7-31-1994

The Influence of Lehi's Admonitions on the Teachings of His Son Jacob

John A. Tvedtnes

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jbms

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation
Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jbms/vol3/iss2/3

This Feature Article is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Book of Mormon Studies by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
The Influence of Lehi’s Admonitions on the Teachings of His Son Jacob

John A. Tvedtnes


1065-9366 (print), 2168-3158 (online)

Lehi, though unable to convince his older sons to follow the Lord, was very successful with both Nephi and Jacob. The speeches and writings of Jacob clearly show that he remembered the admonitions given to him by his dying father and that he shared Lehi’s teachings—including some of his verbiage—with other members of the family. Jacob’s life and his teachings found in the Book of Mormon stand as a memorial to his father’s faith and parental love.
The Influence of Lehi's Admonitions on the Teachings of His Son Jacob

John A. Tvedtnes

Abstract: Lehi, though unable to convince his older sons to follow the Lord, was very successful with both Nephi and Jacob. The speeches and writings of Jacob clearly show that he remembered the admonitions given to him by his dying father and that he shared Lehi's teachings—including some of his verbiage—with other members of the family. Jacob's life and teachings, found in the Book of Mormon, stand as a memorial to his father's faith and parental love.

The teachings of Jacob are found in two sermons and a treatise recorded on the small plates of Nephi. The first sermon, delivered at the request of his brother Nephi and including passages from Isaiah 49–51, is found in 2 Nephi 6–10. The second, delivered after Nephi's death, is in Jacob 2–3. The treatise, including the parable of Zenos, is in Jacob 4–6.

John S. Tanner, in an insightful 1991 article, presented evidence for internal consistency in the teachings of Jacob. He...
attributed the use of specific words and expressions to Jacob's peculiar style. I find, however, that Jacob owes much more to his father's example than to any style of his own.

For example, in 2 Nephi 6:3, Jacob said, "I am desirous for the welfare of your souls," while in Jacob 2:3, he spoke of his "anxiety for the welfare of your souls." He also noted his "anxiety" for his audience in Jacob 1:5 and 4:18. Tanner's observation about Jacob's consistency in using these terms is well-taken. But he fails to note that it was Jacob's father Lehi who first used the word anxiety when addressing his family (2 Nephi 1:16). It seems clear that Jacob was following his father's example, as we note from Lehi's concluding words addressed in summation to Jacob and his other sons: "And I have none other object save it be the everlasting welfare of your souls. Amen" (2 Nephi 2:30; see also 2 Nephi 1:25).

Tanner also noted Jacob's use of the term awake in both of his discourses (2 Nephi 9:47; Jacob 3:11). Jacob may have been influenced by the Isaiah passages he cited that employ this term (see 2 Nephi 8:9, 17, 24). But he may have remembered his father's use of the same expression in exhorting members of his family (2 Nephi 1:13–14, 23). This latter suggestion is reinforced by the fact that, in 2 Nephi 1:13, Lehi warned them to "awake from ... the sleep of hell" and spoke of "the eternal gulf of misery and woe," thus tying the expression to the captivity of the devil, which is discussed below. In Jacob 3:11, Jacob told the people to "awake from the slumber of death, ... from the pains of hell that ye may not become angels to the devil," as noted by Tanner.

An examination of Jacob's two sermons and his treatise show that he was clearly influenced by the admonitions addressed to him by his father Lehi in 2 Nephi 2.² Jacob was further influenced by the advice he heard Lehi give to other family members on the same occasion (2 Nephi 1, 3–4). For example, Jacob's use

² For example, the latter part of Jacob's first sermon, in 2 Nephi 9, bears such a similarity to Lehi's discussion of the atonement in 2 Nephi 2 that the one is almost certainly dependent upon the other. We shall examine details below.

