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Author(s): Joshua Michael Sears

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# “We Came Out from Jerusalem”: The Holy City’s Influence on Book of Mormon Peoples

JOSHUA MICHAEL SEARS

**T**he Bible is linked to Jerusalem. The ancient city has ever been the stage of biblical history, beginning with Melchizedek and Abraham, continuing with the Old Testament prophets, climaxing with the Atonement and Resurrection of the Savior, and concluding with the writings of the Apostles.

Less recognizable, however, is the inseparable tie between the city of Jerusalem and the Book of Mormon. The connection is most obvious in the first two books of Nephi, when Lehi and his family leave Jerusalem to begin their exodus to the promised land. But the relationship does not end there. Although Lehi’s family could leave Jerusalem, Jerusalem’s influence could never leave Lehi’s family. The Eternal City remained an influential presence in both the Nephite and Lamanite civilizations; their past was directly linked to their future. Jerusalem is first mentioned in the fourth verse from the beginning of the Book of Mormon and is last mentioned four verses from its conclusion. In the intervening history, Jerusalem played a dramatic role in shaping the society of this scattered branch of Joseph.

## Jerusalem’s Early Influence

To understand the Nephite and Lamanite civilizations’ attachment to Jerusalem, it is necessary to explore the influence the city had on the

first generation. Lehi, Ishmael, and their families were probably not only inhabitants of Judah but also lifelong residents of Jerusalem, which had at times shown a remarkably different culture from that of the rest of the country.<sup>1</sup> Nephi twice singles out Jerusalem as his father's home by stating that "my father, Lehi . . . dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days" (1 Nephi 1:4) and referring to "his own house at Jerusalem" (1 Nephi 1:7).<sup>2</sup> Thus, Jerusalem was the premier sociocultural and spiritual influence for Lehi's generation, as well as for his elder children. The family would have had an extensive network of relatives, friends, and acquaintances from the city. They would have been taught by Jerusalem's teachers<sup>3</sup> and would have attended Jerusalem's festivals; they would have been interested in Jerusalem's politics and events of the day.<sup>4</sup>

With this in mind, it is not difficult to see how the family might have had a lingering homesickness for Jerusalem for the remainder of their days. Surely this homesickness was part of Laman and Lemuel's constant desire in the desert to return to Jerusalem, "the land of their inheritance" (1 Nephi 2:11). Despite the necessity of escaping Jerusalem's future destruction, it cannot be imagined that Lehi's band did not miss their former home in Zion. A passage from Psalms that was written following the Babylonian exile by Jews contemporary with Lehi could appropriately be applied to the sentiments of his family: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. . . . How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy" (Psalm 137:1, 4-6).

Although they were promised a "choice land" to settle, Lehi's family "by the river Sidon" (Alma 43:51) would have felt much the same at their separation from the land promised to Abraham. This first generation, who had worshipped within the splendor of Solomon's temple and gazed upon the rugged beauty of the Near Eastern countryside, would always have a sense that they had left something precious. Once in the new land, Nephi attempted to re-create at least one of his former home's most treasured features, reporting that "I, Nephi, did build a temple;

and I did construct it after the manner of the temple of Solomon.” Then, almost as if lamenting, he adds that it was “not built of so many precious things; for they were not to be found upon the land, wherefore, it could not be built like unto Solomon’s temple” (2 Nephi 5:16).

The nostalgia was passed to future generations. Lehi’s son Jacob was born in the wilderness and had never seen the city himself. He expresses his feelings, and the feelings of other Nephites who had never personally known Jerusalem, in the latter part of his life in a poignant passage: “And it came to pass that I, Jacob, began to be old . . . wherefore, I conclude this record, declaring that I have written according to the best of my knowledge, by saying that the time passed away with us, and also our lives passed away like as it were unto us a dream, we being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers, cast out from Jerusalem, born in tribulation, in a wilderness, and hated of our brethren, which caused wars and contentions; wherefore, we did mourn out our days” (Jacob 7:26).

