which are, and which are to come" (6:4), of his own day and of future generations. He also spoke of all the house of Israel (6:5). Therefore, Isaiah's message is not only for the Jews and the Northern Ten Tribes, but also for the Nephite-Lamanite nations, and for all the house of Israel scattered among the Gentiles as well.² With these two doctrinal guidelines we can gain a greater insight into and understanding of Isaiah's words.

² That Isaiah's message is to various groups is further supported by the Savior's teachings to the Nephites. He quoted Isaiah 52:8-10 and explained how it would be fulfilled among those people (3 Nephi 16:17-20); then he later quoted the same passage and explained how it would be fulfilled among the Jews (3 Nephi 20:29-35).

2 Nephi 9

President Joseph Fielding Smith has called chapter 9 “one of the most enlightening discourses ever delivered in regard to the atonement” (*Answers* 4:57). The Atonement cannot be understood separate from the fall of man (for fuller treatment of the Fall and the Atonement see chapters 5 and 9 herein).

Four other doctrines, three of which are taught in light of the Atonement, will be given some detail. The Book of Mormon establishes the doctrine that the institution of the church existed in Old Testament times, a doctrine not readily accepted in the world. This was taught first in Nephi’s account of Zoram’s supposing that he (Nephi) spoke “of the brethren of the Church” in explaining why he was taking the plates of brass out of Jerusalem (1 Nephi 4:24-26). It is confirmed when Jacob prophesied that the Jews would “be restored to the true church and fold of God” (2 Nephi 9:2). Logically, one cannot be restored to a church which has not already been established. The New Testament also teaches this doctrine. Stephen, in his great martyrdom speech, referred to “the church in the wilderness” at the time of Moses (Acts 7:38).

A doctrine of the place of education in the church was taught by Jacob, as he warned against losing the benefits of the Atonement by trusting only the mind of man. After warning that the intellectuals who think they are so wise that they need not hearken to the counsels of God will lose the Lord’s blessings, Jacob noted, “But to be learned is good *if* they hearken unto the counsels of God” (9:28-29, emphasis added).

Contrary to the teaching of modern Christianity that Peter guards the pearly gates, Jacob declares “the keeper of the gate [to eternal life] is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there” (v. 41). The doctrine that the Twelve Apostles will judge mankind (Matthew 19:28) is further qualified in the Book of Mormon. Those special witnesses will be at the judgment bar of God bearing testimony of their roles in giving

mankind an opportunity for eternal life (See 1 Nephi 12:9-10; Mormon 3:18, 20-21). Jacob additionally witnesses of his stewardship to teach “the consequences of sin” (2 Nephi 9:48). This doctrine is amplified later in Jacob 1.

2 Nephi 10

There are three doctrines in chapter 10 that relate directly to Jesus Christ. The first is that his name was revealed to prophets in Old Testament times. It was revealed to Jacob (v. 3), to Nephi, and to other prophets as apparently recorded on the plates of brass (25:18-19). The second doctrine is that Christ came among the Jews because no other nation on earth “would crucify their God” (10:3). That Jacob was referring to the nations of the earth in the meridian of time is evident from the Prophet Joseph Smith’s statement that “This generation is as corrupt as the generation of the Jews that crucified Christ; and if he were here to-day, and should preach the same doctrine He did then, they would put Him to death” (*TPJS* 328). The third doctrine relates to the second one. It was the priestcrafts and iniquities among the Jews that caused Christ’s crucifixion (2 Nephi 10:5). The term *priestcraft* is not used in the Bible. It may have been removed as a part of the plain and precious truths being taken away by the great and abominable churches. The devil would undoubtedly like to keep his method of operation unidentified.

There is a unique doctrine which refers to two gathering places of Israel, a doctrine plainly taught in Isaiah.³ It promises that America will be a land of liberty to the Gentiles, that there should be no kings upon the land, and that the Lord would fortify the land against other lands (2 Nephi 10:11-12). Finally,

³ In the early chapters of Isaiah, the prophet always separates his messages to Zion (the Americas) and to Jerusalem (see Isaiah 3:1-15 and 3:16-4:1; 4:3-4; chapter 25 to Zion and chapter 26 to Jerusalem). In the later chapters of Isaiah, including the ones Jacob quotes in 2 Nephi 6-8, the prophet speaks of the two gathering places in conjunction (Isaiah 40:9) as well as giving separate messages to each (see Isaiah 48 to Judah, Isaiah 49 to the Isles of the Sea [Zion]; 51:3-16 and 51:16-23; 52:1-2; see also *TPJS* 362).

chapter 10 says that those who fight “against Zion, both Jew and Gentile, both bond and free, both male and female,” are of “the whore of all the earth; for they who are not for me are against me” (v. 16). This teaches that people become members of the great and abominable church by their actions rather than an by affiliation with a particular organization.