spoke of the guilt felt by the wicked at the judgment (2 Nephi 9:14, 46); he mentions this in his treatise as well (Jacob 6:9).
of *plain* and *truth* in both of his discourses (2 Nephi 9:40, 47; Jacob 2:11; 4:13–14) likely derived from his father’s comments in 2 Nephi 1:26. Jacob’s frequent reference to the heart (2 Nephi 9:33, 49; Jacob 2:10, 22; 3:1–3; 6:4–5) reminds us that Lehi, too, spoke of the heart (2 Nephi 1:17, 21; 2:7). Both Lehi (2 Nephi 3:9–10, 16–17) and Jacob (Jacob 4:5) spoke of Moses and the law of Moses. Jacob followed Lehi’s example in using the term *Holy One* to denote the Lord.³ Jacob’s comments about the “Creator of heaven and earth” (Jacob 2:5) may have been prompted by Lehi’s remarks about the creation of the earth (2 Nephi 1:10). In 2 Nephi 9:53, Jacob says that their seed would not be utterly destroyed, reflecting what Lehi had said to Jacob’s brother Joseph (2 Nephi 3:3).

Jacob undoubtedly picked up some of Lehi’s earlier teachings from his older brother Nephi (cf. 2 Nephi 5:6). As the guardian of the small plates after Nephi’s death, he could review the teachings of his predecessors at any time (Jacob 1:1–4; 3:13–4:4).

In his first discourse, Jacob stated, “I have taught you the words of my father” (2 Nephi 6:3). In his second discourse, he also made specific reference to the teachings of his father (Jacob 2:34).

Lehi had noted that Jacob had suffered much because of his elder brethren (2 Nephi 2:1), but promised, “God . . . shall consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain” (2 Nephi 2:2). This may have influenced Jacob’s thinking when he spoke of those who “shall be afflicted in the flesh, and shall not be suffered to perish, because of the faithful; they shall be scattered, and smitten, and hated; nevertheless, the Lord will be merciful unto them” (2 Nephi 6:11). “They who have endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame of it, they shall inherit the kingdom of God” (2 Nephi 9:18). In his second discourse, Jacob told his audience that God “will console you in your afflictions” (Jacob 3:1).

---

³ 2 Nephi 1:10; 2:10; 3:2; 6:9–10, 15; 9:11–12, 15, 18–19, 23–26, 40–41, 51. The expression appears frequently in the Isaiah passages quoted by Nephi and Jacob.
Lehi promised Jacob that he would be blessed and told him, “thou shalt dwell safely with thy brother, Nephi” (2 Nephi 2:3). The preface introducing Jacob’s discourse stresses that he was “Jacob, the brother of Nephi” (2 Nephi 6:1). Jacob’s first recorded words to the people were of “my brother Nephi, unto whom ye look as a king or a protector, and on whom ye depend for safety” (2 Nephi 6:2).

Lehi further promised that Jacob’s days “shall be spent in the service of thy God” (2 Nephi 2:3). Indeed, he and Joseph had been consecrated as priests and teachers by Nephi (2 Nephi 5:26). In both of his discourses, Jacob spoke of his ordination by Nephi (2 Nephi 6:2; Jacob 1:18) and of his role as a teacher (2 Nephi 9:44, 48; Jacob 1:17–19; 2:2–3; 4:1). Jacob was particularly qualified to serve in this capacity because, as Lehi noted, he had seen the glory of the Redeemer and knew of his ministry in the flesh and of the salvation he would bring (2 Nephi 2:3–4; cf. 11:3; Jacob 2:11). Jacob bore testimony of this in his discourse to the Nephites:

And he also has shown unto me that the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, should manifest himself unto them in the flesh; and after he should manifest himself they should scourge him and crucify him, according to the words of the angel who spake it unto me. (2 Nephi 6:9; cf. 10:3–4)

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. (2 Nephi 9:5)

Both Lehi (2 Nephi 2:12) and Jacob (2 Nephi 9:12, 19, 25–26, 46, 53; Jacob 4:10; 6:5, 10) spoke of the “power” and the “mercy” and the “justice” of God. Each spoke of God as creator (2 Nephi 2:14–15; 9:26) and noted that those who “believe” in him will be saved (2 Nephi 2:9; 9:18). Lehi spoke of God’s “arms of love” (2 Nephi 1:15), while Jacob spoke of his “arm of mercy” (Jacob 6:5). But the similarity does not end there.

