

## March 11–17: 2 Nephi 26–30, "A Marvelous Work and a Wonder"

### Overview

In this lesson Nephi continues his prophecies based largely on passages from Isaiah. Much of his teachings center around the Book of Mormon and the times when the Book of Mormon will come forth:

- How the Book of Mormon will be brought forth
- State of wickedness during the Book of Mormon times
- The impact that the Book of Mormon will have
- It will stand with the Bible and other records as a witness of Christ
- The sealed portion of the Gold Plates

### Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon

Nephi tell us how the Book of Mormon will be brought forth in the last days. Verse 16 is from Isaiah 29.

2 Nephi 26:16-17

[16] For those who shall be destroyed shall speak unto them out of the ground, and their speech shall be low out of the dust, and their voice shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit; for the Lord God will give unto him power, that he may whisper concerning them, even as it were out of the ground; and their speech shall whisper out of the dust.

[17] For thus saith the Lord God: They shall write the things which shall be done among them, and they shall be written and sealed up in a book, and those who have dwindled in unbelief shall not have them, for they seek to destroy the things of God.

How does the Book of Mormon fulfill Isaiah's description of a record “out of the dust,” and a voice “that hath a familiar spirit”?

It is a record of a people who have been destroyed – out of their graves

It will have a “familiar spirit” to those who have read the Bible and felt the influence of the Holy Ghost?

Gerrit W. Gong

“The Book of Mormon speaks by ancient and modern covenant to you who are the children of Lehi, ‘children of the prophets’ (3 Nephi 20:25). Your forefathers received a covenant promise that you, their descendants, would recognize a voice as if from the dust in the Book of Mormon. That voice you feel as you read testifies you are ‘children of the covenant’ (3 Nephi 20:26) and Jesus is your Good Shepherd.” (CR, Oct. 2019)

Nephi’s prophecies of the witnesses of the Gold Plates and Book of Mormon. Recall that we studied the testimonies of the 3 and 8 witnesses during the first lesson

2 Nephi 27:12-14

[12] Wherefore, at that day when the book shall be delivered unto the man of whom I have spoken, the book shall be hid from the eyes of the world, that the eyes of none shall behold it save it be that three witnesses shall behold it, by the power of God, besides him to whom the book shall be delivered; and they shall testify to the truth of the book and the things therein.

[13] And there is none other which shall view it, save it be a few according to the will of God, to bear testimony of his word unto the children of men; for the Lord God hath said that the words of the faithful should speak as if it were from the dead.

[14] Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to bring forth the words of the book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good will he establish his word; and wo be unto him that rejecteth the word of God!

Why do you think that it's important that no one sees the Gold Plates except for a few chosen witnesses?

(by the power of God,... they shall testify to the truth of the book  
the words of the faithful should speak as if it were from the dead  
as many witnesses as seemeth him good will he establish his word)

I've always liked the description of this event by Joseph Smith's mother.  
Note how having 3 additional witnesses affected Joseph Smith

Lucy Mack Smith

"Joseph threw himself down beside me, and exclaimed, 'Father, mother, you do not know how happy I am: the Lord has now caused the plates to be shown to three more besides myself. They have seen an angel, who has testified to them, and they will have to bear witness to the truth of what I have said, for now they know for themselves, that I do not go about to deceive the people, and I feel as if I was relieved of a burden which was almost too heavy for me to bear, and it rejoices my soul, that I am not any longer to be entirely alone in the world.'" (History of Joseph Smith by His Mother, pg. 153)

Note that many will be called to bear witness of the words of the Book of Mormon, "the Lord God will proceed to bring forth the words of the book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good"

The testimony will come by way of the Spirit and they will, in turn, share their testimony with others, who will receive it thru the Spirit

Opposition to the Book of Mormon

Nephi states why the acceptance of the Book of Mormon will be impeded by wickedness

2 Nephi 26:20-21

[20] And the Gentiles are lifted up in the pride of their eyes, and have stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block, that they have built up many churches; nevertheless, they put down the power and miracles of God, and preach up unto themselves their own wisdom and their own learning, that they may get gain and grind upon the face of the poor.

[21] And there are many churches built up which cause envyings, and strifes, and malice.

Why do the Gentiles build up many churches?

(lifted up in the pride of their eyes and have stumbled  
stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block

What seems to be common characteristics of these churches built up because of pride?

(*put down* the power and miracles of God, and *preach up* unto themselves  
their own wisdom  
they may get gain and grind upon the face of the poor)

Nephi states, “the Gentiles... have stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block”

What is the stumbling block that has caused the Gentiles to stumble?

1 Nephi 13:29

... because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the [record of the Jews]... an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them.

Nephi expands on his statement that the Gentiles are “lifted up in pride” and “preach up unto themselves their own wisdom and their own learning”

2 Nephi 26:29-31

[29] He commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.

[30] Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love, and except they should have charity they were nothing. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish.

[31] But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish.

Note that right after Nephi condemns priestcrafts, he talks of the necessity of charity.

How does Nephi contrast priestcrafts with charity with regard to building Zion?

(priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up  
if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to  
perish)

Dallin H. Oaks

"Some may serve for hope of earthly reward. Such a man or woman might  
serve in Church positions... to achieve prominence or cultivate contacts that  
would increase income or aid in acquiring wealth....

"If our service is to be most efficacious, it must be accomplished for the  
love of God and the love of his children....

"This principle—that our service should be for the love of God and the love  
of fellowmen rather than for personal advantage or any other lesser motive  
—is admittedly a high standard. The Savior must have seen it so, since he  
joined his commandment for selfless and complete love directly with the  
ideal of perfection." (CR, Oct 1984)

Nephi tells us about the state of wickedness that will prevail at the time then the  
Book of Mormon will be brought forth

2 Nephi 28:7-9

[7] Yea, and there shall be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for  
tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us.

[8] And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry  
nevertheless, fear God -- he will justify in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take  
the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no  
harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are  
guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the  
kingdom of God.

[9] Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false and vain  
and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to  
hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.

How does the philosophy of “eat, drink, and be marry” appeal to both those who  
believe there is a god and those who do not?

(for tomorrow we die [cease to exist]

God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved)

Carlos E. Asay

Those who believe that the grave is man’s final destiny live without hope of  
a better world and are inclined to embrace that fatalistic approach, 'Eat,  
drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.' This approach often leads to  
wanton experimentation, immoral conduct, and all the other behaviors that  
reap misery and remorse of conscience.” (CR, April 1994)

Dallin H. Oaks

“Those who fall for this deception may profess to believe in God, but they do not take His commandments or His justice seriously. They are confident in their own prosperity and conclude that God must have accepted their chosen route.” (CR, Oct. 2004)

Where do we often see this “eat, drink, and be marry” philosophy taught and practiced today?

(there shall be many which shall teach after this manner)

Dallin H. Oaks

“Surely you have seen and heard these arguments, brethren. They will come at you in classrooms and hallways, in what you read, and in what you see in popular entertainment. Many in the world deny the need for a Savior. Others deny that there is any right or wrong, and they scoff at the idea of sin or a devil. Still others rely on the mercy of God and ignore His justice.” (CR, Oct. 2004)

Nephi warns us that those who follow Christ can also get caught up in this worldliness if they are not careful

2 Nephi 28:20-21,24-25

[20] For behold, at that day shall he rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good.

[21] And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well -- and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.

[24] Therefore, wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion!

[25] Wo be unto him that crieth: All is well!

What reason does Nephi give that some members of the church believe that, “all is well in Zion?”

(he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security)

Adam S. Bennion

“I am always interested in this one. 'Wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion! Wo be unto him that crieth: All is well.' If there is any one keynote that ought to be sounded from one end of the Church to the other, it is that we should beware the prosperity and peace that we enjoy. I fear that there may be many in Zion who are at ease.” (Young Woman's Journal, 3:436)

Brigham Young

"It is our duty to preach the Gospel, gather Israel, pay our tithing, and build temples. The worst fear I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and His people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecutions, and be true. But my greater fear for them is that they cannot stand wealth." (Deseret News, March 4, 2000 - Reference: James S. Brown, Life of a Pioneer, pg. 122-23)

## Impact of the Book of Mormon

Nephi tells us that the Book of Mormon will be a great blessing to the humble follower of Christ

2 Nephi 27:24-26,29-30,35

[24] And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:

[25] Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men --

[26] Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.

[29] And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.

[30] And the meek also shall increase, and their joy shall be in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

[35] They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

What impact will the Book of Mormon have on those who have been led astray by conventional wisdom and understanding?

(the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish  
the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness  
the meek also shall increase  
they also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding)

Bruce R. McConkie

"Members of false churches who err in spirit, who think they have the truth, are brought by the Book of Mormon to the fulness of the gospel. Those who have based their beliefs on isolated verses and obscure passages, and who have wondered and murmured at seeming biblical conflicts, come to learn sound doctrine.... All things fall into place because of this new witness of Christ and His gospel" (The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the

Son of Man, pg. 174)

The Book of Mormon will be delivered to the house of Israel by the Gentiles

2 Nephi 30:3-6

[3] And now, I would prophesy somewhat more concerning the Jews and the Gentiles. For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed.

[4] And then shall the remnant of our seed know concerning us, how that we came out from Jerusalem, and that they are descendants of the Jews.

[5] And the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers.

[6] And then shall they rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God; and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a pure and delightsome people.

What impact will the gentiles who believe in the book have on the descendants of Israel?

(they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed  
the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them  
our seed... shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God)

Ezra Taft Benson

"We hardly fathom the power of the Book of Mormon, nor the divine role it must play, nor the extent to which it must be moved....

"[God] has revealed to me the absolute need for us to move the Book of Mormon forward now in a marvelous manner. You must help with this burden and with this blessing which He has placed on the whole Church."  
(CR, Oct. 1988)

Another Testament of Christ

The Book of Mormon will stand with the Bible and other records as a witness of Christ

2 Nephi 29:3-4,8

[3] And because my words shall hiss forth -- many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.

