

# 2 NEPHI 6–10

John W. Welch Notes



## 2 Nephi 6

### 2 Nephi 6:1–10 — Why Is Jacob’s Sermon in Nephi’s Record?

Many of the themes that show up in 2 Nephi 6–10 have been identified as typical of the New Year and the Feast of Tabernacles on the regular Jewish calendar. At that time, ancient Israelites also typically held coronations and the renewal or re-enthronement of the king. Every year there was a renewal of the people’s loyalty to obey the king of Israel. So, what we have here in Jacob’s speech is likely a covenant renewal speech. We know that this is dealing with covenant because 2 Nephi 9:1 states Jacob’s purpose as follows: “Behold, my beloved brethren, I have read these things *that ye may know concerning the covenants of the Lord* that he has covenanted with all the House of Israel.” Several parts of Jacob’s speech follow old traditions that the Nephites carried on.

For example, several scholars, both those who are and are not Latter-day Saints, have identified in the Old Testament a covenant treaty pattern. This pattern was not just limited to the Hebrews. Such “treaty-covenants” had (1) a preamble, (2) gave a historical overview, (3) stated stipulations of the covenant, (4) extended blessings and curses structured as “if you do this, this will happen; if you do not do it, such and such will happen.” Then there was (5) a witness formula, and (6) a recording of the covenant.

Joshua 24 offers an example of an ancient covenant renewal: “Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; whether the Gods which our fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Jacob’s words in 2 Nephi 6–10 can be read well in the

context of that treaty-covenant pattern, as covenants were renewed on several different occasions, including coronations and covenant-renewal festivals. Such is quite prominently the case at the coronation of Mosiah by his father Benjamin.

One might get the impression that this was Nephi's inauguration or coronation as king. However, 2 Nephi 5:28 tells how the Nephites built a temple, and thirty years passed away, and then Nephi made the record, and then another ten years had passed away (5:34). So, Jacob's speech appears to have been given at least ten years after Nephi's coronation. It may have been a ten-year anniversary celebration.

### Further Reading

Book of Mormon Central, "[Did Jacob Refer to Ancient Israelite Autumn Festivals?](#) (2 Nephi 6:4)," *KnowWhy* 32 (February 12, 2016).

### **2 Nephi 6:17–18 — What Drew Jacob to These Words of Isaiah?**

From 2 Nephi 6:6–7 and 6:16 to 2 Nephi 9:2, Jacob quoted Isaiah 49:22 to Isaiah 52:2. What was it that had drawn Jacob to these particular words of Isaiah?

First, Jacob was told by Nephi to read these selected words to the assembled people of Nephi (6:4). As prophet and king, Nephi surely wanted to reassure his people that God would protect his people: "the Mighty God shall deliver his *covenant* people" (6:17; Isaiah 49:25). This fledgling community must have worried and needed this reassurance. And thus, Nephi and Jacob wanted their people especially to be a faithful "covenant people." For that precise reason Jacob spoke to them so they might "know concerning the *covenants* of the Lord that he has *covenanted* with all the house of Israel" (9:1).

Second, all the people were to know that "all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy *Redeemer*, the *Mighty One of Jacob*" (6:18; cf. Isaiah 49:26). Jacob, the priest of the temple in the city of Nephi, would have been especially desirous that his people would find redemption and deliverance through Jehovah, their Redeemer. In their isolated state, it was pertinent for them to know of their "deliverance" (Jacob used the word "deliver" or "deliverance" 12 times in 2 Nephi 9) by the Mighty God (Jacob calls Him the Lord God "*Almighty*" in 9:46). Despite their being more alone than ever before, the Lord had not abandoned them out in the wilderness. Thus, this block of text suited their needs perfectly.

Third, from these words, Jacob hoped that the people were to "learn and glorify the *name* of your God" (6:4). Previously, Jesus Christ had been called several names, such as "messiah," "the Lamb of God," "the Lord [Jehovah]," and others. Now, in order that they might "learn . . . the name" of their God, to be used in glorifying Him, Jacob will

disclose to his people that his holy name, when he would come among the Jews in the flesh, would be “Christ.” That name had been spoken to Jacob by the angel of the Lord during the night (10:3) in the interval between the two days of this coronation and covenant renewal celebration. Because the word “Christ” literally means “anointed,” raising that name on the occasion of renewing the people’s covenant to God and loyalty to His anointed king (as kings in Israel were called, Psalm 2:2) would have been especially appropriate.