The unhappy picture Jacob paints of “a lonesome and a solemn people” reveals a longing for a happy home. It is interesting that he terms them “wanderers,” even though by this point they had removed themselves from the Lamanites and were well established in the land of Nephi.<sup>5</sup> As a settled and flourishing society, the Nephites’ description as “wanderers” must be connected to being “cast out from Jerusalem.” It would appear that the longing for their home in God’s city—and whatever idealistic notions of it they held—had not diminished with the first generation born away from Jerusalem.<sup>6</sup> These sentiments did not diminish even after the first few generations: Ammon, hundreds of years later, expressed the same thoughts as Jacob when he termed his people “a branch of the tree of Israel, [which] has been lost from its body in a strange land; yea . . . [we are] wanderers in a strange land” (Alma 26:36).

With this background in mind, we can explore how the city influenced many generations. Of the more than 150 times Jerusalem is mentioned by name in the Book of Mormon, nearly 80 of those—about half—occur in and following the book of Jacob.<sup>7</sup> In other words, half of the references to Jerusalem occur in books written by men who never lived there. They alluded to it, even though it does not constitute part of

the historical narrative, as is the case with many of the references in 1 and 2 Nephi. The Nephite preachers and historians of later generations used Jerusalem in a variety of contexts, including teaching, timekeeping, and prophesying.

### Jerusalem in Nephite Teaching

Nephite prophets frequently referred to Jerusalem in their teachings and warnings. Nephi, as noted, taught about the greatness of the city of Jerusalem and its importance in Israelite history; there was, however, a darker side to his teachings. As much as he saw Jerusalem's glory, he also witnessed its wickedness, and he saw his colony as an opportunity to begin anew. He recorded that he did not teach his people "many things concerning the manner of the Jews; for their works were works of darkness, and their doings were doings of abominations" (2 Nephi 25:2). Particularly enlightening is 2 Nephi 25:5–6:

For I came out from Jerusalem, and mine eyes hath beheld the things of the Jews, and I know that the Jews do understand the things of the prophets, and there is none other people that understand the things which were spoken unto the Jews like unto them, save it be that they are taught after the manner of the things of the Jews.

But behold, I, Nephi, have not taught my children after the manner of the Jews; but behold, I, of myself, have dwelt at Jerusalem, wherefore I know concerning the regions round about; and I have made mention unto my children concerning the judgments of God, which hath come to pass among the Jews.

Clearly, Nephi was determined not to allow Jerusalem's wickedness to perpetuate. Even though being taught "after the manner of the Jews" included an understanding of "the things of the prophets," he chose not to teach all things in like manner. The possibility of wickedness stemming from knowledge of the Jews' corruption outweighed the benefit of increased understanding.<sup>8</sup> Thus, he selected what native Jewish knowledge he would pass on to future generations. This decision reflects the almost paradoxical role Jerusalem would continue to play in Nephite society: a

city of God, which the Nephites would be forever yearning after, and a city of wickedness, which they would be forever trying to escape.

In times of Nephite iniquity, the prophets would frequently refer to the wickedness of Jerusalem and remind the people why they were led to their new land. The Lord taught: “I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a righteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph” (Jacob 2:25). He also taught, “Ye were separated from among them because of their iniquity” (3 Nephi 15:19). The prophets used a teaching method that boiled down to “as the wicked Jews of Jerusalem were, we are not to be.” Nephi was the first to compare the colony’s wickedness to that of Jerusalem,<sup>9</sup> and such comparisons continued as the people needed reminders about their special heritage. For example, in referring to perversions of Jacob’s day, the Lord spoke: “For behold, I, the Lord, have seen the sorrow, and heard the mourning of the daughters of my people in the land of Jerusalem, yea, and in all the lands of my people, because of the wickedness and abominations of their husbands. And I will not suffer, saith the Lord of Hosts, that the cries of the fair daughters of this people, which I have led out of the land of Jerusalem, shall come up unto me against the men of my people” (Jacob 2:31–32). The Lord here emphasized the same point: the Nephites were deliberately separated from those in Jerusalem and were not to continue the city’s wicked practices.<sup>10</sup>

