THE PLATES OF MORMON

A BOOK OF MORMON STUDY EDITION

Based on Textual and Narrative Structures in the English Translation

Edited by BRANT A. GARDNER

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For Royal Skousen, whose important work on the Book of Mormon manuscripts made this edition possible.

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Introduction

In 2015, The Joseph Smith Papers Project published the Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon. Six years later, in 2021, the extant pages and fragments of the Original Manuscript followed. Both of these publications present a photograph of a manuscript page on the left with the transcription (and notes) on the right. The transcription is faithful to the manuscript, meaning that there is no punctuation or paragraphing.

When the Printer's Manuscript was given to John H. Gilbert, the compositor and typesetter for Grandin Press, he had to create or delineate the sentences and paragraphs that would make the text more accessible. Although Gilbert's paragraphs have changed through versification and modern formatting, the sentences have persisted much as he punctuated them. This edition returns to the problem presented to Gilbert. As then, the challenge is to take the straight dictation copied onto the Printer's Manuscript and add punctuation and paragraph formatting to make the text easier to read.

The main source for this study edition is the electronic version of the Joseph Smith Paper's published transcript of the Printer's Manuscript. This was then compared to the printed transcript and accompanying images, which resulted in the discovery of a few errors that have been silently corrected. It should be noted that the printed transcript does not contain those errors.

Editorial Decisions

The following describes the features, organizational logic, and some of the added paratextual information in this edition. Many of these concepts are discussed more fully in the companion volume, *Engraven Upon Plates, Printed Upon Paper: Textual and Narrative Structures of the Book of Mormon.*³ Reading the two books together provides the undergirding principles for the editorial decisions that are embodied here. Each book is also able to stand alone.

Mormon's Plates and the Small Plates

A reader's first experience with the Book of Mormon is not with the record that its ancient author and namesake originally intended. Instead, since its first edition in 1830, the Book of Mormon has opened with a replacement text containing records from earlier ancient authors who had different reasons for writing. The set of plates known as the small plates replaced the beginning of Mormon's record that disappeared when the so-called "lost 116 pages" containing the book of Lehi and the opening chapters of the

^{1.} The Printer's Manuscript is almost completely intact. Wear on the bottom of the first page has resulted in the loss of one sentence on the recto and a line and some words from the line above it on the verso. In the published version, the missing text is supplied from the 1830 edition and grayed out to indicate that it has been restored. *Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, xii.

^{2. &}quot;Of the nearly 500 pages that were placed in the Nauvoo House cornerstone, portions of 232 pages survive, amounting to roughly 28 percent of the text. Some of what remains is badly faded, obscured, or otherwise damaged." *Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, xi.

^{3.} Brant A. Gardner, Engraven Upon Plates, Printed Upon Paper: Textual and Narrative Structures of the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2013); hereafter cited as Engraven Upon Plates.

book of Mosiah were stolen.⁴ The Book of Nephi: His Reign and Ministry (also known as First Nephi) was the first book of those small plates that restored the Nephite history and stories that were on those pages. While the small plates offer a parallel history to the narrative that Mormon had written, he did not intend them to be a part of his account (W of M 1:1–7), and they do not reflect the way he compiled and framed his record.

Because of those lost pages, the great mind that conceived the Book of Mormon does not appear in the standard published text until The Words of Mormon. Like the books of the small plates, this short explanation was not part of Mormon's intended record. It was rather written as an introduction to that small set to explain why they were appended to his history. Although they were an introduction, evidence suggests that it was placed at the end of the small plates.

This edition has thus elected to begin with what has been retained of Mormon's planned Book of Mormon, opening with a placeholder for the lost book of Lehi as well as the unknown number of lost chapters from the beginning of the book of Mosiah. Those are followed by the books of Mosiah through Moroni. The small plates books (1 Nephi through Omni) are then included as an appendix of sorts, with The Words of Mormon acting as their introduction.⁵ Similarly, the Title Page was the last text on Mormon and Moroni's plates.⁶ Although physically at the end, it has always been moved to the beginning. This edition follows that convention.

Revision of Spelling and Grammar

The Book of Mormon was dictated during an age when English spelling was yet to be standardized, with each of Joseph Smith's scribes having an idiosyncratic way of spelling some words. This edition corrects spelling to modern expectations. However, there are some cases where the spelling might affect how the passage is understood. In those cases, a particular meaning has been selected for the text with a note discussing the reason for the decision.

The general standardization of spelling does not extend to the standardization of grammar. At times, a plural noun was written where a singular noun would be expected. For example, several times the text indicates that one would do something with their "mights." There are also many cases where there are problems with subject-verb agreement, and these are retained as written. For example, "they was" has not been changed to "they were."

There are several places where the text has some version of "had eat" rather than "had eaten." This may represent the dialectical pronunciation "had et." It has been retained as a possible representation of the dialect.

Both the Original and Printer's Manuscripts have random capitalizations, which have been regularized here. In some cases, capitalization has been removed to conform to modern usage. Thus, there are places where words such as "heaven," "hell," and "church" are capitalized in the manuscripts but not in this edition. The capitalized versions too easily recall modern definitions that may or may not match the concept conveyed in the text.

^{4.} For a history and investigation into this loss, see Don Bradley, *The Lost 116 Pages: Reconstructing the Book of Momron's Missing Pages* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2019), 57–82.

^{5.} The reasons for this are explored in detail in Chapter 15 of Engraven Upon Plates.

^{6. &}quot;History, circa June–October 1839 [Draft 1]," 9, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 29, 2023, https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-circa-june-october-1839-draft-1/9.

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Finally, the manuscripts often use the abbreviation "&C" rather than write out "etcetera." These have silently been expanded to the full form. Similarly, "&" has been silently replaced with "and."

Altered Text and Deletions

This edition uses square brackets to indicate places where a word has been added that differs from that in the Printer's Manuscript. For example, 1 Nephi 1:7 reads: "And it came to pass [that] in the which rebellion, they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem." The word "that" in square brackets was taken from the Original and is missing in the Printer's Manuscript. Each entry in brackets is explained in a footnote.

There is a special case where the text is quoting passages from the King James Bible and an italicized word has been removed. Empty square brackets mark the missing word or words, with a footnote providing the information on what was removed. For example, 2 Nephi 13:14 reads: "The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof. For ye have eaten up the vineyard and the spoil of the poor [] your houses." The empty brackets mark the removal of the words "is in" from the King James Bible.

The Logic for the Punctuation of Sentences

There is no single correct way to punctuate the text. John Gilbert's punctuation allowed for much longer sentences than modern readers prefer. It is possible that the longer sentences better reflect the dictated nature of the text. Despite that, this edition intentionally attempts to create shorter sentences where possible to make reading easier. With longer ones, parentheses are often added to assist the reader in comprehending some of the complex sentences.

There are also a significant number of incomplete sentences in the manuscripts, only some of which have been corrected in subsequent editions. These have been punctuated as best as they can be. Footnotes indicate the existence of the incomplete sentence and at times discuss the reason the sentence remains as is.

In general, Gilbert did an excellent job of demarcating and punctuating sentences. Nevertheless, there have been a few cases where the sentence construction here differ. In at least one case, the difference is significant. The following replicates Gilbert's sentences for Ether 12:6–9 that are still in the current edition:

And now, I, Moroni, would speak somewhat concerning these things; I would show unto the world that faith is things which are hoped for and not seen; wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith.

For it was by faith that Christ showed himself unto our fathers, after he had risen from the dead; and he showed not himself unto them until after they had faith in him; wherefore, it must needs be that some had faith in him, for he showed himself not unto the world.

But because of the faith of men he has shown himself unto the world, and glorified the name of the Father, and prepared a way that thereby others might be partakers of the heavenly gift, that they might hope for those things which they have not seen.

Wherefore, ye may also have hope, and be partakers of the gift, if ye will but have faith.

As punctuated, we have the confusing claim that Jesus did not show himself unto the world, even though it appears clear that the purpose of the passage is to indicate that he did. Because "but" often begins new sentences, in verse 8 Gilbert created a logical sentence beginning with that word. The problem in this case is that "but" also often takes a slightly different meaning in the manuscripts. In this case, it should be read as "except." A change in punctuation restores that intent:

And now I, Moroni, would speak somewhat concerning these things. I would show unto the world that faith is things which are hoped for and not seen. Wherefore, dispute not because ye see not. For ye receive no witness—not until after the trial of your faith. For it was by faith that Christ showed himself unto our fathers, after that he had risen from the dead. And he showed [not] himself unto them until after they had faith in him. Wherefore, it must needs be that some had faith in him. For he showed himself not unto the world but because of the faith of men.

He has shown himself unto the world and glorified the name of the Father, and prepared a way that thereby others might be partakers of the heavenly gift, that they might hope for those things which they have not seen. Wherefore, ye may also have hope and be partakers of the gift—if ye will but have faith.

It is a small change, but it makes sense of the otherwise confusing claim.

The Logic for the Creation of Paragraphs

Modern written English has conventions for what constitutes a paragraph. This edition intentionally uses an entirely different concept for creating them.⁷ In ancient texts written prior to the invention of punctuation, the function of separating ideas or events relied upon textual markers rather than visual indications. For example, the ubiquitous "and it came to pass" functions as a textual flow marker. It marks the movement of the text and events through time (and is therefore almost exclusively appearing in historical narrative rather than doctrinal exposition). Based on that function, this edition typically uses the phrase as the basis for a new paragraph, even when the resulting one is rather short.

Where "and it came to pass" moves the text through time, "and now" marks new information that is associated with the same timeframe as the previous information.⁸ They function similarly to the English markers "after" and "with." It is also used as a basis for beginning a new paragraph.

Other words that have been used in various editions of the Book of Mormon to introduce a paragraph do not have that function in this formatting. For example, in this

^{7.} The details of the Book of Mormon constructions behind these decisions are found in Chapter 6 of *Engraven Upon Plates*.

^{8.} According to John Gee, "An analysis of the original Book of Mormon chapter division shows that the phrase 'and now' serves as verbal punctuation marking a major break in the text both between and within chapters. The Book of Mormon phrase is a literal translation of the Hebrew expression wt(h), which is used both in the Hebrew Bible and in Epigraphic Hebrew to mark a transition between major sections of text." John Gee, "Verbal Punctuation in the Book of Mormon I: (And) Now," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faint and Scholarship* 50 (2022): 48. While I agree that "and now" marks divisions, my reading of the function in the Book of Mormon text comes from the text itself rather than comparison to any ancient language.

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edition, "therefore" does not begin a new paragraph. It is a conclusion to the argument that begins earlier and is thus left associated with the argument.

Finally, there are some cases where this edition separates lines to represent an intentional repetition of elements. These were likely literary elements that were intended for the reader to understand. They may be seen as poetic forms, although many are not and instead are simply the result of the literary competence of the writer.

The Logic for Chapters and Headers

The chapters in this formatting follow those of the manuscripts and the pre-1879 editions of the Book of Mormon. However, since most readers will be more familiar with the modern chapter and verse numbering, those have been retained. Modern chapters are noted in bold square brackets. Sentences do not always conform to verses, but the verse numbers have been inserted in the familiar locations in superscript.

The Original and Printer's Manuscripts have book headers and chapter headers that are translations from Mormon's golden plates and were thus original to the text. These have been augmented with chapter synopses in modern editions. As these synopses were not part of the translation of Mormon's writings, they are not included here. There are some cases where this edition makes a different decision on the division between a header and the text. In most cases, the manuscripts provided Gilbert with no indication for where the header ended and the main text began. He did an excellent job in making the divisions in most cases. When this edition has relocated the division, an explanation is provided in a footnote.

Asides and Insertions

When Mormon or another author or editor inserts information that is tangential to the initial purpose of their writing, the aside is set off with arrow brackets (> <). They are typically footnoted to explain the nature of the aside or insertion. Where the insertion is long, it is also indented.

Long Isaiah (and Other) Quotations

Isaiah was a poet prophet whose writings are considered excellent poetry. His and other poetic texts have been formatted as such. The formatting herein has interacted with that in Grant Hardy's *The Book of Mormon: Maxwell Institute Study Edition.*9 Sometimes it follows Hardy, other times it is arranged differently.

In some cases, Hardy elected to format some of Isaiah in prose. Robert Alter's translation of the Hebrew Bible¹⁰ was consulted for those passages, and this edition instead follows Alter's poetic formatting.

This edition also follows Hardy in using boldface to mark the locations where words have been added to what we have in the King James Bible passages. There are no footnotes to explain the added text. Nevertheless, there are differences between the bolded text in this edition compared to Hardy's edition. The *Maxwell Institute Study*

^{9.} Grant Hardy, ed., *The Book of Mormon: Maxwell Institute Study Edition* (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute, 2018).

^{10.} Robert Alter, *The Hebrew Bible: The Prophets*, vols. 2–3 (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019).

Edition is based on the most recent edition of the Book of Mormon, and this edition relies upon the Printer's Manuscript. Some of the entries Hardy highlighted were the result of editorial changes made after the Book of Mormon was initially published. One place where that makes a difference is 1 Nephi 20:1, where Joseph Smith added the phrase "or out of the waters of baptism" for the 1840 edition. As it was not in the Printer's Manuscript, the phrase is not included here.

Quotations, Allusions, and Echoes

The Book of Mormon's language not only echoes the language of the King James Bible, but specific verses are often directly quoted as they appear in that text. This edition provides footnotes to the quoted or alluded passages. It is not exhaustive but should represent the majority—and most important—of those quotations or allusions. These footnotes rely heavily on the work of Nicholas J. Frederick. For the Old Testament quotations, an unpublished paper created by Dave Larsen for Book of Mormon Central was used with permission.

Finally, three important resources should be noted that are invaluable to this and any in depth study of the text of the Book of Mormon:

- Royal Skousen and Robin Scott Jensen, eds., Revelations and Translations, Volume 3: Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon. Facsimile edition. Part 1 and 2 of vol. 3 of the Revelations and Translations series of The Joseph Smith Papers, edited by Ronald J. Esplin and Matthew J. Grow. (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2015)
- Royal Skousen and Robin Scott Jensen, eds., Revelations and Translations, Volume 5: Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon. Facsimile edition. Vol. 5 of the Revelations and Translations series of The Joseph Smith Papers, edited by Matthew C. Godfrey, R. Eric Smith, Matthew J. Grow, and Ronald J. Esplin. (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2021)
- Royal Skousen, Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon. Parts 1–6
 of the Critical Text of the Book of Mormon, 1st ed. (Provo, UT: Foundation
 for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies and Neal A. Maxwell Institute for
 Religious Scholarship, 2004–2009)

These are referenced throughout this study edition as *Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, *Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, and Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants*.

^{11.} Nicholas J. Frederick, "The Book of Mormon and Its Redaction of the King James New Testament: A Further Evaluation of the Interaction between the New Testament and the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 27 (2018): 44–87.

THE BOOK OF MORMON

An account written by the hand of Mormon upon plates. Taken from the plates of Nephi.^a Wherefore, it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites.

Written to the Lamanites (which 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 prophesy 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 the way of Gentile.

The interpretation thereof by the gift of God.^b

(>An abridgment taken from the book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared which were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people when they were building a tower to get to heaven.c<)

Moroni is the author of the Title Page and editor of the book of Ether. Although this is the Title Page for his father's work, he wanted to make certain to note his own contribution. Thus, it is an inserted afterthought. It would be convenient to suppose that there was an original draft of the Title Page that Moroni copied and inserted this sentence as he copied. That would conform with practices we will see throughout the Book of Mormon. However, there is no evidence for an earlier draft. It is also possible that Moroni included this statement here at the time it occurred to him. It clearly interrupts the flow of the text.

a. Beginning with the 1830 edition, these sentences were formatted as a subtitle. They are an essential part of the message and have therefore been moved to the text. In addition, they have been separated into two sentences to better indicate that the Book of Mormon is written upon plates and that it is the text of the Book of Mormon that is taken from the plates of Nephi, not that the plates themselves which were taken from the plates of Nephi.

b. These sentences have been formatted to highlight the repeated concepts. Although repetition and parallelism may be defined as poetry, the Book of Mormon rarely uses them as formal poetry. In these sentences, the various repetitions serve to highlight the message through the repetition even though they do not conform to a particular poetic structure.

c. This sentence is somewhat problematic. It comes immediately before the statement: "which is to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel how great things the Lord hath done for their fathers." If these sentences are read in sequence, then this purpose statement would refer to the book of Ether and not to the entirely of the Book of Mormon. The statement should apply to the whole and not just to the book of Ether. Therefore, it is placed in parentheses to set it off as an insertion rather than a continual thought.

2 TITLE PAGE

Which is to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel how 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 be fault, it be the mistake of men. Wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

[The Book of Lehi]

[The following by Joseph Smith was included in the first edition of the published Book of Mormon as a preface to explain the absence of the original book of Lehi that was lost among the earliest translated pages of the golden plates.]

To the Reader——

As many false reports have been circulated respecting this, the following, work and also many unlawful measures taken by evil designing persons to destroy me, and also the work, I would inform you that I translated by the gift & power of God and caused to be written, one hundred and sixteen pages, the which I took from the Book of Lehi (which was an account abridged from the plates of Lehi by the hand of Mormon), which said account some person, or persons, have stolen and kept from me—notwith-standing my utmost exertion to recover it again.

And being commanded of the Lord that I should not translate the same over again (for Satan had put it into their hearts to tempt the Lord their God by altering the words that they did read—contrary from that which I translated and caused to be written)—and if I should bring forth the same words again—or in other words if I should translate the same over again—they would publish that which they had stolen. And Satan would stir up the hearts of this generation that they might not receive this work.

But behold, the Lord said unto me: "I will not suffer that Satan shall accomplish his evil design in this thing. Therefore, thou shalt translate from the plates of Nephi until ye come to that which ye have translated, which ye have retained. And behold, ye shall publish it as the record of Nephi. And thus, I will confound those who have altered my words. I will not suffer that they shall destroy my work. Yea, I will shew unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the Devil."

Wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, I have—through his grace and mercy, accomplished that which he hath commanded me respecting this thing.

I would also inform you that the plates of which hath been spoken was found in the township of Manchester, Ontario County, New York.

The Author

THE BOOK OF MOSIAH

[Mosiah – Unknown number of missing chapters]

Two clues in the Printer's Manuscript indicate that some early chapters of the book of Mosiah were lost along with the book of Lehi. The first is the absence of a book header following the book title, which is something that all other individual abridged books in the Book of Mormon begin with.^a

The second is that when preparing the Printer's Manuscript, Oliver Cowdery initially labeled the opening chapter of Mosiah as "Chapter III," which was later changed to "Chapter I" by crossing out two of the Roman numeral Is. Because of this some have assumed that the original number reflected the chapter count before Martin Harris lost the early manuscript, and have thus concluded that two chapters had been lost. However, there seems to be a better explanation for the chapter numbering, which was added later as the manuscript was being prepared for publication—sometimes skipping a number or accidentally continuing the chapter count from the previous book.^b

It seems that this latter type of mistake is the best explanation for the "Chapter III." In the Printer's Manuscript Cowdery originally assigned the book of Omni as "Chapter I," and The Words of Mormon was mistakenly numbered "Chapter 2.d." The opening extant chapter of Mosiah was likely assigned "III" as a logical continuation of that numbering.

