

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Semester 3, Lecture 85
3 Nephi 16–20
The Joy of the Lord's Visit

We should notice some things here [such as] the theme of the other sheep in 3 Nephi 16. Notice, suddenly it broadens out immensely. The other sheep all must be considered. Every individual in the whole world is going to get the full treatment. Here we see the earth from space, as one world, in this 16th chapter here, with all these other tribes. Then why is Israel so small in that case? Verse 1: “I have other sheep, which are not of this land, neither of the land of Jerusalem, neither in any parts of that land around about whither I have been to minister.” I have to go to them; they’re just as important as you are. I have sheep everywhere. I won’t be able to stay with you, so I’m leaving the writings with you. I command that you write down these things [the Savior said]. That’s what scripture is for, to have the words of the Lord after he’s left. Verse 4: “And I command you that ye shall write these sayings after I am gone [the people of Jerusalem will find out about you from them] . . . that they may receive a knowledge of you by the Holy Ghost, and also of the other tribes [these sayings from the Book of Mormon will reach other tribes—and then] . . . shall be manifested unto the Gentiles, that through the fulness of the Gentiles, the remnant of their seed” may come forth. And, of course, it has here.

By why is Israel so small? Why not give it to everybody anyway? Well, that’s very clear. They are the nucleus—they are the cadre. They hold the fort, and the instant any others qualify, they will be accepted. They are included in Israel. Turn to verse 13, just across the page here, “But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel.” They’ll be Israel too. But Israel is the ones he can trust in. But they haven’t worked either. They’re the best, but they’re not nearly good enough. That’s what we have here, you see. So they [the Gentiles] are included. Israel is responsible; therefore, Israel is the one that gets the punishment if it doesn’t work, because the others haven’t had the chance. With the Lamanites and Nephites it’s the same thing.

Verses 5–7: “And then will I gather them in from the four quarters of the earth; and then will I fulfill the covenant which the Father hath made unto all the people of the house of Israel. And blessed are the Gentiles, because of their belief in me [they come in]. . . . Because of the unbelief of you, O house of Israel, in the latter day shall the truth come unto the Gentiles.” [Israel has] failed. We’re going to give the Gentiles a break. The Gentiles will have their time. “But wo, saith the Father, unto the unbelieving of the Gentiles . . . [who] have scattered my people.” Now here we get the ultimate prophecy of the Book of Mormon, the great warning. Of course, the great prophecy comes later, but this is the great warning. This is the message of the Book of Mormon to the world at present, and see if it doesn’t fit like a glove here, from verse 8 on in chapter 16. They have “scattered my people” and trodden them under feet. What has happened? I have some horrendous examples I might give you, but we don’t have time for them. “And because of the mercies of the Father unto the Gentiles . . . after all this, and I have caused my people who are of the house of Israel to be smitten . . . and to be slain, and to be cast out from among them, and to become hated by them, and to become a hiss and a byword among

them.” The Jews and the Indians alike have been just ground down to nothing. The Jews emerged, but the Indians are still down there.

Verse 10: “At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel [when they go bad, after receiving it; notice they’ve received the gospel now, but if they sin against it, here’s the description of the Gentiles today] . . . and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations [we’re talking about one nation, those of the Promised Land, of course] and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and secret abominations [all these things, then] . . . I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.” Does that mean we don’t have the gospel anymore? No. Notice, the emphasis here is on the fullness of the gospel. Do we have the fullness of the gospel now? No, we don’t. We have only parts of it. “And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel [and give them the fulness of the gospel, which they don’t have] and I will bring my gospel unto them. And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you, . . . and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel.” They haven’t yet reached it. Don’t we have the fullness?

Verse 13: “But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel. And I will not suffer my people, who are of the house of Israel, to go through among them, and tread them down” if they behave themselves. But if they do not, what will be the condition in the land then? These conditions in verses 15–16 are hard to imagine. But do we have the fullness? Usually in this class I have handed around [President Spencer W.] Kimball’s great bicentennial address in which he tells us how much of the fullness we have. It’s very much to the point. This was for the bicentennial, and he says here, “I am speaking of the general state of wickedness in which we seem to find the world in these perilous yet crucially momentous days; and thinking of this, I am reminded of the general principle that where much is given, much is expected. . . . But when I review the performance of this people in comparison with what is expected [the fullness, see], I am appalled and frightened. Iniquity seems to abound. The destroyer seems to be taking full advantage of the time remaining to him in this, the great day of his power. Evil seems to engulf us like a great wave, and we feel truly we are living in conditions similar to those in the days of Noah before the flood.”¹

And, of course, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they married, they gave in marriage, they bought, they sold. It was business as usual, and suddenly the flood hit them like that. Then there are three things he takes us to task for: our contempt for the environment, our love of money, and our trust in the arm of flesh—in military might. He talks about these. When I see “many of the dark and miserable practices of men . . . I have the feeling that the good earth can hardly bear our presence upon it. . . . That such a cry is necessary among a people so blessed is amazing to me. . . . Sadly, however, we find that to be shown the way is not necessarily to walk in it. . . . Few men have ever knowingly and deliberately chosen to reject God and his blessings. Rather, we learn from the scriptures that because the exercise of faith has always appeared to be more difficult than relying on things immediately at hand, carnal man has tended to transfer his trust in God to material

