

# **THE BOOK OF MORMON COMPUTER MARKING PROJECT**

for Left-brained but Open-minded and Diligent Seekers  
of a Testimony of the Truth of the Book of Mormon –  
based on a remarkable promise  
by the late Elder Bruce R. McConkie

## **PART 2 – TITLE PAGE TO 1 NEPHI 7**

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# **THE BOOK OF MORMON**

Another Testament of Jesus Christ

Thematically color coded,

with more important text highlighted,

plus clarifying and testimony-enhancing notes

Compiled by Jon M. Taylor, Ph.D.

# THE BOOK OF MORMON

An Account Written by [the Hand of Mormon](#)  
upon Plates Taken from the Plates of Nephi

1 Wherefore, it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites—Written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile—Written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation—Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed—To come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof—Sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by way of the Gentile—The interpretation thereof by the gift of God.

2 An abridgment taken from the Book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the

language of the people, when they were building a tower to get to heaven—Which is to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the [covenants of the Lord](#), that they are not cast off forever—And also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that [JESUS is the CHRIST](#), the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting himself unto all nations—And now, if there are faults they are the mistakes of men; wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment—seat of Christ.

**NOTE:** See color coding below.

TRANSLATED BY JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.

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## Commentary on the Opening Page

In the October 1982 general conference, Elder Boyd K. Packer announced: “. . . by recent decision of the Brethren the Book of Mormon will henceforth bear the title ‘The Book of Mormon,’ with the subtitle ‘Another Testament of Jesus Christ.’ ” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1982, 53)

Pres. Ezra Taft Benson admonished:

**“We invite all men everywhere to read the Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ.**

**“The Bible sits on the pulpit of hundreds of different religious sects. The Book of Mormon, the record of Joseph, verifies and clarifies the Bible. It removes stumbling blocks, it restores many plain and precious things. We testify that when used together, the Bible and the Book of Mormon confound false doctrines, lay down contentions, and establish peace.”** (see 2 Nephi 3:12) (*Ensign*, Nov. 1984, p.7)

“Has the fact that we have had the Book of Mormon with us for over a century and a half made it seem less significant to us today? **Do we remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon? In the Bible we have the Old Testament and the New Testament. The word *testament* is the English**

rendering of a Greek word that can be translated as *covenant*. Is this what the Lord meant when He called the Book of Mormon the “new covenant”? **It is indeed another testament or witness of Jesus. This is one of the reasons why we have recently added the words ‘Another Testament of Jesus Christ’ to the title of the Book of Mormon.”** (*Ensign* Nov. 1986, p. 4)

## Commentary on the Title Page (above)

The Prophet Joseph Smith declared, “The title-page of the Book of Mormon is a literal translation, taken from the very last leaf, on the left hand side of the collection or book of plates.” (*History of the Church* 1:71). It is assumed that the title page was written by Moroni, since it was the last leaf and it closed with the words “sealed by the hand of Moroni.”

**NOTE:** The “Introduction,” “Testimony of Joseph Smith,” and testimonies of the Three Witnesses and Eight Witnesses, which are included in the standard edition of the Book of Mormon, are in a separate volume entitled: **“Introduction: Faith-promoting testimonies and insights about the origin and contents of the Book of Mormon.”**

# A BRIEF EXPLANATION ABOUT [THE CONTENT OF] THE BOOK OF MORMON

The Book of Mormon is a sacred record of peoples in ancient America, and was engraved upon sheets of metal. Four kinds of metal record plates are spoken of in the book itself:

1. *The Plates of Nephi*, which were of two kinds: the Small Plates and the Large Plates. The former were more particularly devoted to the spiritual matters and the ministry and teachings of the prophets, while the latter were occupied mostly by a secular history of the peoples concerned (1 Nephi 9:2–4). From the time of Mosiah, however, the large plates also included items of major spiritual importance.

2. *The Plates of Mormon*, which consist of an abridgment by Mormon from the Large Plates of Nephi, with many commentaries. These plates also contained a continuation of the history by Mormon and additions by his son Moroni.

3. *The Plates of Ether*, which present a history of the Jaredites. This record was abridged by Moroni, who inserted comments of his own and incorporated the record with the general history under the title "Book of Ether."

4. *The Plates of Brass* brought by the people of Lehi from Jerusalem in 600 B.C. These contained "the five books of Moses, . . . And also a record of the Jews from the beginning, . . . down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah; And also the prophecies of the holy prophets" (1 Nephi 5:11–13). Many quotations from these plates, citing Isaiah and other biblical and nonbiblical prophets, appear in the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon comprises fifteen main parts or divisions, known, with one exception, as books, each

designated by the name of its principal author. The first portion (the first six books, ending with Omni) is a translation from the Small Plates of Nephi. Between the books of Omni and Mosiah is an insert called The Words of Mormon. This insert connects the record engraved on the Small Plates with Mormon's abridgment of the Large Plates.

The longest portion, from Mosiah to Mormon, chapter 7, inclusive, is a translation of Mormon's abridgment of the Large Plates of Nephi. The concluding portion, from Mormon, chapter 8, to the end of the volume, was engraved by Mormon's son Moroni, who, after finishing the record of his father's life, made an abridgment of the Jaredite record (as the Book of Ether) and later added the parts known as the Book of Moroni.

In or about the year A.D. 421, Moroni, the last of the Nephite prophet-historians, sealed the sacred record and hid it up unto the Lord, to be brought forth in the latter days, as predicted by the voice of God through his ancient prophets. In A.D. 1823, this same Moroni, then a resurrected personage, visited the Prophet Joseph Smith and subsequently delivered the engraved plates to him.

*About this edition:* Some minor errors in the text have been perpetuated in past editions of the Book of Mormon. This edition contains corrections that seem appropriate to bring the material into conformity with prepublication manuscripts and early editions edited by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

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## The Books of *The Book of Mormon*:

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| 1 Nephi                  | (1 Ne.) |
| 2 Nephi                  | (2 Ne.) |
| Jacob                    |         |
| Enos                     |         |
| Jarom                    |         |
| Omni                     |         |
| Words of Mormon (W of M) |         |
| Mosiah                   |         |
| Alma                     |         |
| Helaman                  | (Hel.)  |
| 3 Nephi                  | (3 Ne.) |
| 4 Nephi                  | (4 Ne.) |
| Mormon                   | (Morm.) |
| Ether                    |         |
| Moroni                   | (Moro.) |

## NEARER TO GOD

***“I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.” — Joseph Smith (History of the Church, 4:461)***

*This color-coded version of the Book of Mormon could be a helpful tool for those who want to read thematically or to review key teachings quickly. This thematic study also helps the reader see why Nephi, Mormon, and the Book of Mormon prophets between them decided under inspiration to include what text they did.*

*The overarching purpose of such thematic study is to strengthen testimony and to enhance understanding and practice of Book of Mormon teachings. I believe it will be of greater value to serious students who are re-examining the Book of Mormon, than to first-time readers.*

*The process of color coding the Book of Mormon by recurring themes – plus highlighting and adding commentary – has had a powerful impact on me personally, and I hope that it will help many others fulfill the promise of the Prophet Joseph Smith – in bringing them nearer to God by recognizing, understanding, and abiding by its precepts. —Jon M. Taylor*

Scriptural text is preceded by summary phrases [in brackets] from the official text. Some of the more interesting passages are in *italic typeface*, higher priority passages are in ***bold italics***, and some of the most important teachings are in **bold type face**. Occasionally, a key word or phrase is underlined as well. Some of the more important text is in larger type. Some highly significant verses are enclosed in heavy borders.

Noted in borders below the applicable text are inspired insights or interesting facts, along with applicable sources. (Hyperlinks are for reading a monitor; note references are for printed copy.) The commentaries were selected for their value in enhancing understanding and appreciation of the principles and in building testimony of the truth of the Book of Mormon. Only minimal attention was given to items of historical, archaeological, and literary interest— and only for evidence in validating the book.

Most of the verses fall into common themes and are **color-coded** by the most recognizable themes in those verses, as indicated below. Where the verses applied to two or more themes, either the most predominant theme was used – or some text was in one color while the surrounding paragraph was in another.

Color coding, text highlighting, and note selections—  
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### COLOR CODING KEY

**IVORY** – OBEDIENCE (leading to earthly blessings), performance of duties, humility, keeping commandments, faithful fulfillment of callings, earthly promises to the righteous of protection, happiness, prosperity, wisdom, etc.

**GOLD** – CONVERSION, fruits of repentance, joys of missionary work, etc.

**LIGHT BLUE** – FAITH in Christ, testimony, power of prayer, spirit of the Lord, Holy Ghost, gifts of the Spirit, revelation, deliverance by divine power, miracles, etc.

**TAN** – HOPE in Christ, mission and atonement of Jesus Christ, plan of salvation, agency, fall of Adam, justice and mercy, eternal judgment, eternal life, doctrine of Christ, etc.

**PURPLE** – CHARITY (pure love of Christ), God’s love for his children and his efforts to save us from the effects of sin, our need to love and serve one another, etc.

**BLUE** – TRIALS to humble God’s chosen people, persecutions of the righteous, etc.

**ICE BLUE** – COURAGE in battles and wisdom in preparations – to defend families and rights to freedom, religion, etc.

**GRAY** – DISOBEDIENCE, Satan and his influence, pride and the sins of the world, conditions of wickedness, the fate and misery of the wicked, etc.

**RED** – Calls to REPENTANCE and warnings to the wicked

**LIME** – HISTORY of the Lord’s dealings with Book of Mormon peoples, the children of Israel, and the Gentiles. Also used when no other themes apply.

**LIGHT GREEN** – PROPHECIES of earthly events; covenants, promises, and warnings to the children of Israel and to converted gentiles, etc.

**GREEN** – RECORDS; writer’s comments; purpose, history, and future of the various plates and Book of Mormon compilations, and genealogy of the children of Israel, etc

NOTE: This color coded version of the original text is not an official publication of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All color selections, highlighting, and notes are the subjective choices of Jon Taylor, and he is solely responsible for the color coding, priority marking, and notes added. The colors below were selected from shading (format) options in Microsoft Word 2000, © 1999.

# THE FIRST BOOK OF NEPHI

## HIS REIGN AND MINISTRY

*An account<sup>A</sup> of Lehi and his wife Sariah, and his four sons, being called, (beginning at the eldest) Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi. The Lord warns Lehi to depart out of the land of Jerusalem, because he prophesieth unto the people concerning their iniquity and they seek to destroy his life. He taketh three days' journey into the wilderness with his family. Nephi taketh his brethren and returneth to the land of Jerusalem after the record of the Jews. The account of their sufferings. They take the daughters of Ishmael to wife. They take their families and depart into the wilderness. Their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness. The course of their travels. They come to the large waters. Nephi's brethren rebel against him. He confoundeth them, and buildeth a ship. They call the name of the place Bountiful. They cross the large waters into the promised land, and so forth. This is according to the account of Nephi; or in other words, I, Nephi, wrote this record.*

### CHAPTER 1

*[Nephi begins the record of his people—Lehi sees in vision a pillar of fire and reads from a book of prophecy—He praises God, foretells the coming of the Messiah, and prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem—He is persecuted by the Jews. About 600 B.C.]*

1 I, NEPHI, having been <sup>a</sup>born of <sup>b</sup>goodly <sup>c</sup>parents<sup>A</sup>, therefore I was <sup>d</sup>taught somewhat in all the learning of my father; and having seen many <sup>e</sup>afflictions in the course of my days, nevertheless, having been *highly favored of the Lord in all my days*<sup>B</sup>; yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the *mysteries of God*<sup>C</sup>, therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days.

