



Type: Magazine Article

---

## Answers to Interesting Questions

Editor(s): Joseph F. Smith and B. H. Roberts

Source: *Improvement Era*, Vol. 2, No. 6 (April 1899)

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Page(s): 467–472

---

**Abstract:** This article discusses why parts of Moroni 7 and 10 are similar to sections of I Corinthians 12 and 13. It also answers why the Book of Mormon is called the stick of Ephraim, given the fact that Lehi was a descendant of Manasseh.

## EDITOR'S TABLE.

---

### OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.

THE ARTICLES OF FAITH, BY DR. JAMES E. TALMAGE.

---

During the early part of April there will be issued by the *Deseret News* a new Church work entitled "The Articles of Faith," the same being a series of lectures on the principal doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, by Dr. James E. Talmage. The lectures were prepared by appointment of the First Presidency, and the book will be published by the Church. It is intended for use as a text book in the Church Schools, Sunday Schools, Improvement Associations, quorums of the Priesthood, and other Church organizations in which the study of Theology is pursued, and also for individual use among the members of the Church. The work has been approved by the First Presidency, and I heartily commend it to the members of the Church.

LORENZO SNOW.

---

### ANSWERS TO INTERESTING QUESTIONS.

A communication recently received introduces a number of questions as follows:

"While in conversation with an investigator of the Gospel a short time ago, among many other propositions considered both pro and con, the following questions were presented, to which, so far, we have not found a satisfactory solution.

First: By comparing chapter ten Book of Moroni, from the 9th to the 17th verses, with I Corinthians, 12th Chapter, from the 8th to 11th verses, one finds the wording so nearly alike that the Book of Mormon passage seems to have been paraphrased from the writings of Paul. How is it that Moroni could use almost exactly the same words in dealing with the same subject as Paul did in writing to the Corinthians? The unbelievers dismiss the subject by claiming that the Book of Mormon was written by a man in our own day and that the passage above referred to in the Book of Mormon was simply copied from the New Testament. How must we explain the subject to unbelievers?

In order that the readers of the ERA may have the matter fairly before them we quote side by side the passages in question.

## BOOK OF MORMON.

9. For behold, to one is given by the Spirit of God, that he may teach the word of wisdom;

10. And to another, that he may teach the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

11. And to another exceeding great faith; and to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit.

12. And again, to another, that he may work mighty miracles;

13. And again, to another that he may prophesy concerning all things;

14. And again, to another, the beholding of angels and ministering spirits;

15. And again, to another, all kinds of tongues;

16. And again, to another, the interpretation of languages and of divers kinds of tongues:

17. And all these gifts come by the Spirit of Christ, and they come unto every man severally, according as he will.

## NEW TESTAMENT.

8. For to one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit;

9. To another faith, by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit;

10. To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

11. But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

It will be observed that while the same general principles are treated very much alike by each of these ancient writers, still the difference in language is considerable; and furthermore the passage in the Book of Mormon is by far more explicit than the teachings of Paul; but the point of the question is, how is it that these passages are, after all, so nearly alike, and are unbelievers justified in the conclusion that the language in the Book of Mormon is merely a paraphrase of the language of Paul?

The answer to the question is, certainly not; for doubtless both Paul and Moroni learned these truths from the teachings of the same master, *viz.*, the Lord Jesus Christ. No one of course will profess to believe that all the teachings of Jesus are found in the New Testament Scriptures. In closing the Gospel according to St. John, the writer says:

“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they should be written every one I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.”

We are of the opinion that the same could be said of the Savior's teachings also, Jesus doubtless taught elaborately “all things concerning the kingdom of God,” and from those teachings Paul learned what he here explains to the Corinthians; and when Jesus was among the Nephites he undoubtedly taught the same doctrines, which by tradition, and, also perhaps from the records of the Nephites, Moroni learned the same great truths with regard to the diversity of gifts enjoyed by those possessing the Holy Ghost. The plain solution of the seeming difficulty then is this: That Paul and Moroni learning these doctrines from the same teacher, expressed them in language somewhat alike when teaching others, being inspired so to do by the same Spirit—the Holy Ghost.

“Also explain,” says our questioner, “the likeness in the language between Moroni, Chapter 7, verse 45, and I Corinthians, 13: 4th to the 7th verses.

These quotations we also place side by side:

## BOOK OF MORMON.

45. And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

## NEW TESTAMENT.

4. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

The explanation of course is the same as that above: Both Paul and Moroni learned about the doctrine of charity from Jesus Christ, and are doubtless quoting what would very nearly be his language on the subject.