¹ Spencer W. Kimball, “The False Gods We Worship,” *The Ensign* 6/6 (June 1976): 3.

things. Therefore, in all ages when men have fallen under the power of Satan and lost the faith, they have put in its place a hope in the ‘arm of flesh.’ . . . Do we have more of these good things than our faith can stand? Many people spend most of their time working in the service of a self-image that includes sufficient money, stocks, bonds, investment portfolios, property [and Brother Kimball had been a banker, you know], credit cards, furnishings, automobiles, and the like to guarantee carnal security throughout, it is hoped, a long and happy life.” He says it is foolish, forget it. Then he quotes Mormon 8:39: “Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not?” And he talks about Babylon to fall.

Well, it’s a great talk. This is the thing here. Do we have the fullness of the gospel? Unless we live up to it, we don’t. “In spite of our delight in defining ourselves as modern, and our tendency to think we possess sophistication that no other people in the past ever had—in spite of these things, we are, on the whole, an idolatrous people—a condition most repugnant to the Lord [well, that’s our condition now; I don’t need to go into detail here]. . . . Can we not take the Lord at his word and exercise a particle of faith in him?” [President Kimball asked]. He’ll take the fullness of the gospel from among them if that [wickedness] is going to happen, he says. We have it, but do we have the fullness? And he’ll hand the fullness over to Israel who do not have it now. But if the Gentiles repent, that will be fine.

Let’s get to the happy stuff in chapter 17. After this mounting pageant we’ve had right from the beginning of conflict and folly, we reach the grand climax in the Book of Mormon, and lo and behold, it is all good news. It’s a happy book, now. You expect, with this culmination, everything will break loose, and this is the dismal end—that the people always look forward to the things of this world. This is the happiest book in the world, you see. The terrible questions give everyone gnawing doubts all their lives, and this is the first time they are confronted head on. They are in the Bible after the resurrection of the Lord, and he comes to the apostles then, you see. He comes to the saints there and visits them for a period of forty days. That’s the joyful news which we don’t have in the New Testament, but here we have it. So this is what happens. Notice first of all 3 Nephi 17:2. These things that are happening, dramatic as they seem, are not an emotional or sentimental display, or anything like that, of what we vapidly call spiritual. None of that. The glory of God is still intelligence, and to appreciate what is happening here, the brain and intellect must be clear and active. So he tells them here, “I perceive that ye are weak, that ye cannot understand all my words [that you can’t understand what I’m talking about] which I am commanded of the Father to speak unto you at this time.”

What do you do about it? He says you go home and think very hard about these things. Verse 3: “Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said [concentrate—think about them, you see], and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand.” See, it’s not just seeing a vision or going into ecstasy or having a warm feeling or something like that. He wants you to understand these things and prepare your minds for tomorrow. You have to be able to receive these things. What’s he going to do? He’s going to give them great things, and for that they must be cleaned up and made ready. Now get rid of all your sickness. You can’t be distracted by itches, toothaches, earaches, and backaches. That will take your attention away from the gospel. See, the gospel is not the healing mission of the Seventh-Day Adventists, for example, or the healing of the Christian Scientists. The gospel begins where that ends. If they’re sick, the

Lord says, make them well. If they're hungry, feed them, and then preach them the gospel.

He saw they were in tears. They didn't want him to leave them. The epiphany doesn't last long. He has to go to all these other sheep. He has to go the rounds, and so they were in tears. I thought Christ was everywhere, that his spirit enters into your heart. You hear all that, but we see some different things here. "... as if they would ask him to tarry a little longer with them. And he said unto them: Behold, my bowels are filled with compassion towards you. Have ye any that are sick among you? ... lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, or leprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf, or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will heal them [he's going to clean everything all up], ... for I see that your faith is sufficient that I should heal you." With one accord they brought their sick and he healed them, every one. The preaching of the gospel is not a medical mission. That's a very important part of it, which prepares people for it. But it begins where the healing ends. I know what to do if I'm sick—no problem there. I don't have a problem to get well. But the gnawing problem is what do we do after we're well? Then what do we do? This is the thing. That's where the gospel comes in, and we could never figure that out for ourselves. Notice here [verse 10]: They bathed his feet with their tears after he had healed them.

Then he commanded that their little children should be brought. Notice, he's always insisting on the children here. Why is that? Verses 12–13: "So they brought their little children and set them down upon the ground round about him ... [and] he commanded the multitude that they should kneel down upon the ground." Why does everybody kneel? Because kneeling is a position of concentration. It's not an ordinary position. You're aware of being in a special condition; it's the best condition to concentrate in. If you're kneeling, you're not going to fall asleep. You could fall asleep standing or lying down, but when you kneel, it's not just an act of subjection. You lower yourself. That's what humility is. *Humilis* means putting yourself on the earth; the *humus*, as you know, is the earth. *Humilis* is to be humble and to kneel on the earth. You not only put yourself in that position, but you're more receptive. You're alert and waiting. You've struck this special posture and you wait in that posture until you've finished what you're doing, what you're going to receive, or what you're going to concentrate on. And so they all do this quite often here.