---

4 Earlier, Lehi had stated that his righteous descendants “shall dwell safely forever” (2 Nephi 1:9).
5 Lehi also told his family, “I have beheld his glory” (2 Nephi 1:15).
Boldness of Speech

Jacob addressed his audience with "boldness of speech" (Jacob 2:7), noting that he was required to speak as the Lord commanded (Jacob 2:10–11). Lehi had made similar comments about Nephi's plain but sharp speech to his brethren, resulting from God's commandment for him to do so (2 Nephi 1:26–27). Jacob, too, spoke with plainness (Jacob 2:11; 4:13–14). Like Nephi, Jacob's teachings reflected the "strictness" of the word of God, which was "hard" for the wicked to hear (2 Nephi 9:40; Jacob 2:35).

Truth and Error

Lehi and Jacob both spoke of the truthfulness of God. "The Spirit is the same, yesterday, today, and forever," said Lehi (2 Nephi 2:4). Jacob spoke of the "eternal word [of God], which cannot pass away" (2 Nephi 9:16–17) and of the Messiah who is "full of grace and truth" (2 Nephi 2:6; cf. verse 10).6 By contrast, he called Satan "the father of all lies" (2 Nephi 9:9; cf. Lehi in 2:18), the "cunning one" (2 Nephi 9:39) who has a "cunning plan" (2 Nephi 9:28). Jacob even went so far as to say, "Wo unto the liar, for he shall be thrust down to hell" (2 Nephi 9:34). Indeed, the fall of the devil from heaven is noted by both Lehi (2 Nephi 2:17) and Jacob (2 Nephi 9:8). God, Jacob declared, will "destroy the secret works of darkness, and of murderers, and of abominations" (2 Nephi 10:15).

Opposition in All Things

Lehi taught that "Men are instructed sufficiently that they know good from evil" (2 Nephi 2:5). Jacob, too, noted that men have a "knowledge of [their] guilt" and a "knowledge of ... their righteousness" (2 Nephi 9:14; cf. verses 33, 46). "Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him" (2 Nephi 9:41). "Prepare your souls ... that ye may not

---

6 Truth is defined in the scriptures as that which is always the same, and is hence a fitting title for the Lord. See my article "Faith and Truth" in the Notes and Communications section of this volume for more details.
remember your awful guilt in perfectness, and be constrained to exclaim: Holy, holy are thy judgments, O Lord God Almighty—but I know my guilt; I transgressed thy law, and my transgressions are mine” (2 Nephi 9:46).

Lehi noted that “if ... there is no law ... there is no sin. If ... there is no sin ... there is no righteousness. And if there be no righteousness there be no happiness. And if there be no righteousness nor happiness there be no punishment nor misery. And if these things are not there is no God. And if there is no God we are not, neither the earth” (2 Nephi 2:13). Jacob reflected these ideas when he said, “Wherefore, he has given a law; and where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment there is no condemnation” (2 Nephi 9:25).

All of this was, according to Lehi, part of the plan by which “there is an opposition in all things,” allowing men to choose between good and evil (2 Nephi 2:11). The first of these choices was made in the garden of Eden, where the “forbidden fruit [was] in opposition to the tree of life; the one being sweet and the other bitter” (2 Nephi 2:15). Jacob reflected these concepts when he declared, “Reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not to the will of the devil and the flesh” (2 Nephi 10:24).

The Fall

After partaking of the forbidden fruit, Lehi said, Adam and Eve were driven from the garden and became the ancestors of “all the earth” (2 Nephi 2:20). Jacob may have had these words in mind when he spoke of “every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam” (2 Nephi 9:21). Lehi had stressed the importance of the fall in God’s plan by noting that, had Adam and Eve not fallen, “they would have had no children” (2 Nephi 2:23). “Adam fell that men might be; and men are; that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25; cf. verse 23). While God seeks the happiness of mankind, “the devil ... seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself” (2 Nephi 2:27). The devil “had become miserable forever, [and] he sought also the misery of all mankind” (2 Nephi 2:18; cf. 1:13).

