

## November 11–17: Ether 1–5, “Rend that Veil of Unbelief”

### Overview

Let's recall where the Book of Ether came from.

Limhi was king over the group of Nephites that had left Zarahemla to live in the land of Nephi. His people were in bondage to the Lamanites so Limhi sent a scouting party to find Zarahemla. Before finding Limhi they found a land covered with ruins and bones. As a testimony of what they found they brought back "24 gold plates which [were] filled with engravings." Limhi gave these plates to Mosiah to translate.

The book of Ether contains Moroni's abridgment of that record.

Mosiah 28:17-19

17 Now after Mosiah had finished translating these records, behold, it gave an account of the people who were destroyed, from the time that they were destroyed back to the building of the great tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people and they were scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth, yea, and even from that time back until the creation of Adam.

18 Now this account did cause the people of Mosiah to mourn exceedingly, yea, they were filled with sorrow; nevertheless it gave them much knowledge, in the which they did rejoice.

19 And this account shall be written hereafter; for behold, it is expedient that all people should know the things which are written in this account.

What is stated time frame of this record?

(back to the building of the great tower  
even from that time back until the creation of Adam)

Note that Mormon felt it was important that we have this account and stated that it would be "written here after". Recall that in Mormon 8:1, Moroni stated, "I have but few things to write, which things I have been commanded by my father".

Moroni was fulfilling his fathers intent when he abridged the record and included it in the Book of Mormon for our study

The record begins with the account of Jared and his brother.  
What is the brother of Jared's name and how do we know?

(Mahonri Moriancumer - Reynolds Cahoon had Joseph Smith name his baby)

### Promised Land

At the time of the tower Jared desires that the Lord delivers him, his family, and their

posterity to a choice land

Ether 1:38

38 And it came to pass that Jared spake again unto his brother, saying: Go and inquire of the Lord whether he will drive us out of the land, and if he will drive us out of the land, cry unto him whither we shall go. And who knoweth but the Lord will carry us forth into a land which is choice above all the earth? And if it so be, let us be faithful unto the Lord, that we may receive it for our inheritance.

What did Jared realize that he and his family must do to receive this blessing from the Lord?

(let us be faithful unto the Lord, that we may receive it for our inheritance)

Moroni reminds us that this is a choice land and it has been preserved for a righteous people

Ether 2:7,10-12

7 And the Lord would not suffer that they should stop beyond the sea in the wilderness, but he would that they should come forth even unto the land of promise, which was choice above all other lands, which the Lord God had preserved for a righteous people.

10 For behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God or shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God. And it is not until the fulness of iniquity among the children of the land, that they are swept off.

11 And this cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God—that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fulness come, that ye may not bring down the fulness of the wrath of God upon you as the inhabitants of the land have hitherto done.

12 Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written.

What is the “everlasting decree of God” concerning this land?

(he that doth possess it shall serve God or shall be swept off)

At what point will the Lord sweep the inhabitants from of the face of this choice land?

(not until the fulness of iniquity... that they are swept off)

What do you think Moroni is referring to when he says, “this cometh unto you... that ye may know the decrees of God”?

The Book of Ether is a second witness of God's blessings and punishments

What is the promise to those on this choice land if they serve God?

(whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage)

Delbert L. Stapley

"The Lord also emphasized to this early prophet that whatsoever nation shall possess this land of promise shall serve God or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity. 'This,' said the prophet, 'is an everlasting decree of God.'

"Thus, from ancient American prophets, we learn that this United States of America was established by God for a divine purpose, and that great blessings, which all must admit, as we review the history of this nation, have so far been literally fulfilled; yet the fulfillment of future promise of blessings is conditional upon the continued righteousness of its people. A great challenge is presented to the citizens of this land if God is to be on our side and give us power as a nation to overcome our enemies and not be brought down into captivity." (CR, Oct. 1963)

Elder Stapley made the comment, "as we review the history of this nation, have so far been literally fulfilled"

Could you argue that this statement is as true today as it was in 1963?

