The Book of Mormon

The Readable Scriptures

The Standard Works Reformatted
for Clarity and Structure

The Book of Mormon

Another Testament of Jesus Christ

An Account Written by the Hand of Mormon
upon Plates—Taken from the Plates of Nephi

Translated by Joseph Smith, Jr.

Reformatted, with Notes and Introduction, by Jack M. Lyon

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Introduction

The first edition of the Book of Mormon was typeset in Palmyra, New York, at E. B. Grandin's print shop, by John Gilbert, who did a relatively decent job but didn't really understand the nature of the text with which he was working—and, like most who work in book production, probably didn't have time to acquire that understanding. The result was a book that looked much like the novels of the day, with most of the text set in regular paragraph form.

In the 1852 edition, Orson Pratt added paragraph numbers for easier reference; in 1879 he created new chapter divisions and broke the text into numbered verses. In 1920 James E. Talmage added chapter summaries and had the text set in double columns. In 1981 the Church published a major edition with new chapter summaries and cross-references to all of the scriptures—a formidable task aided by computer technology. In 2013 the Church published yet another edition with revised cross-references and new formatting.

Since 1852 all of the editions have formatted the scriptural text for ease of reference and use in a classroom setting. As useful as that is, it also tends to obscure the nature of the original record. Like the Bible, the Book of Mormon is much more than verse after verse of identically formatted text; it includes ancient headings, direct quotations, majestic poetry, and much more.

The purpose of this new edition is to present the text of the Book of Mormon in a way that approximates what its primary editor—Mormon—seems to have had in mind when he compiled it. It uses the standard text (from the 1920 edition as updated in 1981 and 2013)

but removes chapter summaries, verse numbers, columns, and cross-references; then it formats the text based on the content of the record itself—as headings, poetry, block quotations, or whatever is required, including modern paragraphing. The result is an edition that shows the probable structure of the ancient record and is easy to read and understand.

Reading in Context

Removing versification and using modern paragraphing also helps readers better understand the scriptures in context rather than as isolated "proof texts" used merely to make some (possibly incorrect) point. A good example is 2 Nephi 25:23, probably the most misunderstood verse in the Book of Mormon. It says, "It is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do." We sometimes interpret this verse to mean that we have to do all we can to save ourselves, and then the Atonement makes up the difference. But is that what Nephi is really saying?

Stephen Robinson, professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University, explains, "The preposition 'after' in 2 Nephi 25:23 [is] a preposition of separation rather than a preposition of time. It denotes logical separateness rather than temporal sequence. We are saved by grace 'apart from all we can do,' or 'all we can do notwithstanding,' or even 'regardless of all we can do.' Another acceptable paraphrase of the sense of the verse might read, 'We are still saved by grace, after all is said and done.'"

That this must be the case is shown in the story of Alma the Younger, who went about "seeking to destroy the church, and to lead astray the people of the Lord, contrary to the commandments of God." (Mosiah 27:10.) He emphatically did *not* do all he could to gain his salvation; in fact, he did just the opposite. And yet, when he prayed, "O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness, and am encircled about by the everlasting chains of death," the Atonement took effect. As Alma explains, "I could remember my pains no more; yea, I was harrowed up by the memory of my sins no more. And oh, what joy,

and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain!" (Alma 36:18–20.)

When we read the verses following 2 Nephi 25:23, we can see that Nephi is actually stressing reliance on the Savior rather than our own efforts: "The law hath become dead unto us, and we are made alive in Christ because of our faith; yet we keep the law because of the commandments. And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins." (See 2 Nephi 10:24; 31:19 for further evidence of Nephi's views.) Reading the passage as a whole, from verse 20 through verse 27, without separating it into isolated verses, helps us understand what Nephi actually meant, without imposing our own interpretation of what we *think* he meant.

Variant Readings

Readers may be surprised to learn that there is no definitive version of the Book of Mormon text. The closest we can get to the original, based on rigorous examination and analysis of the Book of Mormon manuscripts, is the version produced by BYU linguistics professor Royal Skousen in his monumental work *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, published by Yale University Press in 2009. As Professor Skousen has shown, even going back to the original manuscripts leaves many questions unanswered, and every edition published through the years has differed from its predecessors. Even individual volumes of the 1830 edition may differ from each other, as corrections were still being made while printing was in progress.

The Readable Scriptures edition incorporates some of the most significant variant readings identified by Professor Skousen in his work with the original manuscripts, making it slightly different in places from the version currently published by the Church. (Variants are listed in the appendix.) For example, the Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon (at Alma 19:29–30) portrays king Lamoni's queen like this:

> she arose and stood upon her feet and cried with a loud voice saying O blessed Jesus who has saved me from an awful hell O blessed God have mercy on this people and when she had said this she clapped her hands being filled with joy

The current Book of Mormon text says that the queen "clasped" her hands rather than "clapped" her hands. The change to "clasped" appears to be a typographical error introduced by John Gilbert as he typeset the first edition.

Another example is those mysterious people the Amalekites, who first appear in Alma 21. According to Professor Skousen, "Amalekites" is the result of scribal error. The correct reading is "Amlicites," who are the same people introduced in Alma 2. In this edition, all variants except "Amlicites" are marked with a gray asterisk, like this: *

Punctuation

John Gilbert also supplied the original punctuation for the Book of Mormon; the punctuation is thus not part of Joseph Smith's inspired translation. As Gilbert later described the manuscript pages from which he set the type, "Every chapter, if I remember correctly, was one solid paragraph, without a punctuation mark, from beginning to end. . . . I punctuated it to make it read as I supposed the author intended." (Recollections of John H. Gilbert, 8 September 1892, Palmyra, New York, typescript, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.)

Accordingly, *The Readable Scriptures* edition occasionally changes punctuation as needed where Gilbert and subsequent editors got it wrong. A good example is in 2 Nephi 9:13:

> The paradise of God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal, and they are living souls, having a perfect knowledge like unto us in the flesh, save it be that our knowledge shall be perfect.

As published, this says that those in the flesh (we mortals) have a perfect knowledge—which, of course, is not true. Instead, the passage should be punctuated something like this:

> The paradise of God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal, and they are living souls, having a perfect knowledge—like unto us in the flesh, save it be that our knowledge shall be perfect.

In other words, resurrected souls will have a perfect knowledge of their wickedness or righteousness, although in mortality they do not.

Parenthetical comments

The Book of Mormon includes a surprising number of parenthetical comments (like this one). One of the most important, describing the Liahona in Alma 37:41, was missed by John Gilbert during typesetting. The 1830 edition has this:

> Nevertheless, because those miracles were worked by small means, nevertheless it did shew unto them marvellous works. They were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence, and then those marvellous works ceased, and they did not progress in their journey.

The second "nevertheless" was later edited out, leaving us with the current reading:

> Nevertheless, because those miracles were worked by small means it did show unto them marvelous works. They were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence and then those marvelous works ceased, and they did not progress in their journey.

As currently published, this passage says that because the Liahona and other miracles worked by small means, the Liahona showed marvelous works to Lehi and his family—which makes little sense. The passage should actually include the second "nevertheless" and be rendered something like this:

> Nevertheless, because those miracles were worked by small means (nevertheless, it did show unto them marvelous works), they were slothful, and forgot to exercise their faith and diligence, and then those marvelous works ceased, and they did not progress in their journey.

In other words, the people were slothful because the miracles were worked by small means—even though those small means (the Liahona) showed unto them marvelous works.

Interestingly, Gilbert got right another parenthetical expression just two verses later:

> As our fathers were slothful to give heed to this compass (now these things were temporal) they did not prosper; even so it is with things which are spiritual.

Headings

Modern readers are so used to referring to the books of the Book of Mormon as 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, and so on, that we forget that these are not the original headings, which look like this and are used in this edition:

> The Book of Nephi: His Reign and Ministry
>
> The Book of Jacob the Brother of Nephi
>
> The Book of Alma the Son of Alma

These original headings appear in the table of contents and the left-hand running heads; the right-hand running heads, however, use the

modern titles, along with the chapter number, for ease of reference. Chapter numbers are also included as superscript numbers in the text, even though verse numbers are omitted.

The Book of Mormon also includes other ancient headings that are usually ignored. Here are a few examples:

> *An account of the death of Lehi. Nephi's brethren rebel against him. The Lord warns Nephi to depart into the wilderness. His journeyings in the wilderness, and so forth*
>
> *The word that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem*
>
> *The Record of Zeniff: An account of his people, from the time they left the land of Zarahemla until the time that they were delivered out of the hands of the Lamanites*

John Gilbert set most of these in italics in the 1830 edition, and this practice has continued in subsequent editions. A few of these headings, however, have been previously overlooked, such as that in 2 Nephi 6:1:

> *The words of Jacob, the brother of Nephi, which he spake unto the people of Nephi*

This edition tries to identify all such headings and format them so that the structure of the original text becomes clear. These headings are also included in the table of contents.

The headings that introduce the main sections of the book ("The Small Plates," "Mormon's Abridgment of the Large Plates," and so on) are, of course, not part of the original Book of Mormon text. They have been included here to emphasize the book's main divisions, which are the Small Plates; Mormon's abridgment from the Large Plates; and the writings of Mormon's son Moroni, who finished his father's record, appended an abridgment of the Jaredite record, and added a few other important

items. Readers should keep in mind that Mormon's abridgment originally included the book of Lehi, which was lost when Martin Harris borrowed the first 116 pages of manuscript to show to his family. The lost pages were replaced with a translation from the Small Plates, which are a completely independent record written more than a thousand years before Mormon made his abridgment.

Breaks in the Text

The "chapter" breaks in the Book of Mormon did not originally include the word "Chapter" or a chapter number. As Royal Skousen explains:

> Evidence from both the original and printer's manuscripts shows that Joseph Smith apparently saw some visual indication at the end of a section that the section was ending. Although this may have been a symbol of some kind, a more likely possibility is that the last words of the section were followed by blankness. Recognizing that the section was ending, Joseph then told the scribe to write the word *chapter*, with the understanding that the appropriate number would be added later. ("How Joseph Smith Translated the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7/1 [1998].)

This edition omits the chapter numbers that were added to the Book of Mormon manuscripts but marks the original breaks with a section symbol, like this:

§

This symbol is omitted, however, before first chapters.

Other breaks (without the symbol) have been added to show changes in subject or chronology, but these should not be considered as part of the original text.

Editorial Comments

This edition includes a few modern editorial comments, either in brackets or in footnotes. These have been kept to a minimum, and are used to clarify textual features or meaning rather than doctrine.

Block Quotations and Poetry

For purposes of clarity, long quotations have been set in indented block form. Some of these are actually passages from the Large Plates that the compiler (usually Mormon) has included verbatim. A good example is the section titled "The Record of Zeniff" that makes up Mosiah chapters 9 and 10. Other quotations, especially those where people are simply engaged in dialog, are set as regular text.

Passages written in poetic or elevated language are also set in block form but in italic rather than roman text. This has been done quite conservatively, even though the Book of Mormon includes many poetic passages. For a fuller treatment, readers should consult Donald W. Parry, *The Book of Mormon Text Reformatted according to Parallelistic Patterns* (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1992); Grant Hardy, ed., *The Book of Mormon: A Reader's Edition* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005); and John W. Welch, "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," *New Era,* February 1972.

We have no way to know whether the Book of Mormon plates themselves set off quotations or poetry in some special way, and the Book of Mormon manuscripts certainly do not. Thus, doing so in this edition is necessarily speculative and subjective. Nevertheless, the justification for doing so is often readily apparent in the text itself. For example, the passage known as "the Hymn of Nephi" (2 Nephi 4:20–35) is clearly rendered in poetic language, and the first-person "Record of Zeniff" (Mosiah 9–10) is obviously a verbatim quotation. Appropriately formatting such passages results in better understanding and helps reveal the complexity and sophistication of this remarkable sacred record.

The Book of Mormon

An Account Written by the Hand of Mormon upon Plates—Taken from the Plates of Nephi

Wherefore, it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites: written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile. Written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation. Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed, to come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof. Sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by way of the Gentile—the interpretation thereof by the gift of God.

An abridgment taken from the Book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, when they were building a tower to get to heaven—which is to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever; and also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations.

And now, if there are faults they are the mistakes of men; wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment-seat of Christ.

[The Small Plates]

The Book of Nephi: His Reign and Ministry

An account of Lehi and his wife Sariah, and his four sons, being called (beginning at the eldest) Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi. The Lord warns Lehi to depart out of the land of Jerusalem, because he prophesieth unto the people concerning their iniquity and they seek to destroy his life. He taketh three days' journey into the wilderness with his family. Nephi taketh his brethren and returneth to the land of Jerusalem after the record of the Jews. The account of their sufferings. They take the daughters of Ishmael to wife. They take their families and depart into the wilderness. Their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness. The course of their travels. They come to the large waters. Nephi's brethren rebel against him. He confoundeth them, and buildeth a ship. They call the name of the place Bountiful. They cross the large waters into the promised land, and so forth. This is according to the account of Nephi; or in other words, I, Nephi, wrote this record.

