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Book of Mormon Gems of Truth: Lesson 33

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Abstract: Monthly Book of Mormon lessons for adult women (Relief Society). Each month a verse of Book of Mormon scripture is presented with accompanying quotes from General Authorities and writers of the Church.

Visiting Teacher Messages

Book of Mormon Gems of Truth

Lesson 33—"For, If Ye Forgive Men Their Trespases Your Heavenly Father Will Also Forgive You" (3 Nephi 13:14).

Edith S. Elliott

For Tuesday, October 4, 1955

Objective: To show that to obtain forgiveness from God entails our forgiving our fellow men.

IN the Savior's sermon to the Nephites one of the subjects that he spoke of was forgiveness. He placed great importance on this code of conduct. In fact, he gave it the status of a law which rules that certain actions on the part of an individual will bring certain rewards or punishments. In 3 Nephi, we are told that if we forgive men their trespases, our Heavenly Father will forgive us ours. The reverse is also stated which is that we can expect no forgiveness from God unless we forgive our fellow men.

This law is indeed a sobering thought and one which needs to be pondered upon often. In taking stock of our life's deportment, I wonder if any of us is free from mistakes, misunderstandings, and, perhaps, a bit of wilful or thoughtless disobedience to the laws of God or man. In moments of weakness, we may fall prey to transgression. We read in 1 John 1:8:

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

We are all subject to human frail-

ties and, certainly, not invulnerable to temptation. So if we want the divine forgiveness of our God, we must do our part by forgiving our fellows of any acts of harm or unkindness they have done to us. Indeed, the Lord says:

I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men (D. & C. 64:10).

Let us teach forgiveness in our homes. We can truly forgive if we have love for God and our brothers in our hearts. The holding of grudges engenders malice and bitterness which make for misery and canker the soul. This state of being can be completely wiped out by sincere forgiveness. The joy which comes with forgiveness assures us a buoyancy of spirit. The melting away of prejudice brings comfort and well-being.

We are told to forgive ". . . until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:22), which is a lot of forgiving, but, by following this law of the Lord, happiness and contentment come into our lives.