[4] But thus saith the Lord God: O fools, they shall have a Bible; and it shall proceed forth from the Jews, mine ancient covenant people. And what thank they the Jews for the Bible which they receive from them? Yea, what do the Gentiles mean? Do they

remember the travails, and the labors, and the pains of the Jews, and their diligence unto me, in bringing forth salvation unto the Gentiles?

[8] Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word? Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? Wherefore, I speak the same words unto one nation like unto another. And when the two nations shall run together the testimony of the two nations shall run together also.

Why is it essential that the Bible is not the only witness we have of Christ and his gospel?

Boyd K. Packer

"Some have been offended that anyone would assume that the Bible was incomplete or that there needed to be more. They have, indeed, said, 'A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible. What need have we for more Bible?'

"We are, nonetheless, inescapably faced with the fact that with the Bible only, well-intentioned men, as worthy as you today, with centuries of opportunity to seek their end, have devised such a multiplicity of churches that even the ecumenical movement seems hopeless to unite them." (CR, April 1967)

Nephi's tells us how we will have the writings of the Jews, of the decedents of Lehi, and, eventually, of the lost tribes to testify of Christ

2 Nephi 29:12-14

[12] For behold, I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth and they shall write it.

[13] And it shall come to pass that the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews; and the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel; and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews.

[14] And it shall come to pass that my people, which are of the house of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions; and my word also shall be gathered in one. And I will show unto them that fight against my word and against my people, who are of the house of Israel, that I am God, and that I covenanted with Abraham that I would remember his seed forever.

What impact will the records of the other tribes have on witnessing that Jesus is the Christ?

(my word also shall be gathered in one. And I will show unto them... that I am God, and that I covenanted with Abraham that I would remember his seed forever)



Neal A. Maxwell

"Lost books are among the treasures yet to come forth. Over twenty of these are mentioned in the existing scriptures. Perhaps most startling and voluminous will be the records of the lost tribes of Israel. We would not even know of the impending third witness for Christ except through the precious Book of Mormon, the second witness for Christ! This third set of sacred records will thus complete a triad of truth. Then, just as the Perfect Shepherd has said, 'My word also shall be gathered in one' (2 Ne 29:14). There will be 'one fold and one shepherd' (1 Ne 22:25) in a welding together of all the Christian dispensations of human history." (CR, Oct. 1986)

As we receive and believe witnesses of Christ we are promised we will receive more

2 Nephi 28:30

[30] For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have.

How does this verse relate to receiving additional doctrine and witnesses of Christ?

(unto him that receiveth I will give more  
from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away)

The Sealed Portion of the Golden Plates

Nephi also teaches about about the sealed portion of the golden plates

2 Nephi 27:6-8,11

[6] And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book, and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered.

[7] And behold the book shall be sealed; and in the book shall be a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof.

[8] Wherefore, because of the things which are sealed up, the things which are sealed shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness and abominations of the people. Wherefore the book shall be kept from them.

[11] And the day cometh that the words of the book which were sealed shall be read upon the house tops; and they shall be read by the power of Christ; and all things shall be revealed unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, and which ever will be even unto the end of the earth.

What revelations are contained in the sealed portion of the golden plates?

(revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof all things shall be revealed)

Why is the sealed portion kept from us? What must we do before we can receive them?

(shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness)

What do we know about the origin of the sealed portion?

Brother of Jared

Ether 3:25

[25]... the Lord... 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.

Ether 4:1-4

[1] And the Lord commanded the brother of Jared to... write the things which he had seen....

[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... 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...

Ether 12:24

[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.

What do we learn from these verses about the sealed portion of the Gold Plates?

Contains the vision of the Brother of Jared where he was shown all things

The Nephites had them during the time frame of 4th Nephi  
Moroni wrote them onto the gold plates and sealed them  
The writings are “mighty” and “overpowering”)

2 Nephi 27:21-22

[21] Touch not the things which are sealed, for I will bring them forth in mine own due time; for I will show unto the children of men that I am able to do mine own work.

[22] Wherefore, when thou hast read the words which I have commanded thee, and obtained the witnesses which I have promised unto thee, then shalt thou seal up the

book again, and hide it up unto me, that I may preserve the words which thou hast not read, until I shall see fit in mine own wisdom to reveal all things unto the children of men.

When will the sealed portion be revealed?

(I will bring them forth in mine own due time  
until I shall see fit in mine own wisdom to reveal all things)

Joseph Fielding Smith

"Now the Lord has placed us on probation as members of the Church. He has given us the Book of Mormon, which is the lesser part, to build up our faith through our obedience to the counsels which it contains, and when we ourselves, members of the Church, are willing to keep the commandments as they have been given to us and show our faith as the Nephites did for a short period of time, then the Lord is ready to bring forth the other record and give it to us, but we are not ready to receive it. Why? Because we have not lived up to the requirements in this probationary state in the reading of the record which had been given to us and in following its counsels." (CR, Oct. 1961)