Jacob followed Lehi’s example in contrasting the joy God intends for mankind with the misery Satan wishes to share with us
"And their joy shall be full forever" (2 Nephi 9:18). He noted that, without the atonement, all mankind would "remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself" (2 Nephi 9:9; cf. verse 46).

The fall of Adam, Lehi declared, was "done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things" (2 Nephi 2:24; cf. 2:12). Jacob, too, spoke of the "wisdom" and knowledge of God (2 Nephi 9:8, 20; Jacob 4:10) and declared: "Death hath passed upon all men, to fulfill the merciful plan of the great Creator" (2 Nephi 9:6).

Lehi taught that "if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end" (2 Nephi 2:22). Jacob, too, drew attention to this, saying, "And the resurrection must needs come unto man by reason of the fall; and the fall came by reason of transgression" (2 Nephi 9:6).

"All men ... were lost, because of the transgression of their parents" (2 Nephi 2:21). Lehi tempered this dismal view with a promise: "The Messiah cometh ... that he may redeem the children of men from the fall" (2 Nephi 2:26). This became one of Jacob's principal themes:

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. (2 Nephi 9:7)

The plan of God, therefore, was for Adam and Eve to become mortal or imperfect, in order that they and their offspring might gain experience unavailable to them in their perfect condition. But there was a problem to be overcome. Since the penalty for disobedience is death, it was necessary to forestall the judgment in order to give mankind the opportunity to repent. In the eternal plan, this meant (1) providing a savior whose death would satisfy the demands of justice, and (2) establishing a probationary period.
during which Adam's family could be tested and learn obedience to the plan of mercy. Lehi put it this way:

The days of the children of men were prolonged ... that they might repent while in the flesh; wherefore, their state became a state of probation. (2 Nephi 2:21)

Jacob, too, discussed these matters:

And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God. And if they will not repent and believe in his name, and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has spoken it. . . . 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! (2 Nephi 9:23–24, 27)

Temporal and Spiritual Death

The fall of Adam resulted in two types of death, both required under the law of justice. The physical or temporal death separates the spirit from the body, while the spiritual death separates us from God (see D&C 29:40–43). Lehi declared that, "By the law men are cut off, . . . by the temporal law . . . and also, by the spiritual law, . . . and become miserable forever" (2 Nephi 2:5). Jacob put it this way: "For as death hath passed upon all men . . . because man became fallen they were cut off from the presence of the Lord" (2 Nephi 9:6; cf. verse 9).

This death, of which I have spoken, which is the temporal, shall deliver up its dead; which death is the grave. 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 spir-
its, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies.
(2 Nephi 9:11–12)

Atonement

Jacob, Lehi said, was “redeemed, because of the righteousness of thy Redeemer” (2 Nephi 2:3). Jacob later declared, “The mercies of the Holy One of Israel have claim upon them, because of the atonement; for they are delivered by the power of him” (2 Nephi 9:25).

The Messiah, according to Lehi, “offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit” (2 Nephi 2:7). Jacob declared, “And he cometh into the world that he may save all men if they will hearken unto his voice; for behold, he suffereth the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature” (2 Nephi 9:21). “For the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them” (2 Nephi 9:26).

So important is the mission of Jesus that Lehi declared that “there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah” (2 Nephi 2:8). Jacob similarly admonished, “remember, after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved” (2 Nephi 10:24).8 He elaborated on this subject in these words:

And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God. And if they will not repent and believe in his name, and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has spoken it. (2 Nephi 9:23–24; cf. 6:13)

---

7 Jacob also spoke of broken hearts in Jacob 2:10.
8 The grace of God is also mentioned in 2 Nephi 10:25, and the mercy and grace of God are mentioned in 2 Nephi 9:8, 53.
O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name. (2 Nephi 9:41; cf. Jacob 6:11)

