

Book of Mormon 06 - 1 Nephi 2

Hello, brothers and sisters, good be with you again. I have a little cold so you please forgive me if my voice sounds a little crackly and little bit out of normal wanted. I wanted to give you an update on some of the things that are taking place with the *Book of Mormon* pod's casts. There now in many places throughout the world. We will soon have Angels and the Aaronic Priesthood translated into Spanish and also the podcast entitled Accessing the Fullness of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Also in Spanish we expect to be able to have these 2 podcasts in Spanish within the next 6 or 7 days upon a site. As you listen to these podcasts, if the Lord whispers to you that you should help out on Spanish translation or in transcribing any of these records, I can put you in touch with the teams of people who have volunteered to be involved in this endeavor. I'm sure they would welcome additional assistance. We've also had some individuals who volunteered to transcribe and translate the *Book of Mormon* podcasts in the Portuguese with the Spanish and Portuguese translations that would reach all of Mexico and Central America and all of South America. What an exciting prospect consider our brothers and sisters south of us being able to have access to the information that we are providing here and bless their lives. It is very exciting to see the Lord's hand in this as he takes the message of the *Book of Mormon - Another Testament of Christ* out of all his children.

I would like to give you a quick update on some responses, some comments that I've heard concerning the podcast Spending Sacred Holy Time with the Lord Jesus Christ. From things you shared with me, this one hour of time has turned out to be a marvelous blessing to many many people. I'm so pleased to see people experiencing the things that Margie and I have experienced as we set aside this sacred time. Truly this is a wonderful thing to do and will reap great dividends in our spirituality. I've heard a couple of individuals this week who have said that as they concluded their time with the Lord they heard his voice say to them, "thank you so much for spending time with me." Isn't that marvelous to consider that? Imagine the Lord Jesus Christ thanking us for our time and yet I have that experience myself. They are so anxious to be able to spend this time with us and to bless us and to teach us and lift and edify us that when any of us make the effort they are quickly there to respond. May the Lord continue to bless you in these efforts. Don't be discouraged. It's like anything else when you begin doing something new it's going to take practice, practice, practice. Remember practice makes perfect. (3:50)

I remember when Margie and I first started doing this we were concerned when it seemed to fall asleep as we attempted enter into this sacred place of stillness. We felt we are disappointing Lord when we make the attempt to enter in and appear to wake up sometime later unaware of anything which took place during this period. While I was conversing with the Lord one morning I asked him about this and this is what he told me: *"This is not the sleep you experience when your physical body is renewing and regenerating itself during the night."* This part right here, I thought was very interesting, *"This state is induced by the Holy Ghost in order to bring you into a deeper place of stillness. It is in this condition that I am able to transform your very nature by lifting the veil from your spiritual being and by removing the fallen nature of the Telestial world from your physical being. There's more happening to you in this state of stillness than you*

realize. Be at peace and know that you are receiving the gift of my atonement, all is well.” So my friends don’t be concerned if you seem to fall asleep especially after you have enough sleep during the night prior to your awaking early to seek the face of the Lord. It may well be that what you think asleep is just a deeper level this stillness were the Lord can more thoroughly and completely complete this miracle of transformation.

I think it’s important for us to realize that the Lord works with us each individually in a very intimate and particular way. We get into trouble when we compare ourselves and where we are and with others that seem to have greater spiritual gifts and spirituality. This is always a trap and leads to the sin of pride. We need to constantly remind ourselves that we’re on our own individual journey and that it is specific to us. The Lord will work with us and speak to us in a way that will bless us the most and bring us to a place where he can give us those things that he desires and that we seek for and ask for. Be careful to not compare yourself to anyone else. Everyone is on their own journey and having their own full and complete experience in this Telestial world – schoolhouse. We need to be reminded again and again that the Lord does not work with groups, but works with individuals, one on one. They also need to remind us that he lives in a dimension where he can spend as much time as possible with everyone as though they were the only ones with whom he was interacting. I know that we can’t understand that at our current place in this realm, but I’ve learned that that is true. Those in the heavenly realm are never in a rush. Those who have completed their Telestial experience, whether here still on the earth or in the spirit world, do not hurry. They are not in a rush and there is no haste in that it heavenly realm. I know that seems to be counter to some of the things we talked about. That’s why I said that those who have completed their Telestial experience in the 2nd estate are the ones I’m referring to. Angels are not in a hurry. Translated beings are not in a hurry. The spirits of just men and women made perfect are not in a hurry. Time as we measure it in this world is not the same dimensional experience for them. They live in a different dimension and abide by different laws. When you encounter them you will never feel rushed nor any haste that comes from them.

