

## February 19–25: 2 Nephi 6–10, “O How Great the Goodness of Our God”

### Overview

We are taught a lot about the words of Isaiah in the Small Plates of Nephi:

Nephi quotes Isaiah 48 and 49 then in 1 Nephi 22 he tells us what they mean  
Jacob quotes Isaiah 49:22-26; 50; 51 and teaches about them in 2 Nephi 6; 9; 10  
Nephi quotes Isaiah 2 – 14 starting in 2 Nephi 12, then explains their meaning in 2 Nephi 25

In this lesson we will cover the following subjects from Isaiah and explained by Jacob:

Israel forsakes the Lord and are scattered  
Christ's mortal mission  
Christ is our advocate with the Father  
The gathering of Israel to Jerusalem  
The gathering of Israel to the Americas

### Priesthood

First, Jacob gives us some insight about the priesthood among the Nephites

2 Nephi 6:1-2

[1] The words of Jacob, the brother of Nephi, which he spake unto the people of Nephi:

[2] Behold, my beloved brethren, I, Jacob, having been called of God, and ordained after the manner of his holy order, and having been consecrated by my brother Nephi, unto whom ye look as a king or a protector, and on whom ye depend for safety, behold ye know that I have spoken unto you exceedingly many things.

What do we know about priesthood authority among the Nephites?

(called of God  
ordained after the manner of his holy order  
consecrated by my brother)

Note the reference to His Holy Order  
Remember that the real name of the Melchizedek priesthood is:  
The Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God

Bruce R. McConkie

“It should be noted that those consecrated priests and teachers among the Nephites were not receiving offices in the lesser priesthood, for there was no Aaronic Priesthood among the Nephites from the time Lehi left Jerusalem down to the ministry of Christ among them.” (Mormon Doctrine, pg. 776)

## Israel Forsakes the Lord and Is Scattered

### Quoting Isaiah

2 Nephi 7:1-2

[1] Yea, for thus saith the Lord: Have I put thee away, or have I cast thee off forever? For thus saith the Lord: Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement? To whom have I put thee away, or to which of my creditors have I sold you? Yea, to whom have I sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

[2] Wherefore, when I came, there was no man; when I called, yea, there was none to answer. O house of Israel, is my hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem, or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make their rivers a wilderness and their fish to stink because the waters are dried up, and they die because of thirst.

What do you think Isaiah meant when he told Israel that “for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves”?

Israel is defeated and scattered because they have turned from the Lord. Not the other way around.

2 Nephi 7:10-11

[10] Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?

[11] Behold all ye that kindle fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks, walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks which ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand -- ye shall lie down in sorrow. cannot redeem, or have I no power to deliver? Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make their rivers a wilderness and their fish to stink because the waters are dried up, and they die because of thirst.

What does Isaiah mean by “walk in the light of... the sparks which ye have kindled”?

Because of pride and relying on our own learning and understanding, you will only have the light of you own sparks to guide you instead of the eternal light of the Lord

Now for Jacob’s explanation

2 Nephi 9:27-30

[27] But wo unto him that has the law given, yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us, and that transgresseth them, and that wasteth the days of his probation, for awful is his state!

[28] O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of

themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish.

[29] But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God.

[30] But wo unto the rich, who are rich as to the things of the world. For because they are rich they despise the poor, and they persecute the meek, and their hearts are upon their treasures; wherefore, their treasure is their God. And behold, their treasure shall perish with them also.

What's wrong with being learned?

(When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God)

What's wrong with being rich?

(their hearts are upon their treasures)

Gene R. Cook

“The man goes along his own way imagining himself to be learned, leaning on his own understanding, seeking the honor and esteem of men, and feeling it is sufficient to teach and not to do....

