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## Book of Mormon Studies

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**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.

ness through ninety-eight years of accomplishment in this dispensation, attested President Widtsoe, the closing speaker of the conference.

The Mission President and Sister Widtsoe met with the missionaries on Monday. The present-day needs for the promulgation of the Gospel were enthusiastically discussed. *The Western Daily Press* favourably reported the conference.

FRANK S. CRAGUN, District Clerk

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### BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES\*

*Nephi's Last Days:* Nephi remained true to the teachings of his father, Lehi, and to his covenants with his God, as long as he lived. His last days were peacefully spent in seeing his people become strong and prosperous. He continued to exhort them to righteousness and to prepare them for the coming of the Saviour in the meridian of time, which event he foresaw and predicted.

*Nephi's Successors:* "After the death of Nephi, his brother, Jacob, became leader of the Church, having been ordained by Nephi. The office of king was bestowed upon another [by Nephi before his death] who assumed the name of Second Nephi because of the reverence in which that name was held by all the people. All the kings for a long period were called Nephi, each being distinguished from the other by number.

"Up to the time of Nephi's death the people walked obediently before the Lord, and were in consequence prosperous and happy; but under the reign of the Second Nephi they lapsed into sin. Many of them now spent their time in seeking gold and silver and other precious minerals with which the land abounded. With riches came pride; with pride, wickedness; they set their hearts on the things of this world and persecuted their less fortunate neighbours. Jacob, being commanded of the Lord, reproved them in the temple for their wickedness, and told them plainly that the anger of the Lord was kindled against them. He warned them against pride, impurity, the love of wealth and the entertainment of hatred against their neighbours. He commanded them to repent lest the Lord in His wrath should destroy them. He admonished them against seeking the wealth of this world rather than the riches of eternity; he rebuked them for letting pride destroy their hopes of salvation and for persecuting their poorer neighbours, and told them that all men, rich and poor alike, were created by God from the dust and were therefore equal in His sight."†

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\*Lesson 12 of the Relief Society Course of Study—for use on the second lesson night in June. Read from 2 Nephi, chapter 29, to the Words of Mormon, page 132.

†Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, April, 1898.

*The Anti-Christ:* "Towards the close of the life of Jacob, Sherem arose among the Nephites. He was the first of the many anti-Christ's who at various times endeavoured by their teachings to lead the people from the principles of the Gospel. He openly taught that there would be no Christ nor necessity for an atonement, and he was a type of many who came after; for no matter how these apostates differed on lesser matters, they almost universally denied the coming of the Saviour, and taught that the faith of the Nephites in His appearing was a snare and a delusion. Sherem was a man of many words, bland in manners, much given to flattery, and well acquainted with the language of his nation, and withal, very zealous in spreading his pernicious doctrines—so much so that he was successful in misleading many.

"Full of deceit and presumption, he contended with Jacob, and endeavoured to convert him to his ideas. But being unsuccessful, he denied the Christ and blasphemously called for a sign. A sign was given him. On Jacob's praying to the Lord, Sherem was smitten to earth by the power of God, and though he was nourished for many days he eventually died. The day before his death he called the people together and acknowledged his iniquity. He confessed Christ and told the people plainly that he had been deceived by the power of the devil, and had lied unto God. He died with the terrible thought haunting him that he had committed the unpardonable sin.

"When the people who had gathered to hear his last words witnessed the terrors of his death they were softened in their hearts; the power of God rested upon them, and they fell to the earth. The corrupt weeds he had sown in their hearts had withered; the truth had been vindicated; the cause of the Saviour extolled, and peace and love of God was restored again among the people. Thus was this apostasy eradicated, and God glorified. The Nephites of that generation from that time searched the scriptures and cleaved unto the truth."\*

*The Plates Pass to Enos, Jarom, Omni:* These men became scribes and custodians of the plates, each succeeding a righteous father, and each in turn maintaining the integrity of the Nephites.

"Enos was the third one who held the Liahona, the sword of Laban and the records brought from Jerusalem, and who, in addition to this, had the responsibility placed upon him of recording the sacred history of the Nephites. His father, Jacob, gave him a good education in the Nephite language, and instructed him in his duty to God and in the blessings of eternal life. For this good instruction Enos loved his father and praised the Lord.

"One day, he, while hunting in the forest, thought of the good

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\*Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, April, 1898.



things spoken of by his father. Kneeling down upon the ground, he prayed the remainder of the day and part of the night for the forgiveness of his sins. The Lord told him that he was forgiven because of his faith in Christ, whom he had never seen nor heard, and told him that Christ would soon come in the flesh to this earth.

“Enos was not yet satisfied, and asked other favours of the Lord. His most earnest prayer was, that if by any means the Nephites should fall into transgression and be destroyed by the Lamanites, the sacred writings of his people might be preserved and brought forth to them at some future time, so that they might receive salvation. The Lord covenanted with him that the record should be preserved, if necessary by his own arm, and given to the Lamanites in due time. Enos was informed that this had been the prayer of his forefathers, and that the promise was given because of his and their faith. Because of the Lord's promise to these prophets the Nephites understood that the records were preserved for the Lamanites in the last days.”\*

#### QUESTIONS

1. What are the teachings of the Book of Mormon concerning rulers in the land of promise? What fate awaits those who fight against Zion? Why?
2. Tell in your own words the substance of the teachings in 2 Nephi, chapter 26.
3. Tell the story of the foreshadowing in the Book of Mormon of the experience of Martin Harris and Professor Charles Anthon.
4. Were the Nephites always more righteous than the Lamanites in every respect? In what respect were the Lamanites superior? See Jacob, chapter 3.
5. Tell of the discovery of the land of Zarahemla. Who discovered it, and what led to the journey? Read the Book of Omni.
6. Who was Coriantumr? King Benjamin? Tell of the other migrations.
7. Explain Omni, verses 5, 6 and 7. Do these words apply to conditions in these days? How?

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\*Deseret Sunday School Union Leaflets, April, 1898.

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