I’d like to take a few minutes and invite Margie to come and share with you some marvelous experiences that she’s had and that open the door for me to receive wonderful things from the heavenly realm. The Lord taught her this while we are on a mission in the Philippines. She shared it with me and we both have used this now many many times, she daily and me almost daily, as we seek from the face of the Lord and converse with him through the veil.

Margie:

As Mike said, one morning when we were in the Philippines on a mission I was downstairs studying in the *Book of Mormon* and I was reading about counseling and that was given. And I thought, you know, I might want to receive some counsel from my heavenly father direct to me. And I started to think about my patriarchal blessing and I thought, wow. I would like to receive a patriarchal blessing direct from my heavenly father and just see what he has for me. So I sat down, and I sometimes I have a hard time concentrating, so I thought, well I will just go ahead and type my thoughts into my computer as I have them and as they came. So I sat down at my

computer, I asked, typed out, heavenly father I would really like to receive some counseling direction from you. Then all of a sudden it just poured into my mind all of these thoughts and I recorded it as they came to my mind and it was heavenly father talking to me. I had never done this before. (10:04) Later when Mike came down and I shared with him what happened. He said, "Wow, that's not you. You don't speak like that." He said, "That's beautiful." And of course I said, "Well, thanks a lot; you don't think I'm that good." But, it wasn't, it was almost scriptural. And it was such a comfort to me. While I didn't go back and do that again for a couple years and all of a sudden we're having some issues with the kids in trying to knowing exactly what we should be doing and I went to the Lord again and I'll need some counsel. And I said, "I think I had better write this down, because when I feel impressions, a lot of times I forget. I said, do you mind if I get my computer and the thought was, *go ahead*, so I pulled out my laptop and I started writing. And it was just amazing. And I found out that it was valuable to me because I could go back and read and reread what I was given. Fast-forward ahead again several months, I thought this was something special and you don't very often for things like that. But I began to draw closer and closer to the Lord in my way, and everybody's ways are different. And this is how it worked for me so don't think this is the only way to it, and everybody should, it's not. Hopefully this will be a revelatory trigger for you to come up with something that works for you. This works for me because my memory is not always that great at the moment. Anyway, I started arising earlier and earlier so I could spend more uninterrupted time with the Lord. And I found that each time I wanted to write because I would forget when I was told. And so I remember the phrase, conversing with the Lord through the veil, it just kept going over and over in my mind and I thought I am not pausing enough, I'm just getting up and talking so fast and telling the Lord everything; and then I asked him a question and then I continue on. And so I decided to slow down and to say something and then wait and see what comes into my mind. Each time that I do that now, I sit down at my computer. I also found out that the more gratitude I express to my heavenly father the more close I become to him. So I started each morning after I pray and thank heavenly father for when it happened the day before and what's going on in my life, I get out my computer and I start writing everything that I'm grateful for, and I tried to write something that I hadn't written the day before. (12:29) Then I asked father if I can spend some time with him in conversation. And I'll type my name and then I write my question on my thought and then I put His name and then I type whatever comes into my mind. And I had some really neat experience. Every time he answers my questions and it's just become something I look forward to care each morning, to spend time conversing with him. And I going into my scripture study and sometimes I'll stop, and say I need to visit with you a little more and I write it down. And the neat thing is: I have that as a record. One morning I was just conversing with him and I said I really don't have anything than, I just want to spend some time with you because I enjoy that. And then the thought was, "*Why don't you ask me about your children?*" And I thought, "Oh, Okay, I can do that." So I started going down through each one and he gave me what I needed to tell each one of those, except for one son, which I felt was quite interesting. One son, he says, "Go to Mike and I will have... tell Mike what he needs to visit with his son about." So we've had some really neat things and I'm very careful now to ask more about my children, and more about people around. I started out by just asking about me, asking, help me, me, me. And I thought that's not what I'm

here to do. I need to help the people around me, like so many of you do and I've heard you do. You get up and you tell the Lord, "*Here I am. Use me up. What can I do for you today?*" So like I said, I'm sure everybody has their own way of doing it. Mike asked me to share my ways, so that's just what works for me. And some mornings I just get up and tell the Lord, "I'm here, teach me." And then I'm silent and when the words come I write them down so that I can read and rereading them, and have that record to refer to. And often I go back and find out, *whoa, I forgot about that*. So I hope that will help somebody perhaps along their path that will help them come to a way that they can converse with the Lord in their own particular way and manner. Because I think each person will receive individually how they need to converse with the Lord. Here's just one away that I found it works for me. (14:45)

Thanks, Marty, that is beautiful. Let's go back over to first Nephi chapter 1 and look again at verse 20.