The prophets referenced Jerusalem in their teaching in other ways. When speaking about God’s mercy, they frequently used the example of the Lord’s saving Lehi and his family from Jerusalem’s destruction. Lehi and Nephi began this practice (see 1 Nephi 19:20; 2 Nephi 1:3), and as a teaching tool it continued to be employed by such figures as Limhi, Mormon, and particularly Alma. One example is found in 3 Nephi 5:20–21, in which Mormon reflected: “I have reason to bless my God and my Savior Jesus Christ, that he brought our fathers out of the land of Jerusalem, . . . and that he hath given me and my people so much knowledge unto the salvation of our souls. Surely he hath blessed the house of Jacob, and hath been merciful unto the seed of Joseph.” In these references the Nephites

expressed their gratitude for the Lord's love and mercy in preserving and blessing their people.<sup>11</sup>

Another way the Nephite prophets used Jerusalem as a teaching tool was by making it an example of a prophecy fulfilled. For example, Nephi, the son of Helaman, explained to the people in Helaman 8:20: "And behold, also Zenock, and also Ezias, and also Isaiah, and Jeremiah [testified of Christ], (Jeremiah being that same prophet who testified of the destruction of Jerusalem) and now we know that Jerusalem was destroyed according to the words of Jeremiah. O then why not the Son of God come, according to his prophecy?" This warning no doubt took on additional significance after the Nephites mixed with the descendants of Mulek, who was the son of King Zedekiah. The people of Zarahemla gave the Nephites dramatic testimony of the city's destruction; previously, Nephite knowledge of this event was based on prophetic word alone.<sup>12</sup> Nephi, son of Helaman, continued his teaching in verse 21: "And now will you dispute that Jerusalem was destroyed? Will ye say that the sons of Zedekiah were not slain, all except it were Mulek? Yea, and do ye not behold that the seed of Zedekiah are with us, and they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem?" Using Jerusalem's destruction as a symbolic example invariably assisted the prophets in their quest to teach the populace to have greater faith in contemporary prophecies.<sup>13</sup>

### Jerusalem in Nephite Timekeeping

The departure of Lehi from the city of Jerusalem was such a singular event that it became the foundation for the Nephite calendar. Although they would have other migrations to the land of Nephi and later to the land of Zarahemla, leaving Israel and Zion remained the pivotal event that would define their time. This practice would continue for more than five hundred years until the days of King Mosiah. They then considered the restructuring of their government from monarchy to a judicial system a landmark event worthy of redefining the calendar. That landmark would last until the sign of the birth of Christ was given; even during that period reference would still occasionally be made

to how much time had passed since the departure from Jerusalem (see, for example, 3 Nephi 1:1).

The Nephites also used Lehi and Jerusalem as a benchmark as they compared their own time period with that of their forebears. For example, King Benjamin noted that “the plates of Nephi . . . contain the records and the sayings of our fathers from the time they left Jerusalem until now” (Mosiah 1:6).<sup>14</sup> Another use of this reference was speaking of the time period that immediately preceded Lehi. Again, King Benjamin used this in referring to “the records which contain the prophecies which have been spoken by the holy prophets, even down to the time our father, Lehi, left Jerusalem” (Mosiah 2:34).<sup>15</sup> Mormon also used Jerusalem and Lehi’s day as a benchmark to show the severity of battle: “There was a tremendous battle; yea, even such an one as never had been known among all the people in the land from the time Lehi left Jerusalem” (Alma 28:2).<sup>16</sup> These uses further suggest the lasting impact the exodus had on Nephite thought.

