

November 9–15, 2020

## Ether 1–5

“REND THAT VEIL OF UNBELIEF”

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*Moroni abridges the writings of Ether—Ether’s genealogy set forth—The language of the Jaredites is not confounded at the Tower of Babel—The Lord promises to lead them to a choice land and make them a great nation.*

*The Jaredites prepare for their journey to a promised land—It is a choice land whereon men must serve Christ or be swept off—The Lord talks to the brother of Jared for three hours—They build barges—The Lord asks the brother of Jared to propose how the barges shall be lighted.*

*The brother of Jared sees the finger of the Lord as he touches the sixteen stones—Christ shows his spirit body to the brother of Jared—Those who have a perfect knowledge cannot be kept from within the veil—Interpreters are provided to bring the Jaredite record to light.*

*Moroni is commanded to seal up the writings of the brother of Jared—They shall not be revealed until men have faith even as the brother of Jared—Christ commands men to believe his words and those of his disciples—Men are commanded to repent and believe the gospel and be saved.*

*Three witnesses and the work itself shall stand as a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.*

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### Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

#### Which has more eternal consequence, technology, or the soul?

In giving us the account of the Jaredites, Moroni once again points out the importance of identity. The genealogy of Jared is important as well as the fact that in coming from the Tower of Babel area, Jared’s humility resulted in his language not being confounded. “According to some modern commentators, the building of the tower was an example of man’s extreme pride in his own ability. The building became such an obsession that, according to the Midrash, when a builder fell off the tower to his death, the other builders paid no attention, but when a brick fell, they would cry: ‘When shall another come in its place?’ According to this interpretation, every generation has its own Tower of Babel, when it begins to idolize its technology. The moral of the story is thus as applicable today as it was thousands of years ago.” ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

#### What is a Semitic language?

In spite of the confounding of languages, some patterns of familiarity remain in related languages such as Hebrew, the language of

the scriptures. “Hebrew belongs to the family of Semitic languages. Other members of this family are Arabic and Aramaic, and it is assumed that they all evolved from one language which is known as ‘proto-Semitic.’ Among other connected languages were Ugaritic and Akkadian which are extinct. The name ‘Semitic’ was given to the group in 1781 by the scholar A.L. Schloezzer because all the languages in it are spoken by peoples included among the sons of Shem listed in [Genesis 10:21–29](#). ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

#### What does gathering mean to me?

One characteristic of Semitic people is their family ties. The brother of Jared listened to the Lord as he was told to gather seeds of every kind, gather animals and gather his family. As mentioned in several lessons previously, gathering is a strong metaphor of returning to Heavenly Father’s presence. I noticed that the gathering of this Jaredite family was to the “north” at Nimrod. I immediately thought of the north of Israel, close to the Syrian border, where an old Crusader fortress still stands. It is called Nimrod’s castle. The name of Nimrod is known locally as a Syrian warlord and hunter. The name is used in the Bible. “He was a

mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.” (Genesis 10:9)

### **How do we know the name of the brother of Jared?**

The brother of Jared had a name which has come to us by revelation. “While residing at Kirtland, Elder Reynolds Cahoon had a son born to him. One day when President Joseph Smith was passing his door he called the Prophet in and asked him to bless and name the baby. Joseph did so and gave the boy the name of Mahonri Moriancumer. When he had finished the blessing, he laid the child on the bed, and turning to Elder Cahoon he said, the name I have given your son is the name of the Brother of Jared; the Lord has just shown or revealed it to me. Elder William F. Cahoon, who was standing near heard the Prophet make this statement to his father; and this was the first time the name of the brother of Jared was known in the Church in this dispensation.” (The Juvenile Instructor 27/8 [15April 1892]: 282)

“Mahonri Moriancumer is the name of the Brother of Jared, that mighty prophet who led the Jaredites from the Tower of Babel to their North American promised land. Our present knowledge of the life and ministry of this man, one of the greatest prophets ever to live on earth, is so comparatively slight that we do not even find his name recorded in Moroni’s abridgment of the Book of Ether. It was, however, made known by the spirit of inspiration to the Prophet.” (Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p.463)

“The prophet of the Jaredite colony, Mahonri Moriancumer, commonly referred to as the brother of Jared, spoke of this land as a choice land . . . above all other lands. He indicated that those people who live here should worship the God of this land if they were to enjoy the blessings of freedom and liberty and be free from bondage. Otherwise, if they failed, they were to be swept off. And he proclaimed that this is the everlasting decree of God.” (Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p.575)

### **What is the procedure to faith and works?**

In reviewing the brother of Jared’s faith and works we see a formula emerging that we should follow. It is called the “Mahonri Formula.” 1). Identify the problem. 2). Consider possible solutions. 3). Make yourself worthy—develop humility. 4). Make a specific request. Despite backsliding, the Lord recognized the repentance of the Jaredite family and turned toward them. In fact, due to the humble faith of the brother of Jared, the Lord manifested himself to him. Repentance works! Then, as Moses was shown the “ends of the earth” and was able to see the creation, the beginning to the end, so did the brother of Jared. Moroni was also privileged to see this account. As Jared and his brother turned from their backsliding and reflected humility, they were blessed. So shall the Gentiles be blessed as they return from their backsliding and once again reflect humility.