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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.

RELIEF SOCIETY

BOOK OF MORMON STUDIES

For the first lesson in May

IN THIS LESSON (3 Nephi 7-11) comes one of the most powerful, touching, and convincing testimonies of Jesus Christ, available in all the world. That the people on the American continent were ripe in their iniquities is made plain by the events of chapter 7. Then came the climax of the world's history—the crucifixion and atonement of Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of God—the event to which all prophets before looked forward, and to which all prophets since have gazed back, even until now. This one divine event was the frequent theme of Book of Mormon prophets; and the risen Redeemer showed Himself on the Western hemisphere also, as they had predicted.

The tempests and earthquakes and whirlwinds, which may or may not have been experienced generally, were certainly destructive. The wicked perished there, and then came that time of times in Book of Mormon history—and in the world history for that matter—when the Saviour of the world, proclaimed by the Father, ministered to the people who had been spared because of their greater righteousness. They heard Him! They felt Him! They saw Him! Great was their joy! They feasted upon His words as those who have long been an hungered. No honest searcher for truth can read the words of Third Nephi with full purpose of heart, and not be thrilled with its message and convinced that it is a true record. The message of Third Nephi inspires us to exclaim with Job, with the Nephites on the American continent, and with all righteous men and women who are blessed with this testimony—“I know that my Redeemer liveth!”

QUESTIONS

1. What was the condition of the Nephite people just prior to the coming of the Lord? Briefly recount the mighty works of Nephi at this time.
2. Relate the story of the destruction on the American continent that came simultaneously with the crucifixion of the Saviour. Who were destroyed?
3. Tell briefly the message that was given the people by the voice of the Lord before His actual appearance unto them.
4. Christ did show Himself unto the Nephites! What evidence have we of this great truth?
5. Why in your opinion were the Nephite twelve called disciples rather than Apostles? What does this signify concerning the order of God's Church on earth?
6. What mode of baptism did the Saviour prescribe for the Nephites? How does this bear out the Biblical mode?