

November 18–24: Ether 6–11, “That Evil May Be Done Away”

Faith and Works

The Jaredites prepared for the journey and showed great faith that God would protect them and guide them to the Promise Land

Ether 6:4-5,9-10

4 And it came to pass that when they had prepared all manner of food, that thereby they might subsist upon the water, and also food for their flocks and herds, and whatsoever beast or animal or fowl that they should carry with them—and it came to pass that when they had done all these things they got aboard of their vessels or barges, and set forth into the sea, commending themselves unto the Lord their God.

5 And it came to pass that the Lord God caused that there should be a furious wind blow upon the face of the waters, towards the promised land; and thus they were tossed upon the waves of the sea before the wind.

9 And they did sing praises unto the Lord; yea, the brother of Jared did sing praises unto the Lord, and he did thank and praise the Lord all the day long; and when the night came, they did not cease to praise the Lord.

10 And thus they were driven forth; and no monster of the sea could break them, neither whale that could mar them; and they did have light continually, whether it was above the water or under the water.

What did the Jaredites do that demonstrated their faith in God?

(when they had done all these things they... commending themselves unto the Lord their God)

Todd Budge

"The journey was not easy for the Jaredites..... We live in a world where the monster waves of death, physical and mental illness, and trials and afflictions of every kind break upon us. Yet, through faith in Jesus Christ and choosing to trust in Him, we too can have light continually, whether above the water or under the water. We can have the assurance that God never does cease to blow us toward our heavenly home.

"While being tossed about in the barges, the Jaredites 'did sing praises unto the Lord...'. They felt joy and thanksgiving even in the midst of their afflictions. They had not yet arrived in the promised land, yet they were rejoicing in the promised blessing because of their consistent and resilient trust in Him." (CR, Oct. 2019)

Political Freedom

Ether 6:19-24

19 And the brother of Jared began to be old, and saw that he must soon go down to

the grave; wherefore he said unto Jared: Let us gather together our people that we may number them, that we may know of them what they will desire of us before we go down to our graves.

20 And accordingly the people were gathered together. Now the number of the sons and the daughters of the brother of Jared were twenty and two souls; and the number of sons and daughters of Jared were twelve, he having four sons.

21 And it came to pass that they did number their people; and after that they had numbered them, they did desire of them the things which they would that they should do before they went down to their graves.

22 And it came to pass that the people desired of them that they should anoint one of their sons to be a king over them.

23 And now behold, this was grievous unto them. And the brother of Jared said unto them: Surely this thing leadeth into captivity.

24 But Jared said unto his brother: Suffer them that they may have a king. And therefore he said unto them: Choose ye out from among our sons a king, even whom ye will.

What did the brother of Jared fear would happen to the people if they were ruled by a king?

(surely this thing leadeth into captivity)

2 Nephi 10:14

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.

Ether 6:25-27

25 And it came to pass that they chose even the firstborn of the brother of Jared; and his name was Pagag. And it came to pass that he refused and would not be their king. And the people would that his father should constrain him, but his father would not; and he commanded them that they should constrain no man to be their king.

26 And it came to pass that they chose all the brothers of Pagag, and they would not.

27 And it came to pass that neither would the sons of Jared, even all save it were one; and Orihah was anointed to be king over the people.

Marion G. Romney

"The freewill choosing of a king by the Jaredites led directly to their captivity.

"This sequence was repeated in the days of Israel. The people—rejecting government by judges, which God had established—clamored for Samuel to give them a king. Notwithstanding Samuel's warning that a king would make servants of their children, lay heavy taxes and services upon their backs, and send them to war, 'the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel, [saying,] Nay; but we will have a king over us;

'That we also may be like all the nations' (1Sam 8:19–20)." (CR, Oct. 1981)

Chapter 7 briefly describes the reign of eight kings and the wars, deceit, wickedness and righteousness that brought and removed them from power. Moroni tells us this "brought to pass the saying of the brother of Jared that they would be brought into captivity."

Secret Combinations

In chapter 8 we see the beginnings of the secret combinations which, Moroni tells us, was the cause of the destruction of the downfall of the Jaradite and Nephite nations.

Ether 8:7-9

7 And now Jared became exceedingly sorrowful because of the loss of the kingdom, for he had set his heart upon the kingdom and upon the glory of the world.

8 Now the daughter of Jared being exceedingly expert, and seeing the sorrows of her father, thought to devise a plan whereby she could redeem the kingdom unto her father.

9 Now the daughter of Jared was exceedingly fair. And it came to pass that she did talk with her father, and said unto him: Whereby hath my father so much sorrow? Hath he not read the record which our fathers brought across the great deep? Behold, is there not an account concerning them of old, that they by their secret plans did obtain kingdoms and great glory?

How did the daughter of Jared know about the “secret plans [used to] obtain kingdoms and great glory”?

(the record which our fathers brought across the great deep)

Maybe Jared's daughter was referring to the account of Cain

Moses 5:29-32

29) And Satan said unto Cain: Swear unto me by thy throat, and if thou tell it thou shalt die; and swear thy brethren by their heads, and by the living God, that they tell it not; for if they tell it, they shall surely die; and this that thy father may not know it; and this day I will deliver thy brother Abel into thine hands.

30) And Satan sware unto Cain that he would do according to his commands. And all these things were done in secret.

31) And Cain said: Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain. Wherefore Cain was called Master Mahan, and he gloried in his wickedness.

32) And Cain went into the field, and Cain talked with Abel, his brother. And it came to pass that while they were in the field, Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and slew him.

Ether 8:10-16

10 And now, therefore, let my father send for Akish, the son of Kimnor; and behold, I am fair, and I will dance before him, and I will please him, that he will desire me to wife; wherefore if he shall desire of thee that ye shall give unto him me to wife, then shall ye say: I will give her if ye will bring unto me the head of my father, the king.