Although we cannot know the number of chapters that were lost, we can identify some of its narrative history. With book titles named after initial dynastic leaders,^d the book of Mosiah was likely named for Mosiah (the father of king Benjamin, and the first Nephite king not directly of Nephi's lineage) and would have thus contained at least the story of him becoming the new king of the Nephites and meeting with the people of Zarahemla, if not also the departure from the land of Nephi. The transition from Mosiah to Benjamin is also missing, as well as the description of the wars that led up to the current chapter 1 of the book of Mosiah. Some of that information is available at the end of the book of Omni and the end of The Words of Mormon.^c Based on the lengths of Mormon's abridged accounts of Nephite history throughout his record, it is likely that the missing history of the first Mosiah covered multiple chapters.

a. For more on the headers see Chapter 6 of Engraven Upon Plates.

b. Royal Skousen, "Critical Methodology and the Text of the Book of Mormon," *FARMS Review* 6, no. 1 (1994): 138.

c. For an extended analysis, see Brant A. Gardner, "When Hypotheses Collide: Responding to Lyon and Monson's 'When Pages Collide," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 5 (2013): 110–13.

d. See Chapter 12 of Engraven Upon Plates.

e. For an in-depth exploration of this lost history, see Don Bradley, *The Lost 116 Pages: Reconstructing the Book of Momron's Missing Pages* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2019), 241–84.

Chapter I [Mosiah 1-3]

[1] ¹And now, there was no more contention in all the land of Zarahemla, among all the people which belonged to King Benjamin, so that King Benjamin had continual peace all the remainder of his days.

²And it came to pass that he had three sons. And he called their names Mosiah, and Helorum, and Helaman. And he caused that they should be taught in all the language of his fathers, that thereby they might become men of understanding, and that they might know concerning the prophesies which had been spoken by the mouths of their fathers (which was delivered them by the hand of the Lord). ³And he also taught them concerning the records which were engraven on the plates of brass, saying:

My sons, I would that ye should remember that were it not for these plates (which contain these records and these commandments) we must have suffered in ignorance even at this present time, not knowing the mysteries of God.^{a 4}For it were not possible that our father Lehi could have remembered all these things to have taught them to his children, except it were for the help of these plates. For he, having been taught in the language of the Egyptians—therefore he could read these engravings and teach them to his children, that thereby they could teach them to their children.

And so, fulfilling the commandments of the Lord God, even down to this present time, ⁵I say unto you, my sons, were it not for these things which have been kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord God (that we might read and understand of his mysteries and have his commandments always before our eyes), that even our fathers would have dwindled in unbelief. And we should have been like unto our brethren the Lamanites, which know nothing concerning these things, or even do not believe them when they are taught them, because of the tradition of their fathers, which are not correct.

⁶O my sons! I would that ye should remember that these sayings are true. And also that these records are true. And behold, also the plates of Nephi which contain the records and the sayings of our fathers from the time they left Jerusalem until now—and they are true. And we can know of their surety because we have them before our eyes.

⁷And now my sons, I would that ye should remember to search them diligently, that ye may profit thereby. And I would that ye should keep the commandments of God, that ye may prosper in the land, according to the promises which the Lord made unto our fathers.

⁸And many more things did King Benjamin teach his sons which are not written in this book.

⁹And it came to pass that after King Benjamin had made an end of teaching his sons that he waxed old. And he saw that he must very soon go the way of all the earth. ¹⁰Therefore, he thought it expedient that he should confer the kingdom upon one of his sons. Therefore, he had Mosiah brought before him. And these are the words which he spake unto him, saying:

a. The phrase "mystery of God" appears in 1 Corinthians 4:1, Colossians 2:2, and Revelation 10:7. b. See 1 Kings 2:2: "I go the way of all the earth."

My son, I would that ye should make a proclamation throughout all this land among all this people (or the people of Zarahemla, and the people of Mosiah, which dwell in this land), that thereby they may be gathered together. For on the morrow I shall proclaim unto them, this my people, out of mine own mouth, that thou art a king and a ruler over this people which the Lord our God hath given us.

¹¹And moreover, I shall give this people a name, that thereby they may be distinguished above all the people which the Lord God hath brought out of the land of Jerusalem. And this I do because they have been a diligent people in keeping the commandments of the Lord. ¹²And I give unto them a name that never shall be blotted out, except it be through transgression.

¹³Yea, and moreover I say unto you, that if this highly favored people of the Lord should fall into transgression, and become a wicked and an adulterous people, that the Lord will deliver them up, that thereby they become weak like unto their brethren. And he will no more preserve them by his matchless and marvelous power as he hath hitherto preserved our fathers. ¹⁴For I say unto you, that if he had not extended his arm in the preservation of our fathers, they must have fallen into the hands of the Lamanites and become victims to their hatred.

¹⁵And it came to pass that after King Benjamin had made an end of these sayings to his son, that he gave him charge concerning all the affairs of the kingdom. ¹⁶And moreover, he also gave him charge concerning the records which were engraven on the plates of brass. And also the plates of Nephi. And also the sword of Laban. And the ball (or director, which led our fathers through the wilderness, which was prepared by the hand of the Lord, that thereby they might be lead, every one, according to the heed and diligence which they gave unto him). ¹⁷Therefore, as they were unfaithful, they did not prosper nor progress in their journey, but were driven back and incurred the displeasure of God upon them. And therefore, they were smitten with famine and sore afflictions to stir them up in remembrance of their duty.

¹⁸And now it came to pass that Mosiah went and did as his father had commanded him. And proclaimed unto all the people which were in the land of Zarahemla, that thereby they might gather themselves together, to go up to the temple to hear the words which his father should speak unto them.

[2] ¹And it came to pass that after Mosiah had done as his father had commanded him, and had made a proclamation throughout all the land, that the people gathered themselves together throughout all the land, that they might go up to the temple to hear the words which King Benjamin should speak unto them. ²And there were a great number, even so many that they did not number them. For they had multiplied exceedingly and waxed great in the land.

³And they also took of the firstlings of their flocks, that they might offer sacrifice and burnt offerings according to the law of Moses. ⁴And also, that they might give thanks to the Lord, their God, who had brought them out of the land of Jerusalem. And who had delivered them out of the hands of their enemies. And had appointed just men to be their teachers. And also a just man to be their king—who had established peace in the land of Zarahemla, and who had taught them to keep the commandments of God—that thereby they might rejoice and be filled with love towards God and all men.

⁵And it came to pass that when they came up to the temple, they pitched their tents

round about—every man according to his family (consisting of his wife, and his sons, and his daughters, and their sons, and their daughters, from the eldest down to the youngest). Every family being separate one from another. ⁶And they pitched their tents round about the temple, every man having his tent with the door thereof towards the temple, that thereby they might remain in their tents and hear the words which King Benjamin should speak unto them. ⁷For the multitude being so great that King Benjamin could not teach them all within the walls of the temple. Therefore, he caused a tower to be erected, that thereby his people might hear the words which he should speak unto them.

⁸And it came to pass that he began to speak to his people from the tower. And they could not all hear his words because of the greatness of the multitude. Therefore, he caused that the words which he spake should be written and sent forth among those that were not under the sound of his voice, that they might also receive his words. ⁹And these are the words which he spake, and caused to be written, saying:

My brethren, all ye that have assembled yourselves together, you that can hear my words which I shall speak unto you this day. For I have not commanded you to come up hither to trifle with the words which I shall speak. But that you should hearken unto [me^a]—and open your ears, that ye may hear—and your hearts, that ye may understand—and your minds, that the mysteries of God^b may be unfolded to your view.

¹⁰I have not commanded you to come up hither that ye should fear me, or that ye should think that I, of myself, am more than a mortal man. ¹¹But I am (like as yourselves) subject to all manner of infirmities in body and mind. Yet, as I have been chosen by this people, and was consecrated by my father, and was suffered by the hand of the Lord that I should be a ruler and a king over this people. ^c And have been kept and preserved by his matchless power to serve thee with all the might, mind, and strength, which the Lord hath granted unto me. ¹²I say unto you, that as I have been suffered to spend my days in your service (even up to this time). ^d And have not sought gold, nor silver, nor no manner of riches of you. ¹³Neither have I suffered that ye should be confined in dungeons. Nor that ye should make slaves one [of^c] another. Or that ye should murder. Or plunder or steal. Or commit adultery. Or even I have not suffered that ye should commit any manner of wickedness—and have taught you that ye should keep the commandments of the Lord in all things which he hath commanded you.

¹⁴And even I, myself, have labored with mine own hands that I might serve you, and that ye should not be laden with taxes, and that there should nothing come upon you which was grievous to be borne. And of all these things (which I have spoken), ye yourselves are witnesses this day. ¹⁵Yet, my brethren, I have not done these things that I might boast. Neither do I tell these things that thereby I

a. The Printer's Manuscript has "you." This has a superlinear insertion of "me," which is the intended meaning. It was probably corrected during the proofreading.

b. The phrase "mystery of God" appears in 1 Corinthians 4:1, Colossians 2:2, and Revelation 10:7.

c. The sentence appears to run through the end of verse 13. It is never complete. To make it easier to read, it has been broken up with the understanding that this highlights the incompleteness.

d. The text continues to have a hanging verb: "as I have been." It is not resolved.

e. The Printer's Manuscript has "with." Oliver Cowdery changed it to the more appropriate "of."

might accuse you. But I tell you these things that ye may know that I [can^a] answer a [clean^b] conscience before God this day.

¹⁶Behold I say unto you, that because I said unto you that I had spent my days in your service, I do not desire to boast. For I have only been in the service of God. ¹⁷And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom—that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings, ye are only in the service of your God.

¹⁸Behold, ye have called me your king. And if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to serve you, then had not ye ought to labor to serve one another?

¹⁹And behold also, if I, who ye call your king, who has spent his days in your service (and yet hath been in the service of God), doth merit any thanks from you, O how had you ought to thank your heavenly king! ²⁰I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole souls hath power to possess to that God who hath created you, and hath kept and preserved you, and hath caused that ye should rejoice, and hath granted that ye should live in peace one with another—²¹I say unto you, that if ye should serve him, who hath created you from the beginning, and art preserving you from day to day by lending you breath (that ye may live, and move, and do according to your own will, and even supporting you, from one moment to another)—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole soul—and yet ye would be unprofitable servants.

²²And behold, all that he requires of you is to keep his commandments. And he hath promised you that if ye would keep his commandments, ye should prosper in the land. And he never doth vary from that which he hath said. Therefore, if ye do keep his commandments, he doth bless you and prosper you.

²³And now, in the first place he hath created you and granted unto you your lives. For which ye are indebted unto him. ²⁴And secondly, he doth require that ye should do as he hath commanded you. For which, if ye do, he doth immediately bless you. And therefore, he hath paid you. And ye are still indebted unto him—and are, and will be forever and ever. Therefore, of what have ye to boast?

²⁵And now I ask, can ye say ought of yourselves? I answer you, nay. Ye cannot say that thou art even as much as the dust of the earth. Yet thou wast created of the dust of the earth. But behold, it belongeth to him who created you.

²⁶And I, even I, whom ye call your king, am no better than ye yourselves are. For I am also of the dust. And thou beholdest that I am old and am about to yield up this mortal frame to its mother earth. ⁷Therefore, as I said unto you—that I had served you, walking with a clear conscience before God—even so I, at this time, have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might be found blameless and that your blood should not come up on me when I shall stand to be judged of God of the things whereof he hath commanded me concerning you.

²⁸I say unto you that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together,

a. Probably added during proofreading.

b. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 2:1148: "Here in the printer's manuscript, Cowdery initially wrote 'a clear conscience', which is what we expect. He virtually immediately overwrote the final r of *clear* with an $n \dots$, thus ending up with 'a clean conscience', which is also possible (but not what we expect)." Skousen continues to note that Cowdery had other instances where an "r" in the original was copied as an "n" in the Printer's Manuscript. It was typeset as "clear" in the 1830 printed version.

that I might rid my garments of your blood at this period of time, when I am about to go down to my grave, that I might go down in peace. And my immortal spirit may join the choirs above in singing the praises of a just God.

²⁹And moreover, I say unto you that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together that I might declare unto you that I can no longer be your teacher nor your king. ³⁰For even at this time, my whole frame doth tremble exceedingly while attempting to speak unto you. But the Lord God doth support me, and hath suffered me that I should speak unto you. And hath commanded me that I should declare unto you this day that my son Mosiah is a king and a ruler over you.

³¹And now, my brethren, I would that ye should do as ye hath hitherto done. As ye have kept my commandments, and also the commandments of my father, and have prospered and have been kept from falling into the hands of your enemies—even so, if ye shall keep the commandments of my son (or the commandments of God which shall be delivered unto you by him^c), ye shall prosper in the land. And your enemies shall have no power over you.

³²But, O my people! Beware lest there shall arise contentions among you, and ye list to obey the evil spirit (which was spoken by my father Mosiah). ³³For behold, there is a wo pronounced upon him that listeth to obey that spirit. For if he listeth to obey him, and remaineth, and dieth in his sins—the same drinketh damnation to his own soul. For he receiveth for his wages an everlasting punishment, having transgressed the law of God contrary to his own knowledge.

³⁴I say unto you, that there are not one among you, except it be your little children, that have not been taught concerning these things—but what knoweth that ye are eternally indebted to your heavenly Father—to render to him all that you have and are—and also have been taught concerning the records (which contain the prophesies which hath been spoken by the holy prophets, even down to the time our father Lehi left Jerusalem)—³⁵and also all that hath been spoken by our fathers until now. And behold, also they spake that which was commanded them of the Lord, therefore they are just and true.

³⁶And now I say unto you my brethren, that after ye have known and have been taught all these things, if ye should transgress and go contrary to that which hath been spoken, that ye do withdraw yourselves from the spirit of the Lord, that it may have no place in you—to guide you in wisdom's paths, that ye may be blessed, prospered, and preserved. ³⁷I say unto you, that the man that doeth this, the same cometh out in open rebellion against God. Therefore, he listeth to obey the evil spirit and becometh an enemy to all righteousness. Therefore, the Lord hath no place in him, for he dwelleth not in unholy temples. ^d ³⁸Therefore, if that man repenteth not, and remaineth, and dieth, an enemy to God, the demands of divine justice doth awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord, and doth fill his breast with guilt, and pain, and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire whose

c. Before correction, this phrase was "shall be delivered unto him by you." This was clearly incorrect and therefore changed with superlinear insertions.

d. Amulek provides a quotation in Alma 34:36, but it is not present outside of the Book of Mormon. The reference to temples suggests that it was on the brass plates.

flames ascendeth up forever, and ever.^a

³⁹And now, I say unto you that mercy hath no claim on that man. Therefore, his final doom is to endure a never-ending torment.

⁴⁰O all ye old men! And also ye young men! And you little children (which can understand my words)! For I have spoken plain unto you, that ye might understand. I pray that ye should awake to a remembrance of the awful situation of those that have fallen into transgression. ⁴¹And moreover, I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual. And if they hold out faithful to the end, they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness.

O remember, remember that these things are true! For the Lord God hath spoken it.

[3] ¹And again, my brethren, I would call your attention. For I have somewhat more to speak unto you. For behold, I have things to tell you concerning that which is to come. ²And the things which I shall tell you are made known unto me by an angel from God.

³And he said unto me: "Awake!"

And I awoke. And behold, he stood before me. And he said unto me:

Awake! And hear the words which I shall tell thee! For behold, I am come to declare unto thee glad tidings of great joy.^b ⁴For the Lord hath heard thy prayers. And hath judged of thy righteousness. And hath sent me to declare unto thee, that thou mayest rejoice. And that thou mayest declare unto thy people that they also may also be filled with joy.

⁵For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power the Lord Omnipotent (who reigneth, which was, and is, from all eternity to all eternity) shall come down from heaven among the children of men and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay—and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles—such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases. ⁶And he shall cast out devils (or the evil spirits which dwelleth in the hearts of the children of men). ⁷And lo, he shall suffer temptations and pain of body—hunger, thirst, and fatigue. Even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death. For behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people.

⁸And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of Heaven and of Earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning. And his mother shall be called Mary. ⁹And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men, even through faith on his name.

And even after all this, they shall consider him as a man, and say that he hath a devil—and shall scourge him and shall crucify him. ¹⁰And he shall rise the third day from the dead.

And behold, he standeth to judge the world.

a. See Revelation 14:11: "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

b. See Luke 2:10: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy."

And behold all these things are done that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men.

¹¹For behold, and also his blood atoneth for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam who hath died not knowing the will of God concerning them, and who have ignorantly sinned. ¹²But wo! Wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God! For salvation cometh to none such, except it be through repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹³And the Lord God hath sent his holy prophets among all the children of men to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue—that thereby, whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same might receive remission of their sins and rejoice with exceeding great joy, even as though he had already come among them.

¹⁴Yet, the Lord God saw that his people were a stiff-necked people. And he appointed unto them a law, even the law of Moses. ¹⁵And many signs, and wonders, and types, and shadows, showed he unto them concerning his coming. And also holy prophets spake unto them concerning his coming. And yet, they hardened their hearts, and understood not, that the law of Moses availeth nothing, except it were through the atonement of his blood.

¹⁶And even if it were possible that little children could sin, they could not be saved. But I say unto you, they are blessed. For behold, as in Adam (or by nature) they fall, even so the blood of Christ atoneth for their sins. ¹⁷And moreover, I say unto you that there shall be no other name given, nor no other way, nor means, whereby salvation can come unto the children of men. Only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. ¹⁸For behold, he judgeth. And his judgment is just. And the infant perisheth not that dieth in his infancy.

But men drinketh damnation to their own souls, except they humble themselves and become as little children and believeth that salvation was, and is, and is to come—in and through the atoning blood of Christ the Lord Omnipotent. ¹⁹For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam. And will be forever, and ever, but if he yieldeth to the enticings of the Holy Spirit and putteth off the natural man and he becometh a Saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord—and becometh as a child: submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.

²⁰And moreover, I say unto you, that the time shall come when the knowledge of a Savior shall spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.^b ²¹And behold, when that time cometh, none shall be found blameless before God (except it be little children), only through repentance, and faith on the name of the Lord God Omnipotent.