2 Nephi 11-24

2 Nephi 11 is a brief chapter introducing thirteen consecutive chapters of Isaiah (chapters 2-14). Nephi gives three reasons for quoting these chapters: (a) because Isaiah had also seen the Lord, he was a third witness with Nephi and Jacob that the Redeemer lives (see Isaiah 6; also in 2 Nephi 16); (b) in order to prove the truth of the coming of Christ (see Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7 or 2 Nephi 17:14; 19:6-7); and (c) because Isaiah testifies that the covenants of the Lord will be fulfilled (see Isaiah 2, 4, and 11; also in 2 Nephi 12, 14, 21).

That Jesus Christ is Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament, is further attested to by his appearance to Nephi and Jacob (2 Nephi 11:2-3) as well as to Isaiah (Isaiah 6; also in 2 Nephi 16). Further testimony of Jesus is the doctrine that “all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world, unto man, are the typifying of him” (2 Nephi 11:4; see also Moses 6:63). The teaching of Isaiah that “the whole earth is full of [the Lord’s] glory” (2 Nephi 16:3) is not unique to the Book of Mormon but is an important doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord amplified this doctrine in Doctrine and Covenants 88:6-13. Related to it is Isaiah’s teaching that the earth will “be full of the knowledge of the Lord” in the millennial period (11:9; also in 2 Nephi 21:9). The Doctrine and Covenants

suggests that what is contained in the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon plates delivered to Joseph Smith would be a part of that sacred knowledge (5:9).⁴

Isaiah also teaches that a remnant of Israel will return to the mighty God or the Holy One of Israel (10:20-21; also in 2 Nephi 20:20-21). An extension of the doctrine of the remnant's returning would not be clear without the Book of Mormon retention of the plural "lands of promise" (2 Nephi 24:2). That there are two promised lands is a prevalent theme in Isaiah's writings that is often overlooked.

Isaiah speaks of the destruction of Babylon and the fall of Satan, personified as the king of Babylon or the wickedness of the world (2 Nephi 23-24). The doctrine that Satan's objective is to dethrone God and become as God, but that he will be cast into the spirit world during the Millennium and cast out without any glory following the Millennium, are also significant (see Alma 34:34-35; *TPJS* 297).

2 Nephi 25

The book of 2 Kings shows the relevance of Nephi's teachings that a generation of the Jews was destroyed because of iniquity, and never has any generation been destroyed "save it were foretold them by the prophets of the Lord" (2 Nephi 25:9). Nephi also foretold the destiny of Jerusalem from the time of Lehi until the Lord set his hand the second time to restore his people, thus illustrating the doctrine of the foreknowledge of God. Chapter 25 further proclaims the doctrine that the Book of Mormon is the tool that will be instrumental in restoring the Jews to their lands and to the knowledge that there is only "one Messiah

⁴ Joseph Smith paraphrased Isaiah 11:9 in teaching that the earth would be filled with "sacred knowledge, as the waters cover the great deep" (*TPJS* 93). Elder Orson Pratt taught that the "things of all former dispensations will be made manifest and revealed anew in the great dispensation of the fulness of times." He further declared that the book of Enoch will be a part of the fulfillment of that prophecy (16:47-49ff).

spoken of by the prophets, and that Messiah is he who should be rejected of the Jews” (2 Nephi 25:17-18). The prophets of the Old Testament also knew that the Messiah would come six hundred years from the time Lehi left Jerusalem (v. 19). Stated simply, the doctrine revealed in the Book of Mormon is that many prophets of the Old Testament knew the name of Jesus and they also knew when he would minister upon the earth.