### Jerusalem in Nephite Prophecy

In scripture, Jerusalem is a frequent subject of prophecy. Its position as the city of God—the place of prophets, kings, and the Savior—makes it central to gospel understanding in *any* civilization. The same was true of the Nephites. In their revelations, Jerusalem universally served as a stage of defining events in the plan of salvation and uniquely served as the source of their Israelite heritage.

Many of the prophecies about Jerusalem centered on the mission and life of Jesus Christ. “Behold,” said Alma, “he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers” (Alma 7:10).<sup>17</sup> Lehi taught that John the Baptist “should baptize in Bethabara, beyond Jordan . . . even that he should baptize the Messiah with water” (1 Nephi 10:9). “As for those who are at Jerusalem,” explained Nephi, “they shall be scourged by all people, because they crucify the God of Israel” (1 Nephi 19:13). “I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people,” Christ foretold. “I [will] give unto them again the land of their fathers for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem” (3 Nephi 20:29). The Nephites

received prophecies about Christ's entire life at Jerusalem—His birth, His mortal ministry, His Crucifixion, and His work as a resurrected Messiah to gather in His people to "Jerusalem, the holy city" (2 Nephi 8:24). The Book of Mormon speaks of Christ on nearly every page, and as the stage for His mortal life Jerusalem was frequently referenced in Nephite prophecies.<sup>18</sup>

The Nephites received many other prophecies concerning Jerusalem. They were intensely interested in the city, and the Lord periodically revealed its present condition and its prophesied future. In the very first chapter of the Book of Mormon, Lehi had a vision of "Jerusalem—that it should be destroyed, and the inhabitants thereof; many should perish by the sword, and many should be carried away captive into Babylon" (1 Nephi 1:13). In 2 Nephi 1:4, Lehi says he received another vision which confirmed that his prophecy was fulfilled: "For, behold, said he, I have seen a vision, in which I know that Jerusalem is destroyed; and had we remained in Jerusalem we should also have perished." Jacob also reported to the Nephites that he had seen a vision of their brethren in Jerusalem "slain and carried away captive" (2 Nephi 6:8). Nephi assured the people, however, that their brethren would "return again, and possess the land of Jerusalem" (2 Nephi 25:11). Despite this Nephi continued, "Jerusalem shall be destroyed again. . . . Wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered among all nations" (2 Nephi 25:14–15). After this scattering, Nephi prophesied that the Lord would "[scourge] them by other nations for the space of many generations" (2 Nephi 25:16). This scourging would continue until they believe in Christ, at which time, said Jesus to the Nephites, "Then will the Father gather them together again, and give unto them Jerusalem for the land of their inheritance. . . . And then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people" (3 Nephi 20:33, 46). "Then also cometh the Jerusalem of old," prophesied Ether. "It should be built up again, and become a holy city of the Lord. . . . And the inhabitants thereof, blessed are they" (Ether 13:11, 5). The Nephites certainly were not ignorant of Jerusalem's future, nor of the condition of their brethren<sup>19</sup> on the far side of the world. Being both the city of God and the city of their fathers, the Nephites

eagerly received knowledge about Jerusalem and its relevance to them throughout their history.<sup>20</sup>

### Other Influences

Jerusalem subtly influenced the Nephites in other practical ways. One was agricultural: Nephi recorded that “we did begin to till the earth, and we began to plant seeds; yea, we did put all our seeds into the earth, which we had brought from the land of Jerusalem” (1 Nephi 18:24). No doubt Nephi had at least a rudimentary knowledge of Jewish farming practices and taught his children after their manner. Another influence was architectural: Nephi reported in 2 Nephi 5:16 that “I, Nephi, did build a temple; and I did construct it after the manner of the temple of Solomon save it were not built of so many precious things; . . . and the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine.” If Nephi was able to use his knowledge of temple architecture to construct his own temple, it follows that he could similarly teach his children how to construct other types of buildings (such as the oft-mentioned synagogues) based on Jerusalem designs. Though not explicitly stated, everything from Jerusalem’s metallurgy (see 2 Nephi 5:14) to its ideas on government (see 2 Nephi 5:18) may have influenced society in the new world.

