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Book of Mormon Studies

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Abstract: This is a series of articles intended for Relief Society course study. It discusses the importance of the Book of Mormon, its coming forth (i.e., the translation, the witnesses, the publication, Joseph Smith), brief overview of its contents, and explains the text from 1 Nephi 1 through Alma 58. Each article features several questions that are helpful in synthesizing and applying the Book of Mormon to daily life.

dent averred that "Mormonism", which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is a plain and simple religion that is within the understanding of every responsible person. Opposition, he said, has been caused by the claim for modern revelation. The day before the conference was the anniversary of the organization of the Relief Society, and he therefore recounted the story of woman's privileges as taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. As the conference came to a close a deep impression upon those who had listened to the solemn and convincing testimonies that had been borne by each speaker throughout the day was apparent.

Congregational singing and musical selections were of a high order. Meetings were held with auxiliary workers and with the brethren holding the Priesthood. The Mission President met with the Traveling Elders on the following day.

J. RULON DOXEY, District Clerk

BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES*

The Right Attitude: In beginning the serious perusal of the Book of Mormon it is necessary to do so with the right attitude of mind. It is well to do this in reading any book; it is imperative in reading the Book of Mormon. The beauty of its teachings, the thrill of its dramatic story are lost otherwise. The book tells specifically just how to do this:

And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.†

Unless these lessons are studied with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, then will their study fail to bring the conviction of truth, which all are entitled to expect. If the suggested course is followed, then indeed will one's joy be great and one's life enriched.

The Story Begins: "At the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, which was about 600 B.C., there lived in Jerusalem a worthy, prayerful man named Lehi. At that time many prophets of God came to the Jews, and called upon them to repent of their sins, or the great city of Jerusalem would be destroyed. Lehi, hearing these prophecies, prayed to the Lord with all his heart in behalf of his people. . . . He went forth among the people, pleading with them to repent and reform,

*Lesson 8 of the Relief Society Course of Study—for use on the second lesson night in April.

†Moroni 10: 4.

lest judgments come upon them. But the inhabitants of Jerusalem at that time would not give heed to the warnings of the servants of God, and they mocked at Lehi and sought to take away his life, as they had the prophets of earlier times, whom they had cast out and stoned and slain.”*

Lehi Leaves Jerusalem: “The Lord warned Lehi in a dream to leave Jerusalem and to journey into the wilderness and go where He should direct him. All this Lehi did. He left his home in Jerusalem, with all the riches it contained, and, taking his family with him, went into the wilderness. He took nothing with him except such things as were necessary, as provisions and tents, for the comfort of himself and family, which consisted of his wife, Sariah, and his sons, Laman, Lemuel, Sam and Nephi. Which way they traveled we are not informed, but in a few days they reached the borders of the Red Sea, most probably that portion known to us as the Gulf of Akabah.”†

Return for the Plates: “Soon after the arrival of Lehi and his family on the borders of the Red Sea the Lord gave Lehi a commandment that his sons should return to Jerusalem to obtain certain brass plates upon which was engraved the history of the world from the creation to the days of Zedekiah, and more particularly a record of the Jews. The plates also contained the genealogy of Lehi and family. When the elder sons of Lehi heard this command they objected. They said it was a hard thing their father required of them; for they had no faith that they could obtain the plates, as they were in the hands of a rich, wicked and powerful man named Laban, who would not be willing to give them up. Their father told them that it was not he, but the Lord, who desired them to obtain the plates. This did not satisfy them; they still murmured. But Nephi, when he heard the command, at once consented to go; for he told his father he had learned that God gave no commandments to men unless He prepared a way for them to accomplish the thing which He required.

“When Lehi saw how great was the faith of his son, Nephi, he was exceedingly glad, for he knew that the Lord had blessed him. Persuaded by Nephi, the brothers consented to go. Then with their tents they journeyed back to Jerusalem. After two unsuccessful attempts, Nephi, on the third effort, obtained the plates, and the young men returned with them to the tents of the family in the wilderness. Lehi greatly rejoiced when the plates were given into his charge, and offered up a sacrifice to the Lord in token of his gratitude. These plates remained with the people

*Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, September 1889. I Nephi, Chapter 1.

†Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, September 1889. I Nephi, Chapter 1.

of Nephi from this time to the destruction of the race at Cimmorah nearly a thousand years later.”*

Ishmael Joins the Party: “Soon after the return of the sons of Lehi with the plates of brass to the tent of their father on the borders of the Red Sea, they were commanded of the Lord to return once more to Jerusalem. The cause of this command was that God intended to make of the seed of Lehi a great people; but his sons were all unmarried and there were no young women in the company who would do for wives for them. So, to fulfil the purposes of the Lord, they were sent to a man of the tribe of Ephraim, named Ishmael, who had several marriageable daughters. We do not read that any of the sons of Lehi murmured at this command, but they immediately returned to Jerusalem. There they went to the house of Ishmael and made known their errand, and the Lord gave them favour in the eyes of Ishmael and his family, who left their home and went with the sons of Lehi into the wilderness. On the way they had considerable trouble, for Laman and others were very rebellious and quarrelsome; but, at last they reached the tent of Lehi in safety, and in thankfulness to the Lord they thereupon offered sacrifice and burnt offerings unto Him. In a very little while four of the daughters of Ishmael married the four sons of Lehi, and the eldest daughter became the wife of Zoram, formerly the servant of Laban.”†

QUESTIONS

1. Who was Lehi? Why did he and his family leave Jerusalem?
2. What were the contents of the plates of brass secured by Lehi's sons from Laban? Why was it desirable to have them?
3. Read Chapters 5, 6 and 9 of I Nephi, and tell the important points therein contained. Why do you think it was necessary to have two sets of plates?
4. Relate the events foreshadowed in Chapters 10 and 11 of I Nephi.
5. What is said of the churches of the world and events spoken of in Chapters 14 and 15?
6. Tell what you can of Nephi's vision of the future recorded in Chapters 12 and 13.
7. During next month learn the words of the hymn “An Angel from On High” so that it may be sung from memory by all members of the Relief Society.

TOBACCO, TOMBSTONES AND PROFITS

(Concluded from page 199)

If there were no money in poisoning people with tobacco, the tobacco habit would die out with the last of its present victims.

*Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, September 1889. I Nephi, Chapters 3 and 4.

†Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, September 1889. I Nephi, Chapters 7-16.