2 Yea, I make a record in the *language of my father*<sup>D</sup>,

#### Notes for 1 Nephi 1:1-2

A (Introduction to 1 Nephi and Ch. 1) These introductions are colophons; i. e., brief introductions of what is to follow, or brief summaries of what has preceded. Colophons are a typical feature of ancient Near Eastern literature. (*Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, 210)

A (Ch. 1, v. 1): Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another, to observe the commandments of God.” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102)

“After all, to do well those things which God ordained to be the common lot of all man-kind, is the truest greatness. To be a successful father or a successful mother is greater than to be a successful general or a successful statesman. One is universal and eternal greatness, the other is ephemeral. . . . Let us not be trying to substitute an artificial life for the true one.” (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 285-6)

As important as are devoted parents, the term “goodly parents” as used here refers to something else. “What Nephi was explaining . . . was his ability to write,

something not common in his day. That which enabled him to be taught in the “learning of his fathers” was the social station of his family. Lehi was a man of sufficient means so that his family could enjoy the blessings of education. The text is a testimonial for the spiritual blessings that flow from the proper use of this world’s wealth.” (McConkie & Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 19)

B (v. 1): [**“Many afflictions . . . highly favored of the Lord”**] “Life was not intended to be easy. The path of righteousness, that course leading to eternal life, is ever an upward climb and hence uninviting to many. Nephi saw afflictions and blessings as compatible companions. **Surely anything that brings us nearer to God is a blessing.**” (McConkie & Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 19)

C (v. 1): “The mysteries of God are known only to those who have so lived as to enjoy the companionship of the Holy Ghost. ‘No man can receive the Holy Ghost without receiving revelations.’ Joseph taught for ‘the Holy Ghost is a revelator’ (*Teachings*, p. 328). Because of faithfulness in the face of affliction, Nephi became a rightful heir to these hidden treasures of God.” (McConkie & Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 19)

D (v. 2): “The matter is ambiguous. Joseph Smith told us very little about the process of translation and the nature of the language he translated. In one of the early conferences of the Church, Hyrum Smith called on his brother Joseph to tell about the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Joseph declined to do so, saying: ‘It was not intended to tell the world all the particulars of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon’ and that ‘it was not expedient for him to relate these things.’ (*Far West Record*, p. 23)

“The Lord had already told Joseph Smith that if people would not believe his word as found in the Book of Mormon, they would not believe any explanation that Joseph could give, even if he were able to show them everything the Lord had committed to them (D&C 5:7). Ultimately the only valid evidence for the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon is in the doctrines it teaches and the effects of those doctrines on the lives of those who live up to their principles. . . .

“Moroni . . . stated that ‘none other people knoweth our language’ and that the Lord had ‘prepared means for the interpretation’ (Mormon 9:32-34). Confirming this, Joseph said, ‘I translated the Book of Mormon from hieroglyphics: the knowledge of which was lost to the world’ (Cannon, *Life of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, p. 460). Oliver Cowdery also affirmed that the language of the Book of Mormon ‘cannot be interpreted by the learning of this generation’ (Messenger and Advocate, October 1835, 2:198).” (McConkie & Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 20)

which consists of the [learning of the Jews<sup>E</sup>](#) and the [language of the Egyptians<sup>F</sup>](#).

3 And I know that the [record<sup>G</sup>](#) which I make is <sup>a</sup>true; and I make it with mine own hand; and I make it according to my knowledge.

4 For it came to pass in the commencement of the <sup>a</sup>first year of the reign of <sup>b</sup>Zedekiah, king of Judah, (my father, Lehi, having dwelt at <sup>c</sup>Jerusalem in all his days); and in that same year [there came many <sup>d</sup>prophets<sup>H</sup>](#), prophesying unto the people that they must <sup>e</sup>repent, or the great city <sup>f</sup>Jerusalem must be destroyed.

[v. 4: For historical background, see [note I.](#)]

#### Notes for 1 Nephi 1:2-4

E (v. 2-3): While the characters were of Egyptian origin, the learning of the Jews was reflected in many Hebrew idioms in the text.

In about 1970, BYU language instructor Gabriel Tabor bore his testimony to me about his extraordinary journey from a language headmaster in Communist Romania to emigrant to Israel, to language emissary from Israel to Brazil, where he met two Mormon missionaries, who presented him with a copy of the Book of Mormon. **He instantly recognized from his language background that the book was of authentic Hebrew origins.** Gabriel immediately traveled to Salt Lake City, where he went directly to Temple Square and asked to know more about the Church.

The guide happened to be Cleon Skousen, who took him in as a house guest and answered his questions. After traveling to many U.S. cities to see if the Latter-day Saints were as genuine as those in Provo, **he applied for baptism – based on Christ’s instruction, “By their fruits ye shall know them.”** (JMT)

F (v. 2): v. 2: Moroni later referred to the characters as “reformed Egyptian,” which had been “handed down and altered by us, according to our manner of speech.” (Mormon 9:32-33)

Some scholars believe that reformed Egyptian was a type of shorthand. Moroni explains: “if our plates had been sufficiently large we should have written in Hebrew, . . . and if we could have written in Hebrew, behold, ye would have had no imperfection in our record.” (Mormon 9:33) This suggests that **reformed Egyptian must not have been as precise and accurate as Hebrew, and it must have required less space to write reformed Egyptian than to write Hebrew. Knowing this gives us a greater appreciation of how efficient the reformed Egyptian language must have been.**

The Hebrew language is very compact when compared to English and many other western languages. A typical English sentence of fifteen words will often translate into seven to ten Hebrew words. We have no indication of the size of the characters Mormon and Moroni used, but if they rejected Hebrew because the plates were not “sufficiently large,” then reformed Egyptian must have been a language remarkable for its ability to convey a lot of information with few words. (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 4)

“Hebrew is a completely alphabetic language [with 22 simple characters], whereas in Egyptian a symbol can represent an entire concept.” (R. Millet & J.F. McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 1:20)

“We now realize that the ancient Jews could write quickly and boldly, in an artistic flowing hand, with the loving penmanship of those who enjoy writing. And the Nephites got rid of this to learn in its place the most awkward, difficult, and impractical system of writing ever devised by man! **Why all the trouble? Simply to save space. What space? Space on valuable plates.**” (Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 16) (See also notes regarding Sami Hanna’s translation of the Book of Mormon back into the Egyptian language on p. 10 of the Introduction.)

G (v. 3): Pres. Spencer W. Kimball stressed the importance of keeping a journal: “Those who keep a book of remembrance are more likely to keep the Lord in remembrance in their daily lives. Journals are a way of counting our blessings. (*Ensign*, May 1978, 77)

“Your story should be written now while it is fresh and while the true details are available. . . .

“Get a notebook, . . . a journal that will last through all time. . . . Begin today and write in it your goings and comings, your deepest thoughts, your achievements and your failures, your associations and your triumphs, your impressions and your testimonies.” (*Teachings*, 351)

H (v. 4): “The testimony of no prophet stands alone. The Lord has promised that the truth of all things will be established in the mouth of two or more witnesses. (see Deut. 19:15; 2 Cor. 13:1; D&C 6:28) Among the prophets testifying to Jerusalem were Jeremiah, Lehi, Zephaniah, Obadiah, Habakkuk, and, as contemporaries in Babylon, Daniel, and Ezekiel.” (McConkie & Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 20)

I (v. 4): Following the takeover of the kingdom of Judah from Egypt (which had held political control until 605 B.C.) by Babylonia, Southern Palestine became a Babylonian vassal state. Jehoiakim, originally a Jewish appointee of Egypt, had been allowed to retain his throne. He must have perished, “for Jehoichin, his son, is spoken of in the Biblical account as surrendering to the Babylonians.

These struggles between Assyria, Babylonia, and Egypt took place before the Book of Mormon record opens but during the lifetime of its early leading characters. When the account commences, 21-year-old Zedekiah, the well-meaning but utterly weak uncle of the ill-fated King Jehoiachin, is spoken of as being in the first year of his reign. According to the book of 2 Kings, he was appointed to the throne by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. **It was a time of great wickedness. Immorality and corruption were rampant. Dishonesty, false swearing, and idolatry were common vices of the day. . . .**

It was at this point that the prophet Jeremiah, whose gloomy prophecies had already brought him notoriety in Jehoiakim’s day, thundered forth anew the ominous (continued next page.)

5 Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his <sup>a</sup>heart, in behalf of his people.

6 And it came to pass as he prayed unto the Lord, there came a <sup>a</sup>pillar of fire<sup>J</sup> and dwelt upon a rock before him; and he saw and heard much; and because of the things which he saw and heard he did <sup>b</sup>quake and tremble exceedingly.<sup>K</sup>

7 And it came to pass<sup>L</sup> that he returned to his own house at Jerusalem; and he cast himself upon his bed, being <sup>a</sup>overcome with the Spirit and the things which he had seen. [v. 4-7: See note L for how “it came to pass” came to pass so often.]

8 And being thus overcome with the Spirit, he was carried away in a <sup>a</sup>vision, even that he saw the <sup>b</sup>heavens open, and he thought he <sup>c</sup>saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God.

9 And it came to pass that he saw One descending out of the midst of heaven, and he beheld that his <sup>a</sup>luster was above that of the sun at noon-day.

10 And he also saw <sup>a</sup>twelve others following him, and their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament.

11 And they came down and went forth upon the face of the earth; and the first came and <sup>a</sup>stood before my father, and gave unto him a <sup>b</sup>book, and bade him that he should read.

12 And it came to pass that as he read<sup>M</sup>, he was filled with the <sup>a</sup>Spirit of the Lord.

13 And he read, saying: Wo, wo, unto Jerusalem, for I have seen thine <sup>a</sup>abominations! Yea, and many things did my father read concerning <sup>b</sup>Jerusalem—that it should be destroyed, and the inhabitants thereof; many should perish by the sword, and many should be <sup>c</sup>carried away captive into Babylon.

14 And it came to pass that when my father had read and seen many great and marvelous things, he did exclaim many things unto the Lord; such as: *Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty! Thy throne is high in the heavens, and thy <sup>a</sup>power, and goodness, and mercy are over all the inhabitants of the earth; and, because thou art merciful, thou wilt not suffer those who <sup>b</sup>come unto thee that they shall perish!*

#### Notes for 1 Nephi 1:4-14

I, continued (V. 4) pronouncement that Jerusalem and its temple were doomed for destruction and the entire nation would be led into captivity if they did not repent and heed the admonitions of the Lord. **But the declaration that God would turn against his chosen people and allow his sacred temple and his holy city to be destroyed was considered an outrage. To the incensed priests and princes the prophecy was traitorous and bordered on blasphemy. Jeremiah’s arrest and imprisonment were ordered.”** Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 62-63)

Also, the prophet Urijah had recently been persecuted, had fled to Egypt, was extradited, convicted, and executed for preaching repentance (Jeremiah 26:20-23). **Had Lehi stayed and continued preaching in Jerusalem, he would have likely met the same fate.**

J (v. 6): “The pillar of fire represents the glory of God and thus the presence of divinity. God dwells in ‘everlasting burnings,’ as will all who obtain a celestial glory (Teachings, p.347; also see Isaiah 33:14). Joseph Smith described a similar experience as ‘a pillar of light . . . above the brightness of the sun’ (JSH 1:16). Of Moses’ initial experience on Sinai we read: ‘The presence of the Lord appeared unto him, in a flame of fire in the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed’ (JST, Ex. 3:2). . . . One must be consumed with the Holy Ghost to withstand such glory. Moses tells us that he would have ‘withered and died’ in the divine presence had he not been transfigured (see Moses 1:11). Enoch described that process as being ‘clothed upon with glory’ (Moses 7:3). We are told that when Christ was transfigured his ‘face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light’ (Matt. 17:2).” (McConkie & Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 26)

K (v. 6): “Such trembling is not born of fear. The righteous, when brought into the presence of the Lord, experience perfect peace, which replaces all mortal concerns. Joseph Smith described the presence of the Holy Ghost as a ‘still small voice, which whispereth through and pierceth all things.’ He added, ‘often times it maketh my bones to quake while it maketh manifest.’ (D&C 85:6)” (McConkie & Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 20)

L (v. 4-7 - plus 9, 12, 14, & 19): Whew! Four “and it came to pass” statements in four consecutive verses and four such statements later in the same chapter! Mark Twain jokingly remarked that if you removed all the “and it came to pass” statements in the Book of Mormon, you would have nothing left! (I think he stopped reading after the first few pages.) But High Nibley has a different take on it:

“Instead of punctuation the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon divides up its phrases by introducing each by an ‘and,’ ‘behold,’ ‘now,’ or ‘It came to pass.’ Simply outrageous—as English historical texts. . . . **Dramatic texts are held together by the constant repetition of . . . ‘It came to pass.’ In Egyptian these expressions were not merely adornments, . . . they are a grammatical necessity and may not be omitted.**” (*Since Cumorah*, 169) (JMT)

M (v. 12): “I find that when I get casual in my relationship with divinity and when it seems that no divine ear is listening and no divine voice is speaking, that I am far, far away. If I immerse myself in the scriptures the distance narrows and the spirituality returns.” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Teachings*, 135)

15 And after this manner was the language of my father in the praising of his God; for his soul did rejoice, and his whole heart was filled, because of the things which he had seen, yea, which the Lord had shown unto him.