### Jerusalem in Lamanite Society

Only Nephites kept the record that serves as the basis for the Book of Mormon, so information on how Lamanite culture viewed Jerusalem is relatively scarce. There are, however, some hints of their views scattered throughout the Nephite writings. For example, a passage by Zeniff, a Nephite, indicates that the Lamanites spoke of Lehi’s departure from Jerusalem but held a different perspective on why Lehi’s family left and on what happened between Nephi and Laman: “They were a wild, and ferocious, and a blood-thirsty people, believing in the tradition of their fathers, which is this—Believing that they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem because of the iniquities of their fathers, and that they were wronged in the wilderness by their brethren, and they were also wronged while crossing the sea” (Mosiah 10:12; see also vv. 13–17). Zeniff’s sum-

mary of Lamanite perceptions indicates that the Lamanites thought they had been "driven" out of Jerusalem "because of the iniquities of their fathers," probably referring to Lehi and Ishmael.<sup>21</sup> Ammoron identified himself in an epistle to Moroni as "a descendant of Zoram, whom your fathers pressed and brought out of Jerusalem" (Alma 54:23). These false traditions would of course be necessary to give authenticity to Lamanite claims of leadership over their Nephite brothers.

A better picture of the Lamanite civilization's view of Jerusalem can be made by starting with Laman and Lemuel. Of course they missed Jerusalem because it was home. But they would have had an additional unique view. To the Nephites, Jerusalem had a dual nature as a city of holiness and as a city of wickedness. One can easily imagine that Nephi and Sam looked back on Jerusalem with fondness because of the temple of Jehovah, while Laman and Lemuel looked back on their property. They viewed its inhabitants as "a righteous people" (1 Nephi 17:22). While Lehi and Nephi tried to escape Jerusalem's evil, Laman and Lemuel were constantly trying to return. They longed for the city's material pleasures, "their gold, and their silver, and their precious things" (1 Nephi 2:11). The family's struggles become more meaningful if the decision to stay in Jerusalem or abandon it is viewed in terms of remaining in wickedness or leaving it behind: "And it came to pass in the which rebellion, they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem. And now I, Nephi . . . spake unto them, saying . . . If it so be that we are faithful to him [the Lord], we shall obtain the land of promise; and ye shall know at some future period that the word of the Lord shall be fulfilled concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. . . . And now, if ye have choice, go up to the land, and remember the words which I speak unto you, that if ye go ye will also perish" (1 Nephi 7:7, 8, 13, 15).

Nephi recognized that his brothers possessed their own agency and therefore outlined their choices: the land of promise, which was the kingdom of God, or the land of Jerusalem, which was the kingdom of the devil—a hell which would eventually be destroyed. Although Laman and Lemuel chose the path that led to the land of promise, they eventually set their hearts back toward Jerusalem and wickedness. They spoke

frequently of going back to Jerusalem while traveling in the desert (see 1 Nephi 7:7; 16:36). Though they were physically cut off from Jerusalem following their ocean voyage, they eventually rebelled against Nephi and sought the carnally satisfying power of sin.

The brothers then did what Nephi had consciously avoided: they passed these practices on to their progeny. Laziness, idolatry, pride, arrogance, hypocrisy, immorality, covetousness, dishonesty, and disgust of the word of God were all aspects of Jerusalem in 600 BC,<sup>22</sup> a heritage that Laman and Lemuel embraced<sup>23</sup> and instilled in Lamanite culture. Jerusalem continued to be spoken of among the Lamanites, although no doubt it was a Jerusalem far different from the one known to the Nephites.

