



Type: Magazine Article

Book of Mormon Studies

Editor(s): John A. Widtsoe

Source: *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 90, No. 12 (22 March 1928)

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Page(s): 181–183

Abstract: This is a series of articles intended for Relief Society course study. It discusses the importance of the Book of Mormon, its coming forth (i.e., the translation, the witnesses, the publication, Joseph Smith), brief overview of its contents, and explains the text from 1 Nephi 1 through Alma 58. Each article features several questions that are helpful in synthesizing and applying the Book of Mormon to daily life.

souls of all men. The trend of modern sociology has resulted in a false conception of the word "religion."

NEEDS OF THE WORLD

There are three distinct things needed in the world to-day as forces to spiritualize humanity: First, a revival and adherence to the Ten Commandments given to Moses on Mount Sinai; the second is a renewal of faith in God the Eternal Father, and in His Son Jesus Christ; and the third, a divine knowledge that in this day and age of the world the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has been restored by revelation. The Priesthood, sacred in its gifts, divine in its influence, and spiritual in its character, has been given to man directly by the power of God. These are the three great truths that must be taught to the human race.

The Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is a champion of the truth concerning the redeeming love of God; it is the custodian of a particular and exclusive way in which the redeeming power reaches man. To have the right kind of belief in the plan of salvation is indispensable to right relations with God. We believe in the infinite power of the human mind; we hold to the truth that man is divine, and his personal power and individuality live throughout the countless ages of eternity.

I pray that we may grow in knowledge and in faith; and that the divine love of God will lead us to people with His divine message. Amen.

BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES*

The Second Migration: The second people to land upon the shores of the Western Hemisphere were the people of Lehi, called Nephites. They left Jerusalem about 600 years B.C., and their story is extended over a period of time a little more than a thousand years. The Book of Mormon deals chiefly with the history of this people; they will be considered later.

The Third Migration: Zedekiah, who was king at the time Jerusalem fell into the hands of Babylon, was taken prisoner by his captors, together with his entire family. His sons were put to death in his presence, after which his eyes were put out. He was bound in fetters, carried into Babylon and kept a close prisoner until his death.

"But among the king's friends who escaped were a number who carried with them one of Zedekiah's sons, named Mulek; and, according to the Book of Mormon, this company journeyed in the

*Lesson 7 of the Relief Society Course of Study—for use on the first lesson night in April.

wilderness and were brought by the hand of the Lord across the great waters into the Western Hemisphere."* Hence the people who were with him and who came from this original group were called after the king's son.

The Mulekites: "The Mulekites left Jerusalem at the time of its fall before Babylon, 588 B.C., and reached America some twelve years later than the Nephites."†

"It is learned by an incidental remark in the Book of Mormon that the colony of Mulek landed somewhere in the north continent of the Western Hemisphere; and for that reason the north continent was called Mulek, by the Nephites; and the south continent, Lehi; and this for the reason that the Lord brought the colonies bearing these names to the north and south land, respectively. How many years the colony of Mulek traveled, and in what direction, cannot be learned from the Book of Mormon, but it is quite evident that they landed in the north continent of the Western World, most likely in the southern part of that continent, say in the region of what is known in modern times as Central America. Thence they drifted southward to the valley of the Sidon, where they were found by the migrating hosts of Nephites under Mosiah."‡

These people cultivated the land, were industrious, and for a time were very prosperous. They founded a large and prosperous city, called Zarahemla after one of their foremost leaders, and, as was the custom at that time, the country round about a city derived its name from the city. Hence the country round about was called the "land of Zarahemla." See Alma 8:7. It was here that they were discovered centuries later by the descendants of Lehi, or the Nephites.

Deterioration of Language and Ideals: "Mulek's colony—the name is derived from that of the young prince it carried with it, not because he was really the leader of the colony, but doubtless out of a sense of loyalty and national pride on the part of those who would regard themselves as being entrusted by Providence with the fortunes of a prince of Israel—Mulek's colony, I repeat, in their hurried flight from Judea brought no records with them, no scriptures, no genealogies. The circumstances under which they made their escape from the Babylonians considered, it is not difficult to understand that records, scriptures, concerned them not at all. Flight, escape alone occupied their thoughts. In consequence of having no records, no written language of any kind, their language was much changed in the course of the centuries that had elapsed since their departure from Judea. So much so, in fact, that the Nephites could not understand them;

**New Witnesses for God*, Vol. II, p. 164.

†*Young Woman's Journal*, 1920, p. 520.

‡*New Witnesses for God*, Vol. II, pp. 164-5.

neither could the people of Zarahemla understand the Nephites, until instructed by the latter in the Nephite tongue. Moreover, having been without both written scriptures and a living Priesthood for centuries, Zarahemla's people not only no longer believed in God, but denied even the existence of a Creator. In a word, through ignorance and the demoralizing influence of contentions and internecine wars, they had deteriorated to semi-civilized and irreligious conditions. All this, however, in the course of time was changed. The people of Zarahemla soon learned the Nephite language, it being a language akin, of course, to their own. They were also taught in the Nephite faith; and instructed in the scriptures that Lehi's colony had brought with them from Jerusalem, and which Mosiah had brought with him in his northward journey. The happiest results followed this union of the two peoples."*

QUESTIONS

1. Relate in your language the events recorded in the Book of Mormon, Omni, verses 12 to 16.
2. What are the events enumerated in Omni, verses 17 and 18?
3. Read verses 20, 21 and 22 in Omni. Tell what you know of Coriantumr. To what people did he belong? How did the people of Mosiah find out concerning him?
4. Why is it necessary for people to have records and a written language?
5. In what way does modern Israel meet these requirements? Are you doing your part in keeping a written record of your family? How?

**New Witnesses for God*, Vol. II, pp. 165-6.

CONTENTMENT

FAR ACROSS the verdant valley fall the golden shafts of sunset,
 And the tree-tops seem transfigured in their halo of bright gold;
 All the earth looks rich and mellow in the kindly haze of yellow;
 Mating birds trill out the story that a million tongues have told.

Then the weary toiler ceasing once again his round of labour
 With his willing beasts turns homeward through the deep'ning
 shades of even;
 And the friendly lights appearing in the cottage windows, cheering
 Seem, and fairer than the glow that lights the heaven.

Then a deep content enfolds him, for he sees with clearer vision,
 And his humble lot seems glorified and worthy in his eyes;
 On the stern hard face of Duty, glows a sudden charm and beauty,
 And a wordless prayer of gratitude ascends the evening skies.

ESTELLE W. THOMAS