16 And now I, Nephi, do not make a full account of the things which my father hath written, for he hath written many things which he saw in <sup>a</sup>visions and in <sup>b</sup>dreams; and he also hath written many things which he <sup>c</sup>prophesied and spake unto his children, of which I shall not make a full account.

17 But I shall make an account of my proceedings in my days. Behold, I make an <sup>a</sup>abridgment of the record of my <sup>b</sup>father, upon <sup>c</sup>plates which I have made with mine own hands; wherefore, after I have abridged the record of my <sup>d</sup>father then will I make an account of mine own life.

18 Therefore, I would that ye should know, that after the Lord had shown so many marvelous things unto my father, Lehi, yea, concerning the <sup>a</sup>destruction of Jerusalem, behold he went forth among the people, and began to <sup>b</sup>prophesy and to declare unto them concerning the things which he had both seen and heard.

19 And it came to pass that the <sup>a</sup>Jews did <sup>b</sup>mock him because of the things which he testified of them; for he truly testified of their <sup>c</sup>wickedness and their abominations; and he testified that the things which he saw and heard, and also the things which he read in the book, manifested plainly of the coming of a <sup>d</sup>Messiah, and also the redemption of the world.

20 And when the Jews heard these things they were angry with him; yea, even as with the prophets of old, whom they had <sup>a</sup>cast out, and stoned, and slain; and they also <sup>b</sup>sought his life, that they might take it away. **But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender <sup>c</sup>mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the <sup>d</sup>power of <sup>e</sup>deliverance.**<sup>N</sup>

**I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender <sup>c</sup>mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance.**

#### Chapter 1

- 1 a TG Birthright  
 b Prov. 22:1  
 c Mosiah 1:2 (2–3); D&C 68:25 (25, 28); TG Honoring Father and Mother  
 d Enos 1:1; TG Education; TG Family, Children, Responsibilities toward; TG Family, Love within  
 e TG Affliction; TG Blessing; TG God, Gifts of  
 f TG Record Keeping; TG Scriptures, Writing of
- 2 a Mosiah 1:4; Morm. 9:32 (32–33)
- 3 a 1 Ne. 14:30; 2 Ne. 25:20; Mosiah 1:6; Alma 3:12; Ether 5:3 (1–3)
- 4 a 1 Ne. 2:4; Mosiah 6:4  
 b 2 Kings. 24:18; 2 Chr. 36:10; Jer. 37:1; Jer. 44:30; Jer. 49:34; Jer. 52:3 (3–5); Omni 1:15  
 c 1 Chr. 9:3; 2 Chr. 15:9; Alma 7:10  
 d 2 Kings. 17:13 (13–15); 2 Chr. 36:15 (15–16); Jer. 7:25; Jer. 26:20; TG Prophets, Mission of  
 e TG Repentance  
 f Jer. 26:18 (17–19); 2 Ne. 1:4; Hel. 8:20; TG Israel, Bondage of, in Other Lands; TG Jerusalem

- 5 a Jer. 29:13; James 5:16; 2 Ne. 4:24 (23–25)
- 6 a Ex. 13:21; Hel. 5:24 (24, 43); D&C 29:12; JS-H 1:16, 30  
 b Isa. 6:5 (1–5)
- 7 a Dan. 8:27 (26–27); Dan. 10:8 (8–12); 1 Ne. 17:47; Alma 27:17; Moses 1:10 (9–10)
- 8 a 1 Ne. 3:18 (17–18); 1 Ne. 5:4; TG Vision  
 b Ezek. 1:1; Acts 7:56 (55–56); 1 Ne. 11:14; Alma 36:22; Hel. 5:48 (45–49); D&C 137:1  
 c TG God, Manifestations of; TG God, Privilege of Seeing
- 9 a JS-H 1:17 (16–17), 30 (30–32)
- 10 a TG Apostles
- 11 a 1 Sam. 3:10; D&C 110:2 (2–3)  
 b Ezek. 2:9 (9–10); Rev. 10:9 (2–11)
- 12 a Gen. 41:38; Mosiah 27:24; Alma 18:16
- 13 a 2 Kings. 24:19; 2 Chr. 36:14; Jer. 13:27  
 b 2 Kings. 23:27; 2 Kings. 24:2; Jer. 13:14; Ezek. 15:6 (6–8); 1 Ne. 2:13; 1 Ne. 3:17  
 c 2 Kings. 20:17 (17–18); Jer. 52:15 (3–15); 2 Ne. 25:10; Omni 1:15; TG Babylon
- 14 a TG God, Power of  
 b 2 Ne. 26:25 (24–28); Alma 5:34 (33–36); 3 Ne. 9:14 (13–14)
- 16 a Ezek. 1:1; JS-H 1:24 (21–25)  
 b 1 Ne. 8:2 (2–38)  
 c 1 Ne. 7:1
- 17 a 1 Ne. 9:2 (2–5); Enos 1:13 (13, 15–18); TG Scriptures, Writing of  
 b 1 Ne. 6:1 (1–3); 1 Ne. 8:29 (29–30); 1 Ne. 19:1 (1–6)  
 c 1 Ne. 10:15  
 d 2 Ne. 4:14; 2 Ne. 5:33 (29–33); D&C 10:42
- 18 a 2 Ne. 25:9; D&C 5:20  
 b TG Prophets, Mission of; TG Prophets, Rejection of
- 19 a TG Apostasy of Israel  
 b 2 Chr. 36:16; Jer. 25:4 (1–4); Ezek. 5:6; 1 Ne. 2:13; 1 Ne. 7:14  
 c 1 Ne. 17:22  
 d TG Jesus Christ, Prophecies about
- 20 a Jer. 13:11; Hel. 13:24 (24–28)  
 b Jer. 11:19; 1 Ne. 2:2 (1–4); TG Prophets, Rejection of  
 c Gen. 32:10; Alma 34:38; D&C 46:15  
 d TG Deliverance

## CHAPTER 2

*[Lehi takes his family into the wilderness by the Red Sea—They leave their property—Lehi offers a sacrifice to the Lord and teaches his sons to keep the commandments—Laman and Lemuel murmur against their father—Nephi is obedient and prays in faith; the Lord speaks to him, and he is chosen to rule over his brethren. About 600 B.C.]*

1 FOR behold, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto my father, yea, even in a dream [note A], and said unto him: Blessed art thou Lehi, because of the things which thou hast done; and because thou hast been faithful and declared unto this people the things which I commanded thee, be hold, they seek to <sup>a</sup>take away thy <sup>b</sup>life.

### Notes for 1 Nephi 1:15–20

N (v. 20): *The power of deliverance by faith is one of the dominant themes of the Book of Mormon. If we trust in God and exercise faith in him, we need not fear anything men or devils do to us. He will ultimately deliver us.* (JMT)

### Notes for 1 Nephi 2:1

A (v. 1): “An inspired dream is a vision given to a person while he sleeps. . . . All inspired dreams are visions.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 208) The Prophet Joseph Smith wrote: “Where faith is, there will the knowledge of God be also, with all things which pertain thereto—revelations, visions, and dreams, as well as every necessary thing, in order that the possessors of faith may be perfected, and obtain salvation.” (*Lectures on Faith*, 69)

2 And it came to pass that the Lord <sup>a</sup>commanded my father, even in a <sup>b</sup>dream, that he should <sup>c</sup>take his family and depart into the wilderness.

3 And it came to pass that he was <sup>a</sup>obedient unto the word of the Lord, wherefore he did as the Lord commanded him.

4 And it came to pass that he <sup>\*</sup>departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance, and his gold, and his silver<sup>B</sup>, and his precious things<sup>C</sup>, and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and <sup>a</sup>departed into the wilderness.

5 And he came down by the borders near the shore of the <sup>a</sup>Red Sea; and he traveled in the wilderness in the borders which are nearer the Red Sea; and he did travel in the wilderness with his family, which consisted of my mother, Sariah, and my elder brothers, who were Laman, Lemuel, and Sam.

6 And it came to pass that when he had traveled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a <sup>a</sup>valley by the side of a <sup>b</sup>river of water.

7 And it came to pass that he built an <sup>a</sup>altar of <sup>b</sup>stones<sup>D</sup>, and made an <sup>c</sup>offering unto the Lord, and <sup>a</sup>gave <sup>d</sup>thanks<sup>E</sup> unto the Lord our God.

8 And it came to pass that he called the name of the river, Laman, and it emptied into the Red Sea; and the valley was in the borders near the mouth thereof.

9 And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the <sup>a</sup>fountain of the Red Sea, he spake unto Laman, saying: O that thou mightest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all righteousness!

10 And he also spake unto Lemuel: O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, <sup>a</sup>firm and <sup>b</sup>steadfast, and <sup>c</sup>immovable<sup>F</sup> in keeping the commandments of the Lord!

11 Now this he spake because of the <sup>a</sup>stiffneckedness of Laman and Lemuel; for behold they did <sup>b</sup>murmur in many things against their <sup>c</sup>father, because he was a <sup>d</sup>visionary man, and had led them out of the land of Jerusalem, to leave the land of their inheritance, and their gold, and their silver, and their precious things, to perish in the wilderness. And this they said he had done because of the foolish imaginations of his heart.

12 And thus Laman and Lemuel, being the eldest, did murmur against their <sup>a</sup>father. And they did <sup>b</sup>murmur because they <sup>c</sup>knew not the dealings of that God who had <sup>d</sup>created them.

13 Neither did they <sup>a</sup>believe that Jerusalem, that great city, could be <sup>b</sup>destroyed according to the words<sup>G</sup> of the prophets. And they were like unto the Jews who were at Jerusalem, who sought to take away the life of my father.

14 *And it came to pass that my father did speak unto them in the <sup>a</sup>valley of Lemuel, with <sup>b</sup>power, being filled with the Spirit, until their frames did <sup>c</sup>shake before him. And he did confound them, that they durst not utter against him; wherefore, they did as he commanded them.*

15 And my father dwelt in a <sup>a</sup>tent<sup>H</sup>.

### Notes for 1 Nephi 2:2-14

B (v. 4): The repetition of possessive pronouns is one of many Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon. Hebraisms are

Hebrew-like words, phrases, or sentence structure in a text translated from Hebrew, which are unusual in English but normal in Hebrew. In Hebrew the possessive pronoun is usually suffixed to each item possessed if more than one is specified. (See *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, pp. 321-25 for many more examples of various types of Hebraisms. **Only a person well-schooled in Hebrew would have known this.** See also note for 1 Ne.1:2-3 regarding Gabriel Tabor's conversion.)