“Still others the Lord blesses with great material blessings.... [Satan] leads one to set his heart on the things of this world. The man begins not to esteem his brethren as himself, but creates divisions, inequalities, or status distinctions among the people.” (CR, April 1982)

How do you think this equates with Isaiah stating that they “walk by the sparks which ye have kindled”

Ezra Taft Benson

"The two groups who have the greatest difficulty in following the prophet are the proud who are learned and proud who are rich. The learned may feel the prophet is only inspired when he agrees with them otherwise, the prophet is just giving his opinion-speaking as a man. The rich may feel they have no need to take counsel of a lowly prophet." (1980 BYU Speeches of the Year, pg. 29)

Again from Jacob

2 Nephi 9:31-39

[31] And wo unto the deaf that will not hear; for they shall perish.

[32] Wo unto the blind that will not see; for they shall perish also.

[33] Wo unto the uncircumcised of heart, for a knowledge of their iniquities shall smite them at the last day.

[34] Wo unto the liar, for he shall be thrust down to hell.

[35] Wo unto the murderer who deliberately killeth, for he shall die.

[36] Wo unto them who commit whoredoms, for they shall be thrust down to hell.

[37] Yea, wo unto those that worship idols, for the devil of all devils delighteth in them.

[38] And, in fine, wo unto all those who die in their sins; for they shall return to God, and behold his face, and remain in their sins.

[39] O, my beloved brethren, remember the awfulness in transgressing against that Holy God, and also the awfulness of yielding to the enticings of that cunning one. Remember, to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life eternal.

What do you think Jacob means when he says, “to be carnally-minded is death”?

D. Chad Richardson

“Our spirits have been clothed in mortal tabernacles. If we let desires of the flesh dominate our spirit, we become carnally minded. Jacob stated, 'To be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life eternal' (2 Nephi 9:39). Abinadi taught that people who persist in their carnal nature rebel against God and give the devil power over them. Sadly, we see this captivity today among those who indulge in drugs, pornography, immorality, rage, and other sins of the flesh.

“Many of God’s commandments, including the commandments to be morally clean, to fast, to control our anger, and to obey the Word of Wisdom, help us break the power of Satan. As we willingly obey, we follow Christ in subjecting carnal desires to the will of the Spirit.” (“Book of Mormon Principles: Earthly Choices, Eternal Consequences”, Ensign, July 2004)

## Christ's Mortal Mission

From Isaiah

2 Nephi 7:6

[6] I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

We know that Christ allowed wicked men to cause him great suffering during his mortal mission

Jacob gives us considerable detail

2 Nephi 10:3-5

[3] Wherefore, as I said unto you, it must needs be expedient that Christ -- for in the last night the angel spake unto me that this should be his name -- should come among the Jews, among those who are the more wicked part of the world; and they shall crucify him -- for thus it behooveth our God, and there is none other nation on earth that would crucify their God.

[4] For should the mighty miracles be wrought among other nations they would repent, and know that he be their God.

[5] But because of priestcrafts and iniquities, they at Jerusalem will stiffen their necks against him, that he be crucified.

What was it about the Jews during Jesus' time that made them among "the more wicked part of the world"?

(because of priestcrafts and iniquities)

What is the meaning of priestcrafts?

2 Nephi 26:29

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.

Specifically, recall that after Lazareth was raised from the dead the Jewish leaders couldn't dispute this "mighty miracle" so they met in secret to plot His death

Christ is Our Advocate with the Father

From Isaiah

2 Nephi 8:22

[22] Thus saith thy Lord, the Lord and thy God pleadeth the cause of his people; behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again.

2 Nephi 7:7-9

[7] For the Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded. Therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

[8] And the Lord is near, and he justifieth me. Who will contend with me? Let us stand together. Who is mine adversary? Let him come near me, and I will smite him with the strength of my mouth.

[9] For the Lord God will help me. And all they who shall condemn me, behold, all they shall wax old as a garment, and the moth shall eat them up.

What does Isaiah say that the Lord does that makes Him our advocate with the Father?

