

January 29-February 4, 2024

1 Nephi 16–22

“I WILL PREPARE THE WAY BEFORE YOU”

Summary: *1 Nephi 16. The wicked take the truth to be hard—Lehi’s sons marry the daughters of Ishmael—The Liabona guides their course in the wilderness—Messages from the Lord are written on the Liabona from time to time—Ishmael dies; his family murmurs because of afflictions. About 600–592 B.C.*

1 Nephi 17. Nephi is commanded to build a ship—His brethren oppose him—He exhorts them by recounting the history of God’s dealings with Israel—Nephi is filled with the power of God—His brethren are forbidden to touch him, lest they wither as a dried reed. About 592–591 B.C.

1 Nephi 18. The ship is finished—The births of Jacob and Joseph are mentioned—The company embarks for the promised land—The sons of Ishmael and their wives join in revelry and rebellion—Nephi is bound, and the ship is driven back by a terrible tempest—Nephi is freed, and by his prayer the storm ceases—The people arrive in the promised land. About 591–589 B.C.

1 Nephi 19. Nephi makes plates of ore and records the history of his people—The God of Israel will come six hundred years from the time Lehi left Jerusalem—Nephi tells of His sufferings and crucifixion—The Jews will be despised and scattered until the latter days, when they will return unto the Lord. About 588–570 B.C.

1 Nephi 20. The Lord reveals His purposes to Israel—Israel has been chosen in the furnace of affliction and is to go forth from Babylon—Compare Isaiah 48. About 588–570 B.C.

1 Nephi 21. The Messiah will be a light to the Gentiles and will free the prisoners—Israel will be gathered with power in the last days—Kings will be their nursing fathers—Compare Isaiah 49. About 588–570 B.C.

1 Nephi 22. Israel will be scattered upon all the face of the earth—The Gentiles will nurse and nourish Israel with the gospel in the last days—Israel will be gathered and saved, and the wicked will burn as stubble—The kingdom of the devil will be destroyed, and Satan will be bound. About 588–570 B.C.

Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

How does God use objects as one of the methods of communication?

With the restoration of revelation through living prophets, we can see the use and re-use of prophetic statements as well as prophetic tools such as the orb-like Liabona and the triangular-shaped Urim and Thummim. As the Liabona was described as a “ball,” it could be compared to the “echo” in the visual reminder of power and authority in many past monarchies – the “orb.” The word is still used in modern English denoting

knowledge and source of guidance through information. There is an “ORB” described in several online statements, as an example. The shape and purposeful use of the Urim and Thummim will be discussed in an upcoming lesson.

What can I see from sea stories?

There are several “sea and storm stories” in the scriptures. Their meanings and lessons for us, nowadays, have a common connection. Noah is saved by the Lord, Enoch was saved by the Lord, Jonah was saved by the Lord, the Apostles on the Sea of Galilee were

saved by the Lord. Nephi was saved by the Lord. Apparently, the lesson is, when “sinking,” remember, we will be saved by the Lord through His gift of the atonement. It suggests a spiritual contemplation of the term, “sinking to new heights.” Let us examine some instances. “And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.” **(Genesis 7:23)** “And it came to pass that when they were buried in the deep there was no water that could hurt them, their vessels being tight like unto a dish and also they were tight like unto the ark of Noah; therefore when they were encompassed about by many waters they did cry unto the Lord, and he did bring them forth again upon the top of the waters gain upon the top of the waters.” **(Ether 6:7)** “So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.” **(Jonah 1:15-17)** “And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith. Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.” **(Matthew 8:24-26)** “And it came to pass after they had loosed me, behold, I took the compass, and it did work whither I desired it. And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord; and after I had prayed the winds did cease, and the storm did cease, and there was a great calm.” **(Nephi 18:21)**

What lessons of the “waters” come from land-faring Jews?

“He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still the waves thereof are still.” **(Psalms 107:29)** “Though the Israelites were not really a seafaring nation, the Bible is full of references to the sea and ships, and in the Book of Jonah, one of the main parts of the story takes place at sea when the hero is thrown overboard in the hope of stopping a storm.” “During the Middle Ages Jews became less involved in the actual owning and sailing of ships but remained active as sea merchants and brokers. Jews were known for producing nautical instruments and maps. Abraham Zacuto invented the astrolabe and drew up nautical tables that were invaluable to sailors. Christopher Columbus is thought by some to have been a *Marrano* (secret Jew) and his interpreter certainly was Jewish. In England a *Marrano*, Simon Fernandez, was chief pilot to Sir Walter Raleigh.” **(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)**

What methods of recording and archiving exist in ancient writings?