"Second: How is it that the Book of Mormon is called the stick of Ephraim, when in Chapter x., Book of Alma, 3rd verse, it is said that Lehi was a descendant of Manassa, who was the brother of Ephraim?"

The answer to this question is, that while it is true that Lehi was a descendant of Manassa, yet the family of Lehi was not the only family which came to the Western Hemisphere under his and his son Nephi's leadership. There was the family of Ishmael who joined them in the wilderness of Arabia. This apparantly was a very large family, for we read that as they journeyed from Jerusalem to the encampment of Lehi in the wilderness, that Laman and Lemuel, the brothers of Nephi, who had accompanied the expedition, and "two of the daughters of Ishmael, and the two sons of Ishmael, and *their families* did rebel against us," that is, against Nephi, his younger brother Sam, and Ishmael, and the latter's wife and three daughters.

It may be possible also that Sariah, the wife of Lehi was of the tribe of Ephraim, as the early custom in Israel of marrying only within the respective tribes had been for some time but loosely observed.

It must also be remembered that Zoram, the servant of Laban accompanied Nephi into the wilderness; and although nothing is said of his tribal descent, it is not impossible that he was of Ephraim; and the family of Ishmael undoubtedly were Ephraimites. We understand that the Prophet Joseph explained that the first part of Mormon's abridgement of the Nephite record which was stolen from him by some of the friends of Martin Harris, made clear the fact that this family of Ishmael was of the tribe of Ephraim; and it would appear that said family was even larger than that of Lehi, for two of his sons evidently had families, since we read of Ishmael's "two sons and their families" rebelling against Nephi; so that there is every reason to believe that the descendants of Ephraim largely predominated in Lehi's colony.

Moreover, shortly after the departure of Lehi's colony from Jerusalem, another colony under the leadership of Mulek, son of King Zedekiah, left Jerusalem with a colony, and finally landed in the southern part of North America and subsequently established the great city of Zarahemla. Concerning the number of this colony and the descent of the people who constituted it, we have but very little information. Mulek of course was a Jew, and doubtless there were others of the same tribe in the colony, but there may also have been a number of Ephraimites in the colony which he brought to America. In any event, it is possible that the Ephraimites in these several colonies constituted the greater part of the people, and from the fact that the record of these several colonies is called the stick of Ephraim by inspired writers, it is quite evident that the Ephraimites did preponderate.

Third: "It was claimed, in the conversation referred to, that the words used in the Doctrine and Covenants, Sections iv, vi, xi, xii and xiv, about the fourth verses, to the effect that 'yea, whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is called of God,' is not harmonious with the Mormon doctrine that a man must 'be called of God as was Aaron.'"

The language quoted above as appearing in the several revelations enumerated, is not at all out of harmony with the Mormon doctrine referred to. The fact that a person has a desire in his heart to "thrust in his sickle and reap," would be an item of evi-

dence of the operation of the Spirit of God upon him, and a witness to him that God's voice was calling him unto that work; but he was not and could not be authorized by that fact alone to officiate in things pertaining to God until divine authority should be given unto him, and he "called of God as was Aaron."

The work of the Lord at the time these revelations were given was just beginning its existence in the earth. The Church was not yet organized, but the Spirit of the Lord was operating upon the minds of a number of men who afterwards became prominent in establishing the work of the Lord in the earth, and the fact of God's Spirit operating upon their minds, giving them an earnest desire to "thrust in their sickles and reap" God's harvest was considered an evidence that they were called of God, and in time would be authorized by him by receiving divine authority, both to preach the Gospel and administer its ordinances. That this is the proper exegesis of the matter, is to be found in the fact that in each of the cases cited, the men who were inquiring of the Prophet the will of the Lord concerning them, were afterwards ordained to the Holy Priesthood and authorized to assist in building up his kingdom.

As the fourth question submitted in this communication requires a rather lengthy explanation, we shall defer answering it until the publication of the next number of the ERA.

---

#### NOTES.

---

Sorrow, it should be remembered, is within us, and not in the things about us; so is it with joy.

Every attempt to make others happy, every step forward in the cause of what is good, is a step nearer to true manhood.

Great wealth is either a great blessing or a great curse. It is seldom neutral. Great wealth, like great waters, needs constant motion to prevent stagnation and death.

There is no real elevation of mind in a contempt of little things. It is, on the contrary, from too narrow views that we consider those things of little importance which have, in fact, serious consequences.