(the Lord and thy God pleadeth the cause of his people  
And the Lord is near, and he justifieth me  
For the Lord God will help me)

Now for Jacob's explanation

2 Nephi 9:5-6,8

[5] Yea, I know that ye know that in the body he shall show himself unto those at Jerusalem, from whence we came; for it is expedient that it should be among them; for it behooveth the great Creator that he suffereth himself to become subject unto man in the flesh, and die for all men, that all men might become subject unto him.

[6] For as death hath passed upon all men, to fulfil the merciful plan of the great Creator, there must needs be a power of resurrection, and the resurrection must needs come unto man by reason of the fall; and the fall came by reason of transgression; and because man became fallen they were cut off from the presence of the Lord.

[8] O the wisdom of God, his mercy and grace! For behold, if the flesh should rise no more our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the Eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more.

Who is it that all mankind is subject to, and why?

(the great Creator that he suffereth himself to... die for all men  
that all men might become subject unto him)

If Christ had not suffered what He did then who do you think we would be subject to?

(man became fallen they were cut off from the presence of the Lord  
our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell)

2 Nephi 9:11-13

[11] And because of the way of deliverance of our God, the Holy One of Israel, this death, of which I have spoken, which is the temporal, shall deliver up its dead; which death is the grave.

[12] And this death of which I have spoken, which is the spiritual death, shall deliver up its dead; which spiritual death is hell; wherefore, death and hell must deliver up their dead, and hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies, and the bodies and the spirits of men will be restored one to the other; and it is by the power of the resurrection of the Holy One of Israel.

[13] O how great the plan of our God! For on the other hand, 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.

When resurrected, the body of the righteous will be delivered from the grave.

But -

Where will the spirit or the righteous be delivered from?

(the paradise of God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous)

Where will the spirits of the wicked be delivered from?

(spiritual death is hell... and hell must deliver up its captive spirits)

What are we told are some characteristics of all resurrected souls?

(all men become incorruptible  
and immortal  
having a perfect knowledge)

2 Nephi 9:7

[7] Wherefore, it must needs be an infinite atonement -- save it should be an infinite atonement this corruption could not put on incorruption. Wherefore, the first judgment which came upon man must needs have remained to an endless duration. And if so, this flesh must have laid down to rot and to crumble to its mother earth, to rise no more.

What do you think Jacob means when he states the atonement is “infinite”?

Russell M. Nelson

"His Atonement is infinite-without an end. It was also infinite in that all humankind would be saved from never-ending death. It was infinite in terms of His immense suffering. It was infinite in time, putting an end to the preceding prototype of animal sacrifice. It was infinite in scope-it was to be done once for all.... It was infinite beyond any human scale of measurement or mortal comprehension. Jesus was the only one who could offer such an infinite atonement, since He was born of a mortal mother and an immortal Father. Because of that unique birthright, Jesus was an infinite Being." (CR, Oct. 1996)

Because of the atonement, Savior offers us peace and comfort in this life

2 Nephi 9:49-51

[49] Behold, my soul abhorreth sin, and my heart delighteth in righteousness; and I will praise the holy name of my God.

[50] Come, my brethren, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.

[51] Wherefore, do not spend money for that which is of no worth, nor your labor for that which cannot satisfy. Hearken diligently unto me, and remember the words which I have spoken; and come unto the Holy One of Israel, and feast upon that which perisheth not, neither can be corrupted, and let your soul delight in fatness.

How can we arrive at the same state as Jacob, where we abhor sin and our hearts delight in righteousness?

Joseph Smith

“We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; and like the ancients, arrives at that point of faith where he is wrapped in the power and glory of his Maker and is caught up to dwell with Him.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pg. 51)

2 Nephi 10:23-25

[23] Therefore, cheer up your hearts, and remember that ye are free to act for yourselves -- to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life.

[24] Wherefore, my beloved brethren, reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not to the will of the devil and the flesh; and remember, after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved.

[25] Wherefore, may God raise you from death by the power of the resurrection, and also from everlasting death by the power of the atonement, that ye may be received into the eternal kingdom of God, that ye may praise him through grace divine. Amen.