Jared's family and friends were guided by the Lord to the sea that they needed to cross to get to their land of promise. There the Lord commanded them to build barges to cross the sea.

## Faith and Works

The story of brother of Jared's problem of lighting the barges gives us a great object lesson for one of our often quoted scriptures

D&C 9:7-8

7 Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.

8 But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.

With that in mind let's read what the Lord said to the brother of Jared when he came to him asking how to light the barges

Ether 2:22-25

22 And he cried again unto the Lord saying: O Lord, behold I have done even as thou hast commanded me; and I have prepared the vessels for my people, and behold there is no light in them. Behold, O Lord, wilt thou suffer that we shall cross this great water in darkness?

23 And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels? For behold, ye cannot have windows, for they will be dashed in pieces; neither shall ye take fire with you, for ye shall not go by the light of fire.

24 For behold, ye shall be as a whale in the midst of the sea; for the mountain waves shall dash upon you. Nevertheless, I will bring you up again out of the depths of the sea; for the winds have gone forth out of my mouth, and also the rains and the floods have I sent forth.

25 And behold, I prepare you against these things; for ye cannot cross this great deep save I prepare you against the waves of the sea, and the winds which have gone forth, and the floods which shall come. Therefore what will ye that I should prepare for you that ye may have light when ye are swallowed up in the depths of the sea?

The Lord makes it clear that they will face great difficulties while crossing the sea. But -

What does the Lord promise that he will do for them when they face these difficulties?

(the mountain waves shall dash upon you. Nevertheless, I will bring you up again  
for ye cannot cross this great deep save I prepare you against the waves of the sea, and the winds which have gone forth, and the floods which shall come)

Dwan J. Young

"How does a person venture out into the darkness without fear? How do any of us venture out day after day into a world where there are no guarantees of safety? The Lord gave a profound answer that again applies not just to the dark sea the brother of Jared faced, but to our own dark seas as well: 'Ye cannot cross this great deep save I prepare you against the waves of the sea.' 'I will bring you up again out of the depths of the sea.' The Lord was not going to spare the Jaredites from the experience, but he prepared them for it and gave them the sweet promise of bringing them up again out of the depths of the sea." (CR, Oct. 1986)

What was the Lord's response to the brother of Jared when he came to the Lord with his concerns about lighting the vessels?

(what will ye that I should prepare for you that ye may have light)

Dwan J. Young

"The Lord wanted the brother of Jared to suggest a solution, and he did well. He went to the mountain and refined out of a rock sixteen stones clear as

transparent glass. I cannot imagine that this was an easy task; it took time and faith. When he finished, he took these stones to the Lord." (CR, Oct. 1986)

Harold B. Lee

"Notice how the Lord dealt with this question. He said to the brother of Jared, 'What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels?' – as much as to say, 'Well, have you any good ideas? What would you suggest that we should do in order to have light?'" ("How to Receive a Blessing from God", Improvement Era, Oct. 1966)

Lets read about the solution that the brother of Jared presented

Ether 3:1,4-5

1 And it came to pass that the brother of Jared, (now the number of the vessels which had been prepared was eight) went forth unto the mount, which they called the mount Shelem, because of its exceeding height, and did molten out of a rock sixteen small stones; and they were white and clear, even as transparent glass; and he did carry them in his hands upon the top of the mount, and cried again unto the Lord, saying:

4 And I know, O Lord, that thou hast all power, and can do whatsoever thou wilt for the benefit of man; therefore touch these stones, O Lord, with thy finger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness; and they shall shine forth unto us in the vessels which we have prepared, that we may have light while we shall cross the sea.  
5 Behold, O Lord, thou canst do this. We know that thou art able to show forth great power, which looks small unto the understanding of men.

How do you think this solution proposed by the brother of Jared demonstrated his faith?