Then it says here [verse 14]: "Jesus groaned within himself, and said: Father, I am troubled because of the wickedness of the people of the house of Israel." And he himself also knelt on the earth and prayed to the Father. What he prayed cannot be written. Does that mean that it's impossible to write, or that it's not permitted to write? Either one. In this case it happens to be both. Verse 16: "The eye hath never seen, neither hath the ear heard, before, so great and marvelous things as we saw and heard Jesus speak unto the Father." And you notice the theme here is joy. Notice verse 17: "And no one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us unto the Father [of being admitted to the universal discourse] ... but so great was the joy of the multitude that they were overcome."

You'll notice the hardest thing to support is joy. You can support suffering and pain with toothache and everything else without end. I mean there's no limit to the suffering. But how do you contain joy? It's the hardest thing in the world to do, as you know. When you're overwhelmed with joy you have to excuse yourself; you have to depart. Remember

when Joseph met his brethren? He was the great ruler of Egypt, but he had to go into the other room and cry his eyes out because he was so happy to see them. And so it is here. Notice verse 20: “And they arose from the earth, and he said unto them: Blessed are ye because of your faith. And now behold, my joy is full [and what did he do? He wept]. And when he had said these words, he wept, . . . and he took their little children [again], one by one and blessed them.” See, he doesn’t just say bless you children, but the children deserve a blessing. Jesus gave each child his patriarchal blessing, just as he met the people one by one, not in the plural. “And when he had done this, he wept again.”

Now the question is, why would God weep? The classic treatment of this is in Moses 7:28–30 in the Pearl of Great Price. This is as magnificent a passage of prose as you’ll find in English or any other literature. It is the most marvelous of prose, but that isn’t the thing we’re going to read it for. It tells you why God can weep. So this is what happens: “And it came to pass that the God of heaven looked upon the residue of the people [as Jesus does here], and he wept; and Enoch bore record of it, saying [this is a marvelous passage of nature literature]: How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the mountains? And Enoch said unto the Lord: How is it that thou canst weep, seeing thou art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity? [weeping is a human fault, you see]. And were it possible that man could number the particles of the earth, yea, millions of earths like this, it would not be the beginning to the number of thy creations [what a statement]; and thy curtains are stretched out still; and yet thou art there, and thy bosom is there; and also thou art just; thou art merciful and kind forever.”

How does he do it, to stretch forth infinitely? When you reach that stage [you can]. This is the state of glory that he’s working for on our behalf. Verse 31: “And thou hast taken Zion to thine own bosom, from all thy creations, from all eternity to all eternity; and naught but peace, justice, and truth is the habitation of thy throne [this is the ultimate that you can possibly imagine of worlds without number]; and mercy shall go before thy face and have no end; how is it thou canst weep?” If you have filled the whole universe and mastered the whole thing [how can you weep?] “The Lord said unto Enoch: Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands; and I gave unto them [the knowledge they needed] their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency.” So they were not only free to act, but they had the knowledge to act on. With all the knowledge which is still the best course to take? Well, he said, I gave them instruction; I gave them commandments. He gave them all you’d want. “. . . gave I unto man his agency; And unto thy brethren have I said, and also given commandment, that they should love one another [this is the reason for weeping], and that they should choose me, their Father [after all that]; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood [this is the human race at that time, you see] And the fire of mine indignation is kindled against them, and in my hot displeasure will I send in the floods upon them,” and so forth. So this is why he can weep. That such a thing should happen is overpowering. What’s going on here, you see, is something quite overpowering.

We are in 3 Nephi 17:23 now: “And he spake unto the multitude, and said unto them: Behold your little ones.” You may have seen—it’s been in the news for the last week—that 40,000 children a day die of hunger and malnutrition, and such simple things as dehydration, because there’s no one to take care of them. No one cares for them. Here we are rolling in wealth and this goes on. “Behold your little ones. And as they looked to behold they cast their eyes towards the heaven, and they saw the heavens open [now the angels come down], and they saw angels descending out of heaven as it were in the midst

of fire [this is a demonstration of what is available to the undefiled human race as such; this is not a sentimental interlude, you see]; and they came down and encircled those little ones about, and they were encircled about with fire [this is a form of energy, as you know]; and the angels did minister unto them.” What do you mean by minister? Well, if you check the various places in the Book of Mormon [you see] it means they talked to them. In the first chapter of Luke, the Christmas chapter, the angel comes. When Gabriel appears to Zacharias in the temple, he says I have come to chat with you, to have a conversation with you. He says the same thing with Mary. When angels come and minister, what they do is bring the word. That’s what their ministry is, to bring the word, so they come and talk with us. But minister is a two-way road. You talk back and forth. It’s not just a vision or revelation—they come to chat and discuss. That’s what ministry is—to take care of you, to explain things to you, to satisfy you. This is what happens in the New Testament. The multitude saw it, and they talked with them.

