

January 15-21, 2024

1 Nephi 6–10

“COME AND PARTAKE OF THE FRUIT”

Summary: *1 Nephi 6. Nephi writes of the things of God—Nephi’s purpose is to persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham and be saved. [About 600–592 B.C.]*

1 Nephi 7. Lehi’s sons return to Jerusalem and invite Ishmael and his household to join them in their journey—Laman and others rebel—Nephi exhorts his brethren to have faith in the Lord—They bind him with cords and plan his destruction—He is freed by the power of faith—His brethren ask forgiveness—Lehi and his company offer sacrifice and burnt offerings. [About 600–592 B.C.]

1 Nephi 8. Lehi sees a vision of the tree of life—He partakes of its fruit and desires his family to do likewise—He sees a rod of iron, a strait and narrow path, and the mists of darkness that enshroud men—Sariah, Nephi, and Sam partake of the fruit, but Laman and Lemuel refuse. [About 600–592 B.C.]

1 Nephi 9. Nephi makes two sets of records—Each is called the plates of Nephi—The larger plates contain a secular history; the smaller ones deal primarily with sacred things. [About 600–592 B.C.]

1 Nephi 10. Lehi predicts that the Jews will be taken captive by the Babylonians—He tells of the coming among the Jews of a Messiah, a Savior, a Redeemer—Lehi tells also of the coming of the one who should baptize the Lamb of God—Lehi tells of the death and resurrection of the Messiah—He compares the scattering and gathering of Israel to an olive tree—Nephi speaks of the Son of God, of the gift of the Holy Ghost, and of the need for righteousness. [About 600–592 B.C.]

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

How meaningful is the term “Tree of life” to religious Jews?

The familiarity of the Hebrew title *Etz Chaim* (tree of life) is a shared term in the house of Israel, one in Jewish life, often used to refer to the Bible itself and the other to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. “It is a popular name for synagogues and Jewish schools as well as the title of one of the major works of Jewish mysticism. The first reference to the tree of life in Jewish texts comes from the biblical story of the Garden of Eden. (**Genesis 2:9**) relates that God filled the garden with beautiful and tasty trees, and in the middle planted two in particular — the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the latter of which he

forbade Adam and Eve to eat. The tree of life as a metaphor for the *Torah* comes from the Book of Proverbs, which uses the term three times, the most famous of which is the saying in (**Proverbs 3:18**): *Etz chaim hee l’machazikim bah* (“She is a tree of life to those who grasp her”). This line, referring to the *Torah*, is commonly sung in Ashkenazi (Western Jewish) congregations as the *Torah* is returned to the ark after public readings. In modern times, the term continues to be used widely. Many synagogues and Jewish educational institutions are named *Etz Chaim*. It is also a title of the 2001 *Torah* translation and commentary published by the Conservative movement.”

(<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/what-is-the-tree-of-life-etz-chaim>) In Lehi’s dream, what Latter-day Saints call the tree of life,

represents the love of God and is referred to as the greatest of all the gifts of God (1 Nephi. 8; 11:21–22, 25; 15:36)

How do the words “tree of life,” “fruit,” and “living water” relate?

The imagery of the Tree of Life is strong in Jewish culture. On the precious silver plates that can be found in stores of a few Jewish Scribes in the Old City of Jerusalem there is a “tree” with branches, laden with “fruit” with a stream of “water” flowing by. The words on this small sculpture fashioned as a flat square plate come from the *Talmud* (written biblical Jewish interpretations). They recite part of a parable that a tree watered by “living water,” has precious “fruit” that you would bring your children to partake of. “Adam represents all of mankind; the Garden of Eden, the world; the Tree of Life, the Torah; and the serpent, the evil inclination. Just as Adam is placed in the Garden, in the midst of which stands the Tree of Life, so man is placed in the world in order to observe the commandments of the Torah.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

How has prophecy affected our Israelite family history?

“When the *Torah* (1st five books of the Old Testament, The Law) was given at Mount Sinai, all of Israel experienced direct prophecy. However, that revelation was too powerful for them, and they requested that Moses serve as an intermediary between them and God’s word. Following that model, God sent us other prophets to communicate His messages. Prophecy continued until the beginning of the Second Temple (586 BCE to 70 CE) period. Since then, we have received God’s word with less clarity. One of the indicators of the future redemption will be the return of prophecy to Israel. When the glory of God will be revealed in the future world, all will prophesy, young and old.”

(https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5183322/jewish/Prophecy-in-

[Judaism.htm](#)) “Latter-day Saints believe in both ancient and modern prophecy; indeed, continuing prophetic guidance is held to be a characteristic or sign of the true church. These concepts were an integral part of the LDS Church’s origin and restoration, and they continue to distinguish the Church from many other religious movements” (Encyclopedia of Mormonism [1992], 3:1160)

What can dreams mean to me?