1 Nephi 1:

20 And 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. (This part right here) But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance. (15:24)

This is what we call in the *Book of Mormon* and *thus we see statement*. Now is called that because the majority of these types of statements begin with the words *thus we see*. Even though those words are not used in this particular verse is that type of statement. The *thus we see* statements are inspired commentaries by the speaker who summarizes the message of the material prior to the statement. These are unique to the *Book of Mormon* and there are many many of them. We need to learn to recognize these statements as we move through chapter to chapter. Go to Helaman and chapter 12 and let me show you a great example of that *thus we see* statements. Helaman chapter 12 verse 1.

Helaman 12:

***1 And thus we can behold* (that is a *thus we see* statement even though the words are not exact) *how false, and also the unsteadiness of the hearts of the children of men; ...* (Look at verse 2)**

2 Yea, and we may see...

There's another one of those, so you have 2 of those heads up statements at the beginning of the first 2 verses in Helaman. If you will go over the page and if you look at verse 3 you can see, "***And thus we see...***" So one of the ways in studying the *Book of Mormon* is to pay attention to these inspired commentaries, these summaries made by the person who's teaching us. They are very very important in understanding the message that the teacher wants to convey. It's also very important that in our study of the *Book of Mormon* that we use all of that helps that have been given to us by our Father and his son, Jesus Christ, through the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints who has the commission to publish the *Book of Mormon* and distributed throughout the world. Chapter headings, even though the chapter headings were not on the original

commentary by the writers of the *Book of Mormon* and they were added in our day by inspired men, general authorities, and other scholars; they are helpful to give you a quick summary of what was found in the chapter. So I would encourage you that as you begin to read a chapter that you read the chapter heading and even underline and circle some of the things in the chapter heading that you feel impressed or that the Lord impresses upon you there important for you to understand. Another thing is the footnotes. You want to pay attention to the footnotes. You'll have many footnotes there that have JST, that refers to the Joseph Smith translation, not so much in the *Book of Mormon* but in other places as we cross reference the *Book of Mormon*, with the *Bible*, the Old and New Testament, with the *Doctrine and Covenants*, with the *Pearl of Great Price*, because as you have seen we will use all of the canon of Scripture and interweave it as we study the main focus of the *Book of Mormon - another Testament for Christ*.

First Nephi chapter 2 talks about Lehi taking his family into the wilderness. They leave their property and leave Jerusalem behind. Verse one, the Lord commands Lehi, because of his faithfulness in doing very difficult thing, even at the risk of his own life which all of these ancient prophets and modern prophets have experienced and that is fulfilling the command of God as given to them particular to the people that they live among. Even the Prophet Joseph Smith in doing this lost his life, but they were faithful in the things that they had done. Look at the verse 2,

1 Nephi 2:

2 And 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.

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

Brothers and sisters, this is what we call the day a *callout*. The *callout* principal that is discussed in many places among the Latter-Day Saints is a true scriptural principle. In all of the various books of Scripture you can see examples of *the callout* that has been passed down to us. The Jaradites were called out from the civilization of Nimrod at the time of the tower and were called into wilderness. This is a small group to escape the problems of that society. Lehi and his little colony are *called out* from the general populace of the Jews of Jerusalem because of an impending destruction. The members of the church in the New Testament time were warned by Jesus as he sat with his apostles about the Mount of Olives. And he prophesied that the temple of Herod would be completely laid to waste so that would not be one stone left standing upon another stone. This was fulfilled in 70 A.D. as a Roman 10th Legion and others came in under Titus and completely wiped out the city of Jerusalem with its beloved temple. Vast numbers of the Jewish population were put under the sword and it said that the streets ran red with their blood. Those who survived the sword were carried away into Roman captivity. That began what was known as the Diaspora, the scattering of the Jews throughout the world. The members of the church that time heeded the words of Jesus, treasured those words up, and so when they saw certain signs being fulfilled they with their families left before the destruction and went north

into what is today modern Jordan to a place called Pella – P-E-L-L-A. And they escape the destruction of the Roman armies and survived because they were *called out* into a place of safety and avoiding the destruction. The Latter-Day Saints in our own day were *called out* from the eastern United States and the central Mississippi River states on the east side. And were callout into Mexico and into a mountain wilderness before the Lord poured out the desolation and destruction that we call the Civil War, the war between the North and the South. So there have always been examples of callouts and the Lord has prepared places of safety for those who love him and keep his commandments.