Resurrection

Jacob spoke of the resurrection in the following terms:

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. (2 Nephi 10:25; cf. Jacob 6:9)

Jacob's teachings on resurrection derive directly from what he learned from his father. Lehi had spoken of the "power of the Spirit ... the resurrection" (2 Nephi 2:8), and told him that, without the resurrection, the body would "have been created for a thing of naught [and] there would have been no purpose in the end of its creation" and would have destroyed "the wisdom of God and his eternal purposes" (2 Nephi 2:12). Jacob, too, referred to the "power of the resurrection" (2 Nephi 9:6, 12; 10:25; Jacob 4:11; 6:9) and reflected other thoughts of Lehi in his discourse:

For as death hath passed upon all men, to fulfill 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.... 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 [i.e., death] 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. (2 Nephi 9:6–7)

Lehi declared to Jacob, “The Holy Messiah ... layeth down his life ... and taketh it again ... that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise” (2 Nephi 2:8). In his discourse, Jacob discussed the role of the Savior in laying down his life that we might be resurrected (e.g., 2 Nephi 6:9; 9:12–13, 22):

Our flesh must waste away and die; nevertheless, in our bodies we shall see God ... 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. For as death hath passed upon all men ... there must needs be a power of resurrection. (2 Nephi 9:4–6)

**Judgment**

Lehi spoke of Christ as the intercessor, by which we understand that he pleads before the judgment bar of God the case of those who repent:

He is the firstfruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make intercession for all the children of men. . . . Because of the intercession for all, all men come unto God . . . to be judged of him. (2 Nephi 2:9–10)

Jacob, like Lehi, spoke of the judgment in connection with the resurrection:

When all men shall have passed from this first death unto life, insomuch as they have become immortal, they must appear before the judgment-seat of the Holy One of Israel; and then cometh the judgment, and then must they be judged according to the holy judgment of God. (2 Nephi 9:15; see also verses 44, 46)
And he suffereth this that the resurrection might pass upon all men, that all might stand before him at the great and judgment day. (2 Nephi 9:22)

And they are restored to that God who gave them breath, which is the Holy One of Israel. (2 Nephi 9:26)

Wo unto all those who die in their sins; for they shall return to God, and behold his face, and remain in their sins. (2 Nephi 9:38)

For the wicked, said Lehi, the judgment results in a “punishment which is affixed ... in opposition to ... the happiness which is affixed, to answer the ends of the atonement” (2 Nephi 2:10). Following his father’s example, Jacob spoke of the punishment of the wicked and the reward of the righteous (2 Nephi 9:16, 18, 25, 48).9

Captivity and Liberty

Lehi taught Jacob that there are “both things to act and things to be acted upon” (2 Nephi 2:14). “God gave unto man that he should act for himself. Wherefore, man could not act for himself save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other” (2 Nephi 2:16). The atonement ensures that mankind retains its free agency:

And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good and evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day. (2 Nephi 2:26)

Jacob spoke of “the foolishness of men,” which makes them think “they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God” (2 Nephi 9:28). Those who misuse their free agency, after being exposed to the truth, will have an eternal state that is “awful” (2 Nephi 9:27). His reference to the captivity of hell

---

9 See also the list of “woes” in 2 Nephi 9:30–38.
(2 Nephi 9:12) apparently derives from some of Lehi’s comments to the rest of the family (2 Nephi 1:13, 18, 21; 3:5).

Lehi noted that “Men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life . . . or to choose captivity and death” (2 Nephi 2:27). “Eternal death . . . giveth the spirit of the devil power to captivate, to bring you down to hell, that he may reign over you in his own kingdom” (2 Nephi 2:29; cf. 2:18, 21).