Finally, Jacob would have been especially pleased at the opportunity to draw his people’s attention to the name for the Lord that was used by Isaiah, “the Mighty One of Jacob” (6:18; Isaiah 49:26).

#### **Further Reading**

John S. Thompson, “Isaiah 50–51, the Israelite Autumn Festivals, and the Covenant Speech of Jacob in 2 Nephi 6–10,” in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998), 123–150.

## 2 NEPHI 7

### **2 Nephi 7:1–10 — The Lord Has Not Put Away His people**

The first verse in this chapter uses poetic language to describe the love of the Savior as being mother-like—unbreakable. The phrase “thus saith the Lord” had been used twice in 6:17 and it is used twice again in 7:1. We know to pay close attention when the prophet says, “thus saith the Lord.” Here it emphasizes that, like a mother, Jesus Christ will not cast off His covenant children. As the poetic emphasis grows, so too does the promissory certitude that he will stand immovable, to a greater degree than even a mortal mother is capable. If there is separation, it will be due to the choice of man, and not to God’s withdrawal.

Isaiah likens our covenant with God to a marriage covenant. Under the Law of Moses, a man could find some offense in his wife and say, “I divorce thee” and give her a paper of divorcement, which would end the marriage. But the Lord has not done that. If a person had huge debts, they would sometimes sell their children into slavery to the creditors. But the Lord has not done that, and He will not do that.

Look at verse 2. There it says, “O house of Israel is my hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem or I have no power to deliver?” Is the Lord’s hand shortened? If you look back at 2 Nephi 6:6, the Lord says “I will lift up my hand to the gentiles.” What does it mean to “lift up the hand?” When the Israelites were wandering through the wilderness, they had several conflicts with other groups. On one occasion Moses had to literally hold

his hands up in order for his people to win a battle. For this reason, he had to have two counselors of sorts, one on each side of him to hold up an arm. Christ is going to hold up his hand to the gentiles—he is going to extend to them his protective authority as long as possible.

Indeed, the Lord will send his Servant who has been given knowledge (7:5). The Servant was not rebellious, but instead would give his back to the smiter, the plucker, the shamer, and the spitter (7:6). He would set his face like flint, and would not be ashamed (7:7). And thus the Servant will be justified in the face of his accuser. They will stand together to be judged, and those who condemn him will wax old as a garment, and a moth shall eat them (7:9). These words of Isaiah, quoted by Jacob in the city of Nephi, will reverberate four hundred years later, also in the city of Nephi, when Abinadi will warn king Noah that his life will be valued as a garment in a furnace because of his wicked ways.

### **Further Reading**

Leland Gentry, “God Will Fulfill His Covenants with the House of Israel,” in *Second Nephi: The Doctrinal Structure*, The Book of Mormon Symposium Series, Volume 3, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1989), 167–172.

### **2 Nephi 7:11 — What Does It Mean to “Walk in the Light of Your Own Fire?”**

Joseph F. Smith warned against those who falsely teach, using their own light, preaching false doctrines disguised as Gospel truths. He said they are “proud and self-vaulting ones, who read by the lamps of their own conceit; who interpret by rules of their own contriving; who have become a law unto themselves, and so pose as the sole judges of their own doings” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 381).

## **2 NEPHI 8**

### **2 Nephi 8:1 — The Rock from Whence Ye Are Hewn**

Isaiah’s words continue by telling people to “Look unto the rock from whence ye are hewn.” This is how the victory of the Lord will be won. First, his people must look. But what rock are we hewn from to which we must look? Consider the eternal bond of Abraham and Sarah (the promise), the priesthood that Peter would be entrusted with when he was called the Rock (the power), the eternal nature of the covenants made in the temple also called the dome of the rock (the place); in other words, the rock of our Redeemer.