What is it about free agency that Jacob emphasizes to help us to “cheer up [our] hearts”?

Boyd K. Packer

"I readily confess that I would find no peace, neither happiness nor safety, in a world without repentance. I do not know what I should do if there were no way for me to erase my mistakes. The agony would be more than I could bear. It may be otherwise with you, but not with me.

"An atonement was made. Ever and always it offers amnesty from transgression and from death if we will but repent. Repentance is the escape clause in it all. Repentance is the key with which we can unlock the prison from inside. We hold that key within our hands, and agency is ours to use it." (Church News, July 13, 1996)

The Gathering of Israel to the Americas

From Isaiah

A standard is generally larger than a flag or banner and erected at a fixed, strategic location. It is placed on a long pole and/or on the top of a hill so as to be as visible as possible.

2 Nephi 6:6-7

[6] And now these are the words: 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.



[7] And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their faces 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.

What standard will the Lord establish among the Gentiles?

Marion G. Romney

“This Church is the standard which Isaiah said the Lord would set up for the people in the latter days. This Church was given to be a light to the world and to be a standard for God's people and for the Gentiles to seek to. This Church is the ensign on the mountain spoken of by the Old Testament prophets. It is the way, the truth, and the life.” (CR, April 1961)

Now for Jacob’s explanation

2 Nephi 10:8-10

[8] And it shall come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion, from the isles of the sea, and from the four parts of the earth; and the nations of the Gentiles shall be great in the eyes of me, saith God, in carrying them forth to the lands of their inheritance.

[9] Yea, the kings of the Gentiles shall be nursing fathers unto them, and their queens shall become nursing mothers; wherefore, the promises of the Lord are great unto the Gentiles, for he hath spoken it, and who can dispute?

[10] But behold, this land, said God, shall be a land of thine inheritance, and the Gentiles shall be blessed upon the land.

What is the stated role of the Gentiles?

(Yea, the kings of the Gentiles shall be nursing fathers unto them, and their queens shall become nursing mothers)

1 Nephi 22:6,8

[6] 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.

[8] 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.

How do you think the Gentiles are filling this role?

2 Nephi 10:11-14

[11] And this land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles, and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles.

[12] And I will fortify this land against all other nations.

[13] And he that fighteth against Zion shall perish, saith God.

[14] For he that raiseth up a king against me shall perish, for I, the Lord, the king of heaven, will be their king, and I will be a light unto them forever, that hear my words.

What are some of the promises to the Gentiles who are in this land?

(a land of liberty  
fortify this land against all other nations  
he that raiseth up a king against me shall perish  
I, the Lord, the king of heaven, will be their king)

This was also stated by Lehi

1 Nephi 1:7,9

[7] Wherefore, this land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring. And if it so be that they shall serve him according to the commandments which he hath given, it shall be a land of liberty unto them; wherefore, they shall never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because of iniquity; for if iniquity shall abound cursed shall be the land for their sakes, but unto the righteous it shall be blessed forever.

[9] Wherefore, I, Lehi, have obtained a promise, that inasmuch as those whom the Lord God shall bring out of the land of Jerusalem shall keep his commandments, they shall prosper upon the face of this land; and they shall be kept from all other nations, that they may possess this land unto themselves. And if it so be that they shall keep his commandments they shall be blessed upon the face of this land, and there shall be none to molest them, nor to take away the land of their inheritance; and they shall dwell safely forever.

(his land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring  
it shall be a land of liberty  
they shall never be brought down into captivity  
they shall prosper upon the face of this land  
they may possess this land unto themselves  
there shall be none to molest them, nor to take away the land  
they shall dwell safely forever)

Under what condition will this land be greatly blessed to any and all who are led to it?

