

# THE BOOK OF MORMON

## THE FIRST BOOK OF NEPHI

### HIS REIGN AND MINISTRY

*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 returneth to the land of Jerusalem after the record of the Jews. The account of their sufferings. They take the daughters of Ishmael to wife. They take their families and depart into the wilderness. Their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness. The course of their travels. They come to the large waters. Nephi's brethren rebel against him. He confoundeth them, and buildeth a ship. They call the place Bountiful. They cross the large waters into the promised land, &c. This is according to the account of Nephi; or in other words, I, Nephi, wrote this record.*

#### CHAPTER 1.

*Lehi's vision of the pillar of fire and the book of prophecy—He predicts the impending fate of Jerusalem, and foretells the coming of the Messiah—The Jews seek his life.*

1. I, 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, therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days.

2. Yea, I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the

Jews and the "language of the Egyptians.

3. And I know that the record which I make is true; and I make it with mine own hand; and I make it according to my knowledge.

4. For it came to pass in the commencement of the "first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, (my father, Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days); and in that same year there came "many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed.

5. Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea,

a, Mos. 1:4. Morm. 9:32. b, 2 Kings 24:17, 18. c, 2 Chron. 36:15, 16.

even with all his heart, in behalf of his people.

6. And 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.

7. And 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.

8. And 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.

9. And 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 noon-day.

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

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

12. And it came to pass that as he read, he was filled with the Spirit of the Lord.

13. And 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.

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

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

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

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

18. Therefore, I would that ye should know, that after the

*d*, 2 Chron. 36:17—20. Jer. 39:1—9. *e*, 1 Ne. 6:1. *f*, 1 Ne. 6:1. 9:2—5. 10:1. 19:1—6. 2 Ne. 5:29—33. Jac. 1:1—4. 3:13, 14. 4:1, 2. 7:26, 27. Enos 13, 15—18. Jar. 14, 15. W. of Morm. 1—11. ABOUT B. C. 600.

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.

19. And 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.

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. 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.

## CHAPTER 2.

*Lehi departs with his family into the wilderness bordering on the Red Sea—His elder sons, Laman and Lemuel, murmur against him—Nephi and Sam believe his words—The Lord's promises to Nephi.*

1. For behold, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto my father, yea, even in a dream, and said unto him: Blessed art thou Lehi, because of the things which thou hast done; and because thou hast been faithful and declared unto this people the things which I commanded thee,

behold, they seek to take away thy life.

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 that he was obedient unto the word of the Lord, wherefore he did as the Lord commanded him.

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.

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

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

7. And it came to pass that he built an altar of stones, and made an offering unto the Lord, and gave thanks unto the Lord our God.

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

9. And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea, he spake unto Laman, say-

ing: O that thou mightest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all righteousness!

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

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 the foolish imaginations of his heart.

12. And 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.

13. Neither 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 who were at Jerusalem, who sought to take away the life of my father.

14. And it came to pass that my father did speak unto them in the 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 as he commanded them.

15. And my father dwelt in a tent.

16. And 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, 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.

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

18. But, behold, Laman and Lemuel would not hearken unto my words; and being 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, for thou hast sought me diligently, with lowliness of heart.

20. And 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 all other lands.

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.

23. For behold, in that day that they shall rebel against me, I will curse them even with a

a, 1 Ne. 18:22, 23. Eth. 1:42. 2:7—12. b, 2 Ne. 5:20. Al. 9:13. 14. 38:1. c, 1 Ne. 3:29. 2 Ne. 5:19. d, 1 Ne. 12:22, 23. 2 Ne. 5:21—25. Al. 3:6—19. 17:15. 3 Ne. 2:15, 16. Morm. 5:15. ABOUT B. C. 600.

sore curse, and they shall have no power over thy seed except they shall rebel against me also.

24. And 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.

### CHAPTER 3.

*Lehi's sons sent back to Jerusalem to obtain the plates of brass—Laban refuses to deliver the plates—Laman and Lemuel reproved by an angel.*

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

2. And 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.

3. For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews and also a genealogy of thy forefathers, and they are engraven upon plates of brass.

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

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

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

7. And 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.

8. And 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.

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

10. And it came to pass that when we had come up to the land of Jerusalem, I and my brethren did consult one with another.

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

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

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

14. But Laman fled out of his presence, and told the things which Laban had done, unto us. And we began to be 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

<sup>a</sup>, 1 Ne. 3:12, 19, 20, 24. 4:24, 38. 5:10—22. 13:23. 19:22. 2 Ne. 4:2. 5:12. Mos. 1:3, 4. 28:20. Al. 37:3—12. 63:1, 11—14. 3 Ne. 1:2. <sup>b</sup>, Josh. 18:6, 10. Judg. 20:9. Acts 1:26. <sup>z</sup>, 1 Ne. 5:14. BETWEEN B. C. 600 AND 592.

down unto our father in the wilderness until we have accomplished the thing which the Lord hath commanded us.

16. Wherefore, let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord; therefore let us go down to the land of our father's 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.

17. For he knew that Jerusalem must be destroyed, because of the wickedness of the people.

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

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

20. And 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.

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

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

23. And after we had gathered

these things together, we went up again unto the house of Laban.

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

25. And it came to pass that when Laban saw our property, and that it was 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.

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

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

28. And it came to pass that Laman was angry with me, and also with my father; and also was Lemuel, for he hearkened unto the words of Laman. Wherefore Laman and Lemuel did speak many hard words unto us, their younger brothers, and they did smite us even with a rod.

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

*c*, 1 Ne. 2:4. *d*, see *d*, 1 Ne. 1. *e*, 1 Ne. 1:2, 3. Mos. 1:4. *f*, 1 Ne. 2:4. 3:16.  
*g*, see *a*. *h*, 1 Ne. 2:22. BETWEEN B. C. 600 AND 592.

30. And after the angel had spoken unto us, he departed.

31. And after 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?

#### CHAPTER 4.

*Nephi secures possession of the plates by stratagem—Laban slain with his own sword—Zoram accompanies Nephi and his brothers into the wilderness.*

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

2. Therefore 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.

3. Now 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.

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

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

6. And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do.

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

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

9. And 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.

10. And 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.

11. And the Spirit said 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.

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

13. Behold the Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is better that one man should perish than