As Jacob continues to read, his people heard a number of words and phrases that would have helped them remain firmly founded on the rock of the Lord. They were assured that the Lord will comfort them in all their “waste places” (8:3). His law, judgment, righteousness, and salvation shall extend to judge the people. Those on “the isles of the sea shall wait upon” the Lord (8:5), if the law of God is written in their heart (8:7).

Three times, the Lord calls for his people to “Awake, Awake” (8:9, 17, 24), as the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and the Lord will plead the cause of his people, as the Lord will take the cup of trembling out of the hands of His people (8:22). The scene of God’s judgment will reappear in Jacob’s text in chapter 9, where the word *judgment* appears seven times.

In one other way, the words of Isaiah pave the way for Jacob’s main words to his people. Seven times Isaiah used the emphatic opening expression, “O . . .” in Isaiah 51 (2 Nephi 8): O my nation, O arm of the Lord, O Jerusalem, O Zion, O Jerusalem, O Jerusalem, O captive. Jacob will continue this pattern, beginning fourteen of his powerful exclamations this same way: O the wisdom, O how great the goodness, O how great the plan, O the greatness and justice, O the greatness of the mercy, O how great the holiness, O that cunning plan, O the vainness, O my beloved brethren (five times), and O Lord God Almighty. Not just stylistically, but thematically, Jacob’s words elaborate and personalize many of the main themes found in the words of Isaiah that Nephi assigned Jacob to read and teach.

### Further Reading

Book of Mormon Central, “[Why Did Helaman Compare Christ to a Rock?](#) (Helaman 5:12),” *KnowWhy* 176 (August 30, 2016).

### 2 Nephi 8:24 — Modern-day Revelation Clarifies

In D&C 113:7, a very thoughtful man named Elias Higbee asked, “What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?” (Of course, Isaiah 52 and 2 Nephi 8 are the same.) Joseph Smith explained,

[Isaiah] had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost. (D&C 113:8)

And then Higbee asked about the meaning of the “bands around the neck,” and Joseph Smith said,

We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. ... The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles. (D&C 113:10)

## 2 Nephi 9

### 2 Nephi 9:1–7 — Jacob on the Atonement

Jacob's marvelous chapter 9 is unsurpassed in the Book of Mormon or elsewhere. The Atonement is the first theme of redemption that he addresses (expressly in 9:7, 25, 26). What are some of the powers of the Atonement that Jacob mentioned here? There are several: the power of resurrection, the power to bring one back into the presence of God, and the power to make what was corrupted incorrupt. That is one of the main powers of at-one-ment, bringing and holding things together.

Although ancient people did not use the term *entropy*, the basic principle of this law of physics was understood by Jacob. Everything in nature disintegrates. As you look around, you will see decay everywhere. But the power of the Atonement arrests that entropy and reverses it, restoring each corrupted thing to its most perfect state—physically *and* spiritually. Beyond restoration, Christ will permanently stop the process of entropy and corruption. “If it were not so, this flesh must be laid down to rot and to crumble to its mother earth and rise no more” (9:7).

We can think of Christ as the Great High Priest, especially in regard to duties the High Priest would have performed when he officiated in the temple. The High Priest is the one who made the atoning sacrifice, and accordingly Lehi had said to Jacob: “Wherefore redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah for he is full of grace and truth. Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin to answer the ends of the law unto those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (2 Nephi 2:6). The picture here is of the Great High Priest who not only performs the offering, but *he is* the offering. What more could you ask for than that?

Elder Jeffery R. Holland wrote,

Jacob's testimony was that “the Mighty God” will always deliver “his covenant people” and that the Mighty God is, by his own divine declaration, the Lord God Jesus Christ, the “Savior . . . and Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”

Jacob reflected on such teachings—especially those contained in the writing of Isaiah—so that his current audience and future readers “might know concerning the covenants of the Lord that he has covenanted with all the House of Israel,” giving the parents of every generation cause to “rejoice” and to “lift up [their] heads forever, because of the blessings which the Lord God shall bestow upon [their children].

And then Elder Holland adds something that is key to chapter 9: “At the heart of the covenant and the reason for such rejoicing is the atoning sacrifice of that ‘Mighty God’ who is the Savior and Redeemer of the world.” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 66–67).