Laman and Lemuel's glorification of Jerusalem's iniquity is most dramatically demonstrated hundreds of years later. Aaron, one of the sons of King Mosiah, traveled to the land of the Lamanites to preach the word, arriving at "the land which was called by the Lamanites, Jerusalem, calling it after the land of their fathers' nativity. . . . Now the Lamanites . . . had built a great city, which was called Jerusalem" (Alma 21:1-2). It appears that the Lamanites had built up a new Jerusalem to replace the one they had been "robbed of," complete with its iniquities and sin (see Alma 21:3). This city certainly harked back to old Jerusalem: Aaron found no success whatsoever among the people, the inhabitants took up arms against the righteous Anti-Nephi-Lehies (see Alma 24:1), and later Christ reported that He had caused water to "come up in the stead" of the Lamanite city because of its "wickedness and abominations" (3 Nephi 9:7).

The last reference to Jerusalem among the Lamanites comes with the continued missionary work of Aaron. Having gained audience with the king of the Lamanites, Aaron asked him about God. The king responds, "Is God that Great Spirit that brought our fathers out of the land of Jerusalem?" (Alma 22:9). His question is another indication that traditions about Jerusalem had persisted to his day (between 90 and 77 BC), and his shift in perspective to giving at least a "Great Spirit" credit for the exodus is interesting.<sup>24</sup>

## Conclusion

Book of Mormon civilizations were the offspring of Jerusalem. As the city of their fathers and the city of their God, Jerusalem remained a place of importance to American Israelites long after Lehi and his children went to the grave. Among the Nephites, Jerusalem was referenced frequently in their teachings, as a point of reference on their calendar, as a setting for their prophecies, and in practical matters as the origin of various aspects of their society. Among the Lamanites Jerusalem was referred to as the land of their forefathers and was also idealized for its wickedness.

For Lehi's descendants and for the whole earth, Jerusalem's greatest contribution is as the setting for the life and mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was born at Jerusalem, He worshipped at Jerusalem, He preached at Jerusalem, He healed at Jerusalem, and He suffered, died, and rose at Jerusalem. Truly Jerusalem is "the throne of the Lord" (Jeremiah 3:17). Moroni expressed the deep feelings of the Nephites and all saints of God with his fervent admonition: "Awake, and arise from the dust, O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion; and strengthen thy stakes and enlarge thy borders forever, that thou mayest no more be confounded, that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled. Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him . . . and love God with all your might, mind and strength, [and] then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ" (Moroni 10:31-32).

## Notes

The title reference "we came out from Jerusalem" is taken from 2 Nephi 30:4.

1. During the Hellenistic period of Jerusalem's history, for example, Jerusalem and the surrounding countryside developed opposite views of Greek culture, with those in the city supporting Greek influences (see David B. Galbraith, D. Kelly Ogden, and Andrew C. Skinner, *Jerusalem: The Eternal City* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1996], 141).

2. Within the Book of Mormon and the writings of its commentators, distinction is sometimes made between the "city" of Jerusalem and the "land" of Jerusalem, the latter generally referring to a much greater area, often the whole

of Israel. In this chapter the terms will be used interchangeably. In this case, Nephi's reference to their home "at" Jerusalem leaves the possibility that the home may not have been *inside* the walls but merely within some relative proximity to the city, such as in a neighboring town. This does not diminish the fact that Jerusalem would have been a predominating influence on the family.

3. Nephi said his record is made in a language which "consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians" (1 Nephi 1:2), implying that he himself partook of that learning. Nephi and his brothers likely were instructed in Hebrew and Aramaic for speaking and may have learned Egyptian for writing (see Kent P. Jackson, ed., *1 Nephi to Alma 29* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987], 18).

4. Nephi indicated that they left Jerusalem "in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah" (1 Nephi 1:4). Nephi also informed us in 2 Nephi 25:6 that he had a knowledge of "the regions round about" Jerusalem, probably a reference to both the geography and political situation of Judah and the rest of the Levant.

5. By Jacob's day the people had moved beyond the basic necessities of life. In 2 Nephi 5, Nephi reported that the people "did prosper exceedingly; for we did sow seed, and we did reap again in abundance. And we began to raise flocks, and herds, and animals of every kind" (5:11). He also "did teach [his] people to build buildings" and use wood, iron, copper, brass, steel, gold, silver, and precious ores (5:15), and the "workmanship" of his temple "was exceedingly fine" (5:16).