That the nations who have the Book of Mormon shall be judged by it (2 Nephi 25:22) is a doctrine that needs some further explanation. John the Revelator prophesies of an angel proclaiming the everlasting gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. That angel would also proclaim that the hour of God’s judgment was near (Rev. 14:6-7). While this prophecy may include a composite number of angels, it pertains initially to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, thus sustaining one of the teachings of the Book of Mormon that it is a book to judge the nations. The Doctrine and Covenants gives a third witness of this purpose (D&C 20:13-16; also 5:4-10). This judgment is a collective, not an individual, one. When a nation rejects the missionaries and the Book of Mormon, the missionaries will be withdrawn and the Spirit of the Lord will withdraw with them, thus leaving that nation to suffer the consequences of a Godless society. The wicked will destroy each other or members of the great and abominable church will war among themselves (1 Nephi 22:13). Those individuals who did not have an opportunity to learn of the Book of Mormon will be given that opportunity in the spirit world. Thus the judgments of God will or will not come upon a nation depending on whether they accept or reject the Book of Mormon. Since the Book of Mormon is to go to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, this judgment will eventually come to all.

One of the major doctrinal contributions of 2 Nephi is Nephi’s statement about salvation by grace. In light of a supposed contradiction between Paul’s teachings of being saved by

grace (Eph. 2:8-9) and James' teachings that faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26), Nephi declares "it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do" (2 Nephi 25:23). This great statement correlates the two teachings of the Jerusalem apostles and is supported by Lehi (2:6-8) and Jacob (9:6-9; and 10:24-25) as well as others in the Book of Mormon (Alma 34, 42).

The purpose of the law of Moses and its function among the Nephites are also explained by Nephi (2 Nephi 25:24-25). Paul stated that the law was to bring the people to Christ (Gal. 3:24). The law had brought these people to Christ and so it was dead unto them (2 Nephi 25:24-25). However, they still kept it because it would not be fulfilled until the ministry of Jesus Christ was completed. We are not told of the extent to which they kept the law in 2 Nephi, but Alma notes that they kept the "outward performances" (25:15). This would suggest that they kept the basic commandments, possibly living beyond the law of "carnal commandments," (D&C 84:27; Heb. 9:10). Thus the doctrine of the law of Moses taught in 2 Nephi is that it had brought the Nephites to Christ and they followed his teachings of the higher law as well.

2 Nephi 26

That justice is an attribute of God is taught in 2 Nephi 26:3. When a people cast out and slay the prophets and the saints, that people shall perish. Figuratively, Nephi speaks of the blood of the ground crying out and ascending to God against them. In the same context and in words similar to a passage in Malachi 4:1, Nephi speaks of the proud and those who do wickedly being burned in a day that would come (2 Nephi 26:4).⁵ The doctrine

⁵ The source quoted, however, is not Malachi since the date is prior to Malachi's writing. For the same reason, his writings were not on the plates of brass in 600 BC when Lehi left. This further sustains the doctrine of plain and precious parts being lost from the Bible. Nephi also paraphrased Malachi 4:2 in 2 Nephi 26:9. Apparently Zenos, another Old Testament prophet, foretold the same things as did Malachi (1 Nephi 2:15, 24).

spoken of is the cleansing of the earth by fire at the second coming of the Lord.

Nephi lists the causes of the Lamanites' downfall as pride and doing works of darkness administered by the devil (26:10). Consequently, when the Spirit of the Lord withdrew, speedy destruction came upon them. The evils of pride and doing the works of the devil will bring any nation to a downfall.

The doctrine that Jesus Christ manifests himself to all nations, through the power of the Holy Ghost, "working mighty miracles, signs, and wonders . . . according to their faith" is also taught (2 Nephi 26:13). Nephi declares that the Lord does not work in darkness and secret combinations and "doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world" (vv. 22-24).

Priestcraft is defined as men setting themselves up for a light unto the world, to get the gain and praise of the world, and not to seek the welfare of Zion (v. 29). Since priestcraft is not mentioned by name in the Bible, this is a Book of Mormon doctrinal contribution.

That God is no respecter of persons is verified by Nephi's declaration that "he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile" (v. 33).

2 Nephi 27

Except for the first verse, chapter 27 is a quotation from Isaiah 29 as it was on the plates of brass, which were apparently written before the plain and precious parts were lost. While some feel the retentions in the Book of Mormon text are Nephi's comments or paraphrasing of Isaiah, it is recognized that Nephi does not state that he is quoting Isaiah, but the text of the Joseph Smith Translation is essentially the same as in the Book of Mormon.

This strongly supports the actual text concept. The Book of Mormon rendition contains a few unique doctrines:

(1) The more correct Isaiah text in the Book of Mormon teaches the doctrine that man is responsible for a prophet's ceasing to minister (2 Nephi 27:5). Rejecting the prophets and doing iniquity causes the Lord to withdraw the prophets from a people.