[1]I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father; and having seen many afflictions in the course of my days, nevertheless, having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days; yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days. Yea, I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians. And I know that the record which I make is true; and I make it with mine own hand; and I make it according to my knowledge.

For it came to pass in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah—my father, Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem

in all his days—and in that same year there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed. Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart, in behalf of his people. And it came to pass as he prayed unto the Lord, there came a pillar of fire and dwelt upon a rock before him; and he saw and heard much; and because of the things which he saw and heard, he did quake and tremble exceedingly.

And it came to pass that he returned to his own house at Jerusalem; and he cast himself upon his bed, being overcome with the Spirit and the things which he had seen. And being thus overcome with the Spirit, he was carried away in a vision, even that he saw the heavens open, and he thought he saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God.

And it came to pass that he saw One descending out of the midst of heaven, and he beheld that his luster was above that of the sun at noonday. And he also saw twelve others following him, and their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament. And they came down and went forth upon the face of the earth; and the first came and stood before my father, and gave unto him a book, and bade him that he should read. And it came to pass that as he read, he was filled with the Spirit of the Lord. And he read, saying: Wo, wo, unto Jerusalem, for I have seen thine abominations! Yea, and many things did my father read concerning 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.

And it came to pass that when my father had read and seen many great and marvelous things, he did exclaim many things unto the Lord; such as:

Great and marvelous are thy works,
O Lord God Almighty!

Thy throne is high in the heavens,
and thy power, and goodness, and mercy
are over all the inhabitants of the earth;
and because thou art merciful,
thou wilt not suffer those who come unto thee
that they shall perish!

And after this manner was the language of my father in the praising of his God; for his soul did rejoice, and his whole heart was filled, because of the things which he had seen, yea, which the Lord had shown unto him.

And now I, Nephi, do not make a full account of the things which my father hath written, for he hath written many things which he saw in visions and in dreams; and he also hath written many things which he prophesied and spake unto his children, of which I shall not make a full account. But I shall make an account of my proceedings in my days. Behold, I make an abridgment of the record of my father upon plates which I have made with mine own hands; wherefore, after I have abridged the record of my father then will I make an account of mine own life.

Therefore, I would that ye should know, that after the Lord had shown so many marvelous things unto my father, Lehi, yea, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, behold he went forth among the people, and began to prophesy and to declare unto them concerning the things which he had both seen and heard. And it came to pass that the Jews did mock him because of the things which he testified of them; for he truly testified of their wickedness and their abominations; and he testified that the things which he saw and heard, and also the things which he read in the book, manifested plainly of the coming of a Messiah, and also the redemption of the world. And when the Jews heard these things they were angry with him; yea, even as with the prophets of old, whom they had cast out, and stoned, and slain; and they also sought his life, that they

might take it away. But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance.

[2]For behold, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto my father, yea, even in a dream, and said unto him:

Blessed art thou Lehi,
because of the things which thou hast done;
and because thou hast been faithful
and declared unto this people the things which I commanded thee,
behold, they seek to take away thy life.

And it came to pass that the Lord commanded my father, even in a dream, that he should take his family and depart into the wilderness.

And it came to pass that he was obedient unto the word of the Lord, wherefore he did as the Lord commanded him. And it came to pass that he departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance, and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness. And he came down by the borders near the shore of the Red Sea; and he traveled in the wilderness in the borders which are nearer the Red Sea; and he did travel in the wilderness with his family, which consisted of my mother, Sariah, and my elder brothers, who were Laman, Lemuel, and Sam.

And it came to pass that when he had traveled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a valley by the side of a river of water. And it came to pass that he built an altar of stones, and made an offering unto the Lord, and gave thanks unto the Lord our God. And it came to pass that he called the name of the river, Laman, and it emptied into the Red Sea; and the valley was in the borders near the mouth thereof. And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea, he spake unto Laman, saying:

O that thou mightest be like unto this river,
continually running into the fountain of all righteousness!

And he also spake unto Lemuel:

O that thou mightest be like unto this valley,
firm and steadfast and immovable
in keeping the commandments of the Lord!

Now this he spake because of the stiffneckedness of Laman and Lemuel; for behold they did murmur in many things against their father, because he was a visionary man, and had led them out of the land of Jerusalem, to leave the land of their inheritance, and their gold, and their silver, and their precious things, to perish in the wilderness. And this they said he had done because of the foolish imaginations of his heart.

And thus Laman and Lemuel, being the eldest, did murmur against their father. And they did murmur because they knew not the dealings of that God who had created them. Neither did they believe that Jerusalem, that great city, could be destroyed according to the words of the prophets. And they were like unto the Jews who were at Jerusalem, who sought to take away the life of my father.

And it came to pass that my father did speak unto them in the valley of Lemuel, with power, being filled with the Spirit, until their frames did shake before him. And he did confound them, that they durst not utter against him; wherefore, they did as he commanded them. And my father dwelt in a tent.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, being exceedingly young, nevertheless being large in stature, and also having great desires to know of the mysteries of God, wherefore, I did cry unto the Lord; and behold he did visit me, and did soften my heart that I did believe all the words which had been spoken by my father; wherefore, I did not rebel against him like unto my brothers. And I spake unto Sam, making known unto him the

things which the Lord had manifested unto me by his Holy Spirit. And it came to pass that he believed in my words. But, behold, Laman and Lemuel would not hearken unto my words; and being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, I cried unto the Lord for them.

And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying:

Blessed art thou, Nephi, because of thy faith,
for thou hast sought me diligently, with lowliness of heart.
And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments,
ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise;
yea, even a land which I have prepared for you;
yea, a land which is choice above all other lands.
And inasmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee,
they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord.
And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments,
thou shalt be made a ruler and a teacher over thy brethren.
For behold, in that day that they shall rebel against me,
I will curse them even with a sore curse,
and they shall have no power over thy seed
except they shall rebel against me also.
And if it so be that they rebel against me,
they shall be a scourge unto thy seed,
to stir them up in the ways of remembrance.

3 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, returned from speaking with the Lord, to the tent of my father. And it came to pass that he spake unto me, saying: Behold I have dreamed a dream, in the which the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brethren shall return to Jerusalem. For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews and also a genealogy of my forefathers, and they are engraven upon plates of brass. Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brothers should go unto the house of Laban, and seek the records, and bring them down hither into the wilderness.

And now, behold thy brothers murmur, saying it is a hard thing which I have required of them; but behold I have not required it of them, but it is a commandment of the Lord. Therefore go, my son, and thou shalt be favored of the Lord, because thou hast not murmured.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father: I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them. And it came to pass that when my father had heard these words he was exceedingly glad, for he knew that I had been blessed of the Lord.

And I, Nephi, and my brethren took our journey in the wilderness, with our tents, to go up to the land of Jerusalem. And it came to pass that when we had gone up to the land of Jerusalem, I and my brethren did consult one with another. And we cast lots—who of us should go in unto the house of Laban. And it came to pass that the lot fell upon Laman; and Laman went in unto the house of Laban, and he talked with him as he sat in his house. And he desired of Laban the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, which contained the genealogy of my father. And behold, it came to pass that Laban was angry, and thrust him out from his presence; and he would not that he should have the records. Wherefore, he said unto him: Behold thou art a robber, and I will slay thee. But Laman fled out of his presence, and told the things which Laban had done, unto us. And we began to be exceedingly sorrowful, and my brethren were about to return unto my father in the wilderness.

But behold I said unto them that:

> As the Lord liveth, and as we live, we will not go down unto our father in the wilderness until we have accomplished the thing which the Lord hath commanded us. Wherefore, let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord; therefore let us go down to the land of our father's inheritance, for behold he left gold and silver, and all manner of riches. And all this he hath done because of

> the commandments of the Lord. For he knew that Jerusalem must be destroyed, because of the wickedness of the people. For behold, they have rejected the words of the prophets. Wherefore, if my father should dwell in the land after he hath been commanded to flee out of the land, behold, he would also perish. Wherefore, it must needs be that he flee out of the land. And behold, it is wisdom in God that we should obtain these records, that we may preserve unto our children the language of our fathers; and also that we may preserve unto them the words which have been spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets, which have been delivered unto them by the Spirit and power of God, since the world began, even down unto this present time.

And it came to pass that after this manner of language did I persuade my brethren, that they might be faithful in keeping the commandments of God.

And it came to pass that we went down to the land of our inheritance, and we did gather together our gold, and our silver, and our precious things. And after we had gathered these things together, we went up again unto the house of Laban. And it came to pass that we went in unto Laban, and desired him that he would give unto us the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, for which we would give unto him our gold, and our silver, and all our precious things. And it came to pass that when Laban saw our property, and that it was exceedingly great, he did lust after it, insomuch that he thrust us out, and sent his servants to slay us, that he might obtain our property. And it came to pass that we did flee before the servants of Laban, and we were obliged to leave behind our property, and it fell into the hands of Laban. And it came to pass that we fled into the wilderness, and the servants of Laban did not overtake us, and we hid ourselves in the cavity of a rock.

And it came to pass that Laman was angry with me, and also with my father; and also was Lemuel, for he hearkened unto the words of Laman. Wherefore Laman and Lemuel did speak many hard words unto us, their younger brothers, and they did smite us even with a rod. And it came to

pass as they smote us with a rod, behold, an angel of the Lord came and stood before them, and he spake unto them, saying: Why do ye smite your younger brother with a rod? Know ye not that the Lord hath chosen him to be a ruler over you, and this because of your iniquities? Behold ye shall go up to Jerusalem again, and the Lord will deliver Laban into your hands. And after the angel had spoken unto us, he departed.

And after the angel had departed, Laman and Lemuel again began to murmur, saying: How is it possible that the Lord will deliver Laban into our hands? Behold, he is a mighty man, and he can command fifty, yea, even he can slay fifty; then why not us?

4 And it came to pass that I spake unto my brethren, saying:

Let us go up again unto Jerusalem,
and let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord;
for behold he is mightier than all the earth,
then why not mightier than Laban and his fifty,
yea, or even than his tens of thousands?

Therefore let us go up;
let us be strong like unto Moses;
for he truly spake unto the waters of the Red Sea
and they divided hither and thither,
and our fathers came through, out of captivity, on dry ground,
and the armies of Pharaoh did follow
and were drowned in the waters of the Red Sea.
Now behold ye know that this is true;
and ye also know that an angel hath spoken unto you;
wherefore can ye doubt?

Let us go up.
The Lord is able to deliver us, even as our fathers,
and to destroy Laban, even as the Egyptians.

Now when I had spoken these words, they were yet wroth, and did still continue to murmur; nevertheless they did follow me up until we

came without the walls of Jerusalem. And it was by night; and I caused that they should hide themselves without the walls.

And after they had hid themselves, I, Nephi, crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban. And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do; nevertheless I went forth.

And as I came near unto the house of Laban I beheld a man, and he had fallen to the earth before me, for he was drunken with wine. And when I came to him I found that it was Laban. And I beheld his sword, and I drew it forth from the sheath thereof; and the hilt thereof was of pure gold, and the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine, and I saw that the blade thereof was of the most precious steel.

And it came to pass that I was constrained by the Spirit that I should kill Laban; but I said in my heart: Never at any time have I shed the blood of man. And I shrunk and would that I might not slay him.

And the Spirit said unto me again: Behold the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands. Yea, and I also knew that he had sought to take away mine own life; yea, and he would not hearken unto the commandments of the Lord; and he also had taken away our property.

And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me again: Slay him, for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands; behold the Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief.

And now, when I, Nephi, had heard these words, I remembered the words of the Lord which he spake unto me in the wilderness, saying that: Inasmuch as thy seed shall keep my commandments, they shall prosper in the land of promise. Yea, and I also thought that they could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses, save they should have the law. And I also knew that the law was engraven upon the plates of brass. And again, I knew that the Lord had delivered Laban into my hands for this cause—that I might obtain the records according to his commandments. Therefore I did obey the voice of the Spirit, and took Laban by the hair of the head, and I smote off his head with his own

sword. And after I had smitten off his head with his own sword, I took the garments of Laban and put them upon mine own body; yea, even every whit; and I did gird on his armor about my loins.

And after I had done this, I went forth unto the treasury of Laban. And as I went forth towards the treasury of Laban, behold, I saw the servant of Laban who had the keys of the treasury. And I commanded him in the voice of Laban, that he should go with me into the treasury. And he supposed me to be his master, Laban, for he beheld the garments and also the sword girded about my loins. And he spake unto me concerning the elders of the Jews (he knowing that his master, Laban, had been out by night among them). And I spake unto him as if it had been Laban. And I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings, which were upon the plates of brass, to my elder brethren, who were without the walls. And I also bade him that he should follow me. And he, supposing that I spake of the brethren of the church, and that I was truly that Laban whom I had slain, wherefore he did follow me. And he spake unto me many times concerning the elders of the Jews, as I went forth unto my brethren, who were without the walls.

