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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.

to the Lord. "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

In the Mosaic Law the references to tithing are many, and the principle became a binding law upon Israel. Witness: "Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year." In obedience to this obligation placed upon them by divine command, ancient Israel practiced tithing throughout their long and varied history.

Fiery words of the prophets of Israel scorched the hearts of those who disobeyed this sacred principle. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."

The early Christian Church taught tithing as a principle of the Gospel. The fragments of the history of the early Christian Church prove that the practice of giving to the Lord was in vogue. Paul implies it clearly: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches in Galatia, even so do ye." The principle of tithing was generally adopted by Christian nations. In great Britain, as an example, it was practiced from early days and it was even incorporated into the body of civil laws, where it remains to this day.

In the day of restoration, the reaffirmation of the principle of tithing through the Prophet Joseph Smith was merely the re-establishment of a divine principle which has existed among men from the days of the first man. Thus does the modern revelation read: "And this shall be the beginning of the tithing of my people. And after that, those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever, for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord." . . . "And I say unto you, if my people observe not this law, to keep it holy, and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept thereon, that it may be most holy, behold, verily I say unto you, it shall not be a land of Zion unto you."

RELIEF SOCIETY

BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES

For the first lesson in July

IN THE closing chapters of Third Nephi—23 to 30—which are to be considered for July, among the many items of importance one stands out as a doctrine peculiar in the world to the Latter-day Saints, and therefore, of particular interest and responsibility to them. Chapter 25 is introduced with the oft-quoted words from Malachi 4: 5-6, in the Bible: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the

prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

Think upon it for a moment—these words were given to ancient Israel. They were repeated in substance to the Prophet Joseph Smith by the Angel Moroni on the occasion of his first visit to the boy seeker. They were spoken to the Nephites on the American continent by the Saviour Himself. The Saviour did not deal with non-essentials on the occasion of His sojourn among the Nephites. This fact alone, if the words appear nowhere else in Holy Writ, would give a clue as to their profound importance.

The salvation of the dead by the vicarious work of the living, to which the words refer, is not a latter-day doctrine—it is an eternal and cardinal principle of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Possibly no people in the world have such ready access to the records of their ancestors as do the people of Britain. This advantage brings with it its responsibilities. Let the words of the Saviour to Malachi, to the Nephites, and all mankind, move us to action in this land.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the commandment of the Saviour concerning the words of Samuel the Lamanite? What does this indicate to you as the absolute necessity of keeping records?

2. The Lord repeated to the Nephites His word to Malachi concerning the law of tithing. What should this tell us concerning the importance of tithe-paying?

3. Why do you think the Lord repeated His words to Malachi concerning salvation for the dead? What does this indicate to us concerning the importance of this work? Concerning our duty in helping it along?

4. Did Mormon write all the words of the Saviour? See chapter 26. What importance, in your opinion, does this attach to those he did write?

5. What name did the Lord say His Church should be called by? Is His Church in this day called by that name? What of the other churches in the world that are called after men and nations and various doctrines, etc.?

6. What special wish was granted the three Nephites? Tell their story. How does the change they went through differ from death?

7. Discuss the main points of Mormon's warning to those who spurn the words and the works of the Lord.

R. L. E.

WORD OF WISDOM LESSONS (No. 7)

For the third lesson in July

MEAT "SPARINGLY": THE ANIMAL FOODS

Definition. Food may be defined simply as any substance, which, when taken into the body causes it to grow, or to produce