6. See S. Kent Brown, *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla: Literary and Historical Studies of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1998), 13–15.

7. This count includes only references to Near Eastern Jerusalem—not the New Jerusalem or the Lamanite city of the same name.

8. Parallel to this is Alma's admonition to Helaman in Alma 37:32 not to share the details of the Jaredites' secret combinations with the populace—"trust not those secret plans unto this people." Rather, Helaman was instructed to teach "everlasting hatred" against such things in general. Nephi got around his limitations by giving his own prophecies that were made with "plainness; in the which I know that no man can err" (2 Nephi 25:7). Despite both Nephi and Helaman's attempts to keep the people from sin by withholding from them a detailed knowledge of wickedness, the people eventually became corrupt anyway by having the knowledge "put into [their] heart . . . by that same being who did entice our first parents to partake of the forbidden fruit" (Helaman 6:26).

9. See 1 Nephi 2:13, in which he said that his brothers "were like unto the Jews who were at Jerusalem, who sought to take away the life of my father."

10. For more scripture references, see the appendix under "Comparing Nephite Wickedness to Jerusalem's Wickedness."

11. See appendix under "Leading Lehi Out of Jerusalem: An Example of God's Mercy."

12. Lehi told in 2 Nephi 1:4 that he had been informed in vision that Jerusalem had been destroyed; Jacob reported the same thing in 2 Nephi 6:8.

13. See appendix under "Jerusalem's Destruction: An Example of Fulfilled Prophecy."

14. See appendix under "Jerusalem as a Time Reference" (From Jerusalem until now).

15. See appendix under "Jerusalem as a Time Reference" (From the beginning until Jerusalem).

16. See appendix under "Jerusalem as a Time Reference" (Greatest battle since Jerusalem).

17. "[Alma] did not say that the Lord would be born *in* Jerusalem. The preposition 'at' has several meanings. The *Standard Dictionary* lists the following: 'Of a point in space; on; upon; close to; by; near; within. . . . When we think merely of the local or geographical point, we use at; when we think of inclusive space, we employ in.' Alma was thinking of a geographical point, therefore he spoke properly according to the usage of language even in our own day when he said, '*at* Jerusalem, *the land of our forefathers*,' Jerusalem being the central point of the land of their fathers" (Joseph Fielding Smith, as cited in *Book of Mormon Student Manual* [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1996], 74).

18. See appendix under "Jerusalem and the Life of Christ."

19. Nephite writers indicated that they still viewed far-away Israelites as their "brethren" even after they were separated (see 1 Nephi 22:6; 3 Nephi 15:14; 17:8).

20. See appendix under "Prophecies."

21. See Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 182.

22. See Dennis L. Largey, ed., *Book of Mormon Reference Companion* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), 445-46.

23. See Largey, *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, 446: "Laman and Lemuel were products of that same wicked society about to be destroyed and they harbored the same spiritual blindness." See also 1 Nephi 17:22.

24. Previous Lamanite attitudes toward leaving Jerusalem can be summed up by the complaints of Laman and Lemuel: they charged that Lehi had made them leave "because of the foolish imaginations of his heart" (1 Nephi 2:11). This

makes the king's reference to the Great Spirit in relation to the matter seem odd, but perhaps it can be explained by his being spiritually awakened. Or perhaps it has to do with adopting some of the traditions of the Amalekites and Amulonites (Nephite apostates) into Lamanite culture. Another possibility is that interaction with the people of Zarahemla—who gave irrefutable evidence of Jerusalem's destruction—forced Lamanite thought to adapt to the fact that perhaps in some ways Lehi was right after all. This evidence could have caused them to place heavenly guidance on the exodus while still maintaining the idea that Nephi subsequently “robbed them” in the wilderness. See appendix under “Jerusalem and the Lamanites.”