Notice, the angels play this key role in the Book of Mormon for the initiated at a very special time, but they appear just to children. They come for special reasons, and you can see why this is. Why don’t angels come to us? Even Mary had to be assured that she wasn’t unworthy. She felt guilty. Zacharias was terrified and struck dumb. To the shepherds in the field, the angels first had to say, “don’t be afraid,” and so forth. And on the Mount of Transfiguration they were “sore afraid.” This is what’s so sad about it—we could enjoy the presence and visitations of angels if we weren’t so darn guilty. The case of the children proves it. They come to children because there’s no one else in the condition to receive them. See, I wouldn’t want to see an angel. As my grandfather said when he was in the First Presidency, “If an angel would come through that door, I’d go right out the window; I couldn’t face it.” No, we couldn’t. The culture shock would be too much, but children can. We want angels to visit us, but they can only visit communities like this of these little children, to whom we give such a bad time. And then, he says, they actually saw this. This thing really happened. Verse 25: “And the multitude did see and hear and bear record [that these things really happened]. . . . All of them did see and hear, every man for himself.” There it is again. One doesn’t say, well I know all these people believed it. They said they believed it. He said he saw it. Did you see it? No. Every man testified for himself what he had seen and heard, about 2,500 of them.

And then comes the sacrament. He calls for bread and wine and has them sit down on the earth. He took the bread and wine and blessed it “and gave unto the disciples and commanded that they should eat. And when they had eaten and were filled, he commanded that they should give unto the multitude.” Notice, the apostles minister. They’re deacons; they pass the sacrament. They’re ministering to the people. They’re the waiters; they’re waiting on them. He wants to make this clear. It’s not that they’re superior because they have the privilege of doing that, but they’re the ones who are obliging the people by passing the sacrament. Verse 5: “Behold there shall one be ordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall break bread and pass it and give it unto the people of my church, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name.”

Now he always eats after the resurrection. He has many appearances after the resurrection, but he always eats with them. Why does he do that? That marvelous passage in Luke 24:36 explains [this]. It’s after the resurrection and the apostles are talking among themselves. Again, it uses the same words, *autōn lalountōn*, chatting, conversing, exchanging ideas. That’s the very one that’s used when the angels come in the beginning of Luke. The angel

comes and speaks to Mary and others. That's what they do—they minister. Well, they were talking to each other, and suddenly Jesus himself appeared in the middle of them. They were absolutely dumbfounded (*ptothentes* is a very powerful word) and *emphoboi*, terrified. Now these are the apostles that believed on the resurrection; but when Jesus appeared among them, they were terrified and utterly amazed. They thought they were seeing a ghost, a spirit. This is interesting. And he said to them, why are you so disturbed, and why are you of two minds? Why can't you make up your mind? Why are you going to discuss this? It uses the word dialogue here. Why do you make this a dialogue? Why does this double-mindedness appear in your hearts? You're asking yourselves, could this be or couldn't it be? Why aren't you sure? But they weren't sure, so he rebuked them for that. He said, look, these are my hands, these are my feet—the same that I had when I was with you before. And he said, come on, feel them and see “for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see me have.” He was resurrected, and to prove it this is what he does, you see.

Then they still were amazed and didn't know whether to believe him or not, for amazement and for *charās*; they were struck with too much joy. They couldn't make up their minds. So what did they do? He said, do you have anything to eat here? This was going to prove it to them. They still wouldn't believe when he said that. They brought him a cooked fish and honeycomb, and he ate it in front of them to prove that he was really resurrected, that he was a human being. The ministry reads this in the churches, the people and the theologians read this, and they'll say when Jesus appeared after the resurrection, he was a spirit. He came to the breast and bosom of everyone. How could you possibly make it clearer than this? They believed in the spirit stuff, as far as that was concerned, but they wouldn't believe that it was really Jesus. All right, feel me—see and feel [Jesus said]. He said, a spirit isn't solid the way I am. They still wouldn't believe, so he said, do you have anything to eat—I'll eat something. So he ate something. Well, as I say, the Christian world still says, yes, Jesus comes in spirit. After the resurrection, that's the way he came. St. Augustine said, yes, I believe in the afterlife, but I'll never believe in a physical resurrection. That's too gross, too crass. We don't have that.