## **2 Nephi 9:14 — A Perfect Knowledge of Our Mistakes**

For Jacob, it is important that we recognize our sins. “Wherefore, we shall have a perfect knowledge of all our guilt, and our uncleanness, and our nakedness,” but through the Atonement of Jesus Christ those made righteous shall equally “have a perfect knowledge of their enjoyment, and their righteousness, being clothed with purity, yea, even with the robe of righteousness” (9:14). President Gordon B. Hinckley often taught that a daily recommitting to accepting the Atonement of Christ and an honest willingness to change *is* daily repentance. It is not the Lord’s intent that we read these things and say, “O how wretched am I?” and cry all night. True repentance comes from a bright recollection and a genuine confidence that the Lord has provided everything essential for us, pending our acceptance.

Confidence also requires understanding. That is to say, we do need to understand the commitments we make when we enter into covenants. We cannot be saved in ignorance. We must consider that we have a responsibility and act accordingly. Every time we make a covenant, we invoke either blessings or curses upon ourselves dependent on if we keep or break those covenants. We must make an honest accounting of our actions. We must see if we have called woe upon ourselves. If so, we must do what is necessary to repent; this is what Jacob means when he wants us to have a perfect knowledge of our mistakes.

Jacob’s words don’t seem to be an ordinary call to repentance. Jacob certainly pronounces woes upon the wicked, but his words are more of an encouraging priesthood blessing. His focus is more on the promises that are extended to the righteous, so, it seems, at this point he is not worried too much about the wickedness of the people. Nephi and his group had separated from Laman and Lemuel only about twelve years before. They have worked hard together, and they have dedicated themselves to building the temple. But when things are going well, that is the best time to give a warning, while hearts are still soft, and ears are still open.

At the same time, Nephi's people were secluded and probably insecure. They didn't have a large network of connections to potentially keep them safe. If you look back in 2 Nephi 6:2, they were worried about security, protection, and safety. They were looking to Nephi as the king and protector and were depending upon him for safety. They were not starting the fights, but they may have been watching at night. They may have had guards posted, but they were really counting on the Lord to deliver them. In that frame of mind, they were open to Jacob's powerful speech, one of the most inspiring texts in all the scriptures.

## 2 Nephi 9:27–38 — Jacob's Ten Woes

After assuring his people that the Atonement will satisfy the demands of God's justice "upon all those who have *not* the law given to them" (9:26), people who know better will be held accountable. As a warning, Jacob then pronounces a set of ten woes upon those (1) who set aside the counsel of God, (2) who despise the poor, (3) who will not hear and obey, (4) who will not see, (5) whose hearts are impure or uncircumcised, (6) who tell lies, (7) who deliberately kill, (8) who commit whoredoms, (9) who worship idols, and (10) all who die in their sins (27–38). In a covenant setting, this list of Woes functions similar to the list of twelve curses found near the end of the book of Deuteronomy (27:15–26).

Several of Jacob's woes are consequential warnings related to several of the Ten Commandments, which served as the basis of the Lord's covenant with the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. Covenants come with commitments, and failing to keep one's righteous commitments leads to unhappiness. Such ten-fold structures signal to listeners the completeness or perfection of the Lord's covenant teachings and promises (See Figure 1).

### Further Reading

Book of Mormon Central, "[Why Does Jacob Declare so Many 'Woes'? \(2 Nephi 9:27\)](#)," *KnowWhy* 35 (February 17, 2016).

<b>2 Nephi 9:27, 30–38</b>	<b>Compare Exodus 20:3–17</b>
1. Woe unto them who knowingly transgress God's commandments	1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me
2. Wo unto the rich who despise the poor and make their treasure their god	10. Thou shalt not covet
3. Wo unto the deaf who will not hear	5. Honor (hear) thy father and thy mother
4. Wo unto the blind who will not see	
5. Wo unto the uncircumcised of heart	3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain
6. Wo unto the liar	9. Thou shalt not bear false witness
7. Wo unto the murderer who deliberately kills	6. Thou shalt not kill
8. Wo unto them who commit whoredoms	7. Thou shalt not commit adultery
9. Wo unto those who worship idols	2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image
10. Wo unto all those who die and remain in their sins	

© Copyright Book of Mormon Central

Figure 1 Welch, John W., and Greg Welch. *Jacob's Ten Woes and Ten Commandments*. Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1999.