(2) This more complete text also discloses that the sealed portion of the plates that was delivered to Joseph Smith but not translated contained a revelation from God from the beginning of the world to the end thereof (v. 7; see also Ether 3:21-27).

(3) The detail of Martin Harris's taking copies of characters from the Book of Mormon plates and their translation to the learned scholars Anthon and Mitchell illustrates the amazing detail of the foreknowledge of God (27:9-10, 11-19).

(4) Having two sets of witnesses, one by the power of God and the other in a natural setting (as implied), gives further insight into the law of witnesses as taught in the Bible (27:12-14; Deut. 19:15; compare Matthew 18:16). Having both a spiritual and a physical witness is more than having just a double witness (see Ether 5:2-4).

(5) The manner of translating under the inspiration of God is taught in 2 Nephi 27:20. The Lord gives the words by revelation and the translator reads them. A comparison with how the Liahona worked further supports this doctrine. There was written upon it "a new writing, which was plain to be read" (1 Nephi 16:29).

(6) The Lord declares that he is a God of miracles and that miracles come according to one's faith (2 Nephi 27:23; see also Moroni 7:27-37).

2 Nephi 28

Chapter 28 describes the philosophies of men and the teachings of the devil in the day when the Book of Mormon is to come forth. Interspersed with these two concepts are two other doctrines: the eventual fall of the great and abominable church, and the shaking of the kingdom of the devil to stir up its members to repentance. Another doctrine taught in this chapter comes from a fuller text of Isaiah that reveals that those who accept the word of the Lord will receive more, while those who reject it will lose even what they have been given (v. 30). Without this addition, the King James Version doesn't make sense.

2 Nephi 29

The doctrine in chapter 29 falls under the category of revelation to men on earth. There are several components of that category.

(1) The Book of Mormon is the standard or ensign that will go to the ends of the earth for the benefit of the house of Israel (v. 2). This doctrine is prevalent in Isaiah and the Doctrine and Covenants (see Nyman, *An Ensign* 1-8).

(2) A sub-point of this doctrine is that Israel must then be scattered to the ends of the earth among other nations, if the Book of Mormon is to go to the ends of the earth to reach the house of Israel.

(3) An oft overlooked doctrine, or at least an unappreciated one, is the role of the Jews in preserving the Bible. As Nephi said: "What thank they the Jews for the Bible" (v. 4).

(4) The teaching that God speaks to all men and that all will eventually have each other's words (vv. 11-13) is an amplification of the law of witnesses, and the sameness of God as no respecter of persons.

(5) The gathering of the house of Israel in fulfillment of Abraham's covenant is implied to be through these writings concerning the various tribes of Israel (v. 14).

2 Nephi 30

The first part of Chapter 30 is a summation of what Nephi has been teaching concerning Isaiah's writings. The last part is a quotation from Isaiah 11 concerning the millennium. Since we have already spoken of Isaiah 11 earlier, we will not say anything more here except to note that while it is a small chapter, it is rich in doctrine.

The first seven verses summarize the Lord's messages to three different groups of people: (1) The Gentiles can repent and be numbered among the house of Israel and partake of the covenants promised to Israel. (2) Those of Israel who do not live up to their covenants will be cut off from that covenant. (3) The blessings of that covenant will come through the Book of Mormon, which will be taken by those believing Gentiles to the remnant of the Nephites and Lamanites (vv. 1-3). As the remnant of the Nephites and Lamanites accept the Book of Mormon, (4) they will be restored to a knowledge of their fathers and also to a knowledge of Jesus Christ. The scales of darkness (ignorance) will begin to fall from their eyes and in a few generations they shall become a "pure and delightsome people" (vv. 4-6).⁶ (5) As the work of the restoration commences, the Jews will also begin to believe in Christ, and as they do so they will begin to gather (v. 7). A careful study of this promise will

⁶ Prior to the 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 30:6 read "they [the Lamanites] shall be a white and delightsome people." The change to a "pure and delightsome people" is traced to the 1840 edition made under the editorial supervision of the Prophet Joseph Smith. However, for some unknown reason, subsequent editions reverted to the first wording. This background was called to the attention of the First Presidency and the Twelve with the recommendation that the word "pure" be used in the 1981 edition. These modern-day prophets, seers, and revelators unanimously approved the change as a better expression of the correct meaning of the verse.

distinguish between a belief in Christ and a full acceptance of his gospel. (6) It will also distinguish between a full gathering and a beginning to gather. Further, a look at the events of this twentieth century will show the gradual fulfilling of the prophecy and the stated doctrines of the Book of Mormon. In a more general declaration, Nephi speaks of the restoration of all the Lord's people (Israel) through his "work among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people" (v. 8). (7) Thus, the doctrine of the full gathering of Israel is proclaimed.