Spencer W. Kimball

“But these promises, glorious though they be, desirable as they are, can

come only 'if they will but serve the God of this land who is Jesus Christ' (Ether 2:12). There is only one way. That infallible cure is simply righteousness, obedience, Godliness, honor, and integrity. There is no other cure. Mountains of arms and ammunitions will not guarantee safety.... If we would but believe the prophets! For they have warned that if the 'inhabitants of this land are ever brought down into captivity and enslaved, it shall be because of iniquity; for if iniquity shall abound cursed shall be the land' (2 Nephi 1:7)." (CR, Oct. 1961)

2 Nephi 10:18-22

[18] Wherefore, my beloved brethren, thus saith our God: I will afflict thy seed by the hand of the Gentiles; nevertheless, I will soften the hearts of the Gentiles, that they shall be like unto a father to them; wherefore, the Gentiles shall be blessed and numbered among the house of Israel.

[19] Wherefore, I will consecrate this land unto thy seed, and them who shall be numbered among thy seed, forever, for the land of their inheritance; for it is a choice land, saith God unto me, above all other lands, wherefore I will have all men that dwell thereon that they shall worship me, saith God.

[20] And now, my beloved brethren, seeing that our merciful God has given us so great knowledge concerning these things, let us remember him, and lay aside our sins, and not hang down our heads, for we are not cast off; nevertheless, we have been driven out of the land of our inheritance; but we have been led to a better land, for the Lord has made the sea our path, and we are upon an isle of the sea.

For whom is this land a land of inheritance?

(I will consecrate this land unto thy seed, and them who shall be numbered among thy seed, forever, for the land of their inheritance)

Joseph Fielding Smith

"There is strong presumptive evidence in the blessings given by Israel to his son Joseph, and his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh, as recorded in Genesis, that they were to inherit a land far from Jerusalem and become a multitude of nations. Joseph was promised that his inheritance should be to the 'utmost bounds of the everlasting hills' (Genesis 49:26); that he was 'a fruitful bough by a well whose branches run over the wall' (Genesis 49:22). Moreover, he was to receive a greater inheritance than his progenitors, who were given the land of Palestine.

"The Book of Mormon is the record of the descendants of Joseph who were led across the 'great waters' to inherit this western land, which is designated as being choice above all other lands." (Doctrines of Salvation, 3:127)

The Gathering of Israel to Jerusalem

From Isaiah

2 Nephi 8:23-25

[23] But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; who have said to thy soul: Bow down, that we may go over -- and thou hast laid thy body as the ground and as the street to them that went over.

[24] Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

[25] Shake thyself from the dust; arise, sit down, O Jerusalem; loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

Now for Jacob

2 Nephi 6:8,11

[8] And now I, Jacob, would speak somewhat concerning these words. For behold, the Lord has shown me that those who were at Jerusalem, from whence we came, have been slain and carried away captive.

[11] Wherefore, after they are driven to and fro, for thus saith the angel, many shall be afflicted in the flesh, and shall not be suffered to perish, because of the prayers of the faithful; they shall be scattered, and smitten, and hated; nevertheless, the Lord will be merciful unto them, that when they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer, they shall be gathered together again to the lands of their inheritance.

2 Nephi 9:2

[2] That he has spoken unto the Jews, by the mouth of his holy prophets, even from the beginning down, from generation to generation, until the time comes that they shall be restored to the true church and fold of God; when they shall be gathered home to the lands of their inheritance, and shall be established in all their lands of promise.

What must the Jews do before they are again gathered in and given Jerusalem as the land of their inheritance?

(when they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer, they shall be gathered together again to the lands of their inheritance)

Bruce R. McConkie

“As is well known, ancient Israel was scattered among all the nations of the earth because they forsook the Lord and worshipped false gods. As is also well known, the gathering of Israel consists of receiving the truth, gaining again a true knowledge of the Redeemer, and coming back into the true fold of the Good Shepherd. In the language of the Book of Mormon, it consists of being ‘restored to the true church and fold of God,’ and then being ‘gathered’ and ‘established’ in various ‘lands of promise’ (2 Nephi 9:2). ‘When they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer, they shall be gathered together again to the lands of their inheritance’ (2 Nephi 6:11).” (CR, April 1977)