## **2 Nephi 9:41 — Christ Keeps Watch Over the Gate to Salvation**

As the High Priest, Jacob would have stood guard over the gates and the holiness of the House of the Lord. Entering the temple can cast our minds forward to the time when we will come to the gate that is kept by the Holy One. Meeting Christ on that occasion is what we each have to look forward to, knowing that He will be there, that he is a person who knows exactly how you feel. He is the gatekeeper. He doesn't employ any servant there. He is the one who stands in wait of you. We have "gates" of the temple that in many ways are like that gate. As we enter, we can be looking forward to the time we will enter completely into his presence and joy. What role then do the covenants made in the temple play in our passage through that eternal portal? And what does it mean to you that Christ keeps watch over that gate Himself? Jacob would like us to think about that more often.

## **2 Nephi 9:44–45 — Jacob Shakes His Garments**

Visualize Jacob as he took off his high priestly robes and shook them saying, "I shake them before you" (9:44). Why would he do that? He wants his people to be responsible. He is telling them that he has shaken their iniquities from his soul as if saying, "I'm not bearing your iniquities any longer." Jacob couldn't have that impurity on him as the high priest, otherwise that would compromise his ability to be a pure officiator in the temple.

This scene must have been very dramatic. Imagine if President Nelson during General Conference took off his coat and stood there and shook it in front of everybody and said, "I have given you all that I can. Now I shake off any responsibility for you and your sins." How would you feel? Wouldn't that leave an impression? That is how ancient prophets often got their points across. In this case, Jacob wanted to absolutely impress upon his people the importance of holiness. God wants his people to be holy. Several key words are used by Jacob in this chapter, including "judgment" (7 times), "remember" (8 times), and "deliver" (12 times). But the dominant key word in this temple-covenant speech is "holy." It appears 23 times, and "holiness" two times more. The dominant name used by Jacob here for the Lord is "the Holy One of Israel," which appears thirteen times. One may well conclude that the main theme of Jacob's temple speech here is holiness, Holiness to the Lord.

### **Further Reading**

Parry, Donald W., "Symbolic Action as Prophecy in the Old Testament" in *Sperry Symposium Classics: The Old Testament*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson (Provo and Salt Lake City, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University and Deseret Book 2005), 337–355.

## 2 Nephi 10

### 2 Nephi 10:1–2 — The Nephite Branch Will Be Restored

The next morning, Jacob resumed his speech where he left off, by assuring his people that they are a “righteous branch” (9:53; 10:1). Zenos and Isaiah and Nephi had spoken about branches of the House of Israel, righteous or evil (for example, 1 Nephi 15:12; 19:24; 2 Nephi 14:2; 21). Jacob thus assured his audience: You too are a branch of that tree, and you still belong to that tree, and you will be grafted back in when their posterity comes to a knowledge of their Redeemer (10:3). They will be preserved. That image, of course, will reappear in Jacob 5, when Jacob recited to the people Zenos’s lengthy Allegory of the Olive Tree.

### 2 Nephi 10:3–7 — Jesus Will Be Rejected Because of Priestcrafts

But in the meantime, Christ will appear back in the land that Jacob’s father and family had left. There, just as the leaders of the people had killed prophets like Urijah and were prepared to kill Lehi and Jeremiah, the descendants of those priests will likewise kill the anointed Holy Christ. Jacob rightly does not blame all the people in Jerusalem, but primarily those priests involved with priestcrafts and iniquity (10:5). Nephi called them wicked shepherds. “Because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people,” those who have been driven out have been broken off (1 Nephi 21:1). Years later, people like those wicked priests will reject Jesus in spite of—and perhaps because of—the “mighty miracles” (2 Nephi 10:4) he would perform. Those powerful signs and wonders would understandably have terrified people who did not think Jesus was the Son of God, figuring that Jesus must then have had a devil and that his miracles were powered by the Evil One. Likely the same angelic being who spoke along these lines to Jacob (10:3) later explained further to King Benjamin that Jesus’s opponents would actually condemn him, declaring him to have “a devil” (Mosiah 3:9).