And it came to pass that when Laman saw me he was exceedingly frightened, and also Lemuel and Sam. And they fled from before my presence; for they supposed it was Laban, and that he had slain me and had sought to take away their lives also. And it came to pass that I called after them, and they did hear me; wherefore they did cease to flee from my presence.

And it came to pass that when the servant of Laban beheld my brethren he began to tremble, and was about to flee from before me and return to the city of Jerusalem. And now I, Nephi, being a man large in stature, and also having received much strength of the Lord, therefore I did seize upon the servant of Laban, and held him, that he should not flee. And it came to pass that I spake with him, that if he would hearken unto my words, as the Lord liveth, and as I live, even so that if he would hearken unto our words, we would spare his life. And I spake unto him, even with an oath, that he need not fear; that he should be a free man like

unto us if he would go down in the wilderness with us. And I also spake unto him, saying: Surely the Lord hath commanded us to do this thing; and shall we not be diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord? Therefore, if thou wilt go down into the wilderness to my father thou shalt have place with us.

And it came to pass that Zoram did take courage at the words which I spake. Now Zoram was the name of the servant; and he promised that he would go down into the wilderness unto our father. Yea, and he also made an oath unto us that he would tarry with us from that time forth. Now we were desirous that he should tarry with us for this cause, that the Jews might not know concerning our flight into the wilderness, lest they should pursue us and destroy us. And it came to pass that when Zoram had made an oath unto us, our fears did cease concerning him. And it came to pass that we took the plates of brass and the servant of Laban, and departed into the wilderness, and journeyed unto the tent of our father.

[5]And it came to pass that after we had come down into the wilderness unto our father, behold, he was filled with joy, and also my mother, Sariah, was exceedingly glad, for she truly had mourned because of us. For she had supposed that we had perished in the wilderness; and she also had complained against my father, telling him that he was a visionary man; saying: Behold thou hast led us forth from the land of our inheritance, and my sons are no more, and we perish in the wilderness. And after this manner of language had my mother complained against my father.

And it had come to pass that my father spake unto her, saying: I know that I am a visionary man; for if I had not seen the things of God in a vision I should not have known the goodness of God, but had tarried at Jerusalem, and had perished with my brethren. But behold, I have obtained a land of promise, in the which things I do rejoice; yea, and I know that the Lord will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban, and bring them down again unto us in the wilderness. And after this manner

of language did my father, Lehi, comfort my mother, Sariah, concerning us, while we journeyed in the wilderness up to the land of Jerusalem, to obtain the record of the Jews.

And when we had returned to the tent of my father, behold their joy was full, and my mother was comforted. And she spake, saying: Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath commanded my husband to flee into the wilderness; yea, and I also know of a surety that the Lord hath protected my sons, and delivered them out of the hands of Laban, and given them power whereby they could accomplish the thing which the Lord hath commanded them. And after this manner of language did she speak. And it came to pass that they did rejoice exceedingly, and did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto the Lord; and they gave thanks unto the God of Israel.

And after they had given thanks unto the God of Israel, my father, Lehi, took the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, and he did search them from the beginning. And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world, and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents; and also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah; and also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah; and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.

And it came to pass that my father, Lehi, also found upon the plates of brass a genealogy of his fathers; wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph; yea, even that Joseph who was the son of Jacob, who was sold into Egypt, and who was preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he might preserve his father, Jacob, and all his household from perishing with famine. And they were also led out of captivity and out of the land of Egypt, by that same God who had preserved them. And thus my father, Lehi, did discover the genealogy of his fathers. And Laban also was a descendant of Joseph, wherefore he and his fathers had kept the records.

And now when my father saw all these things, he was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed—that these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people who were of his seed. Wherefore, he said that these plates of brass should never perish; neither should they be dimmed any more by time. And he prophesied many things concerning his seed.

And it came to pass that thus far I and my father had kept the commandments wherewith the Lord had commanded us. And we had obtained the records which the Lord had commanded us, and searched them and found that they were desirable; yea, even of great worth unto us, insomuch that we could preserve the commandments of the Lord unto our children. Wherefore, it was wisdom in the Lord that we should carry them with us, as we journeyed in the wilderness towards the land of promise.

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[6] And now I, Nephi, do not give the genealogy of my fathers in this part of my record; neither at any time shall I give it after upon these plates which I am writing; for it is given in the record which has been kept by my father; wherefore, I do not write it in this work. For it sufficeth me to say that we are descendants of Joseph. And it mattereth not to me that I am particular to give a full account of all the things of my father, for they cannot be written upon these plates, for I desire the room that I may write of the things of God. For the fulness of mine intent is that I may persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and be saved. Wherefore, the things which are pleasing unto the world I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God and unto those who are not of the world. Wherefore, I shall give commandment unto my seed, that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of men.

[7] And now I would that ye might know, that after my father, Lehi, had made an end of prophesying concerning his seed, it came to pass

that the Lord spake unto him again, saying that it was not meet for him, Lehi, that he should take his family into the wilderness alone; but that his sons should take daughters to wife, that they might raise up seed unto the Lord in the land of promise. And it came to pass that the Lord commanded him that I, Nephi, and my brethren, should again return unto the land of Jerusalem, and bring down Ishmael and his family into the wilderness. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did again, with my brethren, go forth into the wilderness to go up to Jerusalem.

And it came to pass that we went up unto the house of Ishmael, and we did gain favor in the sight of Ishmael, insomuch that we did speak unto him the words of the Lord. And it came to pass that the Lord did soften the heart of Ishmael, and also his whole* household, insomuch that they took their journey with us down into the wilderness to the tent of our father.

And it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, behold Laman and Lemuel, and two of the daughters of Ishmael, and the two sons of Ishmael and their families, did rebel against us; yea, against me, Nephi, and Sam, and their father, Ishmael, and his wife, and his three other daughters. And it came to pass in the which rebellion, they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem.

And now I, Nephi, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, therefore I spake unto them, saying, yea, even unto Laman and unto Lemuel:

> Behold ye are mine elder brethren, and how is it that ye are so hard in your hearts, and so blind in your minds, that ye have need that I, your younger brother, should speak unto you, yea, and set an example for you? How is it that ye have not hearkened unto the word of the Lord? How is it that ye have forgotten that ye have seen an angel of the Lord? Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten what great things the Lord hath done for us, in delivering us out of the hands of Laban, and also that we should obtain the record? Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten that the Lord is able to do all things according to his will, for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise faith in him? Wherefore, let us be faithful to him.

> And if it so be that we are faithful to him, 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; for all things which the Lord hath spoken concerning the destruction of Jerusalem must be fulfilled. For behold, the Spirit of the Lord ceaseth soon to strive with them; for behold, they have rejected the prophets, and Jeremiah have they cast into prison. And they have sought to take away the life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land. Now behold, I say unto you that if ye will return unto Jerusalem ye shall also perish with them. 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; for thus the Spirit of the Lord constraineth me that I should speak.

And it came to pass that when I, Nephi, had spoken these words unto my brethren, they were angry with me. And it came to pass that they did lay their hands upon me, for behold, they were exceedingly wroth, and they did bind me with cords, for they sought to take away my life, that they might leave me in the wilderness to be devoured by wild beasts. But it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, according to my faith which is in thee, wilt thou deliver me from the hands of my brethren; yea, even give me strength that I may burst these bands with which I am bound. And it came to pass that when I had said these words, behold, the bands were loosed from off my hands and feet, and I stood before my brethren, and I spake unto them again.

And it came to pass that they were angry with me again, and sought to lay hands upon me; but behold, one of the daughters of Ishmael, yea, and also her mother, and one of the sons of Ishmael, did plead with my brethren, insomuch that they did soften their hearts; and they did cease striving to take away my life. And it came to pass that they were sorrowful, because of their wickedness, insomuch that they did bow down before me, and did plead with me that I would forgive them of the thing that they had done against me. And it came to pass that I did frankly forgive them all that they had done, and I did exhort them that they

would pray unto the Lord their God for forgiveness. And it came to pass that they did so. And after they had done praying unto the Lord we did again travel on our journey towards the tent of our father.

And it came to pass that we did come down unto the tent of our father. And after I and my brethren and all the house of Ishmael had come down unto the tent of my father, they did give thanks unto the Lord their God; and they did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto him.

8 And it came to pass that we had gathered together all manner of seeds of every kind, both of grain of every kind, and also of the seeds of fruit of every kind.

And it came to pass that while my father tarried in the wilderness he spake unto us, saying:

> Behold, I have dreamed a dream; or, in other words, I have seen a vision. And behold, because of the thing which I have seen, I have reason to rejoice in the Lord because of Nephi and also of Sam; for I have reason to suppose that they, and also many of their seed, will be saved. But behold, Laman and Lemuel, I fear exceedingly because of you; for behold, methought I saw in my dream, a dark and dreary wilderness. And it came to pass that I saw a man, and he was dressed in a white robe; and he came and stood before me. And it came to pass that he spake unto me, and bade me follow him. And it came to pass that as I followed him I beheld myself that I was in a dark and dreary waste. And after I had traveled for the space of many hours in darkness, I began to pray unto the Lord that he would have mercy on me, according to the multitude of his tender mercies.
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> And it came to pass after I had prayed unto the Lord I beheld a large and spacious field. And it came to pass that I beheld a tree, whose fruit was desirable to make one happy. And it came to pass that I did go forth and partake of the fruit thereof; and I beheld that it was most sweet, above all that I ever before tasted. Yea, and I beheld that the fruit thereof was white, to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen. And as I partook of the fruit thereof it filled my soul

with exceedingly great joy; wherefore, I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also; for I knew that it was desirable above all other fruit.

And as I cast my eyes round about, that perhaps I might discover my family also, I beheld a river of water; and it ran along, and it was near the tree of which I was partaking the fruit. And I looked to behold from whence it came; and I saw the head thereof a little way off; and at the head thereof I beheld your mother Sariah, and Sam, and Nephi; and they stood as if they knew not whither they should go. And it came to pass that I beckoned unto them; and I also did say unto them with a loud voice that they should come unto me, and partake of the fruit, which was desirable above all other fruit. And it came to pass that they did come unto me and partake of the fruit also.

And it came to pass that I was desirous that Laman and Lemuel should come and partake of the fruit also; wherefore, I cast mine eyes towards the head of the river, that perhaps I might see them. And it came to pass that I saw them, but they would not come unto me and partake of the fruit.

And I beheld a rod of iron, and it extended along the bank of the river, and led to the tree by which I stood. And I also beheld a strait and narrow path, which came along by the rod of iron, even to the tree by which I stood; and it also led by the head of the fountain, unto a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world. And I saw numberless concourses of people, many of whom were pressing forward, that they might obtain the path which led unto the tree by which I stood. And it came to pass that they did come forth, and commence in the path which led to the tree.

And it came to pass that there arose a mist of darkness; yea, even an exceedingly great mist of darkness, insomuch that they who had commenced in the path did lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost. And it came to pass that I beheld others pressing forward, and they came forth and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press forward through the mist of darkness, clinging to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree. And after they had partaken of the fruit of the tree they did cast their eyes about as if they were ashamed.

> And I also cast my eyes round about, and beheld, on the other side of the river of water, a great and spacious building; and it stood as it were in the air, high above the earth. And it was filled with people, both old and young, both male and female; and their manner of dress was exceedingly fine; and they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who had come at and were partaking of the fruit. And after they had tasted of the fruit they were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost.

And now I, Nephi, do not speak all the words of my father. But, to be short in writing, behold, he saw other multitudes pressing forward; and they came and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press their way forward, continually holding fast to the rod of iron, until they came forth and fell down and partook of the fruit of the tree.

And he also saw other multitudes pressing* their way towards that great and spacious building. And it came to pass that many were drowned in the depths of the fountain; and many were lost from his view, wandering in strange roads. And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building. And after they did enter into that building they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also; but we heeded them not. These are the words of my father: *For as many as heeded them, had fallen away.* And Laman and Lemuel partook not of the fruit, said my father.

And it came to pass after my father had spoken all the words of his dream or vision, which were many, he said unto us, because of these things which he saw in a vision, he exceedingly feared for Laman and Lemuel; yea, he feared lest they should be cast off from the presence of the Lord. And he did exhort them then with all the feeling of a tender parent, that they would hearken to his words, that perhaps the Lord would be merciful to them, and not cast them off; yea, my father did preach unto them. And after he had preached unto them, and also prophesied unto them of many things, he bade them to keep the commandments of the Lord; and he did cease speaking unto them.

[9]And all these things did my father see, and hear, and speak, as he dwelt in a tent, in the valley of Lemuel, and also a great many more things, which cannot be written upon these plates.