C (v. 4): We may have a hard time seeing it at the time, but sometimes we are called upon to give up lesser things (which we see as "precious") to gain greater things—which we see as remote. (JMT)

D (v. 6-7, 9): [These are] two more evidences of the Book of Mormon as translated literature. . . First, in many parts of the world any river is a *river of water* (v. 6), but in the Middle East, year-round rivers are scarce. During the winter rains thousands of wadis, or dry stream beds, also become rivers. In the months when it does not rain these wadis would not be *rivers of water*.

Second, Lehi's building an *altar of stones* is in direct obedience to a commandment found in Exodus 20:24-26 and Deut. 27:5-6 (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 5)

And it is also a Hebraism to say *altar of stones*, instead of *stone altar*.

E (v. 7): "A grateful heart is a beginning of greatness. It is an expression of humility. It is a foundation for the development of such virtues as prayer, faith, courage, contentment, happiness, love, and well-being. . . ."

"It is clear to me . . . that to 'thank the Lord thy God in all things' D&C 59:7) is more than a social courtesy; it is a binding commandment." (James E. Faust, *Ensign*, Dec. 1996, 2)

F (v. 9): [a third evidence of the Book of Mormon as translated literature] While Americans might think of *mountains* as being *firm*, rather than *valleys*, to those living in the deserts in the Near East, valleys represented firmness, faithfulness, and other enduring qualities. (Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 91-92)

G (v. 13): "Words" is a *frequency hebraism*, which "are words used with a frequency that is abnormally high for English but is typical for Hebrew. . . . 'Word(s)' occurs nearly 900 times in the Old Testament and over 800 times in the Book of Mormon. Its frequency in the Old Testament is due to its broad range of connotations in Hebrew, including 'thing,' 'advice,' 'command,' 'remark,' etc. Similarly, in the Book of Mormon, 'word' has many connotations." (*Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, 325)

H: (v. 15): How curious it is that mention would be made that Lehi dwelt in a tent – in a verse all by itself. However, "in the ancient Near East, it was considered an honor to live in a tent, which became the center of a family community. It also represented living close to the Lord." (Hugh Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, 243) It is not likely that Joseph Smith would have known this. (JMT)

16 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, being exceedingly young, nevertheless being large in stature, and also having [great desires](#) to know of the <sup>a</sup>mysteries of God<sup>I</sup>, wherefore, I did cry unto the Lord; and behold he did <sup>b</sup>visit me, and did <sup>c</sup>soften my heart that I [did<sup>d</sup> believe<sup>J</sup>](#) all the words which had been spoken by my <sup>c</sup>father<sup>J</sup>; wherefore, I did not <sup>f</sup>rebel against him like unto my brothers.

17 And I spake unto Sam, making known unto him the things which the Lord had manifested unto me by his Holy Spirit. And it came to pass that he believed in my words.

18 But, behold, Laman and Lemuel would not hearken unto my words; and being <sup>a</sup>grieved because of the hardness of their hearts I cried unto the Lord for them.

19 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: **Blessed art thou, Nephi, because of thy <sup>a</sup>faith, for thou hast sought me diligently, with lowliness of heart.**

20 *And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall <sup>a</sup>prosper, and shall be led to a <sup>b</sup>land of promise; yea, even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands.*

21 And inasmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee, they shall be [cut off from the presence of the Lord.](#)<sup>K</sup>

22 And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments, thou shalt be made a <sup>a</sup>ruler and a teacher over thy brethren.

23 For behold, in that day that they shall <sup>a</sup>rebel against me, I will <sup>b</sup>curse them even with a sore curse, and they shall have no power over thy seed except they shall <sup>c</sup>rebel against me also.

24 And if it so be that they rebel against me, they shall be a [scourge unto thy seed, to <sup>b</sup>stir them up in the ways of remembrance.](#)<sup>L</sup>

## CHAPTER 3

*[Lehi's sons return to Jerusalem to obtain the plates of brass—Laban refuses to give them up—Nephi exhorts and encourages his brethren—Laban steals their property and attempts to slay them—Laman and Lemuel smite Nephi and are reproved by an angel. About 600–592 B.C.]*

1 AND it came to pass that I, Nephi, returned from [speaking with the Lord](#)<sup>A</sup>, to the tent of my father.

2 And it came to pass that he spake unto me, saying: Behold I have dreamed a <sup>a</sup>dream, in the which the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brethren shall <sup>b</sup>return to Jerusalem.

### Chapter 2

- 1 a TG Persecution  
b 1 Ne. 7:14
- 2 a 1 Ne. 3:16; 1 Ne. 4:34; 1 Ne. 5:8; 1 Ne. 17:44; Mosiah 7:20; Alma 9:9; TG Called of God  
b TG Dream  
c Gen. 12:1; Gen. 19:12; 1 Ne. 1:20 (18–20); 2 Ne. 10:20; Ether 1:42; Abr. 2:3; TG Protection, Divine
- 3 a TG Commitment
- 4 a 1 Ne. 10:4; 1 Ne. 19:8  
\* [600 B.C.]
- 5 a 1 Ne. 16:14; D&C 17:1
- 6 a 1 Ne. 9:1  
b Joel 1:20
- 7 a Gen. 12:7 (7–8); Gen. 26:25; Ex. 24:4; Abr. 2:17  
b Ex. 20:25; Deut. 27:5 (5–6); Josh. 8:31 (30–31)  
c TG Sacrifice  
d TG Thanksgiving

- 9 a IE fount, or source, like the Gulf of Akaba, which empties into the Red Sea
- 10 a IE like Ezion-geber, the Hebrew roots of which denote firmness and strength, or might of a man  
b TG Dependability
- 11 a TG Stiffneckedness  
b 1 Ne. 17:17; TG Murmuring  
c Prov. 20:20  
d 1 Ne. 5:4 (2–4); 1 Ne. 17:20
- 12 a Lam. 4:16 (16–17)  
b 1 Sam. 3:13; Mosiah 27:8 (7–37); Moses 5:16  
c Moses 4:6  
d Deut. 32:6; D&C 43:23; TG Man, Physical Creation of
- 13 a Ezek. 5:6; 1 Ne. 1:19 (18–20)  
b Jer. 13:14; 1 Ne. 1:13 (4–13)
- 14 a 1 Ne. 9:1; 1 Ne. 16:6 (6, 12)  
b TG Priesthood, Power of  
c 1 Ne. 17:45
- 15 a Gen. 12:8; Gen. 26:17 (17, 25); Gen. 31:25 (25, 33); 1 Ne. 4:38; 1 Ne. 10:16
- 16 a TG Mysteries of Godliness  
b Ps. 8:4; 1 Ne. 3:1; 1 Ne. 19:11; Alma 17:10; D&C 5:16; TG Guidance, Divine  
c 1 Kings. 18:37; Alma 5:7  
d 1 Ne. 11:5  
e TG Honoring Father and Mother  
f TG Family, Love within
- 18 a Alma 31:24; 3 Ne. 7:16
- 19 a 1 Ne. 7:12 (9–13); 1 Ne. 15:11
- 20 a Josh. 1:7; 1 Ne. 4:14; Mosiah 1:7  
b Deut. 33:13 (13–16); 1 Chr. 28:8 (7–8); 1 Ne. 5:5 (5, 22); 1 Ne. 7:13; Moses 7:17 (17–18); TG Promised Lands
- 21 a Josh. 23:13; 2 Ne. 5:20 (20–24); Alma 9:14 (13–15); Alma 38:1
- 22 a Gen. 37:8 (8–11); 1 Ne. 3:29; TG Authority
- 23 a Job 24:13  
b Deut. 11:28; 1 Ne. 12:22 (22–23); D&C 41:1; TG Curse  
c Josh. 22:16; Mosiah 15:26
- 24 a Josh. 23:13; Judg. 2:22 (22–23)  
b 2 Ne. 5:25

### Notes for 1 Nephi 2:16-24

I (v. 16): “Whenever spiritually significant things are under way, righteous desires are present.” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 21. See also 1 Nephi 11:1))

J (v. 16): Elder Heber C. Kimball said: “To meet difficulties that are coming, it will be necessary for you to have a knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. . . . The time will come when no man nor woman will be able to endure on borrowed light. Each will have to be guided by the light within himself. If you do not have it, how can you stand? (In Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 450)

K (v. 21): To be “cut off from the presence of the Lord” is to have the influence of the Spirit of the Lord removed from one’s life and to thereby experience spiritual death. (see Alma 12:16; Hel. 14:18)

L (v. 24): This verse explains why the Lord did not leave Laman and Lemuel in Jerusalem. (JMT)

### Note for 1 Nephi 3:1

A (ch. 3, v. 1): Consider the difference between talking to and talking **with** someone.

**Blessed art thou, Nephi, because of thy faith, for thou hast sought me diligently, with lowliness of heart. —1 Nephi 2:19**

3 For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews and also a <sup>a</sup>genealogy of my forefathers, and they are <sup>b</sup>engraven upon plates of brass.<sup>B</sup>

4 Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brothers should go unto the house of Laban, and seek the records, and bring them down hither into the wilderness.

5 And now, behold thy brothers murmur, saying it is a hard thing which I have required of them; but behold I have not required it of them, but it is a commandment of the Lord.

6 *Therefore go, my son, and thou shalt be favored of the Lord, because thou hast <sup>a</sup>not <sup>b</sup>murmured.*

7 *And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father: I <sup>a</sup>will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no <sup>b</sup>commandments unto the children of men, save he shall <sup>c</sup>prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.*

8 *And it came to pass that when my father had heard these words he was exceedingly glad, for he knew that I had been blessed of the Lord.*

9 And I, Nephi, and my brethren took our journey in the wilderness, with our tents, to go up to the land of Jerusalem.<sup>D</sup>

10 And it came to pass that when we had gone up to the land of Jerusalem, I and my brethren<sup>E</sup> did consult one with another.

11 And we <sup>a</sup>cast lots—who of us should go in unto the house of Laban. And it came to pass that the lot fell upon Laman; and Laman went in unto the house of Laban, and he talked with him as he sat in his house.

12 And he desired of Laban<sup>F</sup> the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, which contained the <sup>a</sup>genealogy of my father.

### Notes for 1 Nephi 3:1-11

B (v. 3): “Plates of brass” is another Hebraism. “Plates of brass” is two nouns in a **construct state**, which ties two nouns together with in implied “of” (in this case to describe the material from which something was made). In contrast, typical English would use an adjective and a noun; i. e., “brass plates.” Other examples of construct state are “rod of Iron” and “mist of darkness” in 1 Ne. 8:19 & 23. (*Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, 322) It is not likely that Joseph Smith would have known this.