So here [in 3 Nephi 18:6] he has the sacrament which he shares with them, you see. “And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done.” Remember that you ate it when you were with me. Remember, the sacrament has two purposes—to remind the people of the time when the Lord was with them, in remembrance of him, and to look forward to the time when he shall partake of the new wine with them again in his Father's kingdom. So there's the feast to come and the feast behind. We have both in the Book of Mormon. First, the people have to look forward, and, of course, this comes out in the Dead Sea Scrolls, in the appendix to the Serekh Scroll, where they have the sacrament. In the Dead Sea Scrolls when as many as twelve come together they're were supposed to have a sacrament. The priest puts out his hand and blesses the bread and the wine, because it is to represent the presence of the Messiah who is to come among them, the Messiah of Israel (I think it says of Ephraim). So they anticipated it, and the Jews had this very same thing. We see that the Book of Mormon religion is the same. You always observe to do this.

He doesn't visit as a spirit. Verse 8: “He commanded his disciples that they should take the wine of the cup and drink of it, and . . . give unto the multitude . . . and this doth witness unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you.” You've made the covenant, and you're willing to carry it out. This is another witness, you see, and you do it in remembrance of what's happening right now. He says, you'll do this

always in remembrance of me, because I have to leave you. This involves commitment. We're committing ourselves in this deeper and deeper. We begin to build a bridge. This is this other world that people don't even believe exists, you see. Verse 11: "And ye shall do it in remembrance of my blood, which I have shed for you, that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you." See, this is tuning in. You can do this.

Verse 13: "But whoso among you shall do more or less than these are not built upon my rock [he mentioned that before], but are built upon a sandy foundation." Well, in the Southwest the Indians all live on the sand. That's the wash. The Moenkopi Wash is the richest one, where the Hopis live. But they always put their houses on the rock. They don't put their houses on the sand. When you build, you build up on the mesa, but your field is down below. In the sandy patches there is where you thrust the corn into the ground, and that's where the underground water can be reached. But you don't build on that. That can be very dangerous, because they do have flash floods, as you know, in the desert. They're terrific, and they can change the whole terrain. So you build on the rock. It's the same thing in the Near East, because it's sandy country.

Verse 14: "Therefore blessed are ye if ye shall keep my commandments, which the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you." The Son is an example. He's giving them instruction here. He says here in verse 16: "I have set an example for you." We're all in this together. I do it myself, he says. He prays to the Father, and he partakes of the sacrament. Then he says, "I say unto you, ye must watch and pray always lest ye enter into temptation; for Satan desireth to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." He says this to the multitude, not just to the disciples. See, we don't make this distinction enough in the New Testament.

Verse 19: "Therefore ye must always pray unto the Father in my name." Of course, that's the first commandment given to Adam. Therefore you shall do all you do in the name of the Son, and you shall repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore. Always pray unto the Father in my name. "And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive [credit is good], behold it shall be given unto you [he gives you a blank check here]. Pray in your families unto the Father, always in my name." You don't pray to the saints; you don't pray to anyone else. You don't pray to Jesus. You pray to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. Now it gives the rule for the church here: "And behold, ye shall meet together oft; and ye shall not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together [you shall not cast him out of your meeting]. . . . But ye shall pray for them, and shall not cast them out. . . . Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine unto the world [he's talking about the church]. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do. Behold, ye see that I have prayed unto the Father [so that's what you do] and ye all have witnessed it."

The light is an example, and that's the guide. That's why the Son is so important. He gives it all to us. We have to get it all through him. "And ye see that I have commanded that . . . ye might feel and see; even so shall ye do unto the world." Notice how literal he's being. This is humility, incidentally too, on his part, to be felt and seen, etc. He descends below all things. He says, you feel and see that you might bear testimony, as John says—what we have seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, felt with our hands, that we testify of. People try to get around that and say John is spiritual; he only speaks of the spirit.

Well, he talks about his eyes and ears and feeling. That doesn't mean a thing [to them], and it's the same thing with the resurrection, about the nature of God.

Verses 27–28: “I give unto you another commandment. . . . Ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily.” Well, of course, [a person] can't renew a covenant which he hasn't made. This is a renewal of a covenant, a promise to keep the covenant. If he's never kept it [he can't renew it]. The people do not take this responsibility. Who is to decide whether they're unworthy or not? Well, you know yourself, and others do by the pattern of behavior, or whether they have entered the covenant or not. But you have no mental reservations here. God is not mocked, you see. If you do this and don't intend to keep it all the way or [if you] make reservations, then God is not mocked, and you're to be very much warned against this. He says [verse 30]: “Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out from among you.” Everyone is free to communicate in the church. And if he repents, there's still time. I know them; you don't know them. “I know my sheep, and they are numbered [you must put up with everybody]. Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out of your synagogues, . . . for unto such shall ye continue to minister.” There it is again, minister—associate with him, converse with him. Minister to him, because you never know. It may be “I shall heal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them [so don't judge anyone]. . . . Wo unto him whom the Father condemneth. And I give you these commandments because of the disputations which have been among you. And blessed are ye if ye have no disputations among you.”

What could be more unseemly—after he'd been with them, talked with them, and told them these things—than that they should go on squabbling among themselves? We don't want any of that, he says. Verse 36: “He touched with his hand the disciples whom he had chosen, one by one [there's that again]. . . . And the multitude heard not the words which he spake . . . he gave them power to give the Holy Ghost. . . . There came a cloud and overshadowed the multitude that they could not see Jesus. And while they were overshadowed he departed from them and ascended into heaven.”