With these patterns firmly fixed it is not difficult for us to see that a future callout of the righteous from among the wicked will be applicable. The only question that comes out is how that's going to take place. There are many many theories; and I've heard these and read them over the years; and we discuss and debate these things endlessly as to whether is going to be a church callout from the church headquarters; where were going to go; when it's going to happen; how it will proceed; what the rest of the environment around those who are callout looks like; and endlessly, etc., etc., etc. I would like to propose to you today, brothers and sisters, that more important than a *callout* is a *call-up*. The Lord has said in sacred places that his saints would be chosen and called up. If we experience the call-up, you'll have no need to worry about call out. The call out without the call up is worrisome. There is always the feeling of the unknown, widespread speculation and frenzied and frantic movements as we tried to discern the signs of the times and get the jump on the nearest disaster before it claims us and our families. If we seek the Lord and his counsel and learn to speak with him and having converse with us wherever the place of safety is it has been prepared for you and others you will know in advance not because of the words of another moral necessarily but because of the whisperings of the still small voice of the light of Christ and the Holy Ghost which will lead us carefully surely and successfully in the places of refuge and safety when the Lord pours out wrath upon the nations without measure. We're concentrating too much on physical preparations when the Lord has taught us that an eternal law is spiritual before physical. If we can get our priorities back in shape and spend our priorities first of all in spiritual preparation the physical preparations will take care of themselves. You won't have to worry about empty shelves at a future day. You won't have to worry about sharing your closely guarded and stored foods with others outside your family. You will know by the spirit of prophecy and by revelation what you should do. And when you put the call-up before the call out, you will not worry; you will stress; you will sleep well at night; you will get caught up in the anxiety of those who emphasize physical preparations before spiritual. I would like to invite us all to reevaluate how we view the coming days and seek more the face of the Lord and to be called up into his presence to be instructed from on high from Him knows all things and in that process you will also automatically be physically prepared, emotionally, psychologically for anything that's coming. I once asked the Lord the following question: it appears as though prophesied events are moving quickly into a stage of fulfillment, why is it that I don't feel the urgency nor the haste that such conditions would seem to necessitate? This is August 30 of this year and here's what he said, *Depending upon the state of progression, each individual finds themselves in, they experience their journey in different dimensional positions.*

Those who are journeying in the Telestial condition will experience urgency, haste, confusion, fear, anxiety, and dread. This is the cultural condition of the Telestial world. Those who have come up to a Terrestrial condition, even though living in a Telestial world, will experience peace, optimism, order, wisdom, and a deep spiritual understanding. This is how you can have peace in me, but not as the world giveth. The timing of events in the Telestial world still move along in a linear pattern but your experience in this time differs depending on what level of progression you find yourself. That was very helpful in enabling to look at my own life, and the lives of my family, and the lives of those that I interact with. Notice back to first Nephi chapter 2 verse 4.

1 Nephi 2:

4 And 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 departed into the wilderness.

That a strong case for tent cities, isn't it? Many have seen in visions, the days that are coming, where valleys were filled from one edge to the other with tents as refugees from other places flowed into places of safety to escape the desolation that was taking place behind them. Let's go down to verse 6;

1 Nephi 2:

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

One of the things I've trained myself to do, brothers and sisters, and it has been good for me as I've studied the Scriptures, is I've learned to stop and look and ask questions. I'm not in a rush when I read. That enables me to receive the spirit of inspiration and to formulate a question. The question I had in verse 6 is: Why they travel 3 days in the wilderness; why not 4; why not 2; why not 6 or 8; why 3 days? And I believe that the Lord instructs us in the use of numbers throughout all the Scriptures. For example the number 3 means the following: what is real, what is essential, what is perfect, what is substantial, what is complete. **(30:05)** Thus the 3 days becomes a symbol of complete separation of Lehi's colony from the wickedness of the Jews. No other number would symbolically represent that, showing that he was obedient to the point where he left everything behind, whet into an unknown area and completely separated himself from his society from those that he knew in Jerusalem and perhaps other family members that made fun and mocked his calling for the Lord to depart. As we go throughout the Scriptures we will pay attention to numbers and their significance and what they mean.

Another evidence of the origins of the *Book of Mormon* text can be found in verses 8, 9 and 10. These are what scholars call symbolic. They camp at a place he calls, *the river of Laman*.

1 Nephi 2:

8) ...and it emptied into the Red Sea; and the valley was in the borders near the mouth thereof.

It's Now if you look down at your footnotes you'll start to see some information there, especially when we move in to verse 9,

1 Nephi 2:

9 And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea, ...

Look at your footnotes down there; the fount or resource, like the Gulf of Aqaba, which empties into 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!

Now this manner of speech is not common in Western societies but it is in eastern. Where they will take physical object, in this case a river, and how it runs into the Red Sea and use that to describe attributes and characteristics or failings in people. And you can see that in verse 9 is that Lehi is teaching Laman in a way that Laman understands very well this manner of speech. The *Book of Mormon* talks about this as *speech after the manner of the Jews* and is a very powerful teaching method and the teacher and those that are taught to understand perfectly what the messages to be conveyed. Look at verse 10.