And now, as I have spoken concerning these plates, behold they are not the plates upon which I make a full account of the history of my people; for the plates upon which I make a full account of my people I have given the name of Nephi; wherefore, they are called the plates of Nephi, after mine own name; and these plates also are called the plates of Nephi. Nevertheless, I have received a commandment of the Lord that I should make these plates, for the special purpose that there should be an account engraven of the ministry of my people. Upon the other plates should be engraven an account of the reign of the kings, and the wars and contentions of my people; wherefore these plates are for the more part of the ministry; and the other plates are for the more part of the reign of the kings and the wars and contentions of my people. Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me to make these plates for a wise purpose in him, which purpose I know not. But the Lord knoweth all things from the beginning; wherefore, he prepareth a way to accomplish all his works among the children of men; for behold, he hath all power unto the fulfilling of all his words. And thus it is. Amen.

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[10]And now I, Nephi, proceed to give an account upon these plates of my proceedings, and my reign and ministry; wherefore, to proceed with mine account, I must speak somewhat of the things of my father, and also of my brethren. For behold, it came to pass after my father had made an end of speaking the words of his dream, and also of exhorting them to all diligence, he spake unto them concerning the Jews—that after they should be destroyed, even that great city Jerusalem, and many be carried away captive into Babylon, according to the own due time of the Lord, they should return again, yea, even be brought back out of captivity; and

after they should be brought back out of captivity they should possess again the land of their inheritance.

Yea, even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem, a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews—even a Messiah, or, in other words, a Savior of the world. And he also spake concerning the prophets, how great a number had testified of these things, concerning this Messiah, of whom he had spoken, or this Redeemer of the world. Wherefore, all mankind were in a lost and in a fallen state, and ever would be save they should rely on this Redeemer.

And he spake also concerning a prophet who should come before the Messiah, to prepare the way of the Lord—yea, even he should go forth and cry in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight; for there standeth one among you whom ye know not; and he is mightier than I, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. And much spake my father concerning this thing. And my father said he should baptize in Bethabara, beyond Jordan; and he also said he should baptize with water; even that he should baptize the Messiah with water. And after he had baptized the Messiah with water, he should behold and bear record that he had baptized the Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world.

And it came to pass after my father had spoken these words he spake unto my brethren concerning the gospel which should be preached among the Jews, and also concerning the dwindling of the Jews in unbelief. And after they had slain the Messiah, who should come, and after he had been slain he should rise from the dead, and should make himself manifest, by the Holy Ghost, unto the Gentiles. Yea, even my father spake much concerning the Gentiles, and also concerning the house of Israel, that they should be compared like unto an olive tree, whose branches should be broken off and should be scattered upon all the face of the earth. Wherefore, he said it must needs be that we should be led with one accord into the land of promise, unto the fulfilling of the word of the Lord, that we should be scattered upon all the face of the earth. And after the house of Israel should be scattered they should be gathered

together again; or, in fine, after the Gentiles had received the fulness of the Gospel, the natural branches of the olive tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in, or come to the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer.

And after this manner of language did my father prophesy and speak unto my brethren, and also many more things which I do not write in this book; for I have written as many of them as were expedient for me in mine other book. And all these things, of which I have spoken, were done as my father dwelt in a tent, in the valley of Lemuel.

And it came to pass after I, Nephi, having heard all the words of my father, concerning the things which he saw in a vision, and also the things which he spake by the power of the Holy Ghost, which power he received by faith on the Son of God—and the Son of God was the Messiah who should come—I, Nephi, was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all those who diligently seek him, as well in times of old as in the time that he should manifest himself unto the children of men. For he is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and the way is prepared for all men from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him. For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in this time* as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round.

Therefore remember, O man, for all thy doings thou shalt be brought into judgment. Wherefore, if ye have sought to do wickedly in the days of your probation, then ye are found unclean before the judgment-seat of God; and no unclean thing can dwell with God; wherefore, ye must be cast off forever. And the Holy Ghost giveth authority that I should speak these things, and deny them not.

[11] For it came to pass after I had desired to know the things that my father had seen, and believing that the Lord was able to make them known unto me, as I sat pondering in mine heart I was caught away in the Spirit

of the Lord, yea, into an exceedingly high mountain, which I never had before seen, and upon which I never had before set my foot.

And the Spirit said unto me: Behold, what desirest thou?

And I said: I desire to behold the things which my father saw.

And the Spirit said unto me: Believest thou that thy father saw the tree of which he hath spoken?

And I said: Yea, thou knowest that I believe all the words of my father.

And when I had spoken these words, the Spirit cried with a loud voice, saying:

Hosanna to the Lord, the most high God;
for he is God over all the earth,
yea, even above all.

And blessed art thou, Nephi, because thou believest in the Son of the most high God; wherefore, thou shalt behold the things which thou hast desired. And behold this thing shall be given unto thee for a sign, that after thou hast beheld the tree which bore the fruit which thy father tasted, thou shalt also behold a man descending out of heaven, and him shall ye witness; and after ye have witnessed him ye shall bear record that it is the Son of God.

And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me: Look! And I looked and beheld a tree; and it was like unto the tree which my father had seen; and the beauty thereof was far beyond, yea, exceeding of all beauty; and the whiteness thereof did exceed the whiteness of the driven snow.

And it came to pass after I had seen the tree, I said unto the Spirit: I behold thou hast shown unto me the tree which is precious above all.

And he said unto me: What desirest thou?

And I said unto him: To know the interpretation thereof—for I spake unto him as a man speaketh; for I beheld that he was in the form of a man; yet nevertheless, I knew that it was the Spirit of the Lord; and he spake unto me as a man speaketh with another.

And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look! And I looked as if to look upon him, and I saw him not; for he had gone from before my presence.

And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the great city of Jerusalem, and also other cities. And I beheld the city of Nazareth; and in the city of Nazareth I beheld a virgin, and she was exceedingly fair and white.

And it came to pass that I saw the heavens open; and an angel came down and stood before me; and he said unto me: Nephi, what beholdest thou?

And I said unto him: A virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other virgins.

And he said unto me: Knowest thou the condescension of God?

And I said unto him: I know that he loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things.

And he said unto me: Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh. And it came to pass that I beheld that she was carried away in the Spirit

And after she had been carried away in the Spirit for the space of a time the angel spake unto me, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld the virgin again, bearing a child in her arms.

And the angel said unto me: Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father! Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw?

And I answered him, saying: Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things.

And he spake unto me, saying: Yea, and the most joyous to the soul.

And after he had said these words, he said unto me: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the Son of God going forth among the children of men; and I saw many fall down at his feet and worship him. And it came to pass that I beheld that the rod of iron, which my father had seen, was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to the

tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God; and I also beheld that the tree of life was a representation of the love of God.

And the angel said unto me again: Look and behold the condescension of God! And I looked and beheld the Redeemer of the world, of whom my father had spoken; and I also beheld the prophet who should prepare the way before him. And the Lamb of God went forth and was baptized of him; and after he was baptized, I beheld the heavens open, and the Holy Ghost come down out of heaven and abide upon him in the form of a dove. And I beheld that he went forth ministering unto the people, in power and great glory; and the multitudes were gathered together to hear him; and I beheld that they cast him out from among them. And I also beheld twelve others following him. And it came to pass that they were carried away in the Spirit from before my face, and I saw them not.

And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me again, saying: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the heavens open again, and I saw angels descending upon the children of men; and they did minister unto them.

And he spake unto me again, saying: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the Lamb of God going forth among the children of men. And I beheld multitudes of people who were sick, and who were afflicted with all manner of diseases, and with devils and unclean spirits; and the angel spake and showed all these things unto me. And they were healed by the power of the Lamb of God; and the devils and the unclean spirits were cast out.

And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me again, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld the Lamb of God, that he was taken by the people; yea, the Son of the everlasting God was judged of the world; and I saw and bear record. And I, Nephi, saw that he was lifted up upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world.

And after he was slain I saw the multitudes of the earth, that they were gathered together to fight against the apostles of the Lamb; for thus were the twelve called by the angel of the Lord. And the multitude of the

earth was gathered together; and I beheld that they were in a large and spacious building, like unto the building which my father saw. And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying: Behold the world and the wisdom thereof; yea, behold the house of Israel hath gathered together to fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

And it came to pass that I saw and bear record, that the great and spacious building was the pride of the world; and it fell, and the fall thereof was exceedingly great. And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying: Thus shall be the destruction of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, that shall fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

[12] And it came to pass that the angel said unto me: Look, and behold thy seed, and also the seed of thy brethren. And I looked and beheld the land of promise; and I beheld multitudes of people, yea, even as it were in number as many as the sand of the sea. And it came to pass that I beheld multitudes gathered together to battle, one against the other; and I beheld wars, and rumors of wars, and great slaughters with the sword among my people. And it came to pass that I beheld many generations pass away, after the manner of wars and contentions in the land; and I beheld many cities, yea, even that I did not number them.

And it came to pass that I saw a mist of darkness on the face of the land of promise; and I saw lightnings, and I heard thunderings, and earthquakes, and all manner of tumultuous noises; and I saw the earth and the rocks, that they rent; and I saw mountains tumbling into pieces; and I saw the plains of the earth, that they were broken up; and I saw many cities that they were sunk; and I saw many that they were burned with fire; and I saw many that did tumble to the earth, because of the quaking thereof. And it came to pass after I saw these things, I saw the vapor of darkness, that it passed from off the face of the earth; and behold, I saw multitudes who had not fallen because of the great and terrible judgments of the Lord.

And I saw the heavens open, and the Lamb of God descending out of heaven; and he came down and showed himself unto them. And I also

saw and bear record that the Holy Ghost fell upon twelve others; and they were ordained of God, and chosen. And the angel spake unto me, saying:

> Behold the twelve disciples of the Lamb, who are chosen to minister unto thy seed. And he said unto me: Thou rememberest the twelve apostles of the Lamb? Behold they are they who shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore, the twelve ministers of thy seed shall be judged of them; for ye are of the house of Israel. And these twelve ministers whom thou beholdest shall judge thy seed. And, behold, they are righteous forever; for because of their faith in the Lamb of God their garments are made white in his blood.

And the angel said unto me: Look! And I looked, and beheld three generations pass away in righteousness; and their garments were white even like unto the Lamb of God. And the angel said unto me: These are made white in the blood of the Lamb, because of their faith in him. And I, Nephi, also saw many of the fourth generation who passed away in righteousness.

And it came to pass that I saw the multitudes of the earth gathered together. And the angel said unto me: Behold thy seed, and also the seed of thy brethren. And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the people of my seed gathered together in multitudes against the seed of my brethren; and they were gathered together to battle.

And the angel spake unto me, saying:

> Behold the fountain of filthy water which thy father saw; yea, even the river of which he spake; and the depths thereof are the depths of hell. And the mists of darkness are the temptations of the devil, which blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into broad roads, that they perish and are lost. And the large and spacious building, which thy father saw, is vain imaginations and the pride of the children of men. And a great and a terrible gulf divideth them; yea, even the sword* of the justice of the Eternal God, and the Messiah who is the

Lamb of God, of whom the Holy Ghost beareth record, from the beginning of the world until this time, and from this time henceforth and forever.

And while the angel spake these words, I beheld and saw that the seed of my brethren did contend against my seed, according to the word of the angel; and because of the pride of my seed, and the temptations of the devil, I beheld that the seed of my brethren did overpower the people of my seed. And it came to pass that I beheld, and saw the people of the seed of my brethren that they had overcome my seed; and they went forth in multitudes upon the face of the land.

And I saw them gathered together in multitudes; and I saw wars and rumors of wars among them; and in wars and rumors of wars I saw many generations pass away.

And the angel said unto me: Behold these shall dwindle in unbelief. And it came to pass that I beheld, after they had dwindled in unbelief they became a dark, and loathsome, and a filthy people, full of idleness and all manner of abominations.

13 And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld many nations and kingdoms.

And the angel said unto me: What beholdest thou?

And I said: I behold many nations and kingdoms.

And he said unto me: These are the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles.

And it came to pass that I saw among the nations of the Gentiles the formation of a great church. And the angel said unto me: Behold the formation of a church which is most abominable above all other churches, which slayeth the saints of God, yea, and tortureth them and bindeth them down, and yoketh them with a yoke of iron, and bringeth them down into captivity. And it came to pass that I beheld this great and abominable church; and I saw the devil that he was the founder of it.

And I also saw gold, and silver, and silks, and scarlets, and fine-twined linen, and all manner of precious clothing; and I saw many harlots. And

the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the gold, and the silver, and the silks, and the scarlets, and the fine-twined linen, and the precious clothing, and the harlots, are the desires of this great and abominable church. And also for the praise of the world do they destroy the saints of God, and bring them down into captivity.

And it came to pass that I looked and beheld many waters; and they divided the Gentiles from the seed of my brethren. And it came to pass that the angel said unto me: Behold the wrath of God is upon the seed of thy brethren. And I looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles, who was separated from the seed of my brethren by the many waters; and I beheld the Spirit of God, that it came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land. And it came to pass that I beheld the Spirit of God, that it wrought upon other Gentiles; and they went forth out of captivity, upon the many waters. And it came to pass that I beheld many multitudes of the Gentiles upon the land of promise; and I beheld the wrath of God, that it was upon the seed of my brethren; and they were scattered before the Gentiles and were smitten.