²²And even at this time, when thou shalt have taught thy people the things

a. The 1920 edition of the Book of Mormon changed this to "unless." The phrase "but if" was once used with that meaning but is now obsolete. In current usage, "but if" would lead to an incomplete sentence. See Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 2:1173.

b. See Revelation 14:6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

which the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, even then are they found no more blameless in the sight of God, only according to the words which I have spoken unto thee.

 23 And now, I have spoken the words which the Lord God hath commanded me. 24 And thus saith the Lord:

They shall stand as a bright testimony against this people at the judgment day, whereof they shall be judged—every man according to his works, whether they be good, or whether they be evil. ²⁵And if they be evil, they are consigned to an awful view of their own guilt, and abominations, which doth cause them to shrink from the presence of the Lord into a state of misery and endless torment, from whence they can no more return. ²⁶Therefore, they have drunk damnation to their own souls. Therefore, they have drunk out of the cup of the wrath of God, which justice could no more deny unto them than it could deny that Adam should fall because of his partaking of the forbidden fruit. Therefore, mercy could have claim on them no more, forever. ²⁷And their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, ^a whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever. ^b

And ever thus hath the Lord commanded me. Amen.

a. See Revelation 20:14: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." b. See Revelation 14:11: "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

Chapter II [Mosiah 4]

[4] ¹And now it came to pass that when King Benjamin had made an end of speaking the words which had been delivered unto him by the angel of the Lord, that he cast his eyes round about on the multitude. And behold, they had fell to the earth, for the fear of the Lord had come upon them. ²And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal states, even less then the dust of the earth.

And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: "O, have mercy, and apply the atoning blood [a] Christ, that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified. For we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things—who shall come down among the children of men."

³And it came to pass that after they had spoken these words, the spirit of the Lord came upon them. And they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience because of the exceeding faith which they had in Jesus Christ (which should come, according to the words which King Benjamin had spoken unto them).

⁴And King Benjamin again opened his mouth, and began to speak unto them, saying:

My friends, and my brethren, my kindred, and my people! I would again call your attention, that ye may hear and understand the remainder of my words which I shall speak unto you. ⁵For behold, that if the knowledge of the goodness of God at this time hath awakened you to a sense of your nothingness and your worthlessness and fallen state—

⁶I say unto you, that if ye have come to a knowledge of the goodness of God, and his matchless power, and his wisdom, and his patience, and his glory, long-suffering towards the children of men, and also the atonement, which hath been prepared from the foundation of the world that thereby salvation might come to him that should put his trust in the Lord, and should be diligent in keeping his commandments, and continue in the faith, even unto the end of his life (I mean the life of the mortal body)—

⁷I say, that this is the man that receiveth salvation through the atonement which was prepared from the foundation of the world for all mankind, which ever was, ever since the fall of Adam, or which is or which ever shall be, even unto the end of the world.^{b 8}And this is the means whereby salvation cometh. And there is none other salvation, save this, which hath been spoken of. Neither is there any conditions whereby man can be saved, except the conditions which I have told you.

⁹Believe in [God^c]. Believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth. Believe that he hath all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth. Believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend.

a. The Printer's Manuscript has "that we," which is clearly a copy error. The compositor discovered the error and corrected it to "of."

b. This is a very long sentence, beginning in verse 5 and only ending here. Although it is a single sentence, it is separated into paragraphs to assist the reader in following the multiple internal clauses.

c. The word "God" had been left out of the Printer's Manuscript. It was restored superlinearly and appears in the 1830 edition. It was probably missed while copying and restored upon proofreading.

¹⁰And again, believe that ye must repent of your sins, and forsake them—and humble yourselves before God, and ask in sincerity of heart that he would forgive you. And now, if you believe all these things—see that ye do them.

¹¹And again I say unto you (as I have said before), that as ye have come to the knowledge of the glory of God (or if ye have known of his goodness and have tasted of his love), and have received a remission of your sins (which causeth such exceeding great joy in your souls), even so, I would that ye should remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness—and his goodness and long-suffering towards you unworthy creatures—and humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily—and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel.

¹²And behold I say unto you, that if ye do this, ye shall always rejoice and be filled with the love of God—and always retain a remission of your sins, and ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him who created you (or in the knowledge of that which is just and true). ¹³And ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably and to render to every man according to that which is his due. ¹⁴And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry or naked. Neither will you suffer that they transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrel one with another—and [serve^a] the devil (which is the master of sin, or which is the evil spirit which hath been spoken of by our fathers, he being an enemy to all righteousness). ¹⁵But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth, and soberness. Ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another.

¹⁶And also ye, yourselves, will succor those that stand in need of your succor. Ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need. And ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain and turn him out to perish.

¹⁷Perhaps thou shalt say: "The man hath brought upon himself his misery, therefore I will stay my hand and will not give unto him of my food, nor impart unto him of my substance (that he may not suffer). For his punishments are just." ¹⁸But I say unto you, O man! Whosoever doeth this, the same hath great cause to repent. And except he repenteth of that which he hath done, he perisheth forever and hath no interest in the kingdom of God. ¹⁹For behold, are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend upon the same being, even God, for all the substance which we have, for both food and raiment, and for gold, and for silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind?

²⁰And behold, even at this time ye have been calling on his name and begging for a remission of your sins. And hath he suffered that ye have begged in vain? Nay, he hath poured out his spirit upon you, and hath caused that your hearts should be filled with joy, and hath caused that your mouths should be stopped that ye could not find utterance—so so exceeding great was your joy!

²¹And now, if God (who hath created you, on whom you are dependent for your lives, and for all that ye have, and are), doth grant unto you whatsoever ye ask

a. The Printer's Manuscript has "save," which is clearly incorrect. The correction to "serve" was done later, probably during proofreading. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 2:1187.

(that is right) in faith, believing that ye shall receive^a—O then how had ye ought to impart of the substance that ye have one to another!

²²And if ye judge the man who putteth up his petition to you for your substance (that he perish not) and condemn him—how much more just will be your condemnation for withholding your substance, which doth not belong to you—but to God, to whom also your life belongeth! And yet, ye put up no petition or repenteth not of the thing which thou hast done. ²³I say unto you, wo be unto that man! For his substance shall perish with him. And now, I say these things unto those which are rich as pertaining to the things of this world.

²⁴And again, I say unto the poor, ye that have not and yet hath sufficient that ye remain from day to day—I mean all you that deny the beggar because ye have not—I would that ye say in your hearts that I give not because I have not. But if I had, I would give. ²⁵And now, if ye say this in your hearts, ye remain guiltless. Otherwise, ye are condemned, and your condemnation is just. For ye covet that which ye have not received.

²⁶And now, for the sake of these things which I have spoken unto you, that is, for the sake of retaining a remission of your sins from day to day (that ye may walk guiltless before God), I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor—every man according to that which he hath. Such as feeding the hungry. Clothing the naked. Visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants.

²⁷And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order. For it is not requisite that a man should run faster than what he hath strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize. Therefore, all things must be done in order.

²⁸And I would that ye should remember that whosoever among you that borroweth of his neighbor should return the thing that he borroweth, according as he doth agree, or else thou shalt commit sin—and perhaps thou shalt cause thy neighbor to commit sin also.

²⁹And finally, I cannot tell you all the things whereby ye may commit sin. For there are divers ways and means, even so many that I cannot number them. ³⁰But this much I can tell you—that if ye do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe to keep the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives—ye must perish.

And now, remember, O man! Remember, and perish not!

a. Echoes Matthew 21:22: "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

THE SMALL PLATES OF NEPHI

THE WORDS OF MORMON

Chapter I [Words of Mormon 1]

¹And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making into the hands of my son, Moroni—behold, I have witnessed almost all the destruction of my people the Nephites. ²And it is many hundred years after the coming of Christ that I deliver these records into the hands of my son. And it supposeth me that he will witness the entire destruction of my people. But may God grant that he may survive them, that he may write somewhat concerning them, and somewhat concerning Christ—that perhaps someday it may profit them.

³And now, I speak somewhat concerning that which I have written. For after that I had made an abridgment from the plates of Nephi down to the reign of this King Benjamin (of which Amaleki spake), I searched among the records which had been delivered into my hands and I found these plates, which contained this small account of the prophets from Jacob down to the reign of this King Benjamin. And also many of the words of Nephi. ⁴And the things which are upon these plates, pleasing me because of the prophesies of the coming of Christ and my fathers, knowing that many of them have been fulfilled.^a And yea, and I also know that as many things as have been prophesied concerning us down to this day has been fulfilled. And as many as go beyond this day must surely come to pass. Wherefore, I chose these things to finish my record upon them, which remainder of my record I shall take from the plates of Nephi. And I cannot write a hundredth part of the things of my people. ⁶But behold, I shall take these plates, which contain these prophesyings and revelations, and put them with the remainder of my record. For they are choice unto me. And I know they will be choice unto my brethren. ⁷And I do this for a wise purpose. For thus it whispereth me according to the workings of the Spirit of the Lord, which is in me.

And now, I do not know all things. But the Lord knoweth all things which is to come. Wherefore, he worketh in me to do according to his will. ⁸And my prayer to God is concerning my brethren, that they may once again come to the knowledge of God—yea, the redemption of Christ, that they may once again be a delightsome people.

⁹And now I, Mormon, proceed to finish out my record, which I take from the plates of Nephi. And I make it according to the knowledge and the understanding which God hath given me. ¹⁰Wherefore, it came to pass that after Amaleki had delivered up these plates into the hands of King Benjamin, he took them, and put them with the other plates, which contained records which had been handed down by the kings from generation to generation until the days of King Benjamin. ¹¹And they were handed down from King Benjamin from generation to generation until they have fallen into my hands.

And I, Mormon, pray to God, that they may be preserved from this time hence forth. And I know that they will be preserved. For there are great things written upon them—out of which my people and their brethren shall be judged at the great and last day, according to the word of God which is written.

>12And now, concerning this King Benjamin. He had somewhat contentions among his own people.

¹³And it came to pass also that the armies of the Lamanites came down out of the land of Nephi to battle against his people. But behold, King Benjamin gathered together his armies and he did stand against them. And he did fight with the strength of his own arm, with the sword of Laban. ¹⁴And in the strength of the Lord they did contend against their enemies until they had slain many thousand of the Lamanites.

And it came to pass that they did contend against the Lamanites until they had driven them out of all the lands of their inheritance.

¹⁵And it came to pass that after there had been false Christs (and their mouths had been shut and they punished according to their crimes), ^a ¹⁶and after there had been false prophets, and false preachers, and teachers, among the people (and all these having been punished according to their crimes), and after there having been much contentions and many dissensions away unto the Lamanites—behold, it came to pass that King Benjamin (with the assistance of the holy prophets which were among his people, ¹⁷for behold, King Benjamin was a holy man and he did reign over his people in righteousness—and there were many holy men in the land, and they did speak the word of God with power, and with authority—and they did use much sharpness because of the stiff-neckedness of the people)—¹⁸wherefore, with the help of these, King Benjamin, by laboring with all the might of his body and the faculty of his whole soul, and also the prophets—wherefore, they did once more establish peace in the land.<

a. Verses 15-18 are a single sentence. It is difficult to parse due to the numerous asides.

b. This is blocked as an aside. Mormon has discussed the small plates being given to Benjamin, and enters tangential information about Benjamin.

THE BOOK OF NEPHI: HIS REIGN AND MINISTRY^a

An account 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 returns 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 rebelleth against him. He confoundeth them and buildeth a ship. They call the place Bountiful.

They cross the large waters into the promised land, etcetera.^b

Chapter I [1 Nephi 1-5]

This is according to the account of Nephi. Or, in other words, I, Nephi, wrote this record.^c [1] ¹I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father. And having seen many afflictions in the course of my days—nevertheless having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days, yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God^d—therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days. ²Yea, I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians. ³And I know that the record which I make to be true. And I make it with mine own hand. And I make it according to my knowledge.

⁴For it came to pass in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, King of Judah, >my father, Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days^c<—and in

- a. Beginning with the 1830 edition, the phrase "his reign and ministry" has been set as a subtitle. This edition places it as part of the title, reflecting the reason why Nephi wrote this second record after the one on the large plates.
- b. The Printer's Manuscript does not make a separation between the synopsis and the text proper. This was a decision the compositor made. Other synoptic book headers have similar characteristics to this one. They are in third person and provide a very short preview of what will come in the book.
- c. The Printer's Manuscript does not give any indication of where the synoptic header ends and the narrative begins. The compositor made the decision to include this sentence with the synoptic header, probably to avoid the apparent duplication. This edition considers it as more of a title and declaration of authorship, with the next sentence beginning the story proper. It is best seen as a chapter header, declaring the source from which this record is taken—that is, Nephi's record and memory.

One of the corroborating factors for this change is that the synoptic header (here and in all other synoptic headers) is written in third person, but this sentence is clearly first person. Having the two different voices in the same synoptic header is otherwise unattested.

- d. The phrase "mystery of God" appears in 1 Corinthians 4:1, Colossians 2:2, and Revelation 10:7.
- e. This is a difficult sentence in that the parenthetical phrase has interrupted the flow of the

that same year^a there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent or that great city Jerusalem must be destroyed. ⁵Wherefore, it came to pass that my father Lehi (as he went forth) prayed unto the Lord, yea even with all his heart, in behalf of his people.

⁶And it came to pass as he prayed unto the Lord, there came a pillar of fire 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 quake and tremble exceedingly.

⁷And it came to pass that he returned to his own house at Jerusalem. And he cast himself upon his bed, being overcome with the Spirit and the things which he had seen. ⁸And being thus overcome with the Spirit, he was carried away in a vision, even that he saw the heavens open. And he thought he saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God.

⁹And it came to pass that he saw one descending out of the midst of heaven. And he beheld that his luster was above that of the sun at noonday. ¹⁰And he also saw twelve others following him. And their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament. ¹¹And they came down and went forth upon the face of the earth. And the first came and stood before my father and gave unto him a book. And bade him that he should read it.

¹²And it came to pass that as he read he was filled with the spirit of the Lord. ¹³And he read, saying: "Wo, wo unto Jerusalem! For I have seen thine abominations." Yea, and many things did my father read concerning Jerusalem, that it should be destroyed. And the inhabitants thereof—many should perish by the sword. And many should be carried away captive into Babylon.

And it came to pass that when my father had read and saw 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 power and goodness and mercy
is over all the in habitants of the earth.
And because thou art merciful,
thou wilt not suffer those who come unto thee
that they shall perish.^b

¹⁵And 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.

>16And 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 hath saw in visions

sentence. The resumption of the meaning uses "and" rather than "that." This is an example of repetitive resumption on a sentence level. The phrase "in that same year" is the repetition that recovers from the parenthetical interruption.

a. Repetitive resumption after the insertion.

b. These appear to be separate examples rather than a cohesive statement. If Nephi is quoting from memory, they are the more memorable lines. If he is consulting a text, he is selecting exclamations that probably began a larger theological discussion. That type of discourse is seen later, where a general statement leads to more detailed analysis.

and in dreams. And he also hath written may things which he prophesied, and spake, unto his children, which I shall not make a full account. ¹⁷But I shall make an account of my proceedings in my days.

Behold, I make an abridgment of the record of my father upon plates which I have made with mine own hands. Wherefore, after that I have abridged the record of my father, then will I make an account of mine own life.ac

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

¹⁹And it came to pass that the Jews did mock him because of the things which he testified of them. For he truly testified of their 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 Messiah. And also the redemption of the world.

²⁰And when the Jews heard these things they were angry with him. Yea, even as with the prophets of old whom they had cast out, and stoned, and slain. And they also sought his life, that they might take it away. But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies^b of the Lord is over all them whom he hath chosen because of their faith, to make them mighty, even unto the power of deliverance.

[2] ¹For behold, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto my father, yea, even in a dream, and saith 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, behold, they seek to take away thy life."

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

³And it came to pass that he was obedient unto the word of the Lord. Wherefore, he did as the Lord commanded him.

⁴And it came to pass that he departed into the wilderness. And he left his house and the land of his inheritance, and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things—and took nothing with him save it were his family, and provisions, and tents. And he departed into the wilderness.

⁵And he came down by the borders near the shore of the Red Sea. And he traveled in the wilderness in the borders which was nearer the Red Sea. And he did travel in the wilderness with his family, which consisted of my mother Sariah, and my elder brethren, which were Laman, Lemuel, and Sam.

⁶And it came to pass that when he had traveled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a valley beside a river of water.

⁷And it came to pass that he built an altar of stones. ^c And he made an offering unto

a. The indented text (verses 16–17) is an aside. This is the first of several asides where Nephi speaks of the process of creating his records. In this case, Nephi explains that while this book is declared to be a record of Nephi's reign and ministry, he finds that he must begin with his father's story. After the explanation about the construction of the text, Nephi returns to his planned text in verse 19.

b. The phrase "tender mercies" is found in Psalm 145:1.

c. The commandment to build altars of stone is found in Deuteronomy 27:5–7: "And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them.

the Lord. And gave thanks unto the Lord our God.

⁸And 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.

⁹And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the 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!"

¹⁰And he also spake unto Lemuel: "O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, firm and steadfast, and immoveable in keeping the commandments of the Lord!"

¹¹Now, this he spake because of the stiffneckedness of Laman and Lemuel. For behold, they did murmur in many things against their father, because that he was a visionary man and that he 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, and to perish in the wilderness. And this they said he had done because of the foolish imaginations of his heart.

¹²And thus Laman and Lemuel (being the eldest) did murmur against their father. And they did murmur because they knew not the dealings of that God who had created them. ¹³Neither did they believe that Jerusalem, that great city, could be destroyed according to the words of the prophets. And they were like unto the Jews which were at Jerusalem which sought to take away the life of my father.

¹⁴And it came to pass that my father did speak unto them (in the valley of Lemuel) with power (being filled with the Spirit) until their frames did shake before him. And he did confound them, that they durst not utter against him. Wherefore, they did do as he commanded them. ¹⁵And my father dwelt in a tent.^a

¹⁶And it came to pass that I, Nephi, being exceeding young (nevertheless being large in stature) and also having great desires to know of the mysteries of God,^b wherefore I did cry unto the Lord. And behold he did visit me and did soften my heart that I did believe all the words which had been spoken by my father. Wherefore, I did not rebel against him like unto my brothers.

¹⁷And 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.^c

 $^{18}\mbox{But}$ behold, Laman and Lemuel would not hearken unto my words. And being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, I cried unto the Lord for them.