Jacob instructed, “Remember that ye are free to act for yourselves—to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life” (2 Nephi 10:23). He evidently had his father’s teachings in mind when he wrote, “Remember, to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life eternal” (2 Nephi 9:39). Like his father, he spoke of the captivity that comes from surrendering one’s agency to Satan:

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. And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil . . . O how great the goodness of our God, who prepareth a way for our escape from the grasp of this awful monster. (2 Nephi 9:8–10; cf. verse 46)10

But, he noted, “the God . . . of Israel . . . delivereth his saints from that awful monster the devil” (2 Nephi 9:19; cf. verse 26), while the wicked “shall be thrust down to hell” (2 Nephi 9:34, 36; cf. verse 37). He further declared that one can be “freed from sin” (2 Nephi 9:47) and exhorted his audience to “shake off the chains of him that would bind you fast” (2 Nephi 9:45). These are the same words addressed by Lehi to his family just before he turned to admonish Jacob (2 Nephi 1:13, 23).

---

10 Jacob noted that those who follow Satan become “angels to a devil” (2 Nephi 9:9; also Jacob 3:11; cf. 2 Nephi 9:16). Tanner, “Jacob and His Descendants as Authors,” 60, notes that this expression is unique to Jacob; but it seems likely that he was influenced by Lehi’s comments on the devil as a fallen angel (2 Nephi 2:17–18). Jacob’s comments on the lake of fire and brimstone are found in both of his discourses (2 Nephi 9:16, 19, 26; and Jacob 3:11; 6:10).
A Choice Land

In the exhortation to his family, Lehi spoke of being led out of Jerusalem by the Lord (2 Nephi 1:5; cf. verse 9). Jacob did likewise (Jacob 2:32), and also spoke of the choice nature of the land to which they were led (2 Nephi 10:19–20). Both men also spoke of others led out of Jerusalem (2 Nephi 1:5–6; 10:22). Jacob’s comments on the land of liberty (2 Nephi 10:11) and the land of promise (Jacob 2:12) remind us of Lehi’s statements in 2 Nephi 1:5–8.

The land, Lehi said, would be cursed if the people were wicked (2 Nephi 1:7). Jacob repeated the idea (Jacob 2:29) and, like his father (2 Nephi 1:22; cf. 1:18), used the expression “cursed with a sore cursing” (Jacob 3:3; cf. 2:33).

Preservation of the People

Jacob’s belief that the Lord would show mercy to the Lamanites (Jacob 3:3–9) appears to derive from Lehi’s statement that the Lamanites would not be destroyed (2 Nephi 4:3–9). Lehi promised his son Joseph that his seed would not be utterly destroyed (2 Nephi 3:3), and Jacob repeated this promise (2 Nephi 9:53).

The Branch of Israel

Jacob’s comments on the “righteous branch” of Joseph, mentioned in both his discourses (2 Nephi 9:53; 10:1–4, 22; Jacob 2:25; 6:1–4, 7), hark back to Lehi’s use of the same term (2 Nephi 3:5). This branch, like the branches in the Zenos parable (Jacob 5), was “broken off” from the main body of Israel. But a restoration of Israel was expected by Lehi (2 Nephi 3:13, 24), as by Zenos in the parable cited by Jacob.

It is clear from some of Lehi’s comments that he, like Jacob, was aware of the parable of the olive tree.11 It is equally clear that

---

Jacob was acquainted with Lehi’s tree of life vision (1 Nephi 8) and that he tied it to the Zenos parable.12

Conclusions

A survey of Jacob’s teachings indicates that he was heavily influenced by the admonitions of his father Lehi. Tanner has noted that Jacob’s descendants carried on the tradition of using their father’s words in their own writings.13 It is a tribute to both father and son that such important instruction was remembered and repeated to subsequent generations.14

12 Even in the minutest terminology, Jacob reflects his father’s description of the vision. Both, for example, speak of the strait gate and the narrow way (1 Nephi 8:20; 2 Nephi 9:41; Jacob 6:11). Remembering those who mocked people who ate the fruit of the tree (1 Nephi 8:27), Jacob spoke of those who mock the plan of redemption (Jacob 6:8).

13 Tanner, “Jacob and His Descendants as Authors,” 52–66.

14 For further reading on this subject, see E. Douglas Clark and Robert S. Clark, Fathers and Sons in the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1991).