Nephi's inclusion of the phrase "the Lord God" who would judge the poor in righteousness instead of the pronoun "he" found in Isaiah 11:4 shows a dual meaning in this verse. From the interpretation given in Doctrine and Covenants 113:1-4 and other supporting references, Joseph Smith's name would also be a fitting substitute.⁷ Thus another form of dual interpretation is illustrated.

Nephi also inserted a lengthy comment between two of the verses he quotes from Isaiah (2 Nephi 30:10 is inserted between what is now Isaiah 11:4 and 5). From this insertion we learn that a great division will come among the people just prior to the millennium. Those who are wicked will be destroyed, while those who are righteous will be spared (see D&C 1; 86:1-7; Matthew 13:24-30).

In what seems to be an interpretation of Isaiah 11:9, Nephi teaches us that all secret things will be revealed during the millennium (2 Nephi 30:15). He also verifies a doctrine he taught earlier concerning Satan's loss of power during this time (1 Nephi 22:26). These doctrines are enlarged upon in Doctrine and Covenants 88:108-110.

⁷ Other references supporting Joseph Smith include D&C 5:5-10; 20:13-15, and 2 Nephi 25:21-22. For a further analysis of Isaiah 11:1-5, see Nyman, *Great Are the Words of Isaiah* 71-72.

2 Nephi 31-33

Nephi bears witness to the doctrine of Christ in his last two chapters. While all the doctrines taught in the Book of Mormon are the doctrines of Christ, those taught here are of the plan of salvation for mankind.

The doctrine that God speaks to men according to their language and understanding (2 Nephi 31:1-3; see also D&C 1:24; *TPJS* 162) precedes Nephi's doctrines of the plan of salvation.

Nephi also outlines the purpose of Christ's baptism as a witness to the Father, and also of man's baptism for a remission of sins, to receive the Holy Ghost, and as a gate to the path to eternal life. He further declares that the Holy Ghost which descended upon Christ (see *TPJS* 275-76) will remit man's sins and give revelation (2 Nephi 31:12-13, 17; 32:2-5; 33:1). Nephi also emphasized the necessity of enduring to the end through Christ, loving God and all men (vv. 15-16, 18-20). That this was the only way (plan of salvation) and name (Christ) for salvation and that this was the doctrine of all three members of the Godhead was Nephi's conclusion (v. 21).

Nephi taught that the words of Christ (recorded scripture) teach a person what to do, and the Holy Ghost shows that person (by personal revelation) what to do (32:3, 5). Also, the Spirit teaches a man to pray and the devil teaches a man not to pray (v. 8). Furthermore, those who become angry against the Book of Mormon are influenced by the spirit of the devil (2 Nephi 33:5).

As Lehi had before him, Nephi also had his calling and election made sure (33:6), the final step in the plan of salvation. He further testified that he would be at the bar of God to bear witness of his work (vv. 11-15). This is the doctrine that the prophets and apostles will judge the world.

Finally, Nephi, who was of the tribe of Manasseh (Alma 10:3), qualifies his designation that he was a Jew because he

came from Jerusalem (2 Nephi 33:7-8). One can be from the same culture but of a different bloodline. Paul was by bloodline a Benjaminite (Romans 11:1), but he was also a Jew culturally, and a Roman by citizenship (Acts 22:25-27). Thus, many Latter-day Saints are bloodline Ephraimites or of other tribes and culturally Gentiles (see Woodruff 220; D&C 109:60).

Conclusion

Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary* defines doctrine as "a principle or position or the body of principles in a branch of knowledge or system of belief." The Book of Mormon is one of the main sources for establishing the doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as prophesied by Isaiah (29:24). The book of Second Nephi is one of the main sources of doctrine within the Book of Mormon because of the great explanations and teachings of Lehi, Jacob, Isaiah, and Nephi on the fall of man, the Atonement, the witnesses of Jesus Christ, and the covenants He made to the house of Israel. Thus this symposium is called *Second Nephi: The Doctrinal Structure* because it is built upon last year's symposium, *First Nephi: A Doctrinal Foundation*.

In an overview it is sometimes difficult to determine where the stating of a doctrine ends and a further explanation of it begins, but, regardless, 2 Nephi is a tremendous source to "come to understanding, and . . . learn doctrine" (27:35).

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