Now there's a reminder of that exciting passage from Thucydides where it says “that night, no man slept.” It's like Christmas Eve—the tremendous excitement about the great thing that's going to happen tomorrow. Everybody is rushing around spreading the news: The Lord has finally come. He's going to be here tomorrow. Has anybody missed it? That's what it tells us here [in 3 Nephi 19]. The multitude dispersed. Everybody went home, but they didn't go to bed. Verse 2: “And it was noised abroad among the people immediately, before it was yet dark, that the multitude had seen Jesus, and that he had ministered unto them, and that he would also show himself on the morrow unto the multitude.” Well, be there. [This is] the great night—the excitement of Easter night, the excitement of *Christos anesti*, the excitement of Christmas when we're expecting the coming of the Lord. For little children have intense excitement. A great thing is going to happen; we're going to receive a great gift tomorrow. We're going to get the gospel tomorrow. They're all excited about it. As I said, not a man slept.

Verse 3: “Yea, and even all the night it was noised abroad concerning Jesus [people went running around to make sure everybody heard it]; and insomuch did they send forth unto the people that there were many . . . [who] did labor exceedingly all that night.” As I said there was no rest, no sleep that night for anybody. Who could sleep, you see? “And . . . on the morrow, when the multitude was gathered together, behold Nephi and his brother . . .”

Here are the names of the Twelve Apostles. Notice they're a mixture of Aramaic and Hebrew and Greek here, which is exactly the mixture of the population in the time of Lehi in Palestine, showing that these names had circulated among the people. They had the records and they studied them. They had the brass plates, which were much fuller than our Bible; they were big records.

Verse 5: "And behold, the multitude was so great that they did cause that they should be separated into twelve bodies." This is a very interesting thing—so that they could be handled by the Twelve, etc. The very same process was followed in the ancient kingdoms. It was called *in cespitate*. The people sit down in the grass. I've written an article in a classical journal about this. The person who was to be king would order the people to sit down on the ground in twelve groups, as many as there were tribes, but usually in twelve. Then he would order them to be fed. After they were fed, they would all cry in one voice and acclaim him because he had shown himself capable to supply life. He was the giver of life, substance, and food, and he was the one whom they could rely on as the king. The king had to give victory and prosperity, you see, so they would hail him. Well, this is the pattern it's following, and this goes back to the beginning, to early times.

Verses 6–7: "And the twelve did teach the multitude; and behold, they did cause that the multitude should kneel down upon the face of the earth, and should pray unto the Father in the name of Jesus." The disciples prayed and arose and ministered to the people. What would they do? They gave the speech here. Notice, the next verse proves what we mean by ministering: "And when they had ministered those same words which Jesus had spoken . . ." They ministered the words, see. They came and told them what the teaching was. They told [the people] what the Lord had told them before, so they ministered the words. That's what you do when you minister. In other words, you come and teach. You talk with people, etc. ". . . which Jesus had spoken—nothing varying from the words which Jesus had spoken [the very same words]—behold, they knelt again and prayed to the Father in the name of Jesus. [What would they have said? We don't know.] . . . They desired that the Holy Ghost should be given unto them." And then they went down with Nephi and were baptized. They had all been baptized before. We're told that anyone who wanted to be a member of the church before had to come to Nephi, and he assigned someone to baptize them, or baptized them himself. But now Nephi himself has to be baptized all over again. They have to be cleaned up. It's going to be a new beginning now. Verse 12: "And he baptized all those whom Jesus had chosen [the Twelve, and they're going to do the baptizing now]. . . . The Holy Ghost did fall upon them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire [that energy or force field]. And behold, they were encircled about as if it were by fire [it wasn't oxidation going on here; it was something else; we know it takes many forms]. . . . The multitude did witness it, and did bear record; and angels did come down out of heaven and did minister unto them." Again, an example of greetings and thoughts.

Verse 15: "And it came to pass that while the angels were ministering unto the disciples, behold, Jesus came and stood in the midst and ministered unto them." He dropped in again for conversation. He was going to talk to them. He went around among them "and he spake unto the multitude, and commanded them that they should kneel down again upon the earth, and also that his disciples should kneel down upon the earth." As I said, kneeling keeps you aware. It stimulates concentration, actually. Why all this kneeling? Because this is a position you rarely assume in daily life, for one thing. It's a reminder to concentrate. It's not a casual or workaday occasion. Sitting or lying down or standing are

things we do all the time. The only thing we rarely do is kneel, unless we have to. I had to fix a car last night, and then you have to kneel. But normally that's not what you do, so it has that special attitude that keeps you in concentration, keeps you [humble], and makes you think you're going to be glad to get up. You want to make sure that you won't drag things on there.