¹⁹And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying:

Blessed art thou Nephi, because of thy faith. For thou hast sought me dili-

Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of whole stones: and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord thy God: And thou shalt offer peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before the Lord thy God."

a. Nephi repeats the idea of his father dwelling in a tent in 1 Nephi 2:15, 9:1, and 10:16. None of these verses really say anything about why it was important to note that he dwelt in a tent, but the phrases appear to mark a transition between narrative units. A similar phrase, "tent of my father" occurs in 1 Nephi 3:1, 5:7, 7:22, and 15:1. In this verse the intent of the "my father dwelt in a tent" is to shift the focus from Laman and Lemuel to Nephi. The narrative function of his father's tent is more fully discussed in Chapter 6 of *Engraven Upon Plates*.

b. The phrase "mystery of God" appears in 1 Corinthians 4:1, Colossians 2:2, and Revelation 10:7.

c. Although "and it came to pass" is usually used as a paragraph marker (and might be in this case), this edition has elected to keep the information about Sam in the same paragraph and let the next paragraph be the contrast with Laman and Lemuel.

gently, with lowliness of heart.

²⁰And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise. Yea, even a land which I have prepared for you. Yea, a land which is choice above of all other lands.

 $^{21}\mbox{And}$ in asmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord. a

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

²³For behold, in that day that they shall rebel against me, I will curse them, even with a sore curse. And they shall have no power over thy seed—except they shall rebel against me also. ²⁵And, if it so be that they rebel against me, they shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in the ways of remembrance.

[3] ¹And it came to pass that I, Nephi, returned from speaking with the Lord to the tent of my father.

²And it came to pass that he spake unto me, saying:

Behold I have dreamed a dream—in the which the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brethren shall return to Jerusalem. ³For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews, and also a genealogy of my forefathers. And they are engraven upon plates of brass. ⁴Wherefore, 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.

⁵And 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. ⁶Therefore, go, my son. And thou shalt be favored of the Lord because thou hast not murmured.

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

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

⁹And I Nephi, and my brethren, took our journey in the wilderness (with our tents) to go up to the land of Jerusalem.

¹⁰And it came to pass that when we had come up to the land of Jerusalem, I and my brethren did consult one with another. ¹¹And we cast lots—which 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. ¹²And he desired of Laban the records, which were engraven upon the plates of brass, which contained the genealogy of my father.

¹³And 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!" ¹⁴But Laman fled out of his pres-

a. The phrase "cut off from my presence" is found in Leviticus 22:3.

ence, and told the things which Laban had done—unto us. And we began to be exceeding sorrowful. And my brethren were about to return unto my father in the wilderness.

15 But behold, I said unto them that:

As the Lord liveth and as we live! We will not go down unto our father in the wilderness until we have accomplished the thing which the Lord hath commanded us. ¹⁶Wherefore, let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord. Therefore, let us go down to the land of our father's inheritance. For behold, he left gold and silver, and all manner of riches.

And all this he hath done because of the commandments of the Lord. ¹⁷For he, knowing that Jerusalem must be destroyed because of the wickedness of the people (¹⁸for behold, they have rejected the words of the prophets), wherefore, if my father should dwell in the land after that he had been commanded to flee out of the land, behold, he would also perish. ^b Wherefore, it must needs be that he flee out of the land.

¹⁹And behold, it is wisdom in God that we should obtain these records, that we might preserve unto our children the language of our fathers. ²⁰And also that we may preserve unto them the words which have been spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets (which have been delivered unto them by the spirit and power of God) since the world began, even down unto this present time.^c

²¹And it came to pass that after this manner of language did I persuade my brethren—that^d they might be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord God.

²²And it came to pass that we went down to the land of our inheritance. And we did gather together our gold, and our silver, and our precious things. ²³And after that we had gathered these things together, we went up again unto the house of Laban.

²⁴And 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 plates of brass. For which we would give unto him our gold, and our silver, and all our precious things.

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

²⁶And 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.

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

²⁸And 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

a. The oath is similar to a common one from the Old Testament: "As the Lord liveth, and as they soul liveth." See 1 Samuel 20:3, 25:26; 2 Kings 2:2,4,6, 4:30. The oath "As the Lord liveth" is more common both in the Old Testament and in the Book of Mormon.

b. There is no simple formatting that will make this a complete sentence. The culprit is "knowing." Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:90, notes: "For the 1840 edition, Joseph Smith (presumably) edited the present participle "knowing" to the past tense "knew." This change eliminates what appears to be a dependent participial clause."

c. See Acts 3:21: "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

d. A more modern sentence would have "so that."

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

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

³⁰And after that the angel had spake unto us, he departed. ³¹And after that the angel had departed, Laman and Lemuel again began to 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?"

[4] ¹And 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 mightier than Laban and his fifty—yea, or even than his tens of thousands? ²Therefore, let us go up.

Let us be strong like unto Moses. For he truly spake unto the waters of the Red 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.^a

³Now behold, ye know that this is true. And ye also know that an angel hath spoken unto you. Wherefore can ye doubt?

Let us go up. The Lord is able to deliver us, even as our fathers—and to destroy Laban, even as the Egyptians.

⁴Now, when I had spoken these words, they was yet wroth and did still continue to murmur. Nevertheless, they did follow me up until we came without the walls of Jerusalem. ⁵And it was by night. And I caused that they should hide themselves without the walls. And after that they had hid themselves, I, Nephi, crept in into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban.

⁶And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do. ⁷Nevertheless, 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 drunken with wine. ⁸And when I came to him, I found that it was Laban.

⁹And I beheld his sword and I drew it forth from the sheath thereof. And the hilt thereof was of pure gold. And the workmanship thereof was exceeding fine. And I saw that the blade thereof was of the most precious steel.

¹⁰And it came to pass that I was 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.

¹¹And the Spirit saith unto me again: "Behold, the Lord hath 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 taken away our property.

a. This refers to the story told in Exodus 14.

¹²And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me again: "Slay him, for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands. ¹³Behold, the Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief." ^a

¹⁴And 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: "Inasmuch as thy seed shall keep my commandments, they shall prosper in the land of promise." ¹⁵Yea, and I also thought that they could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses, save they should have the law. ¹⁶And I also knew that the law was engraven upon the plates of brass.

¹⁷And 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. ¹⁸Therefore, 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 sword.

¹⁹And after that I had smote 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. ²⁰And after that 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 servant of Laban which had the keys of the treasury. And I commanded him in the voice of Laban that he should go with me into the treasury. ²¹And he, supposing me to be his master Laban (for he beheld the garments and also the sword girted about my loins)— ²²and he spake unto me concerning the elders of the Jews, he knowing that his master Laban had been out by night among them.^b

²³And I spake unto him as if it had been Laban. ²⁴And I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings which were upon the plates of brass to my elder brethren, which were without the walls. ²⁵And I also bade him that he should follow me.

²⁶And he, supposing that I spake of the brethren of the church and that I was truly that Laban (whom I had slew^c), wherefore, he did follow me. ²⁷And he spake unto me many times concerning the elders of the Jews, as I went forth unto my brethren, which were without the walls.

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

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

³⁰And 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.

a. See John 11:50: "Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."

b. This sentence gets lost after the parenthetical phrase. It is an incomplete sentence. This was changed in the 1830 edition to: "And he *supposed* me to be his master, Laban, for he beheld the garments and also the sword girded about my loins." The change in tense was the easiest way to make the sentence complete. Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants*, 1:112.

c. Oliver Cowdery changed "had slew" to "had slain" in the Printer's Manuscript. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:112. This edition has elected to retain it, as it will appear in other locations where Cowdery did not change it.

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

³²And 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^a—even so, that if he would hearken unto our words, we would spare his life. ³³And I spake unto him, even with an oath, that he need not fear—that he should be a free man like unto us, if he would go down in the wilderness with us. ³⁴And I also spake unto him, saying: "Surely the Lord hath commanded us to do this thing, and shall we not be diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord;^b Therefore, if thou wilt go down into the wilderness to my father, thou shalt have place with us."

³⁵And it came to pass that Zoram did take courage at the words which I spake. >Now Zoram was the name of the servant^c<. And he promised that he would go down into the wilderness unto our father. And he also made an oath unto us that he would tarry with us from that time forth. ³⁶Now, we were desirous that he should tarry with us for this cause, that the Jews might not know concerning our flight unto into the wilderness—lest they should pursue us and destroy us.

³⁷And it came to pass that when Zoram had made an oath unto us, our fears did cease concerning him.

³⁸And 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 tent of our father.

[5] ¹And it came to pass that after we had came down into the wilderness unto our father, behold, he was filled with joy. And also, my mother Sariah was exceeding glad, ²for she truly had mourned because of us. For she had supposed that we had perished in the wilderness. And she also had complained against my father, telling him that he was a 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." ³And after this manner of language had my mother complained against my father.

⁴And it had came to pass that my father spake unto her, saying:

I know that I am a visionary man. For if I had not seen the things of God in a vision I should not have known the goodness of God, but had tarried at Jerusalem and had perished with my brethren.

⁵But behold, I have obtained a land of promise, in the which things I do rejoice. Yea, and I know that the Lord will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban and bring them down again unto us in the wilderness.

⁶And after this manner of language did my father Lehi, 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.

⁷And when we had returned to the tent of my father—behold, their joy was full. And my mother was comforted. ⁸And she spake, saying: "Now I know of a surety that

a. The oath is similar to a common one from the Old Testament: "As the Lord liveth, and as they soul liveth." See 1 Samuel 20:3, 25:26; 2 Kings 2:2,4,6, 4:30. The oath "As the Lord liveth" is more common both in the Old Testament and in the Book of Mormon.

b. Perhaps alluding to Deuteronomy 6:17: "Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

c. This is an aside where Nephi realized that he had not yet named Zoram.

the Lord hath commanded my husband to 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 gave them power whereby they could accomplish the thing which the Lord hath commanded them." And after this manner of language did she speak.

⁹And it came to pass that they did rejoice exceedingly and did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto the Lord. And they gave thanks unto the God of Israel. ¹⁰And after that they had given thanks unto the God of Israel, my father, Lehi, took the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass and he did search them from the beginning.

¹¹And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world.

And also, of Adam and Eve, which was 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—¹³ and also, the prophesies of the holy prophets from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah—and also, many prophesies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.

¹⁴And it came to pass that my father, Lehi, also found upon the plates of brass a genealogy of his fathers. Wherefore, he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph, yea, even that Joseph which was the son of Jacob, which was sold into Egypt, and which was preserved by the hand of the Lord that he might preserve his father, Jacob, and all his household from perishing with famine. ¹⁵And they were also led out of captivity, and out of the land of Egypt, by that same God who had preserved them. ¹⁶And thus my father, Lehi, did discover the genealogy of his fathers.

>And Laban also was a descendant of Joseph. Wherefore, he and his fathers had kept the records.a<

¹⁷And now, when my father saw all these things, he was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed—¹⁸that these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, which were of his seed. ¹⁹Wherefore, he said that these plates of brass should never perish. Neither should they be dimmed any more by time. And he prophesied many things concerning his seed.

²⁰And it came to pass that thus far, I and my father had kept the commandments wherewith the Lord had commanded us. ²¹And we had obtained the record which the Lord had commanded us, and searched them, and found that they were desirable, yea, even of great worth unto us, insomuch that we could preserve the commandments of the Lord unto our children. ²²Wherefore, it was wisdom in the Lord that we should carry them with us as we journeyed in the wilderness, towards the land of promise.

a. This sentence has the feel of Nephi inserting information that was important but not necessarily part of the discussion at the time.

Chapter II [1 Nephi 6-9]

[6] ¹And now I, Nephi, do not give the genealogy of my fathers in this part of my record. Neither at any time shall I give it after upon these plates which I am writing, for it is given in the record which has been kept by my father. Wherefore, I do not write it in this work, ²for it sufficeth me to say that we are a descendant of Joseph.

> ³And it mattereth not to me that I am particular to give to give a full account of all the things of my father. For they cannot be written upon these plates, for I desire the room that I may write of the things of God. ⁴For the fullness of mine intent is that I may persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—and be saved. ⁵Wherefore, the things which are pleasing unto the world I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God, and unto them which are not of the world. ⁶Wherefore, 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. ^a <

[7] ¹And now I would that ye might know that after my father Lehi had made an end of prophesying concerning his seed, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto him again, saying that it was not mete for him, Lehi, that he should take his family into the wilderness alone—but that his sons should take daughters to wife that they might raise up seed unto the Lord in the land of promise.

²And it came to pass that the Lord 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.

³And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did again (with my brethren) go forth into the wilderness, to go up to Jerusalem.

⁴And 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.

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

⁶And it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, behold, Laman and Lemuel, and two of the daughters of Ishmael, and the two sons of Ishmael, and their families—did rebel against us. Yea, against I, Nephi, and Sam, and their father Ishmael, and his wife, and his three other daughters.

⁷And it came to pass [that^c] in the which rebellion, they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem. ⁸And now I, Nephi, being grieved for the hardness of their

- a. The indented text (verses 3–6) is an aside. Orson Pratt must have noticed that this text didn't easily fit into the overall plan of the chapter, as he created a chapter break between this aside and what we now have as chapter 7. Verses 1 and 2 are suggested as the beginning of the chapter, followed by the aside, then a return to the planned text in the modern chapter 7, verse 1.
- b. The Original Manuscript has the nonsensical "hole hole." Skousen has suggested an emendation of "whole household." The mention of "all the house of Ishmael" in verse 22 supports the idea that the intent is to describe the whole household. See Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:142–43.
- c. The word "that" is added from the Original Manuscript. A copying error removed it from the Printer's Manuscript. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:144.

hearts, therefore I spake unto them saying (yea, even unto Laman and unto Lemuel):

Behold, thou art 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 younger brother, should speak unto you—yea, and set an example for you?

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

¹⁰How is it that ye have forgotten that ye have seen an angel of the Lord?

¹¹Yea, and how is it that ye have forgot how great things the Lord hath done for us in delivering us out of the hands of Laban, and also that we should obtain the record?

¹²Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten that the Lord is able to do all things according to his will for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise faith in him? Wherefore, let us be faithful in him. ¹³And if it so be that we are faithful in him, we shall obtain the land of promise.

And ye shall know at some future period that the word of the Lord shall be fulfilled concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. For all things which the Lord hath spoken concerning the destruction of Jerusalem must be fulfilled. ¹⁴For behold, the spirit of the Lord ceaseth soon to strive with them. ^a For behold, they have rejected the prophets and Jeremiah have they cast into prison. And they have sought to take away the life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land.

¹⁵Now 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.

¹⁶And 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 exceeding wroth. And they did 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. ¹⁷But 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? Yea, even give me strength that I may burst these bands with which I am bound."

¹⁸And 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.

¹⁹And it came to pass that they were angry with me again, and sought to lay hands upon me. But behold, one of the 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.

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

²¹And it came to pass that I did frankly forgive them all that they had done. And I did exhort them that they would pray unto the Lord, their God, for forgiveness.

And it came to pass that they did so. And after that they had done praying unto the Lord, we did again travel on our journey toward the tent of our father.

a. See Genesis 6:3: "And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man."

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

[8] ¹And it came to pass that we had gathered together all manner of seeds of every kind, both of grain of every kind, and also of the seeds of fruits of every kind.

²And it came to pass that while my father tarried in the wilderness, he spake unto us, saying:

Behold, I have dreamed a dream, or in other words, I have seen a vision. ³And behold, because of the thing which I have seen, I have reason to rejoice in the Lord because of Nephi, and also of Sam. For I have reason to suppose that they, and also many of their seed, will be saved.

⁴But behold, Laman and Lemuel—I fear exceedingly because of you. For behold, methought I saw a dark and dreary wilderness.

⁵And it came to pass that I saw a man, and he was dressed in a white robe. And he came and stood before me.

⁶And it came to pass that he spake unto me and bade me follow him.

⁷And it came to pass that as I followed him, I beheld myself—that I was in a dark and dreary waste. ⁸And after that I had traveled for the space of many hours in darkness, I began to pray unto the Lord that he would have mercy on me, according to the multitude of his tender mercies.^a

⁹And it came to pass that after I had prayed unto the Lord, I beheld a large and spacious field.

¹⁰And it came to pass that I beheld a tree whose fruit was desirable to make one happy.

¹¹And it came to pass that I did go forth and partook of the fruit thereof. And I beheld that it was most sweet, above all that I ever had before tasted. Yea, and I beheld that the fruit thereof was white, to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen. ¹²And as I partook of the fruit thereof, it filled my soul with exceeding great joy. Wherefore, I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also. For I knew that it was desirous above all other fruit.

¹³And as I cast my eyes round about (that perhaps I might discover my family also), I beheld a river of water. And it ran along, and it was near the tree of which I was partaking the fruit. ¹⁴And I looked to behold from whence it came, and I saw the head thereof a little way off. And at the head thereof, I beheld your mother Sariah, and Sam, and Nephi. And they stood as if they knew not whither they should go.

¹⁵And it came to pass that I beckoned unto them. And I also did say unto them, with a loud voice, that they should come unto me and partake of the fruit which was desirable above all other fruit.

¹⁶And it came to pass that they did come unto me and partake of the fruit also.

 17 And it came to pass that I was desirous that Laman and Lemuel should come and partake of the fruit also. Wherefore, I cast mine eyes towards the head of the river, that perhaps I might see them.

a. The phrase "tender mercies" is found in Psalm 25:6, 40:11, 51:1, 69:16, and others.

¹⁸And it came to pass that I saw them, but they would not come unto me [and partake of the fruit^a].

¹⁹And I beheld a rod of iron. And it extended along the bank of the river, and led to the tree by which I stood. ²⁰And I also beheld a strait and narrow path, which came along by the rod of iron, even to the tree by which I stood. And it also led by the head of the fountain unto a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world. ²¹And I saw numberless concourses of people, many of whom were pressing forward, that they might obtain the path which led unto the tree by which I stood.

 22 And it came to pass that they did come forth and commence in the path which led to the tree.

²³And it came to pass that there arose a mist of darkness, yea, even an exceeding great mist of darkness, insomuch that they which had commenced in the path did lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost.

²⁴And it came to pass that I beheld others pressing forward. And they came forth and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron. And they did press forward through the mists of darkness, clinging to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree.

²⁵And after that they had partook of the fruit of the tree, they did cast their eyes about, as if they were ashamed.

²⁶And I also cast my eyes round about, and [beheld^b] (on the other side of the river of water) a great and spacious building. And it stood as it were in the air high above the earth. ²⁷And it was filled with people, both old and young, both male and female. And their manner of dress was exceeding fine. And they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those which had came [up^c] and were partaking of the fruit. ²⁸And after that they had tasted of the fruit, they were ashamed because of those that were a scoffing at them. And they fell away into forbidden paths, and were lost.

²⁹And now I, Nephi, do not speak all the words of my father. ³⁰But (to be short in writing), behold, he saw other multitudes pressing forward. And they came and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron. And they did press their way forward continually, holding fast to the rod of iron until they came forth and fell down, and partook of the fruit of the tree. ³¹And he also saw other multitudes [pressing^d] their way towards that great and spacious building.