And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the Gentiles, and they did prosper and obtain the land for their inheritance; and I beheld that they were white, and exceedingly fair and beautiful, like unto my people before they were slain. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles who had gone forth out of captivity did humble themselves before the Lord; and the power of the Lord was with them.

And I beheld that their mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the waters, and upon the land also, to battle against them. And I beheld that the power of God was with them, and also that the wrath of God was upon all those that were gathered together against them to battle. And I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles that had gone out of captivity were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that they did prosper in the land; and I beheld a book, and it was carried forth among them.

And the angel said unto me: Knowest thou the meaning of the book?And I said unto him: I know not. And he said: Behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew. And I, Nephi, beheld it; and he said unto me:

> The book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, which contains the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the plates of brass, save there are not so many; nevertheless, they contain the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the Gentiles.

And the angel of the Lord said unto me:

> Thou hast beheld that the book proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew it contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lamb,* of whom the twelve apostles bear record; and they bear record according to the truth which is in the Lamb of God. Wherefore, these things go forth from the Jews in purity unto the Gentiles, according to the truth which is in God.
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> And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away. And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men. Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God.
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> And after these plain and precious things were taken away it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles; and after it goeth

forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the Gentiles which have gone forth out of captivity, thou seest—because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God—because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them.

Nevertheless, thou beholdest that the Gentiles who have gone forth out of captivity, and have been lifted up by the power of God above all other nations, upon the face of the land which is choice above all other lands, which is the land that the Lord God hath covenanted with thy father that his seed should have for the land of their inheritance; wherefore, thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer that the Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed, which are among thy brethren. Neither will he suffer that the Gentiles shall destroy the seed of thy brethren. Neither will the Lord God suffer that the Gentiles shall forever remain in that awful state of wickedness,* which thou beholdest they are in, because of the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, whose formation thou hast seen. Wherefore saith the Lamb of God: I will be merciful unto the Gentiles, unto the visiting of the remnant of the house of Israel in great judgment.

And it came to pass that the angel of the Lord spake unto me, saying:

Behold, saith the Lamb of God, after I have visited the remnant of the house of Israel—and this remnant of whom I speak is the seed of thy father—wherefore, after I have visited them in judgment, and smitten them by the hand of the Gentiles, and after the Gentiles do stumble exceedingly, because of the most plain and precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, which is the mother of harlots, saith the Lamb—I will be merciful unto the Gentiles in that day, insomuch that I will

> bring forth unto them, in mine own power, much of my gospel, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb.
>
> For, behold, saith the Lamb: I will manifest myself unto thy seed, that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious; and after thy seed shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief, and also the seed of thy brethren, behold, these things shall be hid up, to come forth unto the Gentiles, by the gift and power of the Lamb. And in them shall be written my gospel, saith the Lamb, and my rock and my salvation. And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost; and if they endure unto the end they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb; and whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.

And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren. And after it had come forth unto them I beheld other books, which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the convincing of the Gentiles and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true.

And the angel spake unto me, saying:

> These last records, which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved. And they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of

the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed, as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; wherefore they both shall be established in one; for there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth. And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.

[14]And it shall come to pass, that if the Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God in that day that he shall manifest himself unto them in word, and also in power, in very deed, unto the taking away of their stumbling blocks—and harden not their hearts against the Lamb of God, they shall be numbered among the seed of thy father; yea, they shall be numbered among the house of Israel; and they shall be a blessed people upon the promised land forever; they shall be no more brought down into captivity; and the house of Israel shall no more be confounded. And that great pit, which hath been digged for them by that great and abominable church, which was founded by the devil and his children, that he might lead away the souls of men down to hell—yea, that great pit which hath been digged for the destruction of men shall be filled by those who digged it, unto their utter destruction, saith the Lamb of God; not the destruction of the soul, save it be the casting of it into that hell which hath no end. For behold, this is according to the captivity of the devil, and also according to the justice of God, upon all those who will work wickedness and abomination before him.

And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, Nephi, saying:

Thou hast beheld that if the Gentiles repent it shall be well with them; and thou also knowest concerning the covenants of the Lord unto the house of Israel; and thou also hast heard that whoso repenteth not must perish. Therefore, wo be unto the Gentiles if it so be that they harden their hearts against the Lamb of God. For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a

> marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other—either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.

And it came to pass that when the angel had spoken these words, he said unto me: Rememberest thou the covenants of the Father unto the house of Israel? I said unto him, Yea.

And it came to pass that he said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations, whose founder is the devil. And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil; wherefore, whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations; and she is the whore of all the earth.

And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people. And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of

the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory. And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

And as there began to be wars and rumors of wars among all the nations which belonged to the mother of abominations, the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold, the wrath of God is upon the mother of harlots (and behold, thou seest all these things); and when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose founder is the devil, then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.

And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe. And the angel said unto me:

> Behold one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Behold, he shall see and write the remainder of these things; yea, and also many things which have been. And he shall also write concerning the end of the world. Wherefore, the things which he shall write are just and true; and behold they are written in the book which thou beheld proceeding out of the mouth of the Jew; and at the time they proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, or, at the time the book proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, the things which were written were plain and pure, and most precious and easy to the understanding of all men.
>
> And behold, the things which this apostle of the Lamb shall write are many things which thou hast seen; and behold, the remainder shalt thou see. But the things which thou shalt see hereafter thou shalt not write; for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should write them. And also others who have been, to them hath he shown all things, and they have written them;

and they are sealed up to come forth in their purity, according to the truth which is in the Lamb, in the own due time of the Lord, unto the house of Israel.

And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that the name of the apostle of the Lamb was John, according to the word of the angel.

And behold, I, Nephi, am forbidden that I should write the remainder of the things which I saw and heard; wherefore the things which I have written sufficeth me; and I have written but a small part of the things which I saw. And I bear record that I saw the things which my father saw, and the angel of the Lord did make them known unto me. And now I make an end of speaking concerning the things which I saw while I was carried away in the Spirit; and if all the things which I saw are not written, the things which I have written are true. And thus it is. Amen.

§

15 And it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had been carried away in the Spirit, and seen all these things, I returned to the tent of my father. And it came to pass that I beheld my brethren, and they were disputing one with another concerning the things which my father had spoken unto them. For he truly spake many great things unto them, which were hard to be understood, save a man should inquire of the Lord; and they being hard in their hearts, therefore they did not look unto the Lord as they ought.

And now I, Nephi, was grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, and also, because of the things which I had seen, and knew they must unavoidably come to pass because of the great wickedness of the children of men. And it came to pass that I was overcome because of my afflictions, for I considered that mine afflictions were great above all, because of the destruction of my people, for I had beheld their fall.

And it came to pass that after I had received strength I spake unto my brethren, desiring to know of them the cause of their disputations. And they said: Behold, we cannot understand the words which our father

hath spoken concerning the natural branches of the olive tree, and also concerning the Gentiles.

And I said unto them: Have ye inquired of the Lord?

And they said unto me: We have not; for the Lord maketh no such thing known unto us.

Behold, I said unto them:

> How is it that ye do not keep the commandments of the Lord? How is it that ye will perish, because of the hardness of your hearts? Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said?
>
> *If ye will not harden your hearts,*
> *and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive,*
> *with diligence in keeping my commandments,*
> *surely these things shall be made known unto you.*
>
> Behold, I say unto you, that the house of Israel was compared unto an olive tree, by the Spirit of the Lord which was in our father; and behold are we not broken off from the house of Israel, and are we not a branch of the house of Israel? And now, the thing which our father meaneth concerning the grafting in of the natural branches through the fulness of the Gentiles, is, that in the latter days, when our seed shall have dwindled in unbelief, yea, for the space of many years, and many generations after the Messiah shall be manifested in body unto the children of men, then shall the fulness of the gospel of the Messiah come unto the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles unto the remnant of our seed. And at that day shall the remnant of our seed know that they are of the house of Israel, and that they are the covenant people of the Lord; and then shall they know and come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer, which was ministered unto their fathers by him; wherefore, they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved.
>
> And then at that day will they not rejoice and give praise unto their everlasting God, their rock and their salvation? Yea, at that

day, will they not receive the strength and nourishment from the true vine? Yea, will they not come unto the true fold of God? Behold, I say unto you, Yea; they shall be numbered* again among the house of Israel; they shall be grafted in, being a natural branch of the olive tree, into the true olive tree.

And this is what our father meaneth; and he meaneth that it will not come to pass until after they are scattered by the Gentiles; and he meaneth that it shall come by way of the Gentiles, that the Lord may show his power unto the Gentiles, for the very cause that he shall be rejected of the Jews, or of the house of Israel. Wherefore, our father hath not spoken of our seed alone, but also of all the house of Israel, pointing to the covenant which should be fulfilled in the latter days; which covenant the Lord made to our father Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, spake much unto them concerning these things; yea, I spake unto them concerning the restoration of the Jews in the latter days. And I did rehearse unto them the words of Isaiah, who spake concerning the restoration of the Jews, or of the house of Israel; and after they were restored they should no more be confounded, neither should they be scattered again. And it came to pass that I did speak many words unto my brethren, that they were pacified and did humble themselves before the Lord.

And it came to pass that they did speak unto me again, saying: What meaneth this thing which our father saw in a dream? What meaneth the tree which he saw?

And I said unto them: It was a representation of the tree of life.

And they said unto me: What meaneth the rod of iron which our father saw, that led to the tree?

And I said unto them that it was the word of God; and whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, they would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the

adversary overpower them unto blindness, to lead them away to destruction. Wherefore, I, Nephi, did exhort them to give heed unto the word of the Lord; yea, I did exhort them with all the energies of my soul, and with all the faculty which I possessed, that they would give heed to the word of God and remember to keep his commandments always in all things.

And they said unto me: What meaneth the river of water which our father saw? And I said unto them that the water which my father saw was filthiness; and so much was his mind swallowed up in other things that he beheld not the filthiness of the water. And I said unto them that it was an awful gulf, which separated the wicked from the tree of life, and also from the saints of God. And I said unto them that it was a representation of that awful hell, which the angel said unto me was prepared for the wicked.

And I said unto them that our father also saw that the justice of God did also divide the wicked from the righteous; and the brightness thereof was like unto the brightness of a flaming fire, which ascendeth up unto God forever and ever, and hath no end.

And they said unto me: Doth this thing mean the torment of the body in the days of probation, or doth it mean the final state of the soul after the death of the temporal body, or doth it speak of the things which are temporal?

And it came to pass that I said unto them that it was a representation of things both temporal and spiritual; for the day should come that they must be judged of their works, yea, even the works which were done by the temporal body in their days of probation. Wherefore, if they should die in their wickedness they must be cast off also, as to the things which are spiritual, which are pertaining to righteousness; wherefore, they must be brought to stand before God, to be judged of their works; and if their works have been filthiness they must needs be filthy; and if they be filthy it must needs be that they cannot dwell in the kingdom of God; if so, the kingdom of God must be filthy also.

> But behold, I say unto you, the kingdom of God is not filthy, and there cannot any unclean thing enter into the kingdom of God; wherefore there must needs be a place of filthiness prepared for that which is filthy. And there is a place prepared, yea, even that awful hell of which I have spoken, and the devil is the proprietor* of it; wherefore the final state of the souls of men is to dwell in the kingdom of God, or to be cast out because of that justice of which I have spoken. Wherefore, the wicked are separated* from the righteous, and also from that tree of life, whose fruit is most precious and most desirable above all other fruits; yea, and it is the greatest of all the gifts of God.
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> And thus I spake unto my brethren. Amen.

§

16 And now it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had made an end of speaking to my brethren, behold they said unto me: Thou hast declared unto us hard things, more than we are able to bear.

And it came to pass that I said unto them that I knew that I had spoken hard things against the wicked, according to the truth—

> and the righteous have I justified, and testified that they should be lifted up at the last day; wherefore, the guilty taketh the truth to be hard, for it cutteth them to the very center.
>
> And now my brethren, if ye were righteous and were willing to hearken to the truth, and give heed unto it, that ye might walk uprightly before God, then ye would not murmur because of the truth, and say: Thou speakest hard things against us.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did exhort my brethren, with all diligence, to keep the commandments of the Lord. And it came to pass that they did humble themselves before the Lord; insomuch that I had joy and great hopes of them, that they would walk in the paths of righteousness. Now, all these things were said and done as my father dwelt in a tent in the valley which he called Lemuel.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, took one of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also, my brethren took of the daughters of Ishmael to wife; and also Zoram took the eldest daughter of Ishmael to wife. And thus my father had fulfilled all the commandments of the Lord which had been given unto him. And also, I, Nephi, had been blessed of the Lord exceedingly.