1 Nephi 2:

10 And he also spake unto Lemuel: O that thou mightest be like unto this valley ...

So Laman is likened unto a river running into the Red Sea, the fountain of all righteousness; and Lemuel is likened unto a valley, then look at the characteristics and attributes.

..., firm and steadfast, and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord!

This the great manner of teaching and to those who are scholars of the *Book of Mormon*, especially those who have expertise in the Hebrew language and the culture of the Middle East, this becomes a very powerful statement as to the proof and authenticity that this book is an ancient origin. Now let us go to verse 11.

1 Nephi 2:

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

That's what Laman and Larry will call it. I would agree, but take off the word *foolish* and emphasize the words and *imaginations of his heart*. We'll talk a little bit about those kinds of

things. This power to be able to bring up images in the mind is inherent in each one of us. You may want to do a little quick study into the pineal gland in the human body. It's a very fascinating gland. All ancient societies said that the pineal gland is the 3rd eye, or the *Book of Mormon* might call the eye of faith. It enables us to see things that you can't see with the physical eye. And, so Laman and Lemuel are accusing Lehi of being a visionary man. To me that's a great compliment. I hope that my children will refer to me in a future day as a visionary man.

I want to go with you back to the word stiffnakedness. And share a little quote about that term. Listen to this statement on stiff nakedness; means that were not only an error but we are decidedly committed to remaining so. We won't budge, won't humble ourselves and asked the Lord to remove our scales of darkness. We just remain devoted disciples of unbelief, leading in turn to our wickedness born upon the shoulders of our ignorance. What a spectacle we are when seen in the light of the Holy Ghost. Isn't that a great statement? Stiffnakedness is the offspring of unbelief. Unbelief is the great barrier that effectively stops progress heavenward.

There is a difference between unbelief and faithlessness. If I were to speak to somebody about a miracle from God, say, one that had been in the New Testament, raising Lazarus from the dead. There will be some people after listening to that account that would say, *I don't believe that ever happen. I think that's a lie.* That's faithlessness. Others would say, *I believe that really happened. I believe that Jesus raised the dead, but I don't think I ever could.* So unbelief is more personal. It's that which you get when you look in the mirror as you compare what happened to others. See all the great miracles that are found in the Scriptures. You see men and women who have seen the face of God, and you believe without a doubt that that happened to them, but the problem is: you don't believe it could ever happen to you. That's unbelief.

We talk about receiving our 2nd comforter blessings, that we been encouraged to seek for, or the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, or after calling election make sure, any of the great promises that the Lord has given us in the Scriptures that we should seek for, and you understand the doctrine and you believe that others can receive this, but when you think about them coming to yourself you just can't quite see that – unbelief. Verse 12.

1 Nephi 2:

12 And thus Laman and Lemuel, being the eldest, did murmur against their father. (And, here's a great Scripture right now) ***And they did murmur because they knew not the dealings of that God who had created them.***

That's a great key in understanding right there. That in our day in and day out journey in this world, if we don't take time to avail ourselves of the things that the Lord has made available to us in this world, if we remain ignorant because our priorities are misplaced, or we're lazy, or any other reason to where we do not embrace what God has given: the Scriptures, the words of the holy prophets and apostles, that above all that we don't see for personal revelation, you will land

up in stiffnakedness, unbelief and in a murmuring condition. Why, because you don't know the dealings of God who has created you and his interactions with his children recorded in history. This is one of the main reasons it was so important for them to return to Jerusalem as we'll see here few verses to obtain the sacred brass plates.

Let's put your finger right here and go to Mosiah chapter 5 and let's look at verse 13. This would be a good cross reference *first Nephi chapter 2 verse 12*.

Mosiah 5:13

13 For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart?

Isn't that a great Scripture? That ties in where it says, *they murmured because they did not know the dealings of that God who had created them*. Let us not fall into that trap, my brothers and sisters. Let's avail ourselves in a priority manner concerning the things of the Lord has given us while in this existence. Look at verse 15.

1 Nephi 2:

15 And my father dwelt in a tent.

Reminds me of the shortest verse in the New Testament over in John, two words, *Jesus wept*. Why do you think that Mormon and Nephi, and the great chroniclers of the *Book of Mormon* felt that it was important to put this in there, *and my father dwelt in a tent*? You think there's something more than living in this tent that he took with him into the wilderness? Can I give you some thoughts on that? One of the things I thought was that Lehi gave up all now to inherit all later; underlying the words all. He gave up all now to inherit all later. And he certainly did give it all up because in verse 4 the only thing he took with him, and he is a wealthy man; probably a well-known merchant and trader throughout the Middle East, but he takes only is family, his provisions and his tents and departs in the wilderness. Even the provisions you shall see here pretty quick run out. So he didn't carry a whole lot with him. Also thought that if you want to be a king in eternity you need to be a servant in mortality. Those who seek to be kings in mortality in all likelihood will end up servants in eternity- One of the great paradoxes of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now verse 16 is one of the notable Scriptures in all of the *Book of Mormon*. We need to pay close attention to it.