³²And it came to pass that many were drowned in the depths of the fountain. And

a. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:174: "Here is an example of how Joseph Smith, in his editing for the 1840 edition, used the original manuscript to restore phrases that had been accidentally dropped during the earlier transmission of the text. In this case, Oliver Cowdery omitted the conjoined predicate 'and partake of the fruit' when copying from [the Original Manuscript] into [the Printer's Manuscript]."

b. Skousen, Analysis of the Textual Variants, 1:184: "In his copying from [the Original Manuscript] to [the Printer's Manuscript], Oliver Cowdery replaced 'beheld' with 'behold,' which the 1830 typesetter corrected."

c. The phrase "had came at" is in the Printer's Manuscript, rendered "had come at" in the current edition. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:184: "The original manuscript definitely reads *up* rather than *at*. The *u* was partially overwritten, which permitted it to be interpreted as an *a*."

d. The Printer's Manuscript has "feeling," which has been retained in subsequent editions. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:187, notes that it should be "pressing," based on both the original manuscript and the lack of any similar use of "feeling their way."

many were lost from his view—wandering in strange roads. ³³And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building. And after that they did enter into that building, they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also. But we heeded them not^{a 34}(these are the words of my father). For as many as heeded them had fallen away.

³⁵And Laman and Lemuel partook not of the fruit (saith my father).^b

³⁶And it came to pass that after my father had spoken all the words of his dream (or vision), which were many, he said unto us (because of these things which he saw in a vision) he exceedingly feared for Laman and Lemuel. Yea, he feared lest they should be cast off from the presence of the Lord. ³⁷And he did exhort them, then, with all the feeling of a tender parent, that they would hearken to his words—in that perhaps the Lord would be merciful to them and not cast them off. Yea, my father did preach unto them. ³⁸And after that he had preached unto them, and also prophesied unto them of many things, he bade them to keep the commandments of the Lord. And he did cease speaking unto them.

[9] ¹And all these things did my father see, and hear, and speak, as he dwelt in a tent in the valley of Lemuel—and also a great many more things which cannot be written upon these plates.c

> ²And now, as I have spoken concerning these plates—behold, they are not the plates upon which I make a full account of the history of my people. For the plates upon which I make a full account of my people I have given the name of Nephi. Wherefore, they are called the plates of Nephi (after mine own name).

And these plates also are called the plates of Nephi. ³Nevertheless, I have received a commandment of the Lord that I should make these plates for the special purpose that there should be an account engraven of the ministry of my people. ⁴And upon the other plates should be engraven an account of the reign of the kings and the wars and contentions of my people. Wherefore, these plates are for the more part of the ministry, and the other plates are for the more part of the reign of the kings, and the wars, and contentions, of my people.

⁵Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me to make these plates for a wise purpose in him, which purpose I know not. ⁹But the Lord knoweth all things from the beginning. Wherefore, he prepareth a way to accomplish all his works among the children of men. For behold, he hath all power unto the fulfilling of all his words. And thus it is, Amen.<

a. This section appears to be Nephi's summary. Thus, when we see "they did point the finger of scorn at me, and those that were partaking of the fruit also," we should understand that the "me" is Nephi. Nephi recorded that his father had seem him partaking, and this refers to that part of his father's vision.

b. Parentheses are used to parallel the use in the previous sentence as well as to highlight what may have been an intended parallel, indicating what their father said of each of these groups.

c. This verse was intended to be the final verse of chapter II. The use of "dwelt in a tent" marks subdivisions in the story Nephi relates in 1 Nephi. Verses 2 through 9 are an aside that was triggered by the phrase "which cannot be written upon these plates." The mention of "these plates" occasioned an aside to explain what "these plates" meant.

Introduction

In 2015, The Joseph Smith Papers Project published the Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon. Six years later, in 2021, the extant pages and fragments of the Original Manuscript followed. Both of these publications present a photograph of a manuscript page on the left with the transcription (and notes) on the right. The transcription is faithful to the manuscript, meaning that there is no punctuation or paragraphing.

When the Printer's Manuscript was given to John H. Gilbert, the compositor and typesetter for Grandin Press, he had to create or delineate the sentences and paragraphs that would make the text more accessible. Although Gilbert's paragraphs have changed through versification and modern formatting, the sentences have persisted much as he punctuated them. This edition returns to the problem presented to Gilbert. As then, the challenge is to take the straight dictation copied onto the Printer's Manuscript and add punctuation and paragraph formatting to make the text easier to read.

The main source for this study edition is the electronic version of the Joseph Smith Paper's published transcript of the Printer's Manuscript. This was then compared to the printed transcript and accompanying images, which resulted in the discovery of a few errors that have been silently corrected. It should be noted that the printed transcript does not contain those errors.

Editorial Decisions

The following describes the features, organizational logic, and some of the added paratextual information in this edition. Many of these concepts are discussed more fully in the companion volume, *Engraven Upon Plates, Printed Upon Paper: Textual and Narrative Structures of the Book of Mormon.*³ Reading the two books together provides the undergirding principles for the editorial decisions that are embodied here. Each book is also able to stand alone.

Mormon's Plates and the Small Plates

A reader's first experience with the Book of Mormon is not with the record that its ancient author and namesake originally intended. Instead, since its first editon in 1830, the Book of Mormon has opened with a replacement text containing records from earlier ancient authors who had different reasons for writing. The set of plates known as the small plates replaced the beginning of Mormon's record that disappeared when the so-called "lost 116 pages" containing the book of Lehi and the opening chapters of the

^{1.} The Printer's Manuscript is almost completely intact. Wear on the bottom of the first page has resulted in the loss of one sentence on the recto and a line and some words from the line above it on the verso. In the published version, the missing text is supplied from the 1830 edition and grayed out to indicate that it has been restored. *Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, xii.

^{2. &}quot;Of the nearly 500 pages that were placed in the Nauvoo House cornerstone, portions of 232 pages survive, amounting to roughly 28 percent of the text. Some of what remains is badly faded, obscured, or otherwise damaged." *Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, xi.

^{3.} Brant A. Gardner, Engraven Upon Plates, Printed Upon Paper: Textual and Narrative Structures of the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2013); hereafter cited as Engraven Upon Plates.

book of Mosiah were stolen.⁴ The Book of Nephi: His Reign and Ministry (also known as First Nephi) was the first book of those small plates that restored the Nephite history and stories that were on those pages. While the small plates offer a parallel history to the narrative that Mormon had written, he did not intend them to be a part of his account (W of M 1:1–7), and they do not reflect the way he compiled and framed his record.

Because of those lost pages, the great mind that conceived the Book of Mormon does not appear in the standard published text until The Words of Mormon. Like the books of the small plates, this short explanation was not part of Mormon's intended record. It was rather written as an introduction to that small set to explain why they were appended to his history. Although they were an introduction, evidence suggests that it was placed at the end of the small plates.

This edition has thus elected to begin with what has been retained of Mormon's planned Book of Mormon, opening with a placeholder for the lost book of Lehi as well as the unknown number of lost chapters from the beginning of the book of Mosiah. Those are followed by the books of Mosiah through Moroni. The small plates books (1 Nephi through Omni) are then included as an appendix of sorts, with The Words of Mormon acting as their introduction.⁵ Similarly, the Title Page was the last text on Mormon and Moroni's plates.⁶ Although physically at the end, it has always been moved to the beginning. This edition follows that convention.

Revision of Spelling and Grammar

The Book of Mormon was dictated during an age when English spelling was yet to be standardized, with each of Joseph Smith's scribes having an idiosyncratic way of spelling some words. This edition corrects spelling to modern expectations. However, there are some cases where the spelling might affect how the passage is understood. In those cases, a particular meaning has been selected for the text with a note discussing the reason for the decision.

The general standardization of spelling does not extend to the standardization of grammar. At times, a plural noun was written where a singular noun would be expected. For example, several times the text indicates that one would do something with their "mights." There are also many cases where there are problems with subject-verb agreement, and these are retained as written. For example, "they was" has not been changed to "they were."

There are several places where the text has some version of "had eat" rather than "had eaten." This may represent the dialectical pronunciation "had et." It has been retained as a possible representation of the dialect.

Both the Original and Printer's Manuscripts have random capitalizations, which have been regularized here. In some cases, capitalization has been removed to conform to modern usage. Thus, there are places where words such as "heaven," "hell," and "church" are capitalized in the manuscripts but not in this edition. The capitalized versions too easily recall modern definitions that may or may not match the concept conveyed in the text.

^{4.} For a history and investigation into this loss, see Don Bradley, *The Lost 116 Pages: Reconstructing the Book of Momron's Missing Pages* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2019), 57–82.

^{5.} The reasons for this are explored in detail in Chapter 15 of Engraven Upon Plates.

^{6. &}quot;History, circa June–October 1839 [Draft 1]," 9, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed September 29, 2023, https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-circa-june-october-1839-draft-1/9.

As punctuated, we have the confusing claim that Jesus did not show himself unto the world, even though it appears clear that the purpose of the passage is to indicate that he did. Because "but" often begins new sentences, in verse 8 Gilbert created a logical sentence beginning with that word. The problem in this case is that "but" also often takes a slightly different meaning in the manuscripts. In this case, it should be read as "except." A change in punctuation restores that intent:

And now I, Moroni, would speak somewhat concerning these things. I would show unto the world that faith is things which are hoped for and not seen. Wherefore, dispute not because ye see not. For ye receive no witness—not until after the trial of your faith. For it was by faith that Christ showed himself unto our fathers, after that he had risen from the dead. And he showed [not] himself unto them until after they had faith in him. Wherefore, it must needs be that some had faith in him. For he showed himself not unto the world but because of the faith of men.

He has shown himself unto the world and glorified the name of the Father, and prepared a way that thereby others might be partakers of the heavenly gift, that they might hope for those things which they have not seen. Wherefore, ye may also have hope and be partakers of the gift—if ye will but have faith.

It is a small change, but it makes sense of the otherwise confusing claim.

The Logic for the Creation of Paragraphs

Modern written English has conventions for what constitutes a paragraph. This edition intentionally uses an entirely different concept for creating them. In ancient texts written prior to the invention of punctuation, the function of separating ideas or events relied upon textual markers rather than visual indications. For example, the ubiquitous "and it came to pass" functions as a textual flow marker. It marks the movement of the text and events through time (and is therefore almost exclusively appearing in historical narrative rather than doctrinal exposition). Based on that function, this edition typically uses the phrase as the basis for a new paragraph, even when the resulting one is rather short.

Where "and it came to pass" moves the text through time, "and now" marks new information that is associated with the same timeframe as the previous information.⁸ They function similarly to the English markers "after" and "with." It is also used as a basis for beginning a new paragraph.

Other words that have been used in various editions of the Book of Mormon to introduce a paragraph do not have that function in this formatting. For example, in this

^{7.} The details of the Book of Mormon constructions behind these decisions are found in Chapter 6 of *Engraven Upon Plates*.

^{8.} According to John Gee, "An analysis of the original Book of Mormon chapter division shows that the phrase 'and now' serves as verbal punctuation marking a major break in the text both between and within chapters. The Book of Mormon phrase is a literal translation of the Hebrew expression wt(h), which is used both in the Hebrew Bible and in Epigraphic Hebrew to mark a transition between major sections of text." John Gee, "Verbal Punctuation in the Book of Mormon I: (And) Now," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faint and Scholarship* 50 (2022): 48. While I agree that "and now" marks divisions, my reading of the function in the Book of Mormon text comes from the text itself rather than comparison to any ancient language.

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edition, "therefore" does not begin a new paragraph. It is a conclusion to the argument that begins earlier and is thus left associated with the argument.

Finally, there are some cases where this edition separates lines to represent an intentional repetition of elements. These were likely literary elements that were intended for the reader to understand. They may be seen as poetic forms, although many are not and instead are simply the result of the literary competence of the writer.

The Logic for Chapters and Headers

The chapters in this formatting follow those of the manuscripts and the pre-1879 editions of the Book of Mormon. However, since most readers will be more familiar with the modern chapter and verse numbering, those have been retained. Modern chapters are noted in bold square brackets. Sentences do not always conform to verses, but the verse numbers have been inserted in the familiar locations in superscript.

The Original and Printer's Manuscripts have book headers and chapter headers that are translations from Mormon's golden plates and were thus original to the text. These have been augmented with chapter synopses in modern editions. As these synopses were not part of the translation of Mormon's writings, they are not included here. There are some cases where this edition makes a different decision on the division between a header and the text. In most cases, the manuscripts provided Gilbert with no indication for where the header ended and the main text began. He did an excellent job in making the divisions in most cases. When this edition has relocated the division, an explanation is provided in a footnote.

Asides and Insertions

When Mormon or another author or editor inserts information that is tangential to the initial purpose of their writing, the aside is set off with arrow brackets (> <). They are typically footnoted to explain the nature of the aside or insertion. Where the insertion is long, it is also indented.

Long Isaiah (and Other) Quotations

Isaiah was a poet prophet whose writings are considered excellent poetry. His and other poetic texts have been formatted as such. The formatting herein has interacted with that in Grant Hardy's *The Book of Mormon: Maxwell Institute Study Edition.*9 Sometimes it follows Hardy, other times it is arranged differently.

In some cases, Hardy elected to format some of Isaiah in prose. Robert Alter's translation of the Hebrew Bible¹⁰ was consulted for those passages, and this edition instead follows Alter's poetic formatting.

This edition also follows Hardy in using boldface to mark the locations where words have been added to what we have in the King James Bible passages. There are no footnotes to explain the added text. Nevertheless, there are differences between the bolded text in this edition compared to Hardy's edition. The *Maxwell Institute Study*

^{9.} Grant Hardy, ed., *The Book of Mormon: Maxwell Institute Study Edition* (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute, 2018).

^{10.} Robert Alter, *The Hebrew Bible: The Prophets*, vols. 2–3 (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2019).

Edition is based on the most recent edition of the Book of Mormon, and this edition relies upon the Printer's Manuscript. Some of the entries Hardy highlighted were the result of editorial changes made after the Book of Mormon was initially published. One place where that makes a difference is 1 Nephi 20:1, where Joseph Smith added the phrase "or out of the waters of baptism" for the 1840 edition. As it was not in the Printer's Manuscript, the phrase is not included here.

Quotations, Allusions, and Echoes

The Book of Mormon's language not only echoes the language of the King James Bible, but specific verses are often directly quoted as they appear in that text. This edition provides footnotes to the quoted or alluded passages. It is not exhaustive but should represent the majority—and most important—of those quotations or allusions. These footnotes rely heavily on the work of Nicholas J. Frederick. For the Old Testament quotations, an unpublished paper created by Dave Larsen for Book of Mormon Central was used with permission.

Finally, three important resources should be noted that are invaluable to this and any in depth study of the text of the Book of Mormon:

- Royal Skousen and Robin Scott Jensen, eds., Revelations and Translations, Volume 3: Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon. Facsimile edition. Part 1 and 2 of vol. 3 of the Revelations and Translations series of The Joseph Smith Papers, edited by Ronald J. Esplin and Matthew J. Grow. (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2015)
- Royal Skousen and Robin Scott Jensen, eds., Revelations and Translations, Volume 5: Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon. Facsimile edition. Vol. 5 of the Revelations and Translations series of The Joseph Smith Papers, edited by Matthew C. Godfrey, R. Eric Smith, Matthew J. Grow, and Ronald J. Esplin. (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2021)
- Royal Skousen, Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon. Parts 1–6
 of the Critical Text of the Book of Mormon, 1st ed. (Provo, UT: Foundation
 for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies and Neal A. Maxwell Institute for
 Religious Scholarship, 2004–2009)

These are referenced throughout this study edition as *Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, *Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, and Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants*.

^{11.} Nicholas J. Frederick, "The Book of Mormon and Its Redaction of the King James New Testament: A Further Evaluation of the Interaction between the New Testament and the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 27 (2018): 44–87.

THE BOOK OF MORMON

An account written by the hand of Mormon upon plates. Taken from the plates of Nephi.^a Wherefore, it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites.

Written to the Lamanites (which 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 prophesy 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 the way of Gentile.

The interpretation thereof by the gift of God.^b

(>An abridgment taken from the book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared which were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people when they were building a tower to get to heaven. <<)

Moroni is the author of the Title Page and editor of the book of Ether. Although this is the Title Page for his father's work, he wanted to make certain to note his own contribution. Thus, it is an inserted afterthought. It would be convenient to suppose that there was an original draft of the Title Page that Moroni copied and inserted this sentence as he copied. That would conform with practices we will see throughout the Book of Mormon. However, there is no evidence for an earlier draft. It is also possible that Moroni included this statement here at the time it occurred to him. It clearly interrupts the flow of the text.

a. Beginning with the 1830 edition, these sentences were formatted as a subtitle. They are an essential part of the message and have therefore been moved to the text. In addition, they have been separated into two sentences to better indicate that the Book of Mormon is written upon plates and that it is the text of the Book of Mormon that is taken from the plates of Nephi, not that the plates themselves which were taken from the plates of Nephi.

b. These sentences have been formatted to highlight the repeated concepts. Although repetition and parallelism may be defined as poetry, the Book of Mormon rarely uses them as formal poetry. In these sentences, the various repetitions serve to highlight the message through the repetition even though they do not conform to a particular poetic structure.

c. This sentence is somewhat problematic. It comes immediately before the statement: "which is to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel how great things the Lord hath done for their fathers." If these sentences are read in sequence, then this purpose statement would refer to the book of Ether and not to the entirely of the Book of Mormon. The statement should apply to the whole and not just to the book of Ether. Therefore, it is placed in parentheses to set it off as an insertion rather than a continual thought.

THE BOOK OF MOSIAH

[Mosiah – Unknown number of missing chapters]

Two clues in the Printer's Manuscript indicate that some early chapters of the book of Mosiah were lost along with the book of Lehi. The first is the absence of a book header following the book title, which is something that all other individual abridged books in the Book of Mormon begin with.^a

The second is that when preparing the Printer's Manuscript, Oliver Cowdery intitially labeled the opening chapter of Mosiah as "Chapter III," which was later changed to "Chapter I" by crossing out two of the Roman numeral Is. Because of this some have assumed that the original number reflected the chapter count before Martin Harris lost the early manuscript, and have thus concluded that two chapters had been lost. However, there seems to be a better explanation for the chapter numbering, which was added later as the manuscript was being prepared for publication—sometimes skipping a number or accidentally continuing the chapter count from the previous book.^b

It seems that this latter type of mistake is the best explanation for the "Chapter III." In the Printer's Manuscript Cowdery originally assigned the book of Omni as "Chapter I," and The Words of Mormon was mistakenly numbered "Chapter 2.d." The opening extant chapter of Mosiah was likely assigned "III" as a logical continuation of that numbering.