And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord spake unto my father by night, and commanded him that on the morrow he should take his journey into the wilderness. And it came to pass that as my father arose in the morning, and went forth to the tent door, to his great astonishment he beheld upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass. And within the ball were two spindles; and the one pointed the way whither we should go into the wilderness.

And it came to pass that we did gather together whatsoever things we should carry into the wilderness, and all the remainder of our provisions which the Lord had given unto us; and we did take seed of every kind that we might carry into the wilderness. And it came to pass that we did take our tents and depart into the wilderness, across the river Laman. And it came to pass that we traveled for the space of four days, nearly a south-southeast direction, and we did pitch our tents again; and we did call the name of the place Shazer.

And it came to pass that we did take our bows and our arrows, and go forth into the wilderness to slay food for our families; and after we had slain food for our families we did return again to our families in the wilderness, to the place of Shazer. And we did go forth again in the wilderness, following the same direction, keeping in the most fertile parts of the wilderness, which were in the borders near the Red Sea. And it came to pass that we did travel for the space of many days, slaying food by the way, with our bows and our arrows and our stones and our slings. And we did follow the directions of the ball, which led us in the more fertile parts of the wilderness.

And after we had traveled for the space of many days, we did pitch our tents for the space of a time, that we might again rest ourselves and

obtain food for our families. And it came to pass that as I, Nephi, went forth to slay food, behold, I did break my bow, which was made of fine steel; and after I did break my bow, behold, my brethren were angry with me because of the loss of my bow, for we did obtain no food. And it came to pass that we did return without food to our families, and being much fatigued, because of their journeying, they did suffer much for the want of food.

And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael did begin to murmur exceedingly, because of their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness; and also my father began to murmur against the Lord his God; yea, and they were all exceedingly sorrowful, even that they did murmur against the Lord. Now it came to pass that I, Nephi, having been afflicted with my brethren because of the loss of my bow, and their bows having lost their springs, it began to be exceedingly difficult, yea, insomuch that we could obtain no food. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did speak much unto my brethren, because they had hardened their hearts again, even unto complaining against the Lord their God.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make out of wood a bow, and out of a straight stick, an arrow; wherefore, I did arm myself with a bow and an arrow, with a sling and with stones. And I said unto my father: Whither shall I go to obtain food? And it came to pass that he did inquire of the Lord, for they had humbled themselves because of my words; for I did say many things unto them in the energy of my soul. And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came unto my father; and he was truly chastened because of his murmuring against the Lord, insomuch that he was brought down into the depths of sorrow.

And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord said unto him: Look upon the ball, and behold the things which are written. And it came to pass that when my father beheld the things which were written upon the ball, he did fear and tremble exceedingly, and also my brethren and the sons of Ishmael and our wives. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the pointers which were in the ball, that they did work according to the faith and diligence and heed which we did give unto them. And there

was also written upon them a new writing, which was plain to be read, which did give us understanding concerning the ways of the Lord; and it was written and changed from time to time, according to the faith and diligence which we gave unto it. And thus we see that by small means the Lord can bring about great things.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did go forth up into the top of the mountain, according to the directions which were given upon the ball. And it came to pass that I did slay wild beasts, insomuch that I did obtain food for our families. And it came to pass that I did return to our tents, bearing the beasts which I had slain; and now when they beheld that I had obtained food, how great was their joy! And it came to pass that they did humble themselves before the Lord, and did give thanks unto him.

And it came to pass that we did again take our journey, traveling nearly the same course as in the beginning; and after we had traveled for the space of many days we did pitch our tents again, that we might tarry for the space of a time. And it came to pass that Ishmael died, and was buried in the place which was called Nahom. And it came to pass that the daughters of Ishmael did mourn exceedingly, because of the loss of their father, and because of their afflictions in the wilderness; and they did murmur against my father, because he had brought them out of the land of Jerusalem, saying: Our father is dead; yea, and we have wandered much in the wilderness, and we have suffered much affliction, hunger, thirst, and fatigue; and after all these sufferings we must perish in the wilderness with hunger. And thus they did murmur against my father, and also against me; and they were desirous to return again to Jerusalem.

And Laman said unto Lemuel and also unto the sons of Ishmael: Behold, let us slay our father, and also our brother Nephi, who has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, who are his elder brethren. Now, he says that the Lord has talked with him, and also that angels have ministered unto him. But behold, we know that he lies unto us; and he tells us these things, and he worketh many things by his cunning arts, that he may deceive our eyes, thinking, perhaps, that he may lead

us away into some strange wilderness; and after he has led us away, he has thought to make himself a king and a ruler over us, that he may do with us according to his will and pleasure. And after this manner did my brother Laman stir up their hearts to anger.

And it came to pass that the Lord was with us, yea, even the voice of the Lord came and did speak many words unto them, and did chasten them exceedingly; and after they were chastened by the voice of the Lord they did turn away their anger, and did repent of their sins, insomuch that the Lord did bless us again with food, that we did not perish.

[17] And it came to pass that we did again take our journey in the wilderness; and we did travel nearly eastward from that time forth. And we did travel and wade through much affliction in the wilderness; and our women did bear children in the wilderness. And so great were the blessings of the Lord upon us, that while we did live upon raw meat in the wilderness, our women did give plenty of suck for their children, and were strong, yea, even like unto the men; and they began to bear their journeyings without murmurings.

And thus we see that the commandments of God must be fulfilled. And if it so be that the children of men keep the commandments of God he doth nourish them, and strengthen them, and provide means whereby they can accomplish the thing which he has commanded them. Wherefore, he did provide means for us while we did sojourn in the wilderness. And we did sojourn for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness.

And we did come to the land which we called Bountiful, because of its much fruit and also wild honey; and all these things were prepared of the Lord that we might not perish. And we beheld the sea, which we called Irreantum, which, being interpreted, is many waters. And it came to pass that we did pitch our tents by the seashore; and notwithstanding we had suffered many afflictions and much difficulty, yea, even so much that we cannot write them all, we were exceedingly rejoiced when we

came to the seashore; and we called the place Bountiful, because of its much fruit.

And it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had been in the land of Bountiful for the space of many days, the voice of the Lord came unto me, saying: Arise, and get thee into the mountain. And it came to pass that I arose and went up into the mountain, and cried unto the Lord.

And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: Thou shalt construct a ship, after the manner which I shall show thee, that I may carry thy people across these waters.

And I said: Lord, whither shall I go that I may find ore to molten, that I may make tools to construct the ship after the manner which thou hast shown unto me? And it came to pass that the Lord told me whither I should go to find ore, that I might make tools.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make a bellows wherewith to blow the fire, of the skins of beasts; and after I had made a bellows, that I might have wherewith to blow the fire, I did smite two stones together that I might make fire. For the Lord had not hitherto suffered that we should make much fire, as we journeyed in the wilderness; for he said: I will make thy food become sweet, that ye cook it not; and I will also be your light in the wilderness; and I will prepare the way before you, if it so be that ye shall keep my commandments; wherefore, inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall be led towards the promised land; and ye shall know that it is by me that ye are led. Yea, and the Lord said also that: After ye have arrived in the promised land, ye shall know that I, the Lord, am God; and that I, the Lord, did deliver you from destruction; yea, that I did bring you out of the land of Jerusalem.

Wherefore, I, Nephi, did strive to keep the commandments of the Lord, and I did exhort my brethren to faithfulness and diligence. And it came to pass that I did make tools of the ore which I did molten out of the rock. And when my brethren saw that I was about to build a ship, they began to murmur against me, saying: Our brother is a fool, for he thinketh that he can build a ship; yea, and he also thinketh that he can

cross these great waters. And thus my brethren did complain against me, and were desirous that they might not labor, for they did not believe that I could build a ship; neither would they believe that I was instructed of the Lord.

And now it came to pass that I, Nephi, was exceedingly sorrowful because of the hardness of their hearts; and now when they saw that I began to be sorrowful they were glad in their hearts, insomuch that they did rejoice over me, saying:

> We knew that ye could not construct a ship, for we knew that ye were lacking in judgment; wherefore, thou canst not accomplish so great a work. And thou art like unto our father, led away by the foolish imaginations of his heart; yea, he hath led us out of the land of Jerusalem, and we have wandered in the wilderness for these many years; and our women have toiled, being big with child; and they have borne children in the wilderness and suffered all things, save it were death; and it would have been better that they had died before they came out of Jerusalem than to have suffered these afflictions. Behold, these many years we have suffered in the wilderness, which time we might have enjoyed our possessions and the land of our inheritance; yea, and we might have been happy.
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> And we know that the people who were in the land of Jerusalem were a righteous people; for they kept the statutes and judgments of the Lord, and all his commandments, according to the law of Moses; wherefore, we know that they are a righteous people; and our father hath judged them, and hath led us away because we would hearken unto his words; yea, and our brother is like unto him. And after this manner of language did my brethren murmur and complain against us.

And it came to pass that I, Nephi, spake unto them, saying:

> Do ye believe that our fathers, who were the children of Israel, would have been led away out of the hands of the Egyptians if they had not hearkened unto the words of the Lord? Yea, do ye suppose

that they would have been led out of bondage, if the Lord had not commanded Moses that he should lead them out of bondage? Now ye know that the children of Israel were in bondage; and ye know that they were laden with tasks, which were grievous to be borne; wherefore, ye know that it must needs be a good thing for them, that they should be brought out of bondage.

Now ye know that Moses was commanded of the Lord to do that great work; and ye know that by his word the waters of the Red Sea were divided hither and thither, and they passed through on dry ground. But ye know that the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, who were the armies of Pharaoh. And ye also know that they were fed with manna in the wilderness. Yea, and ye also know that Moses, by his word according to the power of God which was in him, smote the rock, and there came forth water, that the children of Israel might quench their thirst.

And notwithstanding they being led, the Lord their God, their Redeemer, going before them, leading them by day and giving light unto them by night, and doing all things for them which were expedient for man to receive, they hardened their hearts and blinded their minds, and reviled against Moses and against the true and living God. And it came to pass that according to his word he did destroy them; and according to his word he did lead them; and according to his word he did do all things for them; and there was not any thing done save it were by his word.

And after they had crossed the river Jordan he did make them mighty unto the driving out of the children of the land, yea, unto the scattering them to destruction. And now, do ye suppose that the children of this land, who were in the land of promise, who were driven out by our fathers, do ye suppose that they were righteous? Behold, I say unto you, Nay. Do ye suppose that our fathers would have been more choice than they if they had been righteous? I say unto you, Nay.

Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God. But behold, this people had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity; and the fulness of the wrath of God was upon them; and the Lord did curse the land against them,

and bless it unto our fathers; yea, he did curse it against them unto their destruction, and he did bless it unto our fathers unto their obtaining power over it.

Behold, the Lord hath created the earth that it should be inhabited;
and he hath created his children that they should possess it.
And he raiseth up a righteous nation,
and destroyeth the nations of the wicked.

And he leadeth away the righteous into precious lands,
and the wicked he destroyeth,
and curseth the land unto them for their sakes.

He ruleth high in the heavens, for it is his throne,
and this earth is his footstool.
And he loveth those who will have him to be their God.

Behold, he loved our fathers, and he covenanted with them, yea, even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and he remembered the covenants which he had made; wherefore, he did bring them out of the land of Egypt. And he did straiten them in the wilderness with his rod; for they hardened their hearts, even as ye have; and the Lord straitened them because of their iniquity. He sent fiery flying serpents among them; and after they were bitten he prepared a way that they might be healed; and the labor which they had to perform was to look; and because of the simpleness of the way, or the easiness of it, there were many who perished.

And they did harden their hearts from time to time, and they did revile against Moses, and also against God; nevertheless, ye know that they were led forth by his matchless power into the land of promise. And now, after all these things, the time has come that they have become wicked, yea, nearly unto ripeness; and I know not but they are at this day about to be destroyed; for I know that the day must surely come that they must be destroyed, save a few only, who shall be led away into captivity. Wherefore, the Lord commanded my father that he should depart into the wilderness; and the Jews also sought to take away his life; yea, and ye also have sought to

take away his life; wherefore, ye are murderers in your hearts and ye are like unto them.

Ye are swift to do iniquity but slow to remember the Lord your God. Ye have seen an angel, and he spake unto you; yea, ye have heard his voice from time to time; and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but ye were past feeling, that ye could not feel his words; wherefore, he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder, which did cause the earth to shake as if it were to divide asunder. And ye also know that by the power of his almighty word he can cause the earth that it shall pass away; yea, and ye know that by his word he can cause the rough places to be made smooth, and smooth places shall be broken up. O, then, why is it, that ye can be so hard in your hearts? Behold, my soul is rent with anguish because of you, and my heart is pained; I fear lest ye shall be cast off forever. Behold, I am full of the Spirit of God, insomuch that my frame has no strength.