1 Nephi 2:

16 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, being exceedingly young, nevertheless being large in stature,...

I don't know what you picture on that, but I picture he's probably 16 years old or 17 years of age, thereabouts, and also this part right here.

...and also having great desires to know of the mysteries of God,

Where did this young man come up with these great desires? Where did this young man come up with these great desires to know God's mysteries? It's obvious that his brothers, Laman and Lemuel, didn't have those desires. It's also obvious from a later account that Sam had more of those desires than his older brethren. The question comes up, where did they come from? I think we can go back and realize that Nephi's father is a king and priest in the holy order, the patriarchal order of the Melchizedek priesthood. And being such a father, he would teach his sons and his daughters in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And as soon as he discerned that they were ready he would teach with them and share with them the great secrets of our Father in heaven, the mysteries, and seek for his sons to receive a witness of what he taught them. I know that Lehi spent time teaching his sons how he was able to have that great experience where he's taken into the presence of God in the first chapter of first Nephi and sees the father, the son, the 12 future apostles who administer with the Lord in his New Testament ministry, the sacred book, and other things and not only did he relate to his sons what he saw but I know he taught them how to access that for themselves. Otherwise Nephi would've never had such great desires if he didn't know somebody who had this experience and is willing to share with them. This is the beauty of us sharing under the direction of the spirit the experiences we have with the Lord and with a heavenly host. Satan has had a great success in the past among us by saying these things are so sacred that they should never be spoken of. When in reality the Scriptures testify that we are to speak of them and we are to testify that we've received them. It just needs to be done under the same spirit that gave you that experience in the first place and that's the spirit of prophecy and revelation. If I had not met and known of people who were not apostles, who we're prophets, who were not mission presidents, temple presidents, state presidents and/or bishops; if I had not met people who were not in any of those leadership capacities who had these experiences, I would've never had the confidence myself to come up and make the attempt for myself to experience the same. My great desire to rend the veil came because I knew people like me, a common, average Latter-day Saints, without any credentials, without any priesthood authority, or leadership or calling, just baptized members of the church who love the Lord and through that love and obedience, their meekness and holiness are able to come up and view great things. And they share those things with me. And because they share those things with me I have the confidence which then gave birth to the desire for me to obtain the same. Back to verse 16.

1 Nephi 2:

16...wherefore, (that means because of these great desires to know the mysteries of God) ***I did cry unto the Lord; and behold he did visit me,*** (And notice what this visitation resulted in) ***and did soften my heart that I did believe all the words which had been spoken by my father;*** (and this little side note) ***wherefore, I did not rebel against him like unto my brothers.***

(46:02) And the two brothers, and Sam is not included in that. You will see Sam in the next verse, so Laman and Lemuel are the rebels. But notice of sequence: number one, he had a desire to know the mysteries of God; number 2, he cried and to the Lord; number 3, the Lord visited him; number 4, that visitation softened his heart; number 5, I believed all the words which had

been spoken by my father; and number 6, I did not rebel against him. See that list. See that sequence there. Also indicates that prior to this visitation that even Nephi had experienced some doubt in the things that he was hearing his father say. Otherwise, why the emphasis on *I did believe*? If he believed right up front there would've been no need to soften in his heart and go through this whole experience. This purpose was to soften Nephi's heart, give him knowledge and confidence and make them steadfast and immovable for the events that are going to unfold in the next few chapters. **(47:15)**

I will also say that this verse says that the Lord did visit Nephi; that is not a personal appearance. As we'll see in verse 17; go with me to verse 17.

1 Nephi 2:

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

That's a direct reference back up to where it says he did visit me. Nephi received a personal revelation through the Holy Spirit, which is also known as the still small voice. You, brothers and sisters, who are conversing with the Lord to the veil, are having that very same experience that Nephi did in verse 16. You are having the Lord visit you. And isn't it interesting that after any one of those visitations where the Lord communes with you through the veil you can't remain the same. Your heart is softened, your whole demeanor is more gentle, there's more humility, and more meekness, and more loneliness of heart. Because you cannot encounter the spiritual realm in any degree and come away from that less you were physically, spiritually, emotionally, or psychologically. It's a changing experience, a transitioning transformation, and that is what the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ does. The bottom of verse 17 of these beautiful words:

... And it came to pass that he (Sam) believed in my words.