Verse 19: "And it came to pass that Jesus departed out of the midst of them, and went a little way off from them and bowed himself to the earth, and he said: . . ." Now we have these amazing things. In chapters 14–17 of John you find the same thing. [It is] even richer in this occasion, and look how we're all tied together. Here in these four short verses we have 39 personal pronouns. Across the page in verses 28 and 29 you have 27 personal pronouns in two verses. I, you, he, them are personal pronouns. Notice, he's tying the whole thing together as if it were a sort of a mesh, as it were. He begins this way: First he addresses the Father. That's a proper noun, not a pronoun. But the pronouns are really going to fly now. "Father, I thank thee [here's the relationship] that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen [notice]; and it is because of their belief in me that I have chosen them out of the world."

Notice the cast of characters here is Father, Son, Holy Ghost, those who are members of the Church—then those who are to be preached to by them, and then also there is the world which doesn't figure. The world has to be taken into consideration, but this is out of the world; this is separating them. It goes on: "Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words." Notice how it ties together with the Holy Ghost. The believers convert the unbelievers here. The converts are the believers. We're spreading it out, you see. It began with the relationship between the Father and the Son, and now it's going on. "Father, thou hast given them the Holy Ghost because they believe in me; and thou seest that they believe in me because thou hearest them, and they pray unto me; and they pray unto me because I am with them." They're praying to God the Father, you see, but they're not seeing God the Father. They hail him [the Savior] here as God. He was God in their midst. He came down amongst them.

Verse 24: "When Jesus had thus prayed unto the Father, he came unto his disciples, and behold, they did still continue, without ceasing, to pray unto him." Well, they prayed to the Father. We have some very interesting old Coptic writings that have come out recently that tell the same thing about Jesus coming and meeting with the people after [the resurrection], and he went aside three times and prayed. The first time his face was illuminated; the second time the apostles' faces were illuminated like his. The third time he prayed to the Father he came back and the multitude were all shining; they were all glorious. And the same thing happens here, so you have a control on that in a very early Christian writing, which had been lost until the 1950s. "And they did not multiply many words." When you multiply, you repeat over and over again, like "Allah, Allah, Allah." You repeat it over and over again. You can do that all day long. That's multiplying. When you multiply you repeat the same thing over again. Ten times four means four repeated ten times. You know that. So they did not multiply—it was not a repetitious prayer. It wasn't a form prayer at all. They didn't multiply words before him, "for it was given unto them what they should pray, and they were filled with desire." The ideas flowed freely on this occasion. They knew what they desired, and they were desiring all sorts of things.

Verse 25: "Jesus blessed them as they did pray unto him [this is the way it is in heaven; like a gratified master he smiles upon them; they're praying unto him now]; and his

countenance did smile upon them, and the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold they were as white as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus.” It was exceeding whiteness. That Coptic text tells us that’s the way it happened. We have an interesting parallel here. “And Jesus said unto them: Pray on; nevertheless they did not cease to pray. And he turned from them again, and went a little way off and bowed himself to the earth; and he prayed again unto the Father.” This is the second time, you see. Again, you notice the personal pronouns. “Father, I thank thee that thou has purified those whom I have chosen, because of their faith, and I pray for them, and also for them who shall believe on their words [see, it brings everybody into this same close relationship] that they may be purified in me, through faith on their words, even as they are purified in me. Father, I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world.” That excludes it. He is bringing them out of the world into this, because the world can’t go sailing on in the long stretch ahead into the eternities. It’s not set for that. It’s for the burning; it’s got to be completely changed and transferred before it can go on at an eternal level. But here we’re gradually inching, you might say, toward that state of eternal existence in which we’ll be able to live on a different level. But [he’s] always reminding them [that he’s there]. It’s physical, it’s real, you felt, you saw, etc. Don’t think you imagined it. I ate with you [he said], so you’re not going to go on as a drop in the ocean of being or something like that. As St. Jerome said, we have to accept the resurrection because the scriptures say it was physical. But, he says, the moment we are resurrected we will immediately start to dissolve, until we have been dissolved into the nothing from which we came. That’s the great Jerome who gave us the Vulgate Bible.

“Father, I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world, because of their faith [and here it is], that they may be purified in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one [now here’s atonement], that I may be glorified in them.” You see, they share the glory, and they are one because they are in each other. That expression is used a great deal in John, and of course it baffles everybody. How can you be in somebody else? Well, this has to do with another dimension of our being. After all, your existence doesn’t stop right where you end off there when you take a photograph. There may be even some Kirlian effect around you. You may even be glowing. These things happen, if you have fever or something like that. No, you extend your personality right here on earth beyond just where you stand—you know that. We can all project. That is the miracle of the word, but this is something far more than that, you see. We really begin to enter into things here.