And now it came to pass that when I had spoken these words they were angry with me, and were desirous to throw me into the depths of the sea; and as they came forth to lay their hands upon me I spake unto them, saying: In the name of the Almighty God, I command you that ye touch me not, for I am filled with the power of God, even unto the consuming of my flesh; and whoso shall lay his hands upon me shall wither even as a dried reed; and he shall be as naught before the power of God, for God shall smite him. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto them that they should murmur no more against their father; neither should they withhold their labor from me, for God had commanded me that I should build a ship.

And I said unto them: If God had commanded me to do all things I could do them. If he should command me that I should say unto this water, be thou earth, it should be earth; and if I should say it, it would be done. And now, if the Lord has such great power, and has wrought so many miracles among the children of men, how is it that he cannot instruct me, that I should build a ship? And it came to pass that

I, Nephi, said many things unto my brethren, insomuch that they were confounded and could not contend against me; neither durst they lay their hands upon me nor touch me with their fingers, even for the space of many days. Now they durst not do this lest they should wither before me, so powerful was the Spirit of God; and thus it had wrought upon them.

And it came to pass that the Lord said unto me: Stretch forth thine hand again unto thy brethren, and they shall not wither before thee, but I will shake* them, saith the Lord, and this will I do, that they may know that I am the Lord their God. And it came to pass that I stretched forth my hand unto my brethren, and they did not wither before me; but the Lord did shake them, even according to the word which he had spoken. And now, they said: We know of a surety that the Lord is with thee, for we know that it is the power of the Lord that has shaken us.

And they fell down before me, and were about to worship me, but I would not suffer them, saying: I am thy brother, yea, even thy younger brother; wherefore, worship the Lord thy God, and honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee.

[18] And it came to pass that they did worship the Lord, and did go forth with me; and we did work timbers of curious workmanship. And the Lord did show me from time to time after what manner I should work the timbers of the ship. Now I, Nephi, did not work the timbers after the manner which was learned by men, neither did I build the ship after the manner of men; but I did build it after the manner which the Lord had shown unto me; wherefore, it was not after the manner of men. And I, Nephi, did go into the mount oft, and I did pray oft unto the Lord; wherefore the Lord showed unto me great things. And it came to pass that after I had finished the ship, according to the word of the Lord, my brethren beheld that it was good, and that the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine; wherefore, they did humble themselves again before the Lord.

And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came unto my father, that we should arise and go down into the ship. And it came to pass that on the morrow, after we had prepared all things, much fruits and meat from the wilderness, and honey in abundance, and provisions according to that which the Lord had commanded us, we did go down into the ship, with all our loading and our seeds, and whatsoever thing we had brought with us, every one according to his age; wherefore, we did all go down into the ship, with our wives and our children. (And now, my father had begat two sons in the wilderness; the elder was called Jacob and the younger Joseph.) And it came to pass after we had all gone down into the ship, and had taken with us our provisions and things which had been commanded us, we did put forth into the sea and were driven forth before the wind towards the promised land.

And after we had been driven forth before the wind for the space of many days, behold, my brethren and the sons of Ishmael and also their wives began to make themselves merry, insomuch that they began to dance, and to sing, and to speak with much rudeness, yea, even that they did forget by what power they had been brought thither; yea, they were lifted up unto exceeding rudeness. And I, Nephi, began to fear exceedingly lest the Lord should be angry with us, and smite us because of our iniquity, that we should be swallowed up in the depths of the sea; wherefore, I, Nephi, began to speak to them with much soberness; but behold they were angry with me, saying: We will not that our younger brother shall be a ruler over us.

And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel did take me and bind me with cords, and they did treat me with much harshness; nevertheless, the Lord did suffer it that he might show forth his power, unto the fulfilling of his word which he had spoken concerning the wicked. And it came to pass that after they had bound me insomuch that I could not move, the compass, which had been prepared of the Lord, did cease to work. Wherefore, they knew not whither they should steer the ship, insomuch that there arose a great storm, yea, a great and terrible tempest, and we

were driven back upon the waters for the space of three days; and they began to be frightened exceedingly lest they should be drowned in the sea; nevertheless they did not loose me. And on the fourth day, which we had been driven back, the tempest began to be exceedingly sore. And it came to pass that we were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea.

And after we had been driven back upon the waters for the space of four days, my brethren began to see that the judgments of God were upon them, and that they must perish save that they should repent of their iniquities; wherefore, they came unto me, and loosed the bands which were upon my wrists, and behold they had swollen exceedingly; and also mine ankles were much swollen, and great was the soreness thereof. Nevertheless, I did look unto my God, and I did praise him all the day long; and I did not murmur against the Lord because of mine afflictions.

Now my father, Lehi, had said many things unto them, and also unto the sons of Ishmael; but, behold, they did breathe out much threatenings against anyone that should speak for me; and my parents being stricken in years, and having suffered much grief because of their children, they were brought down, yea, even upon their sick-beds. Because of their grief and much sorrow, and the iniquity of my brethren, they were brought near even to be carried out of this time to meet their God; yea, their grey hairs were about to be brought down to lie low in the dust; yea, even they were near to be cast with sorrow into a watery grave.

And Jacob and Joseph also, being young, having need of much nourishment, were grieved because of the afflictions of their mother; and also my wife with her tears and prayers, and also my children, did not soften the hearts of my brethren that they would loose me. And there was nothing save it were the power of God, which threatened them with destruction, could soften their hearts; wherefore, when they saw that they were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea they repented of the thing which they had done, insomuch that they loosed me.

And it came to pass after they had loosed me, behold, I took the compass, and it did work whither I desired it. And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord; and after I had prayed the winds did cease, and the storm did cease, and there was a great calm. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did guide the ship, that we sailed again towards the promised land.

And it came to pass that after we had sailed for the space of many days we did arrive at the promised land; and we went forth upon the land, and did pitch our tents; and we did call it the promised land. And it came to pass 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. And it came to pass that they did grow exceedingly; wherefore, we were blessed in abundance. And it came to pass that we did find upon the land of promise, as we journeyed in the wilderness, that there were beasts in the forests of every kind, both the cow and the ox, and the ass and the horse, and the goat and the wild goat, and all manner of wild animals, which were for the use of men. And we did find all manner of ore, both of gold, and of silver, and of copper.

[19] And it came to pass that the Lord commanded me, wherefore I did make plates of ore that I might engraven upon them the record of my people. And upon the plates which I made I did engraven the record of my father, and also our journeyings in the wilderness, and the prophecies of my father; and also many of mine own prophecies have I engraven upon them.

And I knew not at the time when I made them that I should be commanded of the Lord to make these plates; wherefore, the record of my father, and the genealogy of his fathers, and the more part of all our proceedings in the wilderness are engraven upon those first plates of which I have spoken; wherefore, the things which transpired before I made these plates are, of a truth, more particularly made mention upon the first plates.

And after I had made these plates by way of commandment, I, Nephi, received a commandment that the ministry and the prophecies, the more plain and precious parts of them, should be written upon these plates; and that the things which were written should be kept for the instruction of my people, who should possess the land, and also for other wise purposes, which purposes are known unto the Lord. Wherefore, I, Nephi, did make a record upon the other plates, which gives an account, or which gives a greater account of the wars and contentions and destructions of my people. And this have I done, and commanded my people what they should do after I was gone; and that these plates should be handed down from one generation to another, or from one prophet to another, until further commandments of the Lord.

And an account of my making these plates shall be given hereafter; and then, behold, I proceed according to that which I have spoken; and this I do that the more sacred things may be kept for the knowledge of my people. Nevertheless, I do not write anything upon plates save it be that I think it be sacred. And now, if I do err, even did they err of old; not that I would excuse myself because of other men, but because of the weakness which is in me, according to the flesh, I would excuse myself. For the things which some men esteem to be of great worth, both to the body and soul, others set at naught and trample under their feet. Yea, even the very God of Israel do men trample under their feet; I say, trample under their feet but I would speak in other words—they set him at naught, and hearken not to the voice of his counsels.

And behold he cometh, according to the words of the angel, in six hundred years from the time my father left Jerusalem. And the world, because of their iniquity, shall judge him to be a thing of naught; wherefore

they scourge him, and he suffereth it;
and they smite him, and he suffereth it;
yea, they spit upon him, and he suffereth it,

because of his loving kindness and his long-suffering towards the children of men. And the God of our fathers, who were led out of Egypt, out of bondage, and also were preserved in the wilderness by him, yea, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, yieldeth himself, according to the words of the angel, as a man, into the hands of wicked men, to be lifted up, according to the words of Zenock, and to be crucified, according to the words of Neum, and to be buried in a sepulchre, according to the words of Zenos, which he spake concerning the three days of darkness, which should be a sign given of his death unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea, more especially given unto those who are of the house of Israel.

For thus spake the prophet:

> The Lord God surely shall visit all the house of Israel at that day, some with his voice, because of their righteousness, unto their great joy and salvation, and others with the thunderings and the lightnings of his power, by tempest, by fire, and by smoke, and vapor of darkness, and by the opening of the earth, and by mountains which shall be carried up.

And all these things must surely come, saith the prophet Zenos.

> And the rocks of the earth must rend; and because of the groanings of the earth, many of the kings of the isles of the sea shall be wrought upon by the Spirit of God, to exclaim: The God of nature suffers.

And as for those who are at Jerusalem, saith the prophet,

> They shall be scourged by all people, because they crucify the God of Israel, and turn their hearts aside, rejecting signs and wonders, and the power and glory of the God of Israel.

And because they turn their hearts aside, saith the prophet, and have despised the Holy One of Israel, they shall wander in the flesh, and perish, and become a hiss and a byword, and be hated among all nations.

Nevertheless, when that day cometh, saith the prophet, that they no more turn aside their hearts against the Holy One of Israel, then will he remember the covenants which he made to their fathers. Yea, then will he remember the isles of the sea; yea, and all the people who are of the house of Israel, will I gather in, saith the Lord, according to the words of the prophet Zenos, from the four quarters of the earth. Yea, and all the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord, saith the prophet; every nation, kindred, tongue and people shall be blessed.

And I, Nephi, have written these things unto my people, that perhaps I might persuade them that they would remember the Lord their Redeemer. Wherefore, I speak unto all the house of Israel, if it so be that they should obtain these things. For behold, I have workings in the spirit, which doth weary me even that all my joints are weak, for those who are at Jerusalem; for had not the Lord been merciful, to show unto me concerning them, even as he had prophets of old, I should have perished also. And he surely did show unto the prophets of old all things concerning them; and also he did show unto many concerning us; wherefore, it must needs be that we know concerning them for they are written upon the plates of brass.

§

Now it came to pass that I, Nephi, did teach my brethren these things; and it came to pass that I did read many things to them, which were engraven upon the plates of brass, that they might know concerning the doings of the Lord in other lands, among people of old. And I did read many things unto them which were written in the books of Moses; but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning. Wherefore I spake unto them, saying:

Hear ye the words of the prophet,
ye who are a remnant of the house of Israel,
a branch who have been broken off;
hear ye the words of the prophet,
which were written unto all the house of Israel,
and liken them unto yourselves,

that ye may have hope as well as your brethren from whom ye have been broken off; for after this manner has the prophet written:

[20] *Hearken and hear this, O house of Jacob,*
who are called by the name of Israel,
and are come forth out of the waters of Judah,
[*or out of the waters of baptism,*][1]
who swear by the name of the Lord,
and make mention of the God of Israel,
yet they swear not in truth nor in righteousness.
Nevertheless, they call themselves of the holy city,
but they do not stay themselves upon the God of Israel,
who is the Lord of Hosts;
yea, the Lord of Hosts is his name.

Behold, I have declared the former things from the beginning;
and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them.
I did show them suddenly.
And I did it because I knew that thou art obstinate,
and thy neck is an iron sinew,
and thy brow brass;
and I have even from the beginning declared to thee;
before it came to pass I showed them thee;

1. The bracketed words were added by Joseph Smith while preparing the third (1840) edition of the Book of Mormon for publication.

and I showed them for fear lest thou shouldst say—
Mine idol hath done them,
and my graven image,
and my molten image hath commanded them.

Thou hast seen and heard all this;
and will ye not declare them?
And that I have showed thee new things from this time,
even hidden things,
and thou didst not know them.
They are created now, and not from the beginning,
even before the day when thou heardest them not
they were declared unto thee,
lest thou shouldst say, Behold I knew them.
Yea, and thou heardest not;
yea, thou knewest not;
yea, from that time thine ear was not opened;
for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously,
and wast called a transgressor from the womb.

Nevertheless, for my name's sake will I defer mine anger,
and for my praise will I refrain from thee,
that I cut thee not off.
For, behold, I have refined thee,
I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.
For mine own sake, yea, for mine own sake will I do this,
for I will not suffer my name to be polluted,
and I will not give my glory unto another.

Hearken unto me, O Jacob,
and Israel my called,
for I am he; I am the first,
and I am also the last.
Mine hand hath also laid the foundation of the earth,

and my right hand hath spanned the heavens.
I call unto them and they stand up together.

All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear;
who among them hath declared these things unto them?
The Lord hath loved him;
yea, and he will fulfil his word which he hath declared by them;
and he will do his pleasure on Babylon,
and his arm shall come upon the Chaldeans.