Although we cannot know the number of chapters that were lost, we can identify some of its narrative history. With book titles named after initial dynastic leaders,^d the book of Mosiah was likely named for Mosiah (the father of king Benjamin, and the first Nephite king not directly of Nephi's lineage) and would have thus contained at least the story of him becoming the new king of the Nephites and meeting with the people of Zarahemla, if not also the departure from the land of Nephi. The transition from Mosiah to Benjamin is also missing, as well as the description of the wars that led up to the current chapter 1 of the book of Mosiah. Some of that information is available at the end of the book of Omni and the end of The Words of Mormon.^c Based on the lengths of Mormon's abridged accounts of Nephite history throughout his record, it is likely that the missing history of the first Mosiah covered multiple chapters.

a. For more on the headers see Chapter 6 of Engraven Upon Plates.

b. Royal Skousen, "Critical Methodology and the Text of the Book of Mormon," *FARMS Review* 6, no. 1 (1994): 138.

c. For an extended analysis, see Brant A. Gardner, "When Hypotheses Collide: Responding to Lyon and Monson's 'When Pages Collide," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 5 (2013): 110–13.

d. See Chapter 12 of Engraven Upon Plates.

e. For an in-depth exploration of this lost history, see Don Bradley, *The Lost 116 Pages: Reconstructing the Book of Momron's Missing Pages* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2019), 241–84.

Chapter I [Mosiah 1-3]

[1] ¹And now, there was no more contention in all the land of Zarahemla, among all the people which belonged to King Benjamin, so that King Benjamin had continual peace all the remainder of his days.

²And it came to pass that he had three sons. And he called their names Mosiah, and Helorum, and Helaman. And he caused that they should be taught in all the language of his fathers, that thereby they might become men of understanding, and that they might know concerning the prophesies which had been spoken by the mouths of their fathers (which was delivered them by the hand of the Lord). ³And he also taught them concerning the records which were engraven on the plates of brass, saying:

My sons, I would that ye should remember that were it not for these plates (which contain these records and these commandments) we must have suffered in ignorance even at this present time, not knowing the mysteries of God.^{a 4}For it were not possible that our father Lehi could have remembered all these things to have taught them to his children, except it were for the help of these plates. For he, having been taught in the language of the Egyptians—therefore he could read these engravings and teach them to his children, that thereby they could teach them to their children.

And so, fulfilling the commandments of the Lord God, even down to this present time, ⁵I say unto you, my sons, were it not for these things which have been kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord God (that we might read and understand of his mysteries and have his commandments always before our eyes), that even our fathers would have dwindled in unbelief. And we should have been like unto our brethren the Lamanites, which know nothing concerning these things, or even do not believe them when they are taught them, because of the tradition of their fathers, which are not correct.

⁶O my sons! I would that ye should remember that these sayings are true. And also that these records are true. And behold, also the plates of Nephi which contain the records and the sayings of our fathers from the time they left Jerusalem until now—and they are true. And we can know of their surety because we have them before our eyes.

⁷And now my sons, I would that ye should remember to search them diligently, that ye may profit thereby. And I would that ye should keep the commandments of God, that ye may prosper in the land, according to the promises which the Lord made unto our fathers.

⁸And many more things did King Benjamin teach his sons which are not written in this book.

⁹And it came to pass that after King Benjamin had made an end of teaching his sons that he waxed old. And he saw that he must very soon go the way of all the earth. ¹⁰Therefore, he thought it expedient that he should confer the kingdom upon one of his sons. Therefore, he had Mosiah brought before him. And these are the words which he spake unto him, saying:

a. The phrase "mystery of God" appears in 1 Corinthians 4:1, Colossians 2:2, and Revelation 10:7. b. See 1 Kings 2:2: "I go the way of all the earth."

round about—every man according to his family (consisting of his wife, and his sons, and his daughters, and their sons, and their daughters, from the eldest down to the youngest). Every family being separate one from another. ⁶And they pitched their tents round about the temple, every man having his tent with the door thereof towards the temple, that thereby they might remain in their tents and hear the words which King Benjamin should speak unto them. ⁷For the multitude being so great that King Benjamin could not teach them all within the walls of the temple. Therefore, he caused a tower to be erected, that thereby his people might hear the words which he should speak unto them.

⁸And it came to pass that he began to speak to his people from the tower. And they could not all hear his words because of the greatness of the multitude. Therefore, he caused that the words which he spake should be written and sent forth among those that were not under the sound of his voice, that they might also receive his words. ⁹And these are the words which he spake, and caused to be written, saying:

My brethren, all ye that have assembled yourselves together, you that can hear my words which I shall speak unto you this day. For I have not commanded you to come up hither to trifle with the words which I shall speak. But that you should hearken unto [me^a]—and open your ears, that ye may hear—and your hearts, that ye may understand—and your minds, that the mysteries of God^b may be unfolded to your view.

¹⁰I have not commanded you to come up hither that ye should fear me, or that ye should think that I, of myself, am more than a mortal man. ¹¹But I am (like as yourselves) subject to all manner of infirmities in body and mind. Yet, as I have been chosen by this people, and was consecrated by my father, and was suffered by the hand of the Lord that I should be a ruler and a king over this people. ^c And have been kept and preserved by his matchless power to serve thee with all the might, mind, and strength, which the Lord hath granted unto me. ¹²I say unto you, that as I have been suffered to spend my days in your service (even up to this time). ^d And have not sought gold, nor silver, nor no manner of riches of you. ¹³Neither have I suffered that ye should be confined in dungeons. Nor that ye should make slaves one [of^c] another. Or that ye should murder. Or plunder or steal. Or commit adultery. Or even I have not suffered that ye should commit any manner of wickedness—and have taught you that ye should keep the commandments of the Lord in all things which he hath commanded you.

¹⁴And even I, myself, have labored with mine own hands that I might serve you, and that ye should not be laden with taxes, and that there should nothing come upon you which was grievous to be borne. And of all these things (which I have spoken), ye yourselves are witnesses this day. ¹⁵Yet, my brethren, I have not done these things that I might boast. Neither do I tell these things that thereby I

a. The Printer's Manuscript has "you." This has a superlinear insertion of "me," which is the intended meaning. It was probably corrected during the proofreading.

b. The phrase "mystery of God" appears in 1 Corinthians 4:1, Colossians 2:2, and Revelation 10:7.

c. The sentence appears to run through the end of verse 13. It is never complete. To make it easier to read, it has been broken up with the understanding that this highlights the incompleteness.

d. The text continues to have a hanging verb: "as I have been." It is not resolved.

e. The Printer's Manuscript has "with." Oliver Cowdery changed it to the more appropriate "of."

might accuse you. But I tell you these things that ye may know that I [can^a] answer a [clean^b] conscience before God this day.

¹⁶Behold I say unto you, that because I said unto you that I had spent my days in your service, I do not desire to boast. For I have only been in the service of God. ¹⁷And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom—that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings, ye are only in the service of your God.

¹⁸Behold, ye have called me your king. And if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to serve you, then had not ye ought to labor to serve one another?

¹⁹And behold also, if I, who ye call your king, who has spent his days in your service (and yet hath been in the service of God), doth merit any thanks from you, O how had you ought to thank your heavenly king! ²⁰I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole souls hath power to possess to that God who hath created you, and hath kept and preserved you, and hath caused that ye should rejoice, and hath granted that ye should live in peace one with another—²¹I say unto you, that if ye should serve him, who hath created you from the beginning, and art preserving you from day to day by lending you breath (that ye may live, and move, and do according to your own will, and even supporting you, from one moment to another)—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole soul—and yet ye would be unprofitable servants.

²²And behold, all that he requires of you is to keep his commandments. And he hath promised you that if ye would keep his commandments, ye should prosper in the land. And he never doth vary from that which he hath said. Therefore, if ye do keep his commandments, he doth bless you and prosper you.

²³And now, in the first place he hath created you and granted unto you your lives. For which ye are indebted unto him. ²⁴And secondly, he doth require that ye should do as he hath commanded you. For which, if ye do, he doth immediately bless you. And therefore, he hath paid you. And ye are still indebted unto him—and are, and will be forever and ever. Therefore, of what have ye to boast?

²⁵And now I ask, can ye say ought of yourselves? I answer you, nay. Ye cannot say that thou art even as much as the dust of the earth. Yet thou wast created of the dust of the earth. But behold, it belongeth to him who created you.

²⁶And I, even I, whom ye call your king, am no better than ye yourselves are. For I am also of the dust. And thou beholdest that I am old and am about to yield up this mortal frame to its mother earth. ⁷Therefore, as I said unto you—that I had served you, walking with a clear conscience before God—even so I, at this time, have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might be found blameless and that your blood should not come up on me when I shall stand to be judged of God of the things whereof he hath commanded me concerning you.

²⁸I say unto you that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together,

a. Probably added during proofreading.

b. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 2:1148: "Here in the printer's manuscript, Cowdery initially wrote 'a clear conscience', which is what we expect. He virtually immediately overwrote the final r of *clear* with an $n \dots$, thus ending up with 'a clean conscience', which is also possible (but not what we expect)." Skousen continues to note that Cowdery had other instances where an "r" in the original was copied as an "n" in the Printer's Manuscript. It was typeset as "clear" in the 1830 printed version.

that I might rid my garments of your blood at this period of time, when I am about to go down to my grave, that I might go down in peace. And my immortal spirit may join the choirs above in singing the praises of a just God.

²⁹And moreover, I say unto you that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together that I might declare unto you that I can no longer be your teacher nor your king. ³⁰For even at this time, my whole frame doth tremble exceedingly while attempting to speak unto you. But the Lord God doth support me, and hath suffered me that I should speak unto you. And hath commanded me that I should declare unto you this day that my son Mosiah is a king and a ruler over you.

³¹And now, my brethren, I would that ye should do as ye hath hitherto done. As ye have kept my commandments, and also the commandments of my father, and have prospered and have been kept from falling into the hands of your enemies—even so, if ye shall keep the commandments of my son (or the commandments of God which shall be delivered unto you by him^c), ye shall prosper in the land. And your enemies shall have no power over you.

³²But, O my people! Beware lest there shall arise contentions among you, and ye list to obey the evil spirit (which was spoken by my father Mosiah). ³³For behold, there is a wo pronounced upon him that listeth to obey that spirit. For if he listeth to obey him, and remaineth, and dieth in his sins—the same drinketh damnation to his own soul. For he receiveth for his wages an everlasting punishment, having transgressed the law of God contrary to his own knowledge.

³⁴I say unto you, that there are not one among you, except it be your little children, that have not been taught concerning these things—but what knoweth that ye are eternally indebted to your heavenly Father—to render to him all that you have and are—and also have been taught concerning the records (which contain the prophesies which hath been spoken by the holy prophets, even down to the time our father Lehi left Jerusalem)—³⁵and also all that hath been spoken by our fathers until now. And behold, also they spake that which was commanded them of the Lord, therefore they are just and true.

³⁶And now I say unto you my brethren, that after ye have known and have been taught all these things, if ye should transgress and go contrary to that which hath been spoken, that ye do withdraw yourselves from the spirit of the Lord, that it may have no place in you—to guide you in wisdom's paths, that ye may be blessed, prospered, and preserved. ³⁷I say unto you, that the man that doeth this, the same cometh out in open rebellion against God. Therefore, he listeth to obey the evil spirit and becometh an enemy to all righteousness. Therefore, the Lord hath no place in him, for he dwelleth not in unholy temples. ^d ³⁸Therefore, if that man repenteth not, and remaineth, and dieth, an enemy to God, the demands of divine justice doth awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord, and doth fill his breast with guilt, and pain, and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire whose

c. Before correction, this phrase was "shall be delivered unto him by you." This was clearly incorrect and therefore changed with superlinear insertions.

d. Amulek provides a quotation in Alma 34:36, but it is not present outside of the Book of Mormon. The reference to temples suggests that it was on the brass plates.

flames ascendeth up forever, and ever.^a

³⁹And now, I say unto you that mercy hath no claim on that man. Therefore, his final doom is to endure a never-ending torment.

⁴⁰O all ye old men! And also ye young men! And you little children (which can understand my words)! For I have spoken plain unto you, that ye might understand. I pray that ye should awake to a remembrance of the awful situation of those that have fallen into transgression. ⁴¹And moreover, I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual. And if they hold out faithful to the end, they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness.

O remember, remember that these things are true! For the Lord God hath spoken it.

[3] ¹And again, my brethren, I would call your attention. For I have somewhat more to speak unto you. For behold, I have things to tell you concerning that which is to come. ²And the things which I shall tell you are made known unto me by an angel from God.

³And he said unto me: "Awake!"

And I awoke. And behold, he stood before me. And he said unto me:

Awake! And hear the words which I shall tell thee! For behold, I am come to declare unto thee glad tidings of great joy.^b ⁴For the Lord hath heard thy prayers. And hath judged of thy righteousness. And hath sent me to declare unto thee, that thou mayest rejoice. And that thou mayest declare unto thy people that they also may also be filled with joy.

⁵For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power the Lord Omnipotent (who reigneth, which was, and is, from all eternity to all eternity) shall come down from heaven among the children of men and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay—and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles—such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases. ⁶And he shall cast out devils (or the evil spirits which dwelleth in the hearts of the children of men). ⁷And lo, he shall suffer temptations and pain of body—hunger, thirst, and fatigue. Even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death. For behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people.

⁸And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of Heaven and of Earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning. And his mother shall be called Mary. ⁹And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men, even through faith on his name.

And even after all this, they shall consider him as a man, and say that he hath a devil—and shall scourge him and shall crucify him. ¹⁰And he shall rise the third day from the dead.

And behold, he standeth to judge the world.

a. See Revelation 14:11: "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

b. See Luke 2:10: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy."

And behold all these things are done that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men.

¹¹For behold, and also his blood atoneth for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam who hath died not knowing the will of God concerning them, and who have ignorantly sinned. ¹²But wo! Wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God! For salvation cometh to none such, except it be through repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹³And the Lord God hath sent his holy prophets among all the children of men to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue—that thereby, whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same might receive remission of their sins and rejoice with exceeding great joy, even as though he had already come among them.

¹⁴Yet, the Lord God saw that his people were a stiff-necked people. And he appointed unto them a law, even the law of Moses. ¹⁵And many signs, and wonders, and types, and shadows, showed he unto them concerning his coming. And also holy prophets spake unto them concerning his coming. And yet, they hardened their hearts, and understood not, that the law of Moses availeth nothing, except it were through the atonement of his blood.

¹⁶And even if it were possible that little children could sin, they could not be saved. But I say unto you, they are blessed. For behold, as in Adam (or by nature) they fall, even so the blood of Christ atoneth for their sins. ¹⁷And moreover, I say unto you that there shall be no other name given, nor no other way, nor means, whereby salvation can come unto the children of men. Only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. ¹⁸For behold, he judgeth. And his judgment is just. And the infant perisheth not that dieth in his infancy.

But men drinketh damnation to their own souls, except they humble themselves and become as little children and believeth that salvation was, and is, and is to come—in and through the atoning blood of Christ the Lord Omnipotent. ¹⁹For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam. And will be forever, and ever, but if he yieldeth to the enticings of the Holy Spirit and putteth off the natural man and he becometh a Saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord—and becometh as a child: submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.

²⁰And moreover, I say unto you, that the time shall come when the knowledge of a Savior shall spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.^b ²¹And behold, when that time cometh, none shall be found blameless before God (except it be little children), only through repentance, and faith on the name of the Lord God Omnipotent.

²²And even at this time, when thou shalt have taught thy people the things

a. The 1920 edition of the Book of Mormon changed this to "unless." The phrase "but if" was once used with that meaning but is now obsolete. In current usage, "but if" would lead to an incomplete sentence. See Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 2:1173.

b. See Revelation 14:6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

which the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, even then are they found no more blameless in the sight of God, only according to the words which I have spoken unto thee.

 23 And now, I have spoken the words which the Lord God hath commanded me. 24 And thus saith the Lord:

They shall stand as a bright testimony against this people at the judgment day, whereof they shall be judged—every man according to his works, whether they be good, or whether they be evil. ²⁵And if they be evil, they are consigned to an awful view of their own guilt, and abominations, which doth cause them to shrink from the presence of the Lord into a state of misery and endless torment, from whence they can no more return. ²⁶Therefore, they have drunk damnation to their own souls. Therefore, they have drunk out of the cup of the wrath of God, which justice could no more deny unto them than it could deny that Adam should fall because of his partaking of the forbidden fruit. Therefore, mercy could have claim on them no more, forever. ²⁷And their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, ^a whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever. ^b

And ever thus hath the Lord commanded me. Amen.

a. See Revelation 20:14: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." b. See Revelation 14:11: "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever."

Chapter II [Mosiah 4]

[4] ¹And now it came to pass that when King Benjamin had made an end of speaking the words which had been delivered unto him by the angel of the Lord, that he cast his eyes round about on the multitude. And behold, they had fell to the earth, for the fear of the Lord had come upon them. ²And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal states, even less then the dust of the earth.

And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: "O, have mercy, and apply the atoning blood [a] Christ, that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified. For we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things—who shall come down among the children of men."

³And it came to pass that after they had spoken these words, the spirit of the Lord came upon them. And they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience because of the exceeding faith which they had in Jesus Christ (which should come, according to the words which King Benjamin had spoken unto them).

⁴And King Benjamin again opened his mouth, and began to speak unto them, saying:

My friends, and my brethren, my kindred, and my people! I would again call your attention, that ye may hear and understand the remainder of my words which I shall speak unto you. ⁵For behold, that if the knowledge of the goodness of God at this time hath awakened you to a sense of your nothingness and your worthlessness and fallen state—

⁶I say unto you, that if ye have come to a knowledge of the goodness of God, and his matchless power, and his wisdom, and his patience, and his glory, long-suffering towards the children of men, and also the atonement, which hath been prepared from the foundation of the world that thereby salvation might come to him that should put his trust in the Lord, and should be diligent in keeping his commandments, and continue in the faith, even unto the end of his life (I mean the life of the mortal body)—

⁷I say, that this is the man that receiveth salvation through the atonement which was prepared from the foundation of the world for all mankind, which ever was, ever since the fall of Adam, or which is or which ever shall be, even unto the end of the world.^{b 8}And this is the means whereby salvation cometh. And there is none other salvation, save this, which hath been spoken of. Neither is there any conditions whereby man can be saved, except the conditions which I have told you.

⁹Believe in [God^c]. Believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth. Believe that he hath all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth. Believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend.

a. The Printer's Manuscript has "that we," which is clearly a copy error. The compositor discovered the error and corrected it to "of."

b. This is a very long sentence, beginning in verse 5 and only ending here. Although it is a single sentence, it is separated into paragraphs to assist the reader in following the multiple internal clauses.

c. The word "God" had been left out of the Printer's Manuscript. It was restored superlinearly and appears in the 1830 edition. It was probably missed while copying and restored upon proofreading.

¹⁰And again, believe that ye must repent of your sins, and forsake them—and humble yourselves before God, and ask in sincerity of heart that he would forgive you. And now, if you believe all these things—see that ye do them.