(I know, O Lord, that thou hast all power, and can do whatsoever thou wilt for the benefit of man  
Behold, O Lord, thou canst do this)

He demonstrated works with his faith

Harold B. Lee

"It was as though the Lord were saying to [the brother of Jared], 'Look, I gave you a mind to think with and I gave you agency to use it. Now you do all you can to help yourself with this problem; and then, after you've done all you can, I'll step in to help you.'...

"This is the principle in action. If you want the blessing, don't just kneel down and pray about it. Prepare yourselves in every conceivable way you can in order to make yourselves worthy to receive the blessing you seek." ("How to Receive a Blessing from God", Improvement Era, Oct. 1966)

Russell M. Nelson

"Often I have heard [President Hinckley] say, 'I don't know how to get anything done except getting on my knees and pleading for help and then getting on my feet and going to work.' Unshakable faith, hard work, and contagious optimism epitomize our prophet." (CR, Oct. 1997)

We learn that the faith of the brother of Jared was without precedent

Ether 3:6-13

6 And it came to pass that when the brother of Jared had said these words, behold, the Lord stretched forth his hand and touched the stones one by one with his finger.

And the veil was taken from off the eyes of the brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord; and it was as the finger of a man, like unto flesh and blood; and the brother of Jared fell down before the Lord, for he was struck with fear.

7 And the Lord saw that the brother of Jared had fallen to the earth; and the Lord said unto him: Arise, why hast thou fallen?

8 And he saith unto the Lord: I saw the finger of the Lord, and I feared lest he should smite me; for I knew not that the Lord had flesh and blood.

9 And the Lord said unto him: Because of thy faith thou hast seen that I shall take upon me flesh and blood; and never has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast; for were it not so ye could not have seen my finger. Sawest thou more than this?

10 And he answered: Nay; Lord, show thyself unto me.

11 And the Lord said unto him: Believest thou the words which I shall speak?

12 And he answered: Yea, Lord, I know that thou speakest the truth, for thou art a God of truth, and canst not lie.

13 And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said: Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore ye are brought back into my presence; therefore I show myself unto you.

What made it possible for him to see past the veil?

(Because of thy faith thou hast seen that I shall take upon me flesh and blood; and never has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast)

Christ states that "because thou KNOWEST these things... ye are brought back into my presence" -

How do you think faith and knowledge are related?

Bruce R. McConkie

"[Alma stated that] 'faith is not to have a perfect knowledge of things,' but that men have faith when they 'hope for things which are not seen, which are true.' In this sense faith is both preceded and supplanted by knowledge, and when any person gains a perfect knowledge on any given matter, then, as

pertaining to that thing, he has faith no longer; or, rather, his faith is dormant; it has been supplanted by pure knowledge.... The brother of Jared stands out as a good illustration of how the knowledge of God is gained by faith, and also of how that perfect knowledge, from a mortal perspective, replaces faith.” (The New Witness to the Articles of Faith, pg. 209-211)

## Sanctification

This helps us to better understand this next passage...

Ether 3:19-20

19 And because of the knowledge of this man he could not be kept from beholding within the veil; and he saw the finger of Jesus, which, when he saw, he fell with fear; for he knew that it was the finger of the Lord; and he had faith no longer, for he knew, nothing doubting.

20 Wherefore, having this perfect knowledge of God, he could not be kept from within the veil; therefore he saw Jesus; and he did minister unto him.

Again, why could he not be kept within the veil?

(having this perfect knowledge of God)

The brother of Jared was brought back into the presence of Christ and was ministered to by Him

Joseph Smith

"When any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God" (TPJS, pg. 151)

“Having a knowledge of God, we begin to know how to approach him, and how to ask so as to receive an answer. When we understand the character of God, and know how to come to Him, he begins to unfold the heavens to us.” (TPJS, pg. 350)

In D&C 67 the Lord tells us what must happen for someone “not be kept from withing the vail”

D&C 67:10,13

10 And again, verily I say unto you that it is your privilege, and a promise I give unto you that have been ordained unto this ministry, that inasmuch as you *strip yourselves from jealousies and fears, and humble yourselves before me, for ye are not sufficiently humble, the veil shall be rent and you*

*shall see me* and know that I am—not with the carnal neither natural mind, but with the spiritual.