C (v. 7): This principle can apply to any requirement God makes of us. If we receive instructions from the Lord’s servants, or if we feel impressed by the spirit to do

something, **God will provide a way for us to do it – even if it seems impossible at the time.** (JMT)

Regarding the first part of the verse, “I will go and do,” Joseph Smith said,

**“I made this rule:  
When the Lord commands, do it.”**

(*History of the Church*, 2:170) And Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, “**Obedience is the first law of heaven.** . . . There is nothing in all eternity more important than to keep the commandments of God.” (*Promised Messiah*, 126)

Brigham Young taught, “By rendering that strict obedience, are we made slaves? No, it is the only way on the face of the earth for you and me to become free, and we shall become the slaves of our own passions, and of the wicked one, and servants of the devil, if we take any other course. . . .” (JD 18:246)

George Q. Cannon taught, “There are some people who seem to have the idea that rebellion and disobedience are evidences of independence and of manhood. Well, I am glad to know that, so far as I am concerned, I never took that view. I always felt that I was just as independent in being obedient, and I know I felt much better than I could possibly feel if I were disobedient. It is not necessary to be disobedient to show independence. . . . I suppose each one of us is fond of having his own way. I know I am. I am willing to confess that I like to have my own way. But I do not like my own way well enough to want it in opposition to [the leaders of the Church.]” (*Gospel Truths*, 162-63)

D (v. 2-9): The distance from Jerusalem to the Red Sea (the Gulf of Aqaba) is about 180 miles through hot, barren country infested anciently by many marauders. Lehi and his family traveled three days’ journey beyond this point (ch. 2:5-6). This meant at least a 12 to 14-day trip one way, which gives added meaning to Nephi’s response in verse 7. (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 5)

E (v. 10): Another hebraism. “In Hebrew the order of presentation when there is a compound subject is first person, second, then third, as in 1 Samuel 14:40, ‘I and Jonathan my son.’ The proper English pattern would be ‘my son and I,’ or colloquially, ‘me and my son.’” (*Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, 322) It is not likely that Joseph Smith would have known this.

F (v. 4, 11-14, and 31): “A few deft and telling touches resurrect the pompous Laban with photographic perfection. We learn in passing that he commanded a garrison of fifty [but with access to a larger force in the field], that he met in full ceremonial armor with ‘the elders of the Jews’ for secret consultations by night, that he had control of a treasury, that he was of the old aristocracy, being a distant relative to Lehi himself, that he probably held his job because of his ancestors, . . . that his house was the storing place of very old records, that he was a large man, short-tempered, crafty, and dangerous, and to the bargain cruel, greedy, unscrupulous, weak, and given to drink.” (Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 97-98, 111)

13 And behold, it came to pass that Laban was angry, and thrust him out from his presence; and he would not that he should have the records. Wherefore, he said unto him: Behold thou art a robber, and I will slay thee.

14 But Laman fled out of his presence, and told the things which Laban had done, unto us. And we began to be exceedingly sorrowful, and my brethren were about to return unto my father in the wilderness.

15 But behold I said unto them that: <sup>a</sup>*As the Lord liveth, and as we live,*<sup>G</sup> we will not go down unto our father in the wilderness until we have <sup>b</sup>accomplished the thing which the Lord hath commanded us.

16 Wherefore, let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord; therefore let us go down to the land of our father's <sup>a</sup>inheritance, for behold he left gold and silver, and all manner of riches. And all this he hath done because of the <sup>b</sup>commandments of the Lord.

17 For he knew that Jerusalem must be <sup>a</sup>destroyed, because of the wickedness of the people.

18 For behold, they have <sup>a</sup>rejected the words of the prophets. Wherefore, if my father should dwell in the land after he hath been <sup>b</sup>commanded to flee out of the land, behold, he would also perish. Wherefore, it must needs be that he flee out of the land.

19 And behold, it is wisdom in God that we should obtain these <sup>a</sup>records, that we may preserve unto our children the language of our fathers;

20 And also that we may <sup>a</sup>preserve unto them the words which have been spoken by the mouth of all the holy <sup>b</sup>prophets, which have been delivered unto them by the Spirit and power of God, since the world began, even down unto this present time.

21 And it came to pass that after this manner of language did I <sup>a</sup>persuade my brethren, that they might be faithful in keeping the commandments of God.

22 And it came to pass that we went down to the land of our inheritance, and we did gather together our <sup>a</sup>gold, and our silver, and our precious things.

23 And after we had gathered these things together, we went up again unto the house of Laban.

24 And it came to pass that we went in unto Laban, and desired him that he would give unto us the records which were engraven upon the <sup>a</sup>plates of brass, for which we would give unto him our gold, and our silver, and all our precious things.

25 And it came to pass that when Laban saw our property, and that it was exceedingly great, he did <sup>a</sup>lust after it, insomuch that he thrust us out, and sent his servants to slay us, that he might obtain our property.

26 And <sup>a</sup>it came to pass that we did flee before the servants of Laban, and we were obliged to leave behind our property, and it fell into the hands of Laban.

27 And it came to pass that we fled into the wilderness, and the servants of Laban did not overtake us, and we <sup>a</sup>hid ourselves in the cavity of a rock.

28 And it came to pass that Laman was angry with me, and also with my father; and also was Lemuel, for he hearkened unto the words of Laman. Wherefore Laman

and Lemuel did speak many <sup>a</sup>hard words unto us, their younger brothers, and they did smite us even with a rod.

29 And it came to pass as they smote us with a rod, behold, an <sup>a</sup>angel of the Lord came and stood before them, and he spake unto them, saying: Why do ye smite your younger brother with a rod? Know ye not that the Lord hath chosen him to be a <sup>b</sup>ruler over you, and this because of your iniquities? Behold ye shall go up to Jerusalem again, and the Lord will <sup>c</sup>deliver Laban into your hands.

30 And after the <sup>a</sup>angel had spoken unto us, he departed.

31 And <sup>a</sup>after the angel had departed<sup>H</sup>, Laman and Lemuel again began to <sup>a</sup>murmur, saying: How is it possible that the Lord will deliver Laban into our hands? Behold, he is a mighty man, and he can command fifty, yea, even he can slay fifty; then why not us?

### Notes for 1 Nephi 3:12-31

G (v. 15): To ancient peoples, swearing with an oath was considered binding. As Elder Bruce R. McConkie stated, "Thus, Nephi made God his partner. If he failed to get the plates, it meant God had failed. And **because God does not fail, it was incumbent upon Nephi to get he plates or lay down his life in the attempt.**" (*Conference Report*, April, 1982, 49-50)

H (v. 26-31): "On several occasions divine intervention became necessary to preserve Nephi from his brothers' hatred, but even direct evidence of God's power was not enough to change the hardness of their hearts. Imagine seeing an angel and then immediately after his departure preceding to complain again!

This evidence provides support of the Savior's parable wherein he said: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (Luke 16:31) How does this relate to people who say things like, "Well, if I could only see the golden plates then I would know the Book of Mormon is true"? (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 5)

#### Chapter 3

- 1 a 1 Ne. 2:16
- 2 a TG Dream
  - b 1 Ne. 2:4 (1-5); 1 Ne. 7:3
- 3 a 1 Ne. 3:12; 1 Ne. 5:14
  - b Jer. 17:1; 1 Ne. 3:24 (12, 19-24)
- 6 a TG Sustaining Church Leaders
  - b TG Murmuring
- 7 a 1 Sam. 17:32; 1 Kings. 17:15 (11-15); TG Faith; TG Loyalty; TG Obedience
  - b TG Commandments of God
  - c Gen. 18:14; Philip. 4:13; 1 Ne. 17:3, 50; D&C 5:34
- 11 a Neh. 10:34; Acts 1:26
- 12 a 1 Ne. 3:3; 1 Ne. 5:14; Jarom 1:1
- 15 a TG Oath; TG Promise
  - b TG Commitment; TG Dedication
- 16 a 1 Ne. 2:4
  - b 1 Ne. 2:2; 1 Ne. 4:34
- 17 a 2 Chr. 36:20 (16-20); Jer. 39:9 (1-9); 1 Ne. 1:13
- 18 a Jer. 26:23 (21-24); TG Prophets, Rejection of
  - b 1 Ne. 5:21; 1 Ne. 7:2; 1 Ne. 16:8
- 19 a Omni 1:17; Mosiah 1:3 (2-6); TG Record Keeping
- 20 a TG Scriptures, Preservation of
  - b Zech. 7:12; Matt. 11:13; Mosiah 15:13
- 21 a TG Family, Love within; TG Persuade
- 22 a 1 Ne. 2:4
- 24 a 1 Ne. 3:3; 1 Ne. 4:24 (24, 38)
- 25 a TG Covetousness

- 26 a 1 Ne. 4:11  
 27 a Josh. 10:16 (16–17); 1 Sam. 13:6; Jer. 36:26; Ether 13:13 (13, 22)  
 28 a 1 Ne. 17:18  
 29 a 1 Ne. 4:3; 1 Ne. 7:10; TG Angels  
     b Gen. 41:43 (41–43); 1 Ne. 2:22  
     c 2 Kings. 3:18; 3 Ne. 3:21  
 30 a 1 Ne. 4:3; 1 Ne. 16:38  
 31 a TG Murmuring

## CHAPTER 4

[Nephi slays Laban at the Lord's command and then secures the plates of brass by stratagem—Zoram chooses to join Lehi's family in the wilderness. About 600–592 B.C.]

1 AND it came to pass that I spake unto my brethren, saying: Let us go up again unto Jerusalem, **and let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord; for behold he is mightier than all the earth, then why not b mightier than Laban and his fifty, yea, or even than his tens of thousands?**<sup>A</sup>

2 Therefore let us go up; let us be <sup>a</sup>strong like unto Moses; for he truly spake unto the waters of the Red <sup>b</sup>Sea and they divided hither and thither, and our fathers came through, out of captivity, on dry ground, and the armies of Pharaoh did follow and were drowned in the waters of the Red Sea.

3 Now behold ye know that this is true; and ye also know that an <sup>a</sup>angel hath spoken unto you; wherefore can ye <sup>b</sup>doubt? Let us go up; the Lord is able to <sup>c</sup>deliver us, even as our fathers, and to destroy Laban, even as the Egyptians.

4 Now when I had spoken these words, they were yet wroth, and did still continue to murmur; nevertheless they did follow me up until we came without the walls of Jerusalem.

5 And it was by night; and I caused that they should hide themselves without the walls. And after they had hid themselves, I, Nephi, crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban.

6 And I was <sup>a</sup>led by the Spirit<sup>B</sup>, **not <sup>b</sup>knowing beforehand the things which I should do**<sup>C</sup>.

7 Nevertheless I went forth, and as I came near unto the house of Laban I beheld a man, and **he had fallen to the earth before me, for he was <sup>a</sup>drunken with wine.**<sup>D</sup>

8 And when I came to him I found that it was Laban.

9 And I beheld his <sup>a</sup>sword, and I drew it forth from the sheath thereof; and the hilt thereof was of pure gold, and the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine, and I saw that the blade thereof was of the most precious steel.

10 And it came to pass that **I was <sup>a</sup>constrained by the Spirit that I should kill Laban; but I said in my heart: Never at any time have I shed the blood of man. And I shrunk and would that I might not slay him.**<sup>E</sup>

11 And the Spirit said unto me again: Behold the <sup>a</sup>Lord hath <sup>b</sup>delivered him into thy hands. Yea, and I also knew that he had sought to take away mine own life; yea, and he would not hearken unto the commandments of the Lord; and he also had <sup>c</sup>taken away our property.

12 And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me again: Slay him, for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands;

13 Behold the Lord <sup>a</sup>slayeth the <sup>b</sup>wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is <sup>c</sup>better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in <sup>d</sup>unbelief.

14 And now, when I, Nephi, had heard these words, I remembered the words of the Lord which he spake unto me in the wilderness, saying that: <sup>a</sup>Inasmuch as thy seed shall keep my <sup>b</sup>commandments, they shall <sup>c</sup>prosper in the <sup>d</sup>land of promise.