Verses 30: “And when Jesus had spoken these words he came again [for the third time] unto his disciples; and behold they did pray steadfastly, without ceasing, unto him; and he did smile upon them again; and behold they were white, even as Jesus. . . . He went again a little way off and prayed unto the Father; and tongue cannot speak the words which he prayed, neither can be written by man the words which he prayed. And the multitude did hear and do bear record; and their hearts were opened [that’s how we have to understand it] and they did understand in their hearts the words which he prayed. . . . So great and marvelous were the words which he prayed that they cannot be written, neither can they be uttered by man.” Well, the question arises, how can you tell me something about them and the words he said. Can you give me an idea? The multitude did hear and bear record, and somebody comes and says, “Well he said marvelous things. Did you understand it?”

“Yes, we understood it with our hearts.”

“Well, tell me what he said. Can you give me an idea?”

And then he says, “No, I can’t.”

“Can’t you give me some idea?”

“No.”

I walk into a room where there are a lot of quantum physicists, highest bracket, having a conference. I listen to them for a while and then go out. Somebody says, “Well, Mr. Nibley, can you tell me what they said in there?”

I say, “Heavens, I can’t tell you. I can’t even dream what they talking about; it was way out of my star.” There are plenty of things you can hear and not report or understand or anything else. Yet at the time you could have been enormously impressed. But remember, we’re dealing with other dimensions here.

This is the teaching of the forty days, too [in verse 35]: “So great faith have I never seen among all the Jews; wherefore I could not show unto them so great miracles, because of their unbelief. . . . There are none of them that have seen so great things as ye have seen. . . . He commanded the multitude that they should cease to pray, and also his disciples. And he commanded them that they should not cease to pray in their hearts.” There you are again; there’s the other dimension. You can extend it from there, and you know what that means.

Verses 2: “And he commanded them that they should arise, . . . [and] he brake bread again and blessed it, and gave to the disciples to eat.” And they gave it to the multitude, and the wine to drink. The miracle of the loaves and fishes, you remember, was a sacrament. And this was a miracle. He supplied the wine and the bread here.

Verse 6: “Now there had been no bread, neither wine, brought by the disciples, neither by the multitude; but he truly gave unto them bread to eat, and also wine to drink.” There have been a lot of articles written recently about the loaves and fishes [being] really a type of the sacrament when the Lord supplies it. And it’s the same thing here, you see. He supplies it. “And he said unto them: He that eateth this bread eateth of my body to his soul [this is the sacrament]; and he that drinketh of this wine drinketh of my blood to his soul.” Then this always happens, as I said. After the king feasts them, then they all cry out with an acclamation and accept him as king. Verse 9: “Now when the multitude had all eaten and drunk, behold, they were filled with the Spirit; and they did cry out with one voice, and gave glory to Jesus, whom they both saw and heard.”

Then he’s telling them the words of Isaiah, which he quotes about remnants abroad. And then we’re back again to this warning about the Gentiles. Verse 15: “And I say unto you, that if the Gentiles do not repent after . . . they have scattered my people—then shall ye, who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them [these things are yet to be fulfilled, and how we are to imagine them I don’t know]; and ye shall be in the midst of them who shall be many; and ye shall be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.” The Gentiles obviously in such a position must be prostrate; they can’t help themselves. But strange things are already happening in the world. I don’t know [how it will happen]. . . . The sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them,

saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles.” So now we’ve got a world war here. The rest of the world knows nothing of this, but the report is not limited here.

Verse 22: “And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you”—when we achieve Zion, when we have the fullness of the gospel. “Verily I say unto you, yea, and all the prophets . . . have testified of me [this is what it was all about]. And behold, ye are the children of the prophets.” See, the rest of the world knows nothing about this. This is a special community kept apart by itself. Well, we’ve seen how that is. As soon as anyone is able to receive it, they will. On the other hand there are many enclaves we know not of. There are tribes scattered everywhere that you know not of, and I must visit them too [the Savior said]. Take that into account.

Verse 25: “Ye are of the covenant which the Father made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham: And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. The Father having raised me up unto you first, and sent me to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities; and this because ye are the children of the covenant.” They’re a special group, a special classification. But it’s not necessarily the blood. Remember, he says all Gentiles who accept it will be accepted into the covenant. All whom Abraham circumcised and whom he took into his family, with the exception of his son Ishmael were in the covenant as much as anyone, and they were the seed of Abraham.

Verse 27: He said, “In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” We mentioned that before. [Abraham’s] three wives had children who represent the three—Shem, Ham, and Japheth. At a time when the world population was reduced to a nub, his offspring started to flourish like mad. They don’t have to be direct descendants of them, but the fact is they’re probably mingled with all the genes in the world. “In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed—unto the pouring out of the Holy Ghost through me upon the Gentiles, which blessing upon the Gentiles shall make them mighty above all, unto the scattering of my people, O house of Israel.” Now this prophecy is 100 percent filled, you see, with the people on both sides. Both Israel in the New World and Israel in the Old World were thoroughly scattered. The Jews were scattered, as you know, for 2,000 years and were nonpersons. And the Indians have been as scattered and as beaten down as anyone could be by now. And we’ll see what happens now.

Remember the subject [for the final] is: “Should the Book of Mormon be taken more seriously?” or “Have we underestimated the Book of Mormon?” I think we all have.