Also, saith the Lord:
I the Lord, yea,
I have spoken; yea, I have called him to declare,
I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.
Come ye near unto me;
I have not spoken in secret;
from the beginning, from the time that it was declared have I spoken.

And the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

And thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel;
I have sent him, the Lord thy God who teacheth thee to profit,
who leadeth thee by the way thou shouldst go, hath done it.

O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments—
then had thy peace been as a river,
and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.
Thy seed also had been as the sand;
the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof;
his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans,
with a voice of singing declare ye,
tell this, utter to the end of the earth, say ye:
The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.
And they thirsted not; he led them through the deserts;

he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them;
he clave the rock also and the waters gushed out.
And notwithstanding he hath done all this, and greater also,
there is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.

[21] And again:

Hearken, O ye house of Israel,
all ye that are broken off and are driven out
because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people;
yea, all ye that are broken off, that are scattered abroad,
who are of my people, O house of Israel.
Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far;
the Lord hath called me from the womb;
from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.
And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me,
and made me a polished shaft;
in his quiver hath he hid me;
and said unto me: Thou art my servant, O Israel,
in whom I will be glorified.
Then I said, I have labored in vain,
I have spent my strength for naught and in vain;
surely my judgment is with the Lord,
and my work with my God.

And now, saith the Lord
that formed me from the womb
that I should be his servant
to bring Jacob again to him;
Though Israel be not gathered,
yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord,
and my God shall be my strength—

And he said:

It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob,
and to restore the preserved of Israel.
I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles,
that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.
Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One,
to him whom man despiseth,
to him whom the nations abhorreth,
to servant of rulers:
Kings shall see and arise,
princes also shall worship,
because of the Lord that is faithful.

Thus saith the Lord:
In an acceptable time have I heard thee, O isles of the sea,
and in a day of salvation have I helped thee;
and I will preserve thee,
and give thee my servant for a covenant of the people,
to establish the earth,
to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;
that thou mayest say to the prisoners: Go forth;
to them that sit in darkness: Show yourselves.
They shall feed in the ways,
and their pastures shall be in all high places.
They shall not hunger nor thirst,
neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them;
for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them,
even by the springs of water shall he guide them.
And I will make all my mountains a way,
and my highways shall be exalted.

And then, O house of Israel,
behold, these shall come from far;
and lo, these from the north and from the west;

and these from the land of Sinim.
Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth;
for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established;
and break forth into singing, O mountains;
for they shall be smitten no more;
for the Lord hath comforted his people,
and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

But, behold, Zion hath said:
The Lord hath forsaken me,
and my Lord hath forgotten me.
But he will show that he hath not.
For can a woman forget her sucking child,
that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?
Yea, they may forget,
yet will I not forget thee, O house of Israel.
Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands;
thy walls are continually before me.

Thy children shall make haste against thy destroyers;
and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.
Lift up thine eyes round about and behold:
all these gather themselves together,
and they shall come to thee.
And as I live, saith the Lord,
thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all
as with an ornament,
and bind them on even as a bride.
For thy waste and thy desolate places,
and the land of thy destruction,
shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants,
and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.
The children whom thou shalt have,
after thou hast lost the first,

shall again in thine ears say:
The place is too strait for me;
give place to me that I may dwell.
Then shalt thou say in thine heart:
Who hath begotten me these,
seeing I have lost my children,
and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro?
And who hath brought up these?
Behold, I was left alone;
these, where have they been?

Thus saith the Lord God:
Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles,
and set up my standard to the people;
and they shall bring thy sons in their arms,
and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.
And kings shall be thy nursing fathers,
and their queens thy nursing mothers;
they shall bow down to thee with their face towards the earth,
and lick up the dust of thy feet;
and thou shalt know that I am the Lord;
for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.
For shall the prey be taken from the mighty,
or the lawful captives delivered?

But thus saith the Lord,
even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away,
and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered;
for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee,
and I will save thy children.
And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh;
they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine;
and all flesh shall know that I, the Lord,
am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

§

[22] And now it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had read these things which were engraven upon the plates of brass, my brethren came unto me and said unto me: What meaneth these things which ye have read? Behold, are they to be understood according to things which are spiritual, which shall come to pass according to the spirit and not the flesh?

And I, Nephi, said unto them: Behold they were manifest unto the prophet by the voice of the Spirit; for by the Spirit are all things made known unto the prophets, which shall come upon the children of men according to the flesh. Wherefore, the things of which I have read are things pertaining to things both temporal and spiritual; for it appears that the house of Israel, sooner or later, will be scattered upon all the face of the earth, and also among all nations.

And behold, there are many who are already lost from the knowledge of those who are at Jerusalem. Yea, the more part of all the tribes have been led away; and they are scattered to and fro upon the isles of the sea; and whither they are none of us knoweth, save that we know that they have been led away. And since they have been led away, these things have been prophesied concerning them, and also concerning all those who shall hereafter be scattered and be confounded, because of the Holy One of Israel; for against him will they harden their hearts; wherefore, they shall be scattered among all nations and shall be hated of all men.

Nevertheless, after they shall be nursed by the Gentiles, and the Lord has lifted up his hand upon the Gentiles and set them up for a standard, and their children have been carried in their arms, and their daughters have been carried upon their shoulders, behold these things of which are spoken are temporal; for thus are the covenants of the Lord with our fathers; and it meaneth us in the days to come, and also all our brethren who are of the house of Israel. And it meaneth that the time cometh that after all the house of Israel have been scattered and confounded, that the Lord God will raise up a mighty nation among the Gentiles, yea, even

upon the face of this land; and by them shall our seed be scattered. And after our seed is scattered the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles, which shall be of great worth unto our seed; wherefore, it is likened unto their being nourished by the Gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders.

And it shall also be of worth unto the Gentiles; and not only unto the Gentiles but unto all the house of Israel, unto the making known of the covenants of the Father of heaven unto Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. And I would, my brethren, that ye should know that all the kindreds of the earth cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations. Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel. Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel.

And the blood of that great and abominable church, which is the whore of all the earth, shall turn upon their own heads; for they shall war among themselves, and the sword of their own hands shall fall upon their own heads, and they shall be drunken with their own blood. And every nation which shall war against thee, O house of Israel, shall be turned one against another, and they shall fall into the pit which they digged to ensnare the people of the Lord. And all that fight against Zion shall be destroyed, and that great whore, who hath perverted the right ways of the Lord, yea, that great and abominable church, shall tumble to the dust and great shall be the fall of it.

For behold, saith the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned. For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out

upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous. Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.

Behold, my brethren, I say unto you, that these things must shortly come; yea, even blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke must come; and it must needs be upon the face of this earth; and it cometh unto men according to the flesh if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel. For behold, the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off.

And the Lord will surely prepare a way for his people, unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses, which he spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that all those who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people. And now I, Nephi, declare unto you, that this prophet of whom Moses spake was the Holy One of Israel; wherefore, he shall execute judgment in righteousness. And the righteous need not fear, for they are those who shall not be confounded. But it is the kingdom of the devil, which shall be built up among the children of men, which kingdom is established among them which are in the flesh. For the time speedily shall come that all churches which are built up to get gain, and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and tremble, and quake; they are those who must be brought low in the dust; they are those who must be consumed as stubble; and this is according to the words of the prophet.

And the time cometh speedily that the righteous must be led up as calves of the stall, and the Holy One of Israel must reign in dominion, and might, and power, and great glory. And he gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth; and he numbereth his sheep, and they know him; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd; and he shall feed his sheep, and in him they shall find pasture. And because of the righteousness of his people, Satan has no power; wherefore, he cannot be loosed for the space of many years; for he hath no power over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness, and the Holy One of Israel reigneth.

And now behold, I, Nephi, say unto you that all these things must come according to the flesh. But, behold, all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel if it so be that they will repent. And now I, Nephi, make an end; for I durst not speak further as yet concerning these things.

Wherefore, my brethren, I would that ye should consider that the things which have been written upon the plates of brass are true; and they testify that a man must be obedient to the commandments of God. Wherefore, ye need not suppose that I and my father are the only ones that have testified, and also taught them. Wherefore, if ye shall be obedient to the commandments, and endure to the end, ye shall be saved at the last day. And thus it is. Amen.

PROOF

Appendix

The Testimony of Three Witnesses

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety, that the work is true.

And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shewn unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things.

And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

OLIVER COWDERY,
DAVID WHITMER,
MARTIN HARRIS.

And Also the Testimony of Eight Witnesses

Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of this work, has shewn unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated, we did handle with our hands: and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shewn unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety, that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world to witness unto the world that which we have seen; and we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

CHRISTIAN WHITMER,
JACOB WHITMER,
PETER WHITMER, JR.,
JOHN WHITMER,
HIRAM PAGE,
JOSEPH SMITH, SEN.,
HYRUM SMITH,
SAMUEL H. SMITH.

Variant Readings

As explained in the introduction, there is no definitive version of the Book of Mormon text. The closest we can get to the original, based on rigorous examination and analysis of the Book of Mormon manuscripts, is the version produced by BYU linguistics professor Royal Skousen in his monumental work *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, published by Yale University Press in 2009.

The Readable Scriptures edition incorporates some of the most significant variant readings identified by Professor Skousen in his work with the original manuscripts, making it slightly different in places from the version currently published by the Church. The reasons for the variants usually involve scribal or typographical errors that have been perpetuated through the years. Readers who want more information should consult Skousen's article "The Systematic Text of the Book of Mormon," in *Uncovering the Original Text of the Book of Mormon: History and Findings of the Critical Text Project,* edited by M. Gerald Bradford and Alison V. P. Couts (Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2002).

In the list below, the standard reading is given first, followed by the variant reading:

standard reading > variant reading

For example, the standard reading in 1 Nephi 8:31 is "And he also saw other multitudes feeling their way towards that great and spacious building." This edition uses the variant reading "And he also saw other multitudes pressing* their way towards that great and spacious building,"

which is the original text as translated by Joseph Smith. Here is the list of the variant readings used in this edition:

1 Nephi 7:5 household > whole household

1 Nephi 8:31 feeling > pressing

1 Nephi 10:19 these times > this time

1 Nephi 12:18 word > sword

1 Nephi 13:24 Lord > Lamb

1 Nephi 13:32 blindness > wickedness

1 Nephi 15:16 remembered > numbered

1 Nephi 15:35 preparator > proprietor

1 Nephi 15:36 rejected > separated

1 Nephi 17:53 shock > shake

2 Nephi 2:11 holiness > happiness

2 Nephi 24:25 bring > break

2 Nephi 28:23 death, and hell; and death, and hell, and the devil > death, and hell, and the devil

Jacob 1:11 whatever > whatsoever

Jacob 2:35 iniquities > iniquity

Jacob 5:46 hoped > hope

Jacob 5:64 be so > so be

Enos 1:24 and Lamanites > and the Lamanites

Mosiah 4:30 observe the commandments > observe to keep the commandments

Mosiah 17:10 until > unto

Mosiah 17:10 scourged > scorched

Mosiah 26:9 did not know . . . but > did know . . . for

Alma 1:24 remembered > numbered

Alma 3:14 on > upon

Alma 3:27 endeth > ended

Alma 17:1 met with > met

Alma 19:30 clasped > clapped

Alma 21–27, 43 Amalekites > Amlicites

Alma 27:24 condition > conditions

Alma 33:21 be healed > behold

Alma 39:12–13 that wrong > repair that wrong

Alma 42:15 perfect, just > perfectly just

Alma 42:16 punishment, which also was eternal as the life of the soul should be, > punishment—which also was eternal as the life of the soul—should be

Alma 43:14 descendants > dissenters

Alma 43:17 captain > commander

Alma 47:13 a > the

Alma 48:21 year, yea, > year

Alma 51:7 many of > among

Alma 51:15 read > heed

Alma 51:37 endeth > ended

Alma 51:37 endeth > ended

Alma 53:6 of Nephi > of the Nephites

Alma 54:13 ourselves > our lives

Alma 57:12 unto > into

Helaman 3:3 forty and sixth, yea, > forty and sixth year,

Helaman 3:5 whatever > whatsoever

Helaman 6:37 more > less

Helaman 14:18 condition > conditions

Mormon 8:28 rise > be lifted up

Ether 2:20 be so > so be

Ether 14:17 women and children > men, women, and children

Jack M. Lyon, previously managing editor at Deseret Book Company, is a writer and publisher, the owner and operator of Waking Lion Press and Temple Hill Books. At Deseret Book, he helped proofread the 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon. He also edited *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley, The Papers of Joseph Smith,* and hundreds of other publications during a career of more than twenty-five years.

The Readable Scriptures is a multi-volume project that currently includes the Book of Mormon and the New Testament. Future volumes will include the Old Testament, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

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Cover photograph, detail, Tree of Life, from the sarcophagus of K'inich Janaab' Pakal, Palenque, Mexico, A.D. 683.