¹¹And again I say unto you (as I have said before), that as ye have come to the knowledge of the glory of God (or if ye have known of his goodness and have tasted of his love), and have received a remission of your sins (which causeth such exceeding great joy in your souls), even so, I would that ye should remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness—and his goodness and long-suffering towards you unworthy creatures—and humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily—and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel.

¹²And behold I say unto you, that if ye do this, ye shall always rejoice and be filled with the love of God—and always retain a remission of your sins, and ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him who created you (or in the knowledge of that which is just and true). ¹³And ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably and to render to every man according to that which is his due. ¹⁴And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry or naked. Neither will you suffer that they transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrel one with another—and [serve^a] the devil (which is the master of sin, or which is the evil spirit which hath been spoken of by our fathers, he being an enemy to all righteousness). ¹⁵But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth, and soberness. Ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another.

¹⁶And also ye, yourselves, will succor those that stand in need of your succor. Ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need. And ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain and turn him out to perish.

¹⁷Perhaps thou shalt say: "The man hath brought upon himself his misery, therefore I will stay my hand and will not give unto him of my food, nor impart unto him of my substance (that he may not suffer). For his punishments are just." ¹⁸But I say unto you, O man! Whosoever doeth this, the same hath great cause to repent. And except he repenteth of that which he hath done, he perisheth forever and hath no interest in the kingdom of God. ¹⁹For behold, are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend upon the same being, even God, for all the substance which we have, for both food and raiment, and for gold, and for silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind?

²⁰And behold, even at this time ye have been calling on his name and begging for a remission of your sins. And hath he suffered that ye have begged in vain? Nay, he hath poured out his spirit upon you, and hath caused that your hearts should be filled with joy, and hath caused that your mouths should be stopped that ye could not find utterance—so so exceeding great was your joy!

²¹And now, if God (who hath created you, on whom you are dependent for your lives, and for all that ye have, and are), doth grant unto you whatsoever ye ask

a. The Printer's Manuscript has "save," which is clearly incorrect. The correction to "serve" was done later, probably during proofreading. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 2:1187.

(that is right) in faith, believing that ye shall receive^a—O then how had ye ought to impart of the substance that ye have one to another!

²²And if ye judge the man who putteth up his petition to you for your substance (that he perish not) and condemn him—how much more just will be your condemnation for withholding your substance, which doth not belong to you—but to God, to whom also your life belongeth! And yet, ye put up no petition or repenteth not of the thing which thou hast done. ²³I say unto you, wo be unto that man! For his substance shall perish with him. And now, I say these things unto those which are rich as pertaining to the things of this world.

²⁴And again, I say unto the poor, ye that have not and yet hath sufficient that ye remain from day to day—I mean all you that deny the beggar because ye have not—I would that ye say in your hearts that I give not because I have not. But if I had, I would give. ²⁵And now, if ye say this in your hearts, ye remain guiltless. Otherwise, ye are condemned, and your condemnation is just. For ye covet that which ye have not received.

²⁶And now, for the sake of these things which I have spoken unto you, that is, for the sake of retaining a remission of your sins from day to day (that ye may walk guiltless before God), I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor—every man according to that which he hath. Such as feeding the hungry. Clothing the naked. Visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants.

²⁷And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order. For it is not requisite that a man should run faster than what he hath strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize. Therefore, all things must be done in order.

²⁸And I would that ye should remember that whosoever among you that borroweth of his neighbor should return the thing that he borroweth, according as he doth agree, or else thou shalt commit sin—and perhaps thou shalt cause thy neighbor to commit sin also.

²⁹And finally, I cannot tell you all the things whereby ye may commit sin. For there are divers ways and means, even so many that I cannot number them. ³⁰But this much I can tell you—that if ye do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe to keep the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives—ye must perish.

And now, remember, O man! Remember, and perish not!

a. Echoes Matthew 21:22: "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

THE WORDS OF MORMON

Chapter I [Words of Mormon 1]

¹And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making into the hands of my son, Moroni—behold, I have witnessed almost all the destruction of my people the Nephites. ²And it is many hundred years after the coming of Christ that I deliver these records into the hands of my son. And it supposeth me that he will witness the entire destruction of my people. But may God grant that he may survive them, that he may write somewhat concerning them, and somewhat concerning Christ—that perhaps someday it may profit them.

³And now, I speak somewhat concerning that which I have written. For after that I had made an abridgment from the plates of Nephi down to the reign of this King Benjamin (of which Amaleki spake), I searched among the records which had been delivered into my hands and I found these plates, which contained this small account of the prophets from Jacob down to the reign of this King Benjamin. And also many of the words of Nephi. ⁴And the things which are upon these plates, pleasing me because of the prophesies of the coming of Christ and my fathers, knowing that many of them have been fulfilled.^a And yea, and I also know that as many things as have been prophesied concerning us down to this day has been fulfilled. And as many as go beyond this day must surely come to pass. Wherefore, I chose these things to finish my record upon them, which remainder of my record I shall take from the plates of Nephi. And I cannot write a hundredth part of the things of my people. ⁶But behold, I shall take these plates, which contain these prophesyings and revelations, and put them with the remainder of my record. For they are choice unto me. And I know they will be choice unto my brethren. ⁷And I do this for a wise purpose. For thus it whispereth me according to the workings of the Spirit of the Lord, which is in me.

And now, I do not know all things. But the Lord knoweth all things which is to come. Wherefore, he worketh in me to do according to his will. ⁸And my prayer to God is concerning my brethren, that they may once again come to the knowledge of God—yea, the redemption of Christ, that they may once again be a delightsome people.

⁹And now I, Mormon, proceed to finish out my record, which I take from the plates of Nephi. And I make it according to the knowledge and the understanding which God hath given me. ¹⁰Wherefore, it came to pass that after Amaleki had delivered up these plates into the hands of King Benjamin, he took them, and put them with the other plates, which contained records which had been handed down by the kings from generation to generation until the days of King Benjamin. ¹¹And they were handed down from King Benjamin from generation to generation until they have fallen into my hands.

And I, Mormon, pray to God, that they may be preserved from this time hence forth. And I know that they will be preserved. For there are great things written upon them—out of which my people and their brethren shall be judged at the great and last day, according to the word of God which is written.

>12And now, concerning this King Benjamin. He had somewhat contentions among his own people.

¹³And it came to pass also that the armies of the Lamanites came down out of the land of Nephi to battle against his people. But behold, King Benjamin gathered together his armies and he did stand against them. And he did fight with the strength of his own arm, with the sword of Laban. ¹⁴And in the strength of the Lord they did contend against their enemies until they had slain many thousand of the Lamanites.

And it came to pass that they did contend against the Lamanites until they had driven them out of all the lands of their inheritance.

¹⁵And it came to pass that after there had been false Christs (and their mouths had been shut and they punished according to their crimes), ^a ¹⁶and after there had been false prophets, and false preachers, and teachers, among the people (and all these having been punished according to their crimes), and after there having been much contentions and many dissensions away unto the Lamanites—behold, it came to pass that King Benjamin (with the assistance of the holy prophets which were among his people, ¹⁷for behold, King Benjamin was a holy man and he did reign over his people in righteousness—and there were many holy men in the land, and they did speak the word of God with power, and with authority—and they did use much sharpness because of the stiff-neckedness of the people)—¹⁸wherefore, with the help of these, King Benjamin, by laboring with all the might of his body and the faculty of his whole soul, and also the prophets—wherefore, they did once more establish peace in the land.<

a. Verses 15-18 are a single sentence. It is difficult to parse due to the numerous asides.

b. This is blocked as an aside. Mormon has discussed the small plates being given to Benjamin, and enters tangential information about Benjamin.

THE BOOK OF NEPHI: HIS REIGN AND MINISTRY^a

An account 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 returns 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 rebelleth against him. He confoundeth them and buildeth a ship. They call the place Bountiful.

They cross the large waters into the promised land, etcetera.^b

Chapter I [1 Nephi 1-5]

This is according to the account of Nephi. Or, in other words, I, Nephi, wrote this record.^c [1] ¹I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father. And having seen many afflictions in the course of my days—nevertheless having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days, yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God^d—therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days. ²Yea, I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians. ³And I know that the record which I make to be true. And I make it with mine own hand. And I make it according to my knowledge.

⁴For it came to pass in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, King of Judah, >my father, Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days^c<—and in

- a. Beginning with the 1830 edition, the phrase "his reign and ministry" has been set as a subtitle. This edition places it as part of the title, reflecting the reason why Nephi wrote this second record after the one on the large plates.
- b. The Printer's Manuscript does not make a separation between the synopsis and the text proper. This was a decision the compositor made. Other synoptic book headers have similar characteristics to this one. They are in third person and provide a very short preview of what will come in the book.
- c. The Printer's Manuscript does not give any indication of where the synoptic header ends and the narrative begins. The compositor made the decision to include this sentence with the synoptic header, probably to avoid the apparent duplication. This edition considers it as more of a title and declaration of authorship, with the next sentence beginning the story proper. It is best seen as a chapter header, declaring the source from which this record is taken—that is, Nephi's record and memory.

One of the corroborating factors for this change is that the synoptic header (here and in all other synoptic headers) is written in third person, but this sentence is clearly first person. Having the two different voices in the same synoptic header is otherwise unattested.

- d. The phrase "mystery of God" appears in 1 Corinthians 4:1, Colossians 2:2, and Revelation 10:7.
- e. This is a difficult sentence in that the parenthetical phrase has interrupted the flow of the

that same year^a there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent or that great city Jerusalem must be destroyed. ⁵Wherefore, it came to pass that my father Lehi (as he went forth) prayed unto the Lord, yea even with all his heart, in behalf of his people.

⁶And it came to pass as he prayed unto the Lord, there came a pillar of fire 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 quake and tremble exceedingly.

⁷And it came to pass that he returned to his own house at Jerusalem. And he cast himself upon his bed, being overcome with the Spirit and the things which he had seen. ⁸And being thus overcome with the Spirit, he was carried away in a vision, even that he saw the heavens open. And he thought he saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God.

⁹And it came to pass that he saw one descending out of the midst of heaven. And he beheld that his luster was above that of the sun at noonday. ¹⁰And he also saw twelve others following him. And their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament. ¹¹And they came down and went forth upon the face of the earth. And the first came and stood before my father and gave unto him a book. And bade him that he should read it.

¹²And it came to pass that as he read he was filled with the spirit of the Lord. ¹³And he read, saying: "Wo, wo unto Jerusalem! For I have seen thine abominations." Yea, and many things did my father read concerning Jerusalem, that it should be destroyed. And the inhabitants thereof—many should perish by the sword. And many should be carried away captive into Babylon.

And it came to pass that when my father had read and saw 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 power and goodness and mercy
is over all the in habitants of the earth.
And because thou art merciful,
thou wilt not suffer those who come unto thee
that they shall perish.^b

¹⁵And 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.

>16And 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 hath saw in visions

sentence. The resumption of the meaning uses "and" rather than "that." This is an example of repetitive resumption on a sentence level. The phrase "in that same year" is the repetition that recovers from the parenthetical interruption.

a. Repetitive resumption after the insertion.

b. These appear to be separate examples rather than a cohesive statement. If Nephi is quoting from memory, they are the more memorable lines. If he is consulting a text, he is selecting exclamations that probably began a larger theological discussion. That type of discourse is seen later, where a general statement leads to more detailed analysis.

and in dreams. And he also hath written may things which he prophesied, and spake, unto his children, which I shall not make a full account. ¹⁷But I shall make an account of my proceedings in my days.

Behold, I make an abridgment of the record of my father upon plates which I have made with mine own hands. Wherefore, after that I have abridged the record of my father, then will I make an account of mine own life.ac

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

¹⁹And it came to pass that the Jews did mock him because of the things which he testified of them. For he truly testified of their 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 Messiah. And also the redemption of the world.

²⁰And when the Jews heard these things they were angry with him. Yea, even as with the prophets of old whom they had cast out, and stoned, and slain. And they also sought his life, that they might take it away. But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies^b of the Lord is over all them whom he hath chosen because of their faith, to make them mighty, even unto the power of deliverance.

[2] ¹For behold, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto my father, yea, even in a dream, and saith 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, behold, they seek to take away thy life."

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

³And it came to pass that he was obedient unto the word of the Lord. Wherefore, he did as the Lord commanded him.

⁴And it came to pass that he departed into the wilderness. And he left his house and the land of his inheritance, and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things—and took nothing with him save it were his family, and provisions, and tents. And he departed into the wilderness.

⁵And he came down by the borders near the shore of the Red Sea. And he traveled in the wilderness in the borders which was nearer the Red Sea. And he did travel in the wilderness with his family, which consisted of my mother Sariah, and my elder brethren, which were Laman, Lemuel, and Sam.

⁶And it came to pass that when he had traveled three days in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a valley beside a river of water.

⁷And it came to pass that he built an altar of stones. ^c And he made an offering unto

a. The indented text (verses 16–17) is an aside. This is the first of several asides where Nephi speaks of the process of creating his records. In this case, Nephi explains that while this book is declared to be a record of Nephi's reign and ministry, he finds that he must begin with his father's story. After the explanation about the construction of the text, Nephi returns to his planned text in verse 19.

b. The phrase "tender mercies" is found in Psalm 145:1.

c. The commandment to build altars of stone is found in Deuteronomy 27:5–7: "And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them.

the Lord. And gave thanks unto the Lord our God.

⁸And 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.

⁹And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the 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!"

¹⁰And he also spake unto Lemuel: "O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, firm and steadfast, and immoveable in keeping the commandments of the Lord!"

¹¹Now, this he spake because of the stiffneckedness of Laman and Lemuel. For behold, they did murmur in many things against their father, because that he was a visionary man and that he 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, and to perish in the wilderness. And this they said he had done because of the foolish imaginations of his heart.

¹²And thus Laman and Lemuel (being the eldest) did murmur against their father. And they did murmur because they knew not the dealings of that God who had created them. ¹³Neither did they believe that Jerusalem, that great city, could be destroyed according to the words of the prophets. And they were like unto the Jews which were at Jerusalem which sought to take away the life of my father.

¹⁴And it came to pass that my father did speak unto them (in the valley of Lemuel) with power (being filled with the Spirit) until their frames did shake before him. And he did confound them, that they durst not utter against him. Wherefore, they did do as he commanded them. ¹⁵And my father dwelt in a tent.^a

¹⁶And it came to pass that I, Nephi, being exceeding young (nevertheless being large in stature) and also having great desires to know of the mysteries of God,^b wherefore I did cry unto the Lord. And behold he did visit me and did soften my heart that I did believe all the words which had been spoken by my father. Wherefore, I did not rebel against him like unto my brothers.

¹⁷And 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.^c

 $^{18}\mbox{But}$ behold, Laman and Lemuel would not hearken unto my words. And being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, I cried unto the Lord for them.

¹⁹And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying:

Blessed art thou Nephi, because of thy faith. For thou hast sought me dili-

Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of whole stones: and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord thy God: And thou shalt offer peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before the Lord thy God."

a. Nephi repeats the idea of his father dwelling in a tent in 1 Nephi 2:15, 9:1, and 10:16. None of these verses really say anything about why it was important to note that he dwelt in a tent, but the phrases appear to mark a transition between narrative units. A similar phrase, "tent of my father" occurs in 1 Nephi 3:1, 5:7, 7:22, and 15:1. In this verse the intent of the "my father dwelt in a tent" is to shift the focus from Laman and Lemuel to Nephi. The narrative function of his father's tent is more fully discussed in Chapter 6 of *Engraven Upon Plates*.

b. The phrase "mystery of God" appears in 1 Corinthians 4:1, Colossians 2:2, and Revelation 10:7.

c. Although "and it came to pass" is usually used as a paragraph marker (and might be in this case), this edition has elected to keep the information about Sam in the same paragraph and let the next paragraph be the contrast with Laman and Lemuel.

gently, with lowliness of heart.

²⁰And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise. Yea, even a land which I have prepared for you. Yea, a land which is choice above of all other lands.

 $^{21}\mbox{And}$ in asmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord. a

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

²³For behold, in that day that they shall rebel against me, I will curse them, even with a sore curse. And they shall have no power over thy seed—except they shall rebel against me also. ²⁵And, if it so be that they rebel against me, they shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in the ways of remembrance.

[3] ¹And it came to pass that I, Nephi, returned from speaking with the Lord to the tent of my father.

²And it came to pass that he spake unto me, saying:

Behold I have dreamed a dream—in the which the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brethren shall return to Jerusalem. ³For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews, and also a genealogy of my forefathers. And they are engraven upon plates of brass. ⁴Wherefore, 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.

⁵And 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. ⁶Therefore, go, my son. And thou shalt be favored of the Lord because thou hast not murmured.

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

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

⁹And I Nephi, and my brethren, took our journey in the wilderness (with our tents) to go up to the land of Jerusalem.

¹⁰And it came to pass that when we had come up to the land of Jerusalem, I and my brethren did consult one with another. ¹¹And we cast lots—which 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. ¹²And he desired of Laban the records, which were engraven upon the plates of brass, which contained the genealogy of my father.

¹³And 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!" ¹⁴But Laman fled out of his pres-

a. The phrase "cut off from my presence" is found in Leviticus 22:3.

ence, and told the things which Laban had done—unto us. And we began to be exceeding sorrowful. And my brethren were about to return unto my father in the wilderness.

15 But behold, I said unto them that:

As the Lord liveth and as we live! We will not go down unto our father in the wilderness until we have accomplished the thing which the Lord hath commanded us. ¹⁶Wherefore, let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord. Therefore, let us go down to the land of our father's inheritance. For behold, he left gold and silver, and all manner of riches.

And all this he hath done because of the commandments of the Lord. ¹⁷For he, knowing that Jerusalem must be destroyed because of the wickedness of the people (¹⁸for behold, they have rejected the words of the prophets), wherefore, if my father should dwell in the land after that he had been commanded to flee out of the land, behold, he would also perish. ^b Wherefore, it must needs be that he flee out of the land.

¹⁹And behold, it is wisdom in God that we should obtain these records, that we might preserve unto our children the language of our fathers. ²⁰And also that we may preserve unto them the words which have been spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets (which have been delivered unto them by the spirit and power of God) since the world began, even down unto this present time.^c

²¹And it came to pass that after this manner of language did I persuade my brethren—that^d they might be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord God.

²²And it came to pass that we went down to the land of our inheritance. And we did gather together our gold, and our silver, and our precious things. ²³And after that we had gathered these things together, we went up again unto the house of Laban.

²⁴And 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 plates of brass. For which we would give unto him our gold, and our silver, and all our precious things.

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

²⁶And 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.