From their point of view, death was the required legal penalty for performing miracles, signs, or wonders that led people away to follow other paths or to worship in unauthorized ways (see Deuteronomy 13:1–5), and the mode of execution for such an offense was crucifixion or “hanging on a tree” (Deuteronomy 21:22). And, indeed, as Jacob knew, no other nation had such laws as are found in Deuteronomy. For these reasons, Jacob could well have foreseen that in no other nation would a group of priestly leaders react with such awful fear and hostility against such beneficial miracles, signs, and wonders. But nevertheless, and amazingly, on the cross the Lord had the strength to forgive the soldiers who knew not what they were doing. In addition, it would seem, Jesus also would have soon held out forgiveness to all who were involved in any way in

bringing about his death. They too must not have really known what they were doing either. Evidence of Jesus's continued extension of mercy and willingness to forgive can be found in Jacob's declaration that Christ has "covenanted with their fathers that [these people] shall [still] be restored in the flesh, upon the earth [when they] shall believe in me, that I am Christ" (10:7). He has not thrown them away or cast anyone off.

### **Further Reading**

John W. Welch, "The Factor of Fear in the Trial of Jesus," in *Jesus Christ: Son of God, Savior*, ed. Paul H. Peterson, Gary L. Hatch, and Laura D. Card (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2002), 284–312.

John W. Welch, "Latter-day Saint Reflections on the Trial of Jesus," *Clark Memorandum* (Fall 2000): 2–13.

### **2 Nephi 10:8–19 — Israel Will Be Remembered in All Lands**

To prepare the way for that to happen, the Jews and Israel who will be scattered among the nations will be remembered and gathered from "the isles of the sea" (see 2 Nephi 8:6). Jacob and his people would have been relieved to hear this promise. They would have been comforted not only in their being remembered, but also in the knowledge that there would be others like them scattered about amidst the nations of the world. When we hear the word gentiles, we often think of people who are not members of the Church. But the word *gentiles* in ancient times literally meant the *nations* or birth lines. We get our word *genealogy* from that root word. The Lord was saying that He will work through all kindreds and nations, their kings and queens (10:9, see 2 Nephi 6:6), to restore his people.

In this prophetic connection, Jacob also spoke concerning the future of his people's posterity in their land of promise, which will be a "protected" and "consecrated" land of liberty, where no kings "shall raise up unto the Gentiles" (10:11, 19). Secret works of darkness will be destroyed (10:15), those who fight against Zion must needs perish (10:16), the hearts of the Gentiles will be softened, and they will be "like a father to them" (10:18; compare 2 Nephi 6:6). These are wonderful promises of the Lord that surely gave great assurance to Jacob and his people.

### **2 Nephi 10:20–25 — Jacob Comforts the Nephites**

In closing, Jacob reassured his people that the promises of the Lord will protect them and that they will not be forgotten. Their posterity in years to come will still be remembered and blessed, and that, even though they may die out in the wilderness, it's not all over. The real land of promise will be the eternal heavenly Kingdom of God (10:25). We too can find comfort in the promise that we will be brought back again into God's presence because of the Atonement and Resurrection of the Savior.

May you take this encouragement of Jacob into your hearts and take it away with you from this lesson: "Therefore, cheer up your hearts and remember that ye are free to act for yourselves, to choose the way of the everlasting death or the way of eternal life" (10:23). "Reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not to the will of the Devil and the flesh; and remember after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved" (10:24; accord 2 Nephi 25:23). Jacob's plea that people will choose the way of life over the way of death echoes Lehi's words regarding choice and accountability spoken to Jacob and his brothers in 2 Nephi 2:27. And those words align with Joshua's ancient covenant-renewal charge: "Choose ye this day whom you will serve," either the Lord or other gods (Joshua 24:15). Nothing much has changed. The plan is the plan, and it is still the plan.