### Notes for 1 Nephi 4:1-12

A (v. 1): Nephi was not naïve in dismissing the overwhelming odds against them in getting the plates from Laban. **He simply had faith that “With God, nothing shall be impossible.”** (JMT – see Luke 1:37)

B (v. 6): Brigham Young was instructed by the Prophet Joseph Smith in a dream: **“Tell the people to be . . . sure to keep the spirit of the Lord and it will lead them right. Be careful and not turn away the small still voice; it will teach them what to do and where to go.”** (*Journal History, Feb. 23, 1847, 1*).

Elder S. Dilworth Young said, “. . . if you will ask, not doubting that you can have an answer, **the answer will come in the whispering.** Then you must learn to interpret the whispering. **At first it likely will come as something akin to a feeling, although not a feeling. There will finally come into your minds the words expressive of the feeling, and those words properly interpreted will be the whispering of the Spirit.**” (*Conference Report, April 1959, 59-60*)

C (v.6): Regarding moving ahead “not knowing beforehand the things which I should do,” Elder Harold B. Lee once advised Elder Boyd K. Packer, “You must learn to walk to the edge of the light, and perhaps a few steps into the darkness, and you will find that the light will appear and move ahead of you.” (*Holy Temple, 184*)

D (vs. 1-26): Note that the first effort to get the plates was when they drew lots, leading to Laman’s unsuccessful effort. Then they tried to buy the plates by offering family treasures. Failing that, Nephi went alone trusting in the Lord that he would provide the way. That worked—Laban had fallen drunken before him. There is a great lesson here for all of us. (1 Ne. 3:7)

E (vs. 7-18): The Lord could have caused Laban to fall and hit his head against a rock, killing him. But he tested Nephi’s faith by insisting that he kill Laban himself.

**I was led by the Spirit, not knowing  
beforehand the things which I should do.**  
—1 Nephi 4:6

15 Yea, and I also thought that they could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the <sup>a</sup>law of Moses, save they should have the law.

16 And I also knew that the <sup>a</sup>law was engraven upon the plates of brass.

17 And again, I knew that the Lord had delivered Laban into my hands for this cause—that I might obtain the records according to his commandments.

18 Therefore **I did obey the voice of the Spirit, and took Laban by the hair of the head, and I smote off his head with his own <sup>a</sup>sword.**<sup>F</sup>

19 And after I had smitten off his head with his own sword, I took the garments of Laban and put them upon mine own body; yea, even every whit; and I did gird on his armor about my loins.

20 And after I had done this, I went forth unto the treasury of Laban. And as I went forth towards the treasury of Laban, behold, I saw the <sup>a</sup>servant of Laban who had the keys of the treasury. And I commanded him in the voice of Laban, that he should go with me into the treasury.

21 And he supposed me to be his master, Laban, for he beheld the garments and also the sword girded about my loins.

22 And he spake unto me concerning the <sup>a</sup>elders of the Jews<sup>G</sup>, he knowing that his master, Laban, had been out by night among them.

23 And I spake unto him as if it had been Laban.

24 And I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings, which were upon the <sup>a</sup>plates of brass, to my elder brethren, who were without the walls.

25 And I also bade him that he should follow me.

26 And he, supposing that I spake of the <sup>a</sup>brethren of the <sup>b</sup>church<sup>H</sup>, and that I was truly that Laban whom I had slain, wherefore he did follow me.

27 And he spake unto me many times concerning the elders of the Jews, as I went forth unto my brethren, who were without the walls.

28 And it came to pass that when Laman saw me he was exceedingly frightened, and also Lemuel and Sam. And they fled from before<sup>I</sup> my presence; for they supposed it was Laban, and that he had slain me and had sought to take away their lives also.

29 And it came to pass that I called after them, and they did hear me; wherefore they did cease to flee from my presence.

30 And it came to pass that when the servant of Laban beheld my brethren he began to tremble, and was about to flee from before me and return to the city of Jerusalem.

31 And now I, Nephi, being a man large in stature, and also having received much <sup>a</sup>strength of the Lord, therefore I did seize upon the servant of Laban, and held him, that he should not flee.

32 And it came to pass that I spake with him, that if he would hearken unto my words, as the Lord liveth, and as I live<sup>J</sup>, even so that if he would hearken unto our words, we would spare his life.

33 And I spake unto him, even with an <sup>a</sup>oath, that he need not fear; that he should be a <sup>b</sup>free man like unto us if he would go down in the wilderness with us.

34 And I also spake unto him, saying: Surely the Lord hath <sup>a</sup>commanded us to do this thing; and shall we not be diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord? Therefore, if thou wilt go down into the wilderness to my father thou shalt have place with us.

35 And it came to pass that <sup>a</sup>Zoram did take courage at the words which I spake. Now Zoram was the name of the servant; and he promised that he would go down into the wilderness unto our father. Yea, and he also made an oath unto us that he would tarry with us from that time forth.

36 Now we were desirous that he should tarry with us for this cause, that the Jews might not know concerning our flight into the wilderness, lest they should pursue us and destroy us.

#### **Notes for 1 Nephi 4:13-36**

F (v. 18): Joseph Smith taught “This is the principle upon which the government of heaven is conducted—by revelation adapted to the circumstances in which the children of the kingdom are placed. **Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire.**” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 256)

G (v. 22): As used here, *elders* does not refer to priesthood officers, but to “the heads of the most influential families of a city.” (Hugh Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, 96)

H (v. 26): “. . . was there a church anciently, and if so, how was it organized and regulated? There was not so much as the twinkling of an eye during the whole so-called pre-Christian Era when the Church of Jesus Christ was not upon the earth, organized basically in the same way it now is. Melchizedek belonged to the Church; Laban was a member; so also was Lehi, long before he left Jerusalem. There was always apostolic power. The Melchizedek Priesthood always directed the course of the Aaronic Priesthood. All of the prophets held a position in the hierarchy of the day.” (Bruce R. McConkie, “The Bible, a Sealed Book,” 6)

I (v. 28): Another Hebraism. “In English one uses words such as ‘because,’ ‘before,’ and ‘after’ singly as subordinate conjunctions. In Hebrew such words are combined with the conjunction ‘that’ as in Ezedkiel 40:1, ‘*after that* the city was smitten.’ ” (*Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, 323)

**Whatever God requires is right, no matter what it is, although we may not see the reason thereof till long after the events transpire.” —Joseph Smith**

37 And it came to pass that when Zoram had made an oath unto us<sup>K</sup>, our <sup>b</sup>fears did cease concerning him.

38 And it came to pass that we took the plates of brass and the servant of Laban, and departed into the wilderness, and journeyed unto the <sup>a</sup>tent of our father.

## Chapter 4

- 1 a TG Courage; TG Dependability; TG Faithful  
 b 1 Ne. 7:11; TG God, Power of
- 2 a Deut. 11:8; Prov. 24:10 (10–12)  
 b Ex. 14:21 (18–30); Josh. 2:10; 1 Ne. 17:26; Mosiah 7:19
- 3 a 1 Ne. 3:30 (29–31); 1 Ne. 7:10  
 b TG Doubt  
 c TG Deliverance
- 6 a TG Guidance, Divine; TG Holy Ghost, Gifts of; TG Inspiration  
 b Heb. 11:8
- 7 a TG Drunkenness
- 9 a 2 Ne. 5:14; D&C 17:1
- 10 a 1 Sam. 15:3 (3–33)
- 11 a Deut. 3:3; 1 Sam. 17:46 (41–49)  
 b 1 Ne. 7:11  
 c 1 Ne. 3:26
- 13 a Num. 25:17; Deut. 12:29; Ps. 139:19; 1 Ne. 17:37 (33–38); D&C 98:32 (31–32)  
 b TG Justice; TG Punishment; TG Wickedness  
 c Alma 30:47; TG Life, Sanctity of  
 d TG Unbelief, Unbelievers
- 14 a Omni 1:6; Mosiah 2:22; Ether 2:7 (7–12)  
 b TG Commandments of God  
 c 1 Ne. 2:20  
 d 1 Ne. 17:13 (13–14); Jacob 2:12
- 15 a Mosiah 1:5 (1–6)
- 16 a Josh. 1:8; TG Law of Moses
- 18 a 1 Sam. 17:51
- 20 a 2 Ne. 1:30
- 22 a 2 Sam. 17:15; Ezek. 8:1; Acts 25:15
- 24 a 1 Ne. 3:24 (12, 19–24); 1 Ne. 5:10 (10–22)
- 26 a Ex. 2:11; Num. 18:6; 2 Sam. 19:41  
 b TG Church Organization
- 31 a TG Strength; TG Strengthen
- 33 a 2 Sam. 21:7; TG Oath  
 b TG Free
- 34 a 1 Ne. 2:2; 1 Ne. 3:16
- 35 a 1 Ne. 16:7; 2 Ne. 5:6 (5–6); Jacob 1:13; Alma 54:23; 4 Ne. 1:36 (36–37)
- 37 a Ex. 22:11 (10–11); Josh. 9:19 (1–21); TG Oath; TG Vows  
 b TG Trustworthiness
- 38 a 1 Ne. 2:15

## CHAPTER 5

*[Sariah complains against Lehi—Both rejoice over the return of their sons—They offer sacrifices—The plates of brass contain writings of Moses and the prophets—They identify Lehi as a descendant of Joseph—Lehi prophesies concerning his seed and the preservation of the plates. About 600–592 B.C.]*

1 AND it came to pass that after we had come down into the wilderness unto our father, behold, he was filled with joy, and also my mother, Sariah, was exceedingly glad, for she truly had mourned because of us.

2 For she had supposed that we had perished in the wilderness; and she also had <sup>a</sup>complained against my father, telling him that he was a <sup>b</sup>visionary man; saying: Behold thou hast led us forth from the land of our inheritance, and my sons are no more, and we perish in the wilderness.

3 And after this manner of language had my mother complained against my father.

4 And it had come to pass that my father spake unto her, saying: *I know that I am a <sup>a</sup>visionary man; for if I had not seen the things of God in a <sup>b</sup>vision I should not have known*

*the goodness of God, but had tarried at Jerusalem, and had perished with my brethren.*

5 *But behold, I have <sup>a</sup>obtained a <sup>b</sup>land of promise, in the which things I do rejoice; yea, and I <sup>c</sup>know that the Lord will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban, and bring them down again unto us in the wilderness.*

6 And after this manner of language did my father, Lehi, <sup>a</sup>comfort my mother, Sariah, concerning us, while we journeyed in the wilderness up to the land of Jerusalem, to obtain the record of the Jews.

7 And when we had returned to the tent of my father, behold their joy was full, and my mother was comforted.

**Note for 1 Nephi 4:37**

K (v. 32–38): “When he [Zoram] saw the brethren and heard Nephi’s real voice he got the shock of his life and in a panic made a break for the city. In such a situation there was only one thing Nephi could possibly have done, both to spare Zoram and to avoid giving alarm—and no westerner could have guessed what it was. Nephi, a powerful fellow, held the terrified Zoram in a vice-like grip long enough to swear a solemn oath in his ear, ‘*as the Lord liveth, and as I live,*’ that he would not harm him if he would listen. Zoram immediately relaxed, and Nephi swore another oath to him that he would *be a free man* if he would join the party: ‘*Therefore, if thou wilt go down into the wilderness to my father thou shalt have place with us.*’

“What astonishes the reader is the miraculous effect of Nephi’s oath on Zoram, who upon hearing a few conventional words promptly becomes tractable, while as for the brothers, as soon as Zoram ‘*made and oath unto us that he would tarry with us from that time forth . . . our fears did cease concerning him.*’

The reaction of both parties makes sense when one realizes that the oath is the one thing that is most sacred and inviolable among the desert people and their descendants. . . (continued to J, referenced in v. 32)

J (v. 32): But not every oath will do. To be most binding and solemn an oath should be by the life of something, even if it be but a blade of grass. The only oath more awful than that by my life or (less commonly) by the life of my head, is . . . ‘*as the Lord Liveth,*’ the exact Arabic equivalent of the ancient Hebrew *hai Elohim*. . .