11 And now Omer was a friend to Akish; wherefore, when Jared had sent for Akish, the daughter of Jared danced before him that she pleased him, insomuch that he desired her to wife. And it came to pass that he said unto Jared: Give her unto me to wife.

12 And Jared said unto him: I will give her unto you, if ye will bring unto me the head of my father, the king.

13 And it came to pass that Akish gathered in unto the house of Jared all his kinsfolk, and said unto them: Will ye swear unto me that ye will be faithful unto me in the thing which I shall desire of you?

14 And it came to pass that they all sware unto him, by the God of heaven, and also by the heavens, and also by the earth, and by their heads, that whoso should vary from the assistance which Akish desired should lose his head; and whoso should divulge whatsoever thing Akish made known unto them, the same should lose his life.

15 And it came to pass that thus they did agree with Akish. And Akish did administer unto them the oaths which were given by them of old who also sought power, which had been handed down even from Cain, who was a murderer from the beginning.

16 And they were kept up by the power of the devil to administer these oaths unto the people, to keep them in darkness, to help such as sought power to gain power, and to murder, and to plunder, and to lie, and to commit all manner of wickedness and whoredoms.

What do we learn are some of the characteristics of secret combinations from these verses?

They are based on ancient and secret plans (v. 9)

Their members must join with an oath (v. 14)

Their loyalty and secrecy are maintained with threats of violence (v. 14)

Their author is the devil (v. 16)

Their goal is to obtain kingdoms and great glory (v. 9), to gain power, and to murder, and to plunder, and to lie, and to commit all manner of wickedness and whoredoms (v. 16).

Ether 8:20-22

20 And now I, Moroni, do not write the manner of their oaths and combinations, for it hath been made known unto me that they are had among all people, and they are had among the Lamanites.

21 And they have caused the destruction of this people of whom I am now speaking, and also the destruction of the people of Nephi.

22 And whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed; for the Lord will not suffer that the blood of his saints, which shall be shed by them, shall

always cry unto him from the ground for vengeance upon them and yet he avenge them not.

Moroni states that secret combinations caused the destruction of the Nephites and the Jaradites.

And he warns that “whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed”

How do you think we can recognize if a nation upholds secret combinations?

Hugh Nibley

“If the reader has imagined to himself the Gadianton band as abandoned wretches or street Arabs lurking in dark alleys and fleeing from the light of day in dingy and noisome hideouts, let him disabuse his mind of such a concept. They were a highly respected concern that made their handsome profits by operating strictly within the letter of the law, as they interpreted and controlled it. They were the government, the well-to-do, the respectable, and the law-abiding citizens.” (An Approach to the Book of Mormon, pg. 385)

Ezra Taft Benson

"The Prophet Moroni described how the secret combination would take over a country and then fight the work of God, persecute the righteous, and murder those who resisted. Moroni therefore proceeded to describe the workings of the ancient 'secret combinations' so that modern man could recognize this great political conspiracy in the last days....

"The Prophet Moroni seemed greatly exercised lest in our day we might not be able to recognize the startling fact that the same secret societies which destroyed the Jaredites and decimated numerous kingdoms of both Nephites and Lamanites would be precisely the same form of criminal conspiracy which would rise up among the gentile nations in this day." (CR, Oct. 1961)

Ether 8:23-25

23 Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shown unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which are built up to get power and gain -- and the work, yea, even the work of destruction come upon you, yea, even the sword of the justice of the Eternal God shall fall upon you, to your overthrow and destruction if ye shall suffer these things to be.

24 Wherefore, the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you; or wo be unto it, because of the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and

also upon those who built it up.

25 For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries; and it bringeth to pass the destruction of all people, for it is built up by the devil, who is the father of all lies; even that same liar who beguiled our first parents, yea, even that same liar who hath caused man to commit murder from the beginning; who hath hardened the hearts of men that they have murdered the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out from the beginning.

What is the stated objective of those who build up secret combinations?

(overthrow the freedom of all lands)

Ezra Taft Benson

"I testify that wickedness is rapidly expanding in every segment of our society. It is more highly organized, more cleverly disguised, and more powerfully promoted than ever before. Secret combinations lusting for power, gain, and glory are flourishing. A secret combination that seeks to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries is increasing its evil influence and control over America and the entire world." (CR, Oct. 1988)

Neal A. Maxwell

"There will be combinations built up by the devil to overthrow freedom. He is still acting out against the principle of freedom." (Things As They Really Are, pg. 41)

Supporting secret combinations led to the destruction of the part of the Jaradite kingdom that was controlled by Akish

Ether 9:11-13

11 Now the people of Akish were desirous for gain, even as Akish was desirous for power; wherefore, the sons of Akish did offer them money, by which means they drew away the more part of the people after them.

12 And there began to be a war between the sons of Akish and Akish, which lasted for the space of many years, yea, unto the destruction of nearly all the people of the kingdom, yea, even all, save it were thirty souls, and they who fled with the house of Omer.

13 Wherefore, Omer was restored again to the land of his inheritance.

The Lord sent prophets to warn them about their inevitable destruction

Ether 11:20-23

20 And in the days of Coriantor there also came many prophets, and prophesied of great and marvelous things, and cried repentance unto the people, and except they should repent the Lord God would execute judgment against them to their utter destruction;

21 And that the Lord God would send or bring forth another people to possess the land, by his power, after the manner by which he brought their fathers.

22 And they did reject all the words of the prophets, because of their secret society and wicked abominations.

23 And it came to pass that Coriantor begat Ether, and he died, having dwelt in captivity all his days.

Why did the people reject the prophets who sought to lead them out of bondage and away from destruction?

(because of their secret society and wicked abominations)