13 Ye are not able to abide the presence of God now, neither the ministering of angels; wherefore, continue in patience until ye are perfected.

Because he could not be kept within the veil, the brother of Jared was given an understanding of all things

Ether 3:25-28

25 And when the Lord had said these words, he showed unto the brother of Jared all the inhabitants of the earth which had been, and also all that would be; and he withheld them not from his sight, even unto the ends of the earth.

26 For he had said unto him in times before, that if he would believe in him that he could show unto him all things—it should be shown unto him; therefore the Lord could not withhold anything from him, for he knew that the Lord could show him all things.

27 And the Lord said unto him: Write these things and seal them up; and I will show them in mine own due time unto the children of men.

28 And it came to pass that the Lord commanded him that he should seal up the two stones which he had received, and show them not, until the Lord should show them unto the children of men.

What was the extent of things witnessed by him in this vision

(the inhabitants of the earth which had been, and also all that would be; and he withheld them not from his sight, even unto the ends of the earth)

Can you name others who have seen similar visions?

Moses, Enoch, Abraham, John, Nephi

Note that he recorded his vision.

## The Record of the Brother of Jared

Lets read about the writings of the brother of Jared among the Nephites

Ether 4:1-5

1 And the Lord commanded the brother of Jared to go down out of the mount from the presence of the Lord, and write the things which he had seen; and they were forbidden to come unto the children of men until after that he should be lifted up upon the cross; and for this cause did king Mosiah keep them, that they should not come unto the world until after Christ should show himself unto his people.

2 And after Christ truly had showed himself unto his people he commanded that they should be made manifest.

3 And now, after that, they have all dwindled in unbelief; and there is none save it be the Lamanites, and they have rejected the gospel of Christ; therefore I am



commanded that I should hide them up again in the earth.

4 Behold, I have written upon these plates the very things which the brother of Jared saw; and there never were greater things made manifest than those which were made manifest unto the brother of Jared.

5 Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that I should seal them up; and he also hath commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters, according to the commandment of the Lord.

Here is brief history of what happened to the writings of the brother of Jared

Ether included them with his record; the 24 gold plates  
The Limhi's expedition to find Zarahemla brought back 24 gold plates  
Limhi gave these plates to king Mosiah  
King Mosiah translated these plates by the gift and power of God  
The translation was kept from the people until the coming of Christ  
Christ commanded that they should be made manifest to the Nephites  
Moroni records them on the Golden Plates ('these plates')  
Moroni seals up that portion of the Golden Plates and hides them up

Note, "there never were greater things made manifest than those which were made manifest unto the brother of Jared"

Lets read when they will come forth again

Ether 4:6-7

6 For the Lord said unto me: They shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord.

7 And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I manifest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are.

What will be the state of the world when the writings of the brother of Jared come forth again?

(exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me)

Bruce R. McConkie

"We do not have, and are not yet prepared to receive, the fulness of gospel truth. This is perfectly illustrated by the fact that we do not have the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon. That treasure-house of Holy Writ contains an account of the creation of the world, of the dealings of God with men in all ages of the Second Coming of the Son of Man, and of the millennial era when the earth shall rest and Zion prosper to the full-all of which we are not

prepared to receive. The doctrines revealed to the brother of Jared, and which are recorded in the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon, were had among the Jaredites; they were known to the Nephites during their Golden Era... but when the Lehite people 'dwindled in unbelief,' Moroni was commanded to 'hide them up.'” (Mortal Messiah, Book 2, pg. 237)

One more point about the writings of the brother of Jared

Ether 12:24

... Behold, thou hast not made us mighty in writing like unto the brother of Jared, for *thou madest him that the things which he wrote were mighty even as thou art, unto the overpowering of man to read them.*

It is clear that the Lord has great things in store for us if we strength our faith and live to keep the Holy Ghost with us.