So we see that **the only way that Nephi could possibly have pacified the struggling Zoram in an instant was to utter the one oath that no man would dream of breaking, the most solemn of all oaths to the Semite: ‘As the Lord liveth, and as I live!’** (Hugh Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, pp. 103–105) (see also ch. 3:15)

See also *Book of Mormon Reference Companion* 616) for how Christ taught the people to forego such oaths for a higher law.

8 And she spake, saying: Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath <sup>a</sup>commanded my husband to <sup>b</sup>flee into the wilderness; yea, and I also know of a surety that the Lord hath protected my sons, and delivered them out of the hands of Laban, and given them power whereby they could accomplish the thing which the Lord hath commanded them<sup>A</sup>. And after this manner of language did she speak.

9 And it came to pass that they did rejoice exceedingly, and did offer <sup>a</sup>sacrifice and burnt offerings unto the Lord; and they gave <sup>b</sup>thanks unto the God of Israel.

10 And after they had given thanks unto the God of Israel, my father, Lehi, took the records which were engraven upon the <sup>a</sup>plates of brass,<sup>B</sup> and he did search them from the beginning.

11 And he beheld that they did contain the five <sup>a</sup>books of Moses,<sup>C</sup> which gave an account of the creation of the world, and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents;

12 And also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah; [see [note D](#) for Old Testament references]

13 And also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of <sup>a</sup>Zedekiah; and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of <sup>b</sup>Jeremiah.

14 And it came to pass that my father, Lehi, also found upon the <sup>a</sup>plates of brass a <sup>b</sup>genealogy of his <sup>c</sup>fathers; wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of <sup>d</sup>Joseph<sup>E</sup>; yea, even that Joseph who was the son of <sup>e</sup>Jacob, who was <sup>f</sup>sold into Egypt, and who was <sup>g</sup>preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he might preserve his father, Jacob, and all his household from perishing with famine.

#### Notes for 1 Nephi 5:8-14

A (v. 8 – also 3:7, 6:12, 9:6, and 17:50): Lehi must have repeatedly taught his family this principle of God’s power to enable His servants to carry out his will - in any and all circumstances. It is repeated frequently in the lives of Lehi and Nephi.

The faith of Sariah was confirmed. **“From trustworthy evidence, rightly interpreted, true faith will spring.”** (James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 91) The record does not mention her complaining again.

B (v. 10-22): “The value of the Brass Plates to the Nephites cannot be overestimated. By means of them they were able to preserve the language (1 Ne. 3:19), most of the civilization, and the religious knowledge of the people from whence they came. (1 Ne. 22:30) By way of contrast, the Mulekites, who were led out of Jerusalem some 11 years after Lehi’s departure, and who had no record equivalent to the Brass Plates, soon dwindled in apostasy and unbelief and lost their language, civilization, and religion. (Omni 14-18) . . .

“From prophet to prophet and generation to generation the Brass Plates were handed down and preserved by the Nephites. (Mosiah 1:16; 28:30; 3 Ne. 1:2) At some future date the Lord has promised to bring them forth, undimmed by time and retaining their original

brightness, and the scriptural accounts recorded on them are to ‘go forth unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.’ ” (1 Ne. 5:18-19, Alma 37:3-5) (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 103)

“But what interests us more than the books included on the brass plates is the tone and tenor and general approach to the gospel and to salvation that they set forth. They are gospel oriented and speak of Christ and the various Christian concepts which the world falsely assumes to have originated with Jesus and the early apostles.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *The Doctrinal Restoration*, 17)

C (v. 11): “. . . The Book of Mormon helps to establish the truthfulness of the Bible. Here, and in numerous other places, we have affirmed the validity of theological matters which have been questioned for centuries by those who choose to cast doubt upon the origins of Judaeo-Christian scriptural records. The Book of Mormon is a royal, confirming testimony that Moses was the man chosen by God to write the story of the Creation and to compile the records which recount the birth and development of the house of Israel. . . .

“The account of the creation and placement of life on earth, as well as the subsequent fall from paradisiacal and Edenic glory, is given in our present biblical record with little detail and even less context. **Very frequently the Bible will tell us what happened, while the more thorough and complete accounts (as given in the JST or as taught in the brass plates) will tell us additionally why it happened.** After arriving in the promised land, Lehi gave a marvelous discourse to his son Jacob based upon those things which he had read on the brass plates. Matters which received serious and detailed attention were Lucifer’s fall from heaven; the temptation of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden; the importance and necessity of the fall of our first parents as a means to the perpetuation of the human family; the value of an extended period of probation in the early days of the earth’s temporal continuance; and the essential tie between the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement. (See 2 Ne. 2:17-27) (McConkie & Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 48-49)

D: (v. 32-37): See table on “Book of Mormon references that reflect historical information in the Old Testament” in *Book of Mormon Reference Companion* (617)

E (v. 14): Lehi affirms his being a descendent of Joseph (through Manasseh – see Alma 10:3). This became the fulfillment of prophecy by his posterity of Ezekiel 37:15-17, regarding the stick of Joseph, which would come together with the *Bible*, or record of the Jews, in the last days.

Regarding the importance of studying and appreciating our ancestors, Pres. Spencer W. Kimball said, “Learning about my ancestors has not only turned my heart to them, but has helped me see eternity more clearly. My won life is rooted not just in the present, but in the lives of my ancestors as well.” (*Ensign*, Jan. 1977, 3)

15 And they were also <sup>a</sup>led out of captivity and out of the land of Egypt, by that same God who had preserved them.

16 And thus my father, Lehi, did discover the genealogy of his fathers. And Laban also was a descendant of <sup>a</sup>Joseph, wherefore he and his fathers had kept the <sup>b</sup>records.

17 And now when my father saw all these things, *he was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed*<sup>F</sup>—

18 *That these <sup>a</sup>plates of brass should go forth unto all <sup>b</sup>nations, kindreds, tongues, and people who were of his seed.*<sup>G</sup>

19 *Wherefore, he said that these plates of brass should <sup>a</sup>never perish; neither should they be dimmed any more by time. And he prophesied many things concerning his seed.*

20 And it came to pass that thus far I and my father had kept the commandments wherewith the Lord had commanded us.

21 *And we had obtained the records which the Lord had commanded us, and searched them and found that they were desirable; yea, even of great <sup>a</sup>worth unto us, insomuch that we could <sup>b</sup>preserve the commandments of the Lord unto our children.*

22 Wherefore, it was wisdom in the Lord that we should carry them with us, as we journeyed in the wilderness towards the land of promise.

#### Chapter 5

- 2 a TG Murmuring  
b Gen. 37:19 (8, 19)
- 4 a 1 Ne. 2:11; 1 Ne. 17:20  
b 1 Ne. 1:8 (8–13); 1 Ne. 3:18 (17–18); TG Vision
- 5 a Eph. 1:11; Heb. 6:15 (13–15)  
b 1 Ne. 2:20; 1 Ne. 18:8 (8, 22–23); TG Promised Lands  
c TG Faith; TG Trust in God
- 6 a TG Comfort; TG Family, Love within
- 8 a 1 Ne. 2:2  
b Gen. 19:14  
c 1 Ne. 3:7
- 9 a 1 Ne. 7:22; Mosiah 2:3; 3 Ne. 9:19; TG Law of Moses  
b TG Thanksgiving
- 10 a 1 Ne. 4:24 (24, 38); 1 Ne. 13:23
- 11 a Ex. 17:14; Deut. 31:9; Luke 16:29; Luke 24:27; 1 Ne. 19:23; Moses 1:41 (40–41)
- 12 a 1 Chr. 9:1; TG Scriptures, Writing of
- 13 a 2 Kings. 24:18; Jer. 37:1  
b Ezra 1:1; Jer. 36:32 (17:32); 1 Ne. 7:14; Hel. 8:20
- 14 a Mosiah 2:34  
b 1 Ne. 3:3, 12; Jarom 1:1; TG Book of Remembrance  
c TG Israel, Origins of  
d 2 Ne. 3:4; Alma 10:3; TG Israel, Joseph, People of  
e Gen. 25:26; 2 Ne. 20:21; Alma 7:25; D&C 27:10  
f Gen. 37:36 (29–36)  
g TG Protection, Divine
- 15 a Gen. 15:14 (13–14); Ex. 15:13; Amos 3:1 (1–2); 1 Ne. 17:31 (23–31); 1 Ne. 19:10; D&C 103:16 (16–18); D&C 136:22
- 16 a 2 Chr. 15:9; 1 Ne. 6:2; TG Israel, Joseph, People of  
b TG Record Keeping
- 18 a Alma 22:12  
b JS-H 1:33
- 19 a Alma 37:4
- 21 a TG Scriptures, Value of  
b TG Scriptures, Preservation of

## CHAPTER 6

[Nephi writes of the things of God—His purpose is to persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham and be saved. About 600–592 B.C.]

1 AND now I, Nephi, do not give the genealogy of my fathers in <sup>a</sup>this part of my record; neither at any time shall I give it after upon these <sup>b</sup>plates which I am <sup>c</sup>writing; for it is given in the record which has been kept by my <sup>d</sup>father; wherefore, I do not write it in this work.

2 For it sufficeth me to say that we are descendants of <sup>a</sup>Joseph.

3 And it mattereth not to me that I am particular to give a full account of all the things of my father, for they cannot be written upon <sup>a</sup>these plates, for I desire the room that I may write of the things of God.

4 *For the fulness of mine intent is that I may <sup>a</sup>persuade men to <sup>b</sup>come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and be saved.*

5 *Wherefore, the things which are <sup>a</sup>pleasing unto the world I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God<sup>A</sup> and unto those who are not of the world.*

6 Wherefore, I shall give commandment unto my seed, that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of men.

#### Chapter 6

- 1 a 2 Ne. 4:15  
b 1 Ne. 9:2  
c TG Scriptures, Writing of  
d 1 Ne. 1:17 (16–17); 1 Ne. 19:1 (1–6)
- 2 a 1 Ne. 5:16 (14–16)
- 3 a Jacob 7:27; Jarom 1:2 (2, 14); Omni 1:1, 30
- 4 a Luke 1:4 (3–4); John 20:31 (30–31)  
b 2 Ne. 9:41 (41, 45, 51)
- 5 a Gal. 1:10; 1 Thes. 2:4; Heb. 13:21; W of M 1:4

#### Notes for 1 Nephi 5:15-23

F (v. 19): “Seed” would have read “descendants” in English. This is a *lexical hebraism*, which “are single words with a meaning which does not fit the context or correspond to proper or normal English usage but could represent a literal translation of a Hebrew word which would be appropriate.” (*Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, 324)

G (v. 18): Since many of the precious truths of the brass plates were known and recorded by Book of Mormon prophet-writers, and since the Book of Mormon will eventually go to all the world as a witness of Jesus Christ and also of the great latter-day work, this particular prophetic utterance is being and will yet be fulfilled. In addition, undoubtedly at some future day the brass plates themselves will be brought forth and their contents thereafter will be available for study to all those with pure hearts and with ears to hear. (McConkie & Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, v.1, 50)

#### Note for 1 Nephi 6:3-6

A (v. 3-6): While Nephi 6 is a break in the historical narrative, it is significant because it establishes the criteria Nephi and other Book of Mormon writers used to select material for inclusion on the plates. (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 9)

“Let us turn to the Book of Mormon, . . . to learn some principles about coming to Jesus Christ, being committed to Him, centered in Him, and consumed in Him.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 84)

## CHAPTER 7

*[Lehi's sons return to Jerusalem and enlist Ishmael and his household in their cause—Laman and others rebel—Nephi exhorts his brethren to have faith in the Lord—They bind him with cords and plan his destruction—He is freed by the power of faith—His brethren ask forgiveness—Lehi and his company offer sacrifice and burnt offerings. About 600–592 B.C.]*

1 AND now I would that ye might know, that after my father, Lehi, had made an end of <sup>a</sup>prophesying concerning his seed, it came to pass that *the Lord spake unto him again, saying that it was not meet for him, Lehi, that he should take his family into the wilderness alone; but that his sons should take <sup>b</sup>daughters to <sup>c</sup>wife, that they might raise up <sup>d</sup>seed unto the Lord in the land of promise.* [ See [note A](#) for more on this remarkable group matchup. ]

2 And it came to pass that the Lord <sup>a</sup>commanded him that I, Nephi, and my brethren, should again return unto the land of Jerusalem, and bring down Ishmael and his family into the wilderness.