Now that Sam has access to one of the marvelous gifts of the spirit. Go with me to Doctrine and Covenants section 46 and let's look at verses 13 and 14. It doesn't tell us that Sam had the same experience that Nephi did. I can only assume that that is because he did not meet the same criteria for receiving that experience that Nephi did. That doesn't mean that Sam is one whit behind his brother. It just means that he simply in a different place in his journey. You don't look once you've graduated from elementary school and you're now into high school, you don't look upon those who are in junior high or kindergarten or elementary school and say, what's wrong with them? It's just that they're at their place in their journey and that's where Sam is. But he does have access to one of the marvelous gifts of the spirit spoken in this list in section 46 verse 13.

D&C 46:

13 To some it is given by the Holy Ghost to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world. (Now verse 14, here we go, is this Sam's gift?)

14 To others it is given to believe on their words, that they also might have eternal life if they continue faithful.

Well if they continue faithful they will have the very same experience of the person who testified to them because that is the course of God, an eternal round. Nephi shares his beautiful experience also with Laman and Lemuel in verse 18.

1 Nephi 2:

18 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.

19 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: Blessed art thou, Nephi, because of thy faith,...

Now, here is one of the keys, also, to approaching the veil and accessing the powers of heaven. You have to seek the Lord. There are other places in the Scriptures where it says the Lord is hidden. So what we have is spiritual pattern for the game - hide and seek. And all of the scriptural reference where the Lord uses the phrase *ask, seek, and knock*. The Interpretation of all those is: *ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you*. But in section 88 verse 63 it says this:

D&C 88:

63 Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; (right here) seek me diligently (this is the only place where it says, seek me) and ye shall find me; () ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

This is what Nephi is being taught here.

1 Nephi 2:

19...for thou hast sought me diligently, with lowliness of heart.

Let's go over to Matthew chapter 11 and let's look at verse 29 through 30. Matthew 11:28, 29, and 30.

Matthew 11:

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek (here we go) and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

This is the same thing, because when you find the rest that Matthew's speaking of here, you have found the Lord for entering into his presence is one of the indicators of *entering into the rest of the Lord*. Go with me and one other place, Moroni chapter 8 and let's look at verse 25 and 26. Remember this loneliness of heart verse 25.

Moroni 8:

25 And the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins; (watch this sequence. All of this is a sequence, one following the other)

*26 And the remission of sins bringeth meekness, **and lowliness of heart**; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God.*

It would be well for you to look into and get a deeper feeling for this term *lowliness of heart*. Now in verse 20 comes the great promise of the *Book of Mormon*. All Through the *Book of Mormon*, all of the people Nephi referred to this promise given early in their history to their fathers.

1 Nephi 2:

20 And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise; ...

I want you to underline the word 'a'. It doesn't say 'the', it says 'a'. There are many lands of promise and the Lord takes his people and leads them away to these lands as they fulfill the requirements for being led.

...yea, even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands.

There is a great parallel in the Scripture concerning *the land of promise*. Let's go down and look at the next couple verses, and I'll come back that.

1 Nephi 2:

21 And inasmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord.

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

Let's stop there for just a minute. All through the Scriptures from Adam on up to Joseph Smith, it's been the younger brother in the family who ends up being the inheritor in the ruler and teacher over his older brother. What an interesting pattern that is. If you will ponder... that can lead you to some of the mysteries of God. Also this nation that in the latter-days the Promised Land will be what's called the United States of America. Now Joseph Smith said that all of North American and South America is the land of Joseph. But the Promised Land spoken of in the *Book of Mormon* is the United States of America from the Canadian border on the north, to the Mexican border on the South, from the Atlantic on the east, to the Pacific on the west. In our day of comparatively young nation compared to its older brothers, could you see that in our day America is a teacher and a ruler throughout the world? When God established its government and its sacred Constitution those documents and principles were exported throughout many many

countries throughout the world. Those who did not harden their hearts against godly principles adopted the U.S. Constitution in their own countries and it is blessed and prospered there lands exceedingly. What a great pattern that is, Nephi and his family are being led to this land choice above all other lands and told that there prosper. And as Nephi becomes a ruler and a teacher over his older brother and so when latter day with the great land of promise become a ruler teacher among all the nations of the world. Verse 23

1 Nephi 2:

23 For behold, in that day that they shall rebel against me, (meaning Laman and Lemuel) 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.