Dreams are one of the means God has of communicating with his children. Some of them, the Prophets, have the responsibility of teaching us what those dreams mean. “Dreams have fascinated people through the ages. The Biblical view was that dreams are divine communication --- events transpiring on a supernatural plane. Thus, dreams were regarded as omens, which could be interpreted only by visionaries or prophets, who were in touch with this ‘divine dimension.’ In the Bible, ‘dreamer,’ ‘prophet,’ and ‘magician’ are related terms.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.) The Biblical accounts of Joseph and Daniel have a great basis in dreams, some irritated family or friends and others brought redemption for people as well as condemnation of people in the lands where they lived. “Joseph was one such interpreter; he explained Pharaoh’s dreams of the fat and thin cows as symbolizing seven years of plenty followed by seven years of hunger (Genesis 41). God’s promise to Abraham about the inheritance of the land of Israel came in a dream (Genesis 15) and Samuel’s first prophecies were stimulated by God’s calling to him in a dream (Samuel 1:3).” “Because of his great wisdom and ability to interpret dreams, Daniel rose to positions of responsibility and honor in the court of kings Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar and Darius. However, as a Jew, he was constantly tormented by his rivals who denounced him for not

worshiping the idols of the land. Daniel's piety and faith in God always stood firm and despite all dangers, he continued to pray daily in the traditional Jewish way. When, as punishment, his enemies cast him into a lion's den, he was prepared to sacrifice his life. The next morning when the king came to see Daniel's fate, he found him calmly reciting." ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

What scriptural imagery does colorful fruit have?

"A part of the first harvest each year of grains and of fruits was to be brought to the Temple in Jerusalem as a thanksgiving offering to God obeying the commandment: 'The choice first fruits of your soil shall you bring to the house of the Lord' ([Exodus 34:33](#))." ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#)) White as a color is a combination of all colors. That may mean a "wholeness" or "completeness." Religious garments used by Jews are often pure white. "In *Ashkenazi* (Western Jewish) tradition it is not just the bride who wears white on her wedding day. The groom, too, stands under the canopy wearing his white *kittel*, or robe, over his wedding finery. The day of their marriage is a solemn one for the bride and groom. They pray that their past sins will be forgiven, and they can start their life together afresh. The white of their clothing symbolizes the purity and the forgiveness of sin for which they are hoping. For this reason, a similar garment is used to clothe the dead for burial. The *kittel* therefore also serves to remind the wearer of how brief life is, and of the necessity for atonement." ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#)) The white bread used for the Sabbath apparently has to be sweet also.

What is the special Sabbath bread called?

"Rabbinic tradition made *hallah* (Sabbath bread) a special *mitzvah* (blessing and

commandment) for women. Today the word is generally used to mean the white Sabbath and festival loaf. And the *mitzvah* of separating hallah is followed by observant Jews in their bakeries and in homes where the art of baking fresh hallah is still practiced." "Loaves of hallah appear in forms associated with special occasions and different areas. The most distinct special occasion is Passover, when *hallah* appears as *mazzah*, unleavened bread. Dough was often made into symbolic shapes. One example is the bird shape which represents the phrase 'As birds hover, so will the Lord protect Jerusalem' ([Isaiah 31:5](#)). The sweet *hallah*, often round in shape, is traditional for Rosh Ha-Shanah, to symbolize the prayer for a sweet and a full year." ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

What does the scriptural "rod" mean to me?

In the Book of Exodus, the staff (Hebrew: *matteh*) is translated as "rod" in the King James Bible) The word "rod" is one of the symbols of authority. For example: Moses prayed to God, then he lifted up his rod and the waters of the Red Sea parted, and the Israelites crossed safely to the opposite shore. "And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs." ([Exodus 4:17](#)) "But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry [ground] through the midst of the sea." ([Exodus 14:16](#)) "Therefore he was constrained to speak more unto them saying: Behold my brethren, have ye not read that God gave power unto one man, even Moses, to smite upon the waters of the Red Sea, and they parted hither and thither, insomuch that the Israelites, who were our fathers, came through upon dry ground, and the waters closed upon the armies of the Egyptians and swallowed them up?" ([Helaman 8:11](#))

What reason does mockery have no place in true religion?

“We believe that it is necessary for man to be placed in communication with God; that he should have revelation from him . . . I do not wonder that so many men treat religion with contempt, and regard it as something not worth the attention of intelligent beings, for without revelation religion is a mockery and a farce.” **(John Taylor, Gospel Kingdom, Pg.35)**