3 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did <sup>a</sup>again, with my brethren, go forth into the wilderness to go up to Jerusalem.

4 And it came to pass that we went up unto the house of Ishmael, and we did gain favor in the sight of Ishmael, insomuch that we did speak unto him the words of the Lord.

5 And it came to pass that the <sup>a</sup>Lord did soften the heart of Ishmael, and also his household, insomuch that they took their journey with us down into the wilderness to the tent of our father.

6 And it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, behold Laman and Lemuel, and two of the <sup>a</sup>daughters of Ishmael, and the two <sup>b</sup>sons of Ishmael and their families, did <sup>c</sup>rebel against us; yea, against me, Nephi, and Sam, and their father, Ishmael, and his wife, and his three other daughters.

7 And it came to pass in the which rebellion, they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem.

8 And now I, Nephi, being <sup>a</sup>grieved for the hardness of their hearts, therefore I spake unto them, saying, yea, even unto Laman and unto Lemuel: Behold ye are mine elder brethren, and how is it that ye are so hard in your hearts, and so blind in your minds, that ye have need that I, your <sup>b</sup>younger brother, should speak unto you, yea, and set an <sup>c</sup>example for you?

9 How is it that ye have not hearkened unto the word of the Lord?

10 How is it that ye have <sup>a</sup>forgotten that ye have seen an angel of the Lord?

11 Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten what great things the Lord hath done for us, in <sup>a</sup>delivering us out of the hands of Laban, and also that we should obtain the record?

12 Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten that **the Lord is able to do all <sup>a</sup>things according to his will, for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise <sup>b</sup>faith in him?** Wherefore, let us be faithful to him.

13 And if it so be that we are faithful to him, we shall obtain the <sup>a</sup>land of promise; and ye shall know at some future period that the word of the Lord shall be fulfilled concerning the <sup>b</sup>destruction of <sup>c</sup>Jerusalem; for all things which the Lord hath spoken concerning the destruction of Jerusalem must be fulfilled.

14 For behold, the <sup>a</sup>Spirit of the Lord <sup>b</sup>ceaseth soon to strive with them; for behold, they have <sup>c</sup>rejected the prophets, and <sup>d</sup>Jeremiah have they cast into prison. And they have sought to take away the <sup>e</sup>life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land.

15 Now behold, I say unto you that if ye will return unto Jerusalem ye shall also perish with them. And now, if ye have choice, go up to the land, and remember the words which I speak unto you, that if ye go ye will also perish; for thus the Spirit of the Lord constraineth me that I should speak.

16 And it came to pass that when I, Nephi, had spoken these words unto my brethren, they were angry with me. And it came to pass that they did lay their hands upon me, for behold, they were exceedingly wroth, and they did <sup>a</sup>bind me with cords, for they sought to take away my life, that they might leave me in the wilderness to be devoured by wild beasts.

**. . . the Lord is able to do all <sup>a</sup>things according to his will, for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise <sup>b</sup>faith in him? —I Nephi 7:12**

**Note for 1 Nephi 7:1-16**

A (v. 1): “After the Lord counseled Lehi *‘that his sons should take daughters to wife, that they might raise up seed unto the Lord in the land of promise’*, Lehi immediately sent back to Jerusalem for Ishmael and his family.

“Our present Book of Mormon does not indicate exactly why Ishmael’s family was selected (except that it included at least five unmarried women!), but perhaps the following statement provides additional important reasons for the selection:

“Whoever has read the Book of Mormon carefully will have learned that the remnants of the house of Joseph dwelt upon the American continent; and that Lehi learned by searching the records of his fathers that were written upon the plates of brass, that he was of the lineage of Manasseh. The Prophet Joseph informed us that the record of Lehi, was contained on the 116 pages that were first translated and subsequently stolen, and of which an abridgment is given us in the first Book of Nephi, which is the record of Nephi individually, he himself being of the lineage of Manasseh; but that *Ishmael was of the lineage of Ephraim, and that his sons married into Lehi’s family*, and Lehi’s sons married Ishmael’s daughters, thus fulfilling the words of Jacob upon Ephraim and Manasseh [Gen. 48:16] . . . , which says: (continued on next page)

17 But it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, according to my faith which is in thee, *wilt thou deliver me from the hands of my brethren*<sup>B</sup>; yea, even give me <sup>a</sup>strength that I may <sup>b</sup>burst these bands with which I am bound.

18 And it came to pass that when I had said these words, behold, the bands were loosed from off my hands and feet, and I stood before my brethren, and I spake unto them again.

19 And it came to pass that they were angry with me again, and sought to lay hands upon me; but behold, one of the <sup>a</sup>daughters of Ishmael, yea, and also her mother, and one of the sons of Ishmael, did plead with my brethren, insomuch that they did soften their hearts; and they did cease striving to take away my life.

20 And it came to pass that *they were sorrowful, because of their wickedness*<sup>C</sup>, insomuch that they did bow down before me, and did plead with me that I would <sup>a</sup>forgive them of the thing that they had done against me.

21 And it came to pass that *I did frankly <sup>a</sup>forgive them all that they had done*<sup>D</sup>, and I did exhort them that they would pray unto the Lord their God for <sup>b</sup>forgiveness. And it came to pass that they did so. And after they had done praying unto the Lord we did again travel on our journey towards the tent of our father.

22 And it came to pass that we did come down unto the tent of our father. And after I and my brethren and all the house of Ishmael had come down unto the tent of my father, they did give <sup>a</sup>thanks unto the Lord their God; and they did offer <sup>b</sup>sacrifice and burnt offerings unto him.

## Chapter 7

- 1 a 1 Ne. 1:16  
b 1 Ne. 16:7  
c TG Marriage  
d Ps. 127:3
- 2 a 1 Ne. 16:8
- 3 a 1 Ne. 3:2
- 5 a TG Guidance, Divine
- 6 a 1 Ne. 16:7 (7, 27)  
b 2 Ne. 4:10  
c 1 Ne. 17:18 (17–55)
- 8 a Mosiah 28:3; Alma 31:2; 3 Ne. 17:14; Moses 7:41  
b 1 Chr. 29:1; D&C 1:19 (19, 23)  
c TG Example
- 10 a Deut. 4:9 (9–13); 1 Ne. 4:3
- 11 a 1 Ne. 4:1 (1–38)
- 12 a Ps. 18:32 (32–40); 1 Ne. 17:50; Alma 26:12  
b 1 Ne. 2:19 (18–21); 1 Ne. 15:11
- 13 a 1 Ne. 2:20; TG Promised Lands  
b 2 Kings. 25:4 (1–21)  
c 2 Ne. 6:8; 2 Ne. 25:10; Omni 1:15; Hel. 8:21 (20–21)
- 14 a TG God, Spirit of  
b Ezek. 5:6; 1 Ne. 1:19 (18–20); 1 Ne. 2:13  
c TG Prophets, Rejection of  
d Jer. 37:15 (15–21)  
e 1 Ne. 2:1
- 16 a 1 Ne. 18:11 (11–15)
- 17 a Judg. 14:6  
b Jacob 4:6; Alma 14:28 (26–28); 3 Ne. 28:20 (19–22)
- 19 a 1 Ne. 16:7; 1 Ne. 18:19 (19–20)
- 20 a TG Repentance
- 21 a TG Family, Love within  
b TG Forgiveness
- 22 a TG Thanksgiving  
b 1 Ne. 5:9

**Notes for 1 Nephi 7:1-16**

A (v. 1, cont.): ‘And let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the land.

“Thus these descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim grew together upon this American continent.’ ” (Erastus Snow, *Journal of Discourses*, 23:184-85)” (Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, 99-100) “That is to say, it appears that Ishmael’s sons were already married to Lehi’s daughters before the journey began.” (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 1:53-54)

When one considers the challenge of mate selection for even one young man or woman, even in a system of arranged marriages, it can be seen as nothing short of a miracle that this group matchup could take place without severe compatibility problems, let alone the remarkable numerical matchup. Yet no one seems to have complained about the spouses they acquired. (JMT)

“The most important things that any member of of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints ever does in this world are: 1. To marry the right person, in the right place, by the right authority; and 2. To keep the covenant made in connection with this holy and perfect order of matrimony – thus assuring the obedient persons of an inheritance of exaltation in the celestial kingdom.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 118.)

B (v. 17-18): Nephi expressed great faith in prayer, and his faith in God’s power of deliverance was rewarded. (see also 1:20). Pres. Hinkley taught: **“Believe in prayer. Pray to the Lord with the expectation of answers.”** (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinkley*, 469).

C: (v. 20): The Book of Mormon clearly teaches that wickedness leads to sorrow and unhappiness (1 Ne. 7:20; Alma 41:10-11; cf. Hel. 13:38), guilt and remorse (1 Ne. 16:2); Mosiah 2:38; Alma 5:18, 36:12-16). Such feelings lead to suffering and pain in both body and spirit. (Alma 15:3; 38:8)

D. (v. 21): “Yes, to be in the right we must forgive, and we must do so without regard to whetere or not our [enemy] repents, or how sincere is his transformation, or whtereh or not he askes our forgiveness.” (Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, pp. 282-283)

**Believe in prayer. Pray to the Lord with the expectation of answers. —**  
*Gordon B. Hinkley*

## POSTSCRIPT

Now, dear Reader, you've seen how much work could be involved in this computer marking project. However, when you consider the value of a firm testimony of the truth of the Book of Mormon to you and to those you may influence during the course of your life, it will be worth spending the time and energy to continue the project – at least the color coding. And remember to do as Elder McConkie suggested:

*“. . . read, ponder, and pray—all in the spirit of faith and with an open mind. To keep ourselves alert to the issues at hand—as we do read, ponder, and pray—we should ask ourselves a thousand times, “Could any man have written this book?”*

*“And it is absolutely guaranteed that sometime between the first and thousandth time this question is asked, every sincere and genuine truth seeker will come to know by the power of the Spirit that the Book of Mormon is true, that it is the mind and will and voice of the Lord to the whole world in our day. . . It is the evidence, the proof, that God has spoken to us in our day.”*

You may do as I did and exit the project when you gain that more certain testimony. After that, reading the Book of Mormon as it has been given to us, without further commentary, will be much more satisfying to you. I feel confident in echoing Elder McConkie and the man in the commercial – “I guarantee it.”

This is not to suggest that it is not worthwhile to continue reading and learning more about the Book of Mormon. But I now prefer to spend my time reading the Book of Mormon itself in its pure form as the Lord gave it to us. I also enjoy listening to audio versions as I walk and drive around. You may feel the same.

When you have satisfied yourself through such efforts that your testimony is on solid ground, I would love to hear from you. Please send me a note telling how this project affected you. Please send it to the following e-mail address – [jonmtaylor@juno.com](mailto:jonmtaylor@juno.com)