They good definition of a curse as is used throughout the Scripture is simply it's opposite a blessing. So where there is an absence of a blessing there is the presence of a curse. Notice that this sets the stage in verse 24

1 Nephi 2:

24 And if it so be that they (meaning Nephi's seed) rebel against me, they (meaning the Lamanites) shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them (the Nephites) up in the ways of remembrance.

Let's read that again. *If it's so be that they the Nephites rebel against me, they the Lamanites shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them the Nephites up in the ways of remembrance.* Now this is a principle that is operative all throughout mankind. We can see it best representative, will go over to Helaman 11 chapter 12 and let's look at the *thus verse we see statement* and in verse 2 look for this scourge. By the way the Hebrew word for scourge is whip – W-H-I-P. Verse 2,

Helaman 12:

2 Yea, and we may see (that's a thus we may see statement) at the very time when he (the Lord) doth prosper his people, (and here are the various ways he prospered them anciently. And you can easily see their counterparts in our day) yea, in the increase of their fields, their flocks and their herds, and in gold, and in silver, and in all manner of precious things of every kind and art; (this part right here) sparing their lives, and delivering them out of the hands of their enemies;

I don't care who you are as long as you're in the Telestial world and you're striving to live righteously, keep God's commandments. There is never going to be a time when you do not have enemies, both physical and spiritual. So what the Lord promises if we will do what he asks. He will deliver us out of the hands of our enemies. How does he do that, look?

...softening the hearts of their enemies that they should not declare wars against them; yea, and in fine, doing all things for the welfare and happiness of his people; yea, then is the time that they do harden their hearts, and do forget the Lord their God, and do trample under their feet the Holy One—yea, and this because of their ease, and their exceedingly great prosperity.

Now look at this... Thus we see statement...

3 And thus we see that except the Lord doth chasten (let's put in that place – scourge and whip) his people with many afflictions, yea, except he doth visit them with death and with terror, and with famine and with all manner of pestilence, they will not remember him.

Now, here we are, and let's look at past in the United States of America in the land of promise. We are the counterpart in the *Book of Mormon* to the ancient Nephites. They were favored by the Lord because of their willingness to keep the commandments because of their love the Lord and his father. But we see that the minute that they start to leave that favored status and their enemies come in and start to whip them and making war against them and to scourge them even with death and terror and famine if they survived that scourging then they'll come out the other end humbled because of that because there situation puts them in a place where they have nowhere else to turn. And we begin the cycle one more time. I love what the Lord says when he talks about verse 4.

Helaman 12:

4 O how foolish, and how vain, and how evil, and devilish, and how quick to do iniquity, and how slow to do good, are the children of men; yea, how quick to hearken unto the words of the evil one, and to set their hearts upon the vain things of the world!

5 Yea, how quick to be lifted up in pride; yea, how quick to boast, and do all manner of that which is iniquity; and how slow are they to remember the Lord their God, and to give ear unto his counsels, yea, how slow to walk in wisdom's paths! (Last verse)

6 Behold, they do not desire that the Lord their God, who hath created them, should rule and reign over them; notwithstanding his great goodness and his mercy towards them, they do set at naught (naught means nothingness, worthlessness) his counsels, and they will not that he should be their guide.

(I guess one more verse)

7 O how great is the nothingness of the children of men; yea, even they are less than the dust of the earth.

Now, brothers and sisters, do we have any enemies that seek our destruction? Are there any sabers rattling out there? Are there any rumors of wars and rumors of war? Is there something yet to come that Isaiah talks about, the king of the Syrian, who comes out of the north? We'll talk about him when we get into Isaiah. If we're afflicted with these tyrants, with these dictators, yea, even if the day comes where we, in this promised land, lose our liberties and freedoms for a while, as it seems prophesied that we will, know this is because we have forgotten the holy one and have set at naught his holy councils and will not even created us should rule over us. If that's the case then this injunction of ancient times in verse 24, first Nephi 2:24...

1 Nephi 2:

24 And if it so be that they rebel against me, they (in our day those nations who hate us) shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them (us) up in the ways of remembrance.

This is what I call *the great day of take it away*. It is a sad thing to contemplate but it appears that is as yet on our horizon. Well, I hope that this lesson has been a beneficial one to you. I love you.

I'm thankful for your desire to participate with us in our study the great *Book of Mormon - Another Testament of Christ*. May our father bless you to always seek him as you study this great book. When you read about it and you know that you're going to be reading about Lehi or Nephi or Alma or Amulik is anything wrong with asking the Lord that the spirits of these great men attend you. Is anything wrong with seeking to have Alma being with you as you study this book? Can Alma from where he is reached for in ways we don't understand and bless those that live in our day and are reading his words and trying to comprehend his message. I give that with you to contemplate. May the Lord bless you this week. I pray in his holy name even, Jesus Christ. Amen.