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

²⁸And 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

a. The oath is similar to a common one from the Old Testament: "As the Lord liveth, and as they soul liveth." See 1 Samuel 20:3, 25:26; 2 Kings 2:2,4,6, 4:30. The oath "As the Lord liveth" is more common both in the Old Testament and in the Book of Mormon.

b. There is no simple formatting that will make this a complete sentence. The culprit is "knowing." Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:90, notes: "For the 1840 edition, Joseph Smith (presumably) edited the present participle "knowing" to the past tense "knew." This change eliminates what appears to be a dependent participial clause."

c. See Acts 3:21: "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

d. A more modern sentence would have "so that."

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

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

³⁰And after that the angel had spake unto us, he departed. ³¹And after that the angel had departed, Laman and Lemuel again began to 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?"

[4] ¹And 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 mightier than Laban and his fifty—yea, or even than his tens of thousands? ²Therefore, let us go up.

Let us be strong like unto Moses. For he truly spake unto the waters of the Red 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.^a

³Now behold, ye know that this is true. And ye also know that an angel hath spoken unto you. Wherefore can ye doubt?

Let us go up. The Lord is able to deliver us, even as our fathers—and to destroy Laban, even as the Egyptians.

⁴Now, when I had spoken these words, they was yet wroth and did still continue to murmur. Nevertheless, they did follow me up until we came without the walls of Jerusalem. ⁵And it was by night. And I caused that they should hide themselves without the walls. And after that they had hid themselves, I, Nephi, crept in into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban.

⁶And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do. ⁷Nevertheless, 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 drunken with wine. ⁸And when I came to him, I found that it was Laban.

⁹And I beheld his sword and I drew it forth from the sheath thereof. And the hilt thereof was of pure gold. And the workmanship thereof was exceeding fine. And I saw that the blade thereof was of the most precious steel.

¹⁰And it came to pass that I was 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.

¹¹And the Spirit saith unto me again: "Behold, the Lord hath 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 taken away our property.

a. This refers to the story told in Exodus 14.

¹²And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me again: "Slay him, for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands. ¹³Behold, the Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief." ^a

¹⁴And 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: "Inasmuch as thy seed shall keep my commandments, they shall prosper in the land of promise." ¹⁵Yea, and I also thought that they could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses, save they should have the law. ¹⁶And I also knew that the law was engraven upon the plates of brass.

¹⁷And 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. ¹⁸Therefore, 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 sword.

¹⁹And after that I had smote 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. ²⁰And after that 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 servant of Laban which had the keys of the treasury. And I commanded him in the voice of Laban that he should go with me into the treasury. ²¹And he, supposing me to be his master Laban (for he beheld the garments and also the sword girted about my loins)— ²²and he spake unto me concerning the elders of the Jews, he knowing that his master Laban had been out by night among them.^b

²³And I spake unto him as if it had been Laban. ²⁴And I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings which were upon the plates of brass to my elder brethren, which were without the walls. ²⁵And I also bade him that he should follow me.

²⁶And he, supposing that I spake of the brethren of the church and that I was truly that Laban (whom I had slew^c), wherefore, he did follow me. ²⁷And he spake unto me many times concerning the elders of the Jews, as I went forth unto my brethren, which were without the walls.

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

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

³⁰And 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.

a. See John 11:50: "Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."

b. This sentence gets lost after the parenthetical phrase. It is an incomplete sentence. This was changed in the 1830 edition to: "And he *supposed* me to be his master, Laban, for he beheld the garments and also the sword girded about my loins." The change in tense was the easiest way to make the sentence complete. Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants*, 1:112.

c. Oliver Cowdery changed "had slew" to "had slain" in the Printer's Manuscript. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:112. This edition has elected to retain it, as it will appear in other locations where Cowdery did not change it.

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

³²And 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^a—even so, that if he would hearken unto our words, we would spare his life. ³³And I spake unto him, even with an oath, that he need not fear—that he should be a free man like unto us, if he would go down in the wilderness with us. ³⁴And I also spake unto him, saying: "Surely the Lord hath commanded us to do this thing, and shall we not be diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord;^b Therefore, if thou wilt go down into the wilderness to my father, thou shalt have place with us."

³⁵And it came to pass that Zoram did take courage at the words which I spake. >Now Zoram was the name of the servant^c<. And he promised that he would go down into the wilderness unto our father. And he also made an oath unto us that he would tarry with us from that time forth. ³⁶Now, we were desirous that he should tarry with us for this cause, that the Jews might not know concerning our flight unto into the wilderness—lest they should pursue us and destroy us.

³⁷And it came to pass that when Zoram had made an oath unto us, our fears did cease concerning him.

³⁸And 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 tent of our father.

[5] ¹And it came to pass that after we had came down into the wilderness unto our father, behold, he was filled with joy. And also, my mother Sariah was exceeding glad, ²for she truly had mourned because of us. For she had supposed that we had perished in the wilderness. And she also had complained against my father, telling him that he was a 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." ³And after this manner of language had my mother complained against my father.

⁴And it had came to pass that my father spake unto her, saying:

I know that I am a visionary man. For if I had not seen the things of God in a vision I should not have known the goodness of God, but had tarried at Jerusalem and had perished with my brethren.

⁵But behold, I have obtained a land of promise, in the which things I do rejoice. Yea, and I know that the Lord will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban and bring them down again unto us in the wilderness.

⁶And after this manner of language did my father Lehi, 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.

⁷And when we had returned to the tent of my father—behold, their joy was full. And my mother was comforted. ⁸And she spake, saying: "Now I know of a surety that

a. The oath is similar to a common one from the Old Testament: "As the Lord liveth, and as they soul liveth." See 1 Samuel 20:3, 25:26; 2 Kings 2:2,4,6, 4:30. The oath "As the Lord liveth" is more common both in the Old Testament and in the Book of Mormon.

b. Perhaps alluding to Deuteronomy 6:17: "Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

c. This is an aside where Nephi realized that he had not yet named Zoram.

the Lord hath commanded my husband to 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 gave them power whereby they could accomplish the thing which the Lord hath commanded them." And after this manner of language did she speak.

⁹And it came to pass that they did rejoice exceedingly and did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto the Lord. And they gave thanks unto the God of Israel. ¹⁰And after that they had given thanks unto the God of Israel, my father, Lehi, took the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass and he did search them from the beginning.

¹¹And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world.

And also, of Adam and Eve, which was 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—¹³ and also, the prophesies of the holy prophets from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah—and also, many prophesies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.

¹⁴And it came to pass that my father, Lehi, also found upon the plates of brass a genealogy of his fathers. Wherefore, he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph, yea, even that Joseph which was the son of Jacob, which was sold into Egypt, and which was preserved by the hand of the Lord that he might preserve his father, Jacob, and all his household from perishing with famine. ¹⁵And they were also led out of captivity, and out of the land of Egypt, by that same God who had preserved them. ¹⁶And thus my father, Lehi, did discover the genealogy of his fathers.

>And Laban also was a descendant of Joseph. Wherefore, he and his fathers had kept the records.a<

¹⁷And now, when my father saw all these things, he was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed—¹⁸that these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, which were of his seed. ¹⁹Wherefore, he said that these plates of brass should never perish. Neither should they be dimmed any more by time. And he prophesied many things concerning his seed.

²⁰And it came to pass that thus far, I and my father had kept the commandments wherewith the Lord had commanded us. ²¹And we had obtained the record which the Lord had commanded us, and searched them, and found that they were desirable, yea, even of great worth unto us, insomuch that we could preserve the commandments of the Lord unto our children. ²²Wherefore, it was wisdom in the Lord that we should carry them with us as we journeyed in the wilderness, towards the land of promise.

a. This sentence has the feel of Nephi inserting information that was important but not necessarily part of the discussion at the time.

Chapter II [1 Nephi 6-9]

[6] ¹And now I, Nephi, do not give the genealogy of my fathers in this part of my record. Neither at any time shall I give it after upon these plates which I am writing, for it is given in the record which has been kept by my father. Wherefore, I do not write it in this work, ²for it sufficeth me to say that we are a descendant of Joseph.

> ³And it mattereth not to me that I am particular to give to give a full account of all the things of my father. For they cannot be written upon these plates, for I desire the room that I may write of the things of God. ⁴For the fullness of mine intent is that I may persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—and be saved. ⁵Wherefore, the things which are pleasing unto the world I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God, and unto them which are not of the world. ⁶Wherefore, 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. ^a <

[7] ¹And now I would that ye might know that after my father Lehi had made an end of prophesying concerning his seed, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto him again, saying that it was not mete for him, Lehi, that he should take his family into the wilderness alone—but that his sons should take daughters to wife that they might raise up seed unto the Lord in the land of promise.

²And it came to pass that the Lord 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.

³And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did again (with my brethren) go forth into the wilderness, to go up to Jerusalem.

⁴And 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.

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

⁶And it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, behold, Laman and Lemuel, and two of the daughters of Ishmael, and the two sons of Ishmael, and their families—did rebel against us. Yea, against I, Nephi, and Sam, and their father Ishmael, and his wife, and his three other daughters.

⁷And it came to pass [that^c] in the which rebellion, they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem. ⁸And now I, Nephi, being grieved for the hardness of their

- a. The indented text (verses 3–6) is an aside. Orson Pratt must have noticed that this text didn't easily fit into the overall plan of the chapter, as he created a chapter break between this aside and what we now have as chapter 7. Verses 1 and 2 are suggested as the beginning of the chapter, followed by the aside, then a return to the planned text in the modern chapter 7, verse 1.
- b. The Original Manuscript has the nonsensical "hole hole." Skousen has suggested an emendation of "whole household." The mention of "all the house of Ishmael" in verse 22 supports the idea that the intent is to describe the whole household. See Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:142–43.
- c. The word "that" is added from the Original Manuscript. A copying error removed it from the Printer's Manuscript. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:144.

hearts, therefore I spake unto them saying (yea, even unto Laman and unto Lemuel):

Behold, thou art 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 younger brother, should speak unto you—yea, and set an example for you?

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

¹⁰How is it that ye have forgotten that ye have seen an angel of the Lord?

¹¹Yea, and how is it that ye have forgot how great things the Lord hath done for us in delivering us out of the hands of Laban, and also that we should obtain the record?

¹²Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten that the Lord is able to do all things according to his will for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise faith in him? Wherefore, let us be faithful in him. ¹³And if it so be that we are faithful in him, we shall obtain the land of promise.

And ye shall know at some future period that the word of the Lord shall be fulfilled concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. For all things which the Lord hath spoken concerning the destruction of Jerusalem must be fulfilled. ¹⁴For behold, the spirit of the Lord ceaseth soon to strive with them. ^a For behold, they have rejected the prophets and Jeremiah have they cast into prison. And they have sought to take away the life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land.

¹⁵Now 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.

¹⁶And 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 exceeding wroth. And they did 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. ¹⁷But 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? Yea, even give me strength that I may burst these bands with which I am bound."

¹⁸And 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.

¹⁹And it came to pass that they were angry with me again, and sought to lay hands upon me. But behold, one of the 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.

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

 21 And it came to pass that I did frankly forgive them all that they had done. And I did exhort them that they would pray unto the Lord, their God, for forgiveness.

And it came to pass that they did so. And after that they had done praying unto the Lord, we did again travel on our journey toward the tent of our father.

a. See Genesis 6:3: "And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man."

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

[8] ¹And it came to pass that we had gathered together all manner of seeds of every kind, both of grain of every kind, and also of the seeds of fruits of every kind.

²And it came to pass that while my father tarried in the wilderness, he spake unto us, saying:

Behold, I have dreamed a dream, or in other words, I have seen a vision. ³And behold, because of the thing which I have seen, I have reason to rejoice in the Lord because of Nephi, and also of Sam. For I have reason to suppose that they, and also many of their seed, will be saved.

⁴But behold, Laman and Lemuel—I fear exceedingly because of you. For behold, methought I saw a dark and dreary wilderness.

⁵And it came to pass that I saw a man, and he was dressed in a white robe. And he came and stood before me.

⁶And it came to pass that he spake unto me and bade me follow him.

⁷And it came to pass that as I followed him, I beheld myself—that I was in a dark and dreary waste. ⁸And after that I had traveled for the space of many hours in darkness, I began to pray unto the Lord that he would have mercy on me, according to the multitude of his tender mercies.^a

⁹And it came to pass that after I had prayed unto the Lord, I beheld a large and spacious field.

¹⁰And it came to pass that I beheld a tree whose fruit was desirable to make one happy.

¹¹And it came to pass that I did go forth and partook of the fruit thereof. And I beheld that it was most sweet, above all that I ever had before tasted. Yea, and I beheld that the fruit thereof was white, to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen. ¹²And as I partook of the fruit thereof, it filled my soul with exceeding great joy. Wherefore, I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also. For I knew that it was desirous above all other fruit.

¹³And as I cast my eyes round about (that perhaps I might discover my family also), I beheld a river of water. And it ran along, and it was near the tree of which I was partaking the fruit. ¹⁴And I looked to behold from whence it came, and I saw the head thereof a little way off. And at the head thereof, I beheld your mother Sariah, and Sam, and Nephi. And they stood as if they knew not whither they should go.

¹⁵And it came to pass that I beckoned unto them. And I also did say unto them, with a loud voice, that they should come unto me and partake of the fruit which was desirable above all other fruit.

¹⁶And it came to pass that they did come unto me and partake of the fruit also.

 17 And it came to pass that I was desirous that Laman and Lemuel should come and partake of the fruit also. Wherefore, I cast mine eyes towards the head of the river, that perhaps I might see them.

a. The phrase "tender mercies" is found in Psalm 25:6, 40:11, 51:1, 69:16, and others.

¹⁸And it came to pass that I saw them, but they would not come unto me [and partake of the fruit^a].

¹⁹And I beheld a rod of iron. And it extended along the bank of the river, and led to the tree by which I stood. ²⁰And I also beheld a strait and narrow path, which came along by the rod of iron, even to the tree by which I stood. And it also led by the head of the fountain unto a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world. ²¹And I saw numberless concourses of people, many of whom were pressing forward, that they might obtain the path which led unto the tree by which I stood.

 22 And it came to pass that they did come forth and commence in the path which led to the tree.

²³And it came to pass that there arose a mist of darkness, yea, even an exceeding great mist of darkness, insomuch that they which had commenced in the path did lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost.

²⁴And it came to pass that I beheld others pressing forward. And they came forth and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron. And they did press forward through the mists of darkness, clinging to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree.

²⁵And after that they had partook of the fruit of the tree, they did cast their eyes about, as if they were ashamed.

²⁶And I also cast my eyes round about, and [beheld^b] (on the other side of the river of water) a great and spacious building. And it stood as it were in the air high above the earth. ²⁷And it was filled with people, both old and young, both male and female. And their manner of dress was exceeding fine. And they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those which had came [up^c] and were partaking of the fruit. ²⁸And after that they had tasted of the fruit, they were ashamed because of those that were a scoffing at them. And they fell away into forbidden paths, and were lost.

²⁹And now I, Nephi, do not speak all the words of my father. ³⁰But (to be short in writing), behold, he saw other multitudes pressing forward. And they came and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron. And they did press their way forward continually, holding fast to the rod of iron until they came forth and fell down, and partook of the fruit of the tree. ³¹And he also saw other multitudes [pressing^d] their way towards that great and spacious building.

³²And it came to pass that many were drowned in the depths of the fountain. And

a. Skousen, Analysis of the Textual Variants, 1:174: "Here is an example of how Joseph Smith, in his editing for the 1840 edition, used the original manuscript to restore phrases that had been accidentally dropped during the earlier transmission of the text. In this case, Oliver Cowdery omitted the conjoined predicate 'and partake of the fruit' when copying from [the Original Manuscript] into [the Printer's Manuscript]."

b. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:184: "In his copying from [the Original Manuscript] to [the Printer's Manuscript], Oliver Cowdery replaced 'beheld' with 'behold,' which the 1830 typesetter corrected."

c. The phrase "had came at" is in the Printer's Manuscript, rendered "had come at" in the current edition. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:184: "The original manuscript definitely reads *up* rather than *at*. The *u* was partially overwritten, which permitted it to be interpreted as an *a*."

d. The Printer's Manuscript has "feeling," which has been retained in subsequent editions. Skousen, *Analysis of the Textual Variants*, 1:187, notes that it should be "pressing," based on both the original manuscript and the lack of any similar use of "feeling their way."

many were lost from his view—wandering in strange roads. ³³And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building. And after that they did enter into that building, they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also. But we heeded them not^{a 34}(these are the words of my father). For as many as heeded them had fallen away.

³⁵And Laman and Lemuel partook not of the fruit (saith my father).^b

³⁶And it came to pass that after my father had spoken all the words of his dream (or vision), which were many, he said unto us (because of these things which he saw in a vision) he exceedingly feared for Laman and Lemuel. Yea, he feared lest they should be cast off from the presence of the Lord. ³⁷And he did exhort them, then, with all the feeling of a tender parent, that they would hearken to his words—in that perhaps the Lord would be merciful to them and not cast them off. Yea, my father did preach unto them. ³⁸And after that he had preached unto them, and also prophesied unto them of many things, he bade them to keep the commandments of the Lord. And he did cease speaking unto them.

[9] ¹And all these things did my father see, and hear, and speak, as he dwelt in a tent in the valley of Lemuel—and also a great many more things which cannot be written upon these plates.c

> ²And now, as I have spoken concerning these plates—behold, they are not the plates upon which I make a full account of the history of my people. For the plates upon which I make a full account of my people I have given the name of Nephi. Wherefore, they are called the plates of Nephi (after mine own name).

And these plates also are called the plates of Nephi. ³Nevertheless, I have received a commandment of the Lord that I should make these plates for the special purpose that there should be an account engraven of the ministry of my people. ⁴And upon the other plates should be engraven an account of the reign of the kings and the wars and contentions of my people. Wherefore, these plates are for the more part of the ministry, and the other plates are for the more part of the reign of the kings, and the wars, and contentions, of my people.

⁵Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me to make these plates for a wise purpose in him, which purpose I know not. ⁹But the Lord knoweth all things from the beginning. Wherefore, he prepareth a way to accomplish all his works among the children of men. For behold, he hath all power unto the fulfilling of all his words. And thus it is, Amen.<

a. This section appears to be Nephi's summary. Thus, when we see "they did point the finger of scorn at me, and those that were partaking of the fruit also," we should understand that the "me" is Nephi. Nephi recorded that his father had seem him partaking, and this refers to that part of his father's vision.

b. Parentheses are used to parallel the use in the previous sentence as well as to highlight what may have been an intended parallel, indicating what their father said of each of these groups.

c. This verse was intended to be the final verse of chapter II. The use of "dwelt in a tent" marks subdivisions in the story Nephi relates in 1 Nephi. Verses 2 through 9 are an aside that was triggered by the phrase "which cannot be written upon these plates." The mention of "these plates" occasioned an aside to explain what "these plates" meant.