In reviewing history, let’s consider at least some types of technology for recording texts that became a library. Writing on leather is an ancient method. As more space was needed for added texts, additional leather was sewn onto the existing scroll. One of the Dead Sea Scrolls, Isaiah, is about twenty-seven feet long! These scrolls are usually fastened to a stick at each end for better handling, rolling open and shut, and for stability in storage. Writing on metal plates required the processing and preparing of sheets of gold, brass, or copper. They would be fastened with a ring like a modern-day binder. It is less likely to be able to simply add a few perfectly sized metal pages after the initial production. That means the scribe must determine approximately what he will include. “And if our plates had been sufficiently large, we should have

written in Hebrew; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us also; and if we could have written in Hebrew, behold, ye would have had no imperfection in our record.” **(Mormon 9:33)** “But whatsoever things we write upon anything save it be upon plates, must perish and vanish away; but we can write a few words upon plates which will give our children, and also our beloved brethren, a small degree of knowledge concerning us, or concerning their fathers.” **(Jacob 4:2)** Once he has collated his material and completed his transcript, he may have additional space or plates available and could thereby add more information, letters, or testimonials. “And now I, Moroni, write a few of the words of my father Mormon, which he spake concerning faith, hope, and charity; for after this manner did he speak unto the people, as he taught them in the synagogue which they had built for the place of worship.” **(Moroni 7:1)**

What have recent discoveries revealed about writing methods?

There is at least one case of thin metal sheets being fastened together as a scroll found in the Dead Sea Scroll collection. The sheer weight and difficulty in handling this type of text storage limited its use. “In ancient times all books were scrolls. Those used for holy purposes were written on animal skin; others were made from tree bark, parchment, and similar materials. The *Talmud* and *Midrash* speak often of scroll-books. We read that the high priest on the Day of Atonement read from a scroll during the Temple service and then rolled it up. There is no mention in the *Talmud* of books with folded pages.” “Recently, archaeological discoveries, such as the Dead Sea scrolls, have once again revived Christian interest in the investigation of ancient texts.” **(Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)**

How did Prophets give me insights to these last days?

The prophecies in the Book of Mormon about the scattering and gathering of Israel can be compared to ancient as well as to modern prophecies. A brief comparison of the Orson Hyde Dedicatory Prayer on the Land of Israel given October 24, 1842, with some of the verses from **1 Nephi 21 and 22** are an example.

<p><u>Book of Mormon</u> “They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them; for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.” (1 Nephi 21:10)</p>	<p><u>Orson Hyde’s Israel Dedication</u> “. . . remove the barrenness and sterility of this land and let springs of living water break forth to water its thirsty soil. Let the vine and olive produce in their strength and the fig-tree bloom and flourish. Let the land become abundantly fruitful when possessed by its rightful heirs; let it again flow with plenty to feed the returning prodigals who come home with a spirit of grace and supplication; upon it let the clouds distil virtue and richness, and let the fields smile with plenty. Let the flocks and the herds greatly increase and multiply upon the mountains and the hills . . .”</p>
<p>“And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to</p>	<p>“. . . and let kings become their nursing fathers, and queens with motherly fondness wipe the</p>

<p>thee with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.” (1 Nephi 21:23)</p>	<p>tear of sorrow from their eye . . .”</p>
<p>“Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel.” (1 Nephi 22:12)</p>	<p>“ . . . let Thy great kindness conquer and subdue the unbelief of Thy people. Do Thou take from them their stony heart, and give them a heart of flesh; and may the sun of Thy favor dispel the cold mists of darkness which have beclouded their atmosphere . . .”</p>
<p>“For behold, the righteous shall not perish; for the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off.” (1 Nephi 22:19)</p>	<p>“ . . . Let that nation or that people who shall take an active part in behalf of Abraham's children, and in the raising up of Jerusalem, find favor in Thy sight. Let not their enemies prevail against them, neither let pestilence or famine overcome them, but let the glory of Israel overshadow them, and the power of the Highest protect them; while that nation or kingdom that will not serve Thee in this glorious work must</p>

	<p>perish, according to Thy word --Yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted . . .” (History of the Church, Volume 4, Chapter 26)</p>
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How does a perception of light help me be closer to the Savior?

“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.” (Acts 26:22-23) Oil lamps and candles have been symbols of God's light. The imagery of lamps was used in the temple and their purpose was to demonstrate that God's habitation is a place of light. “For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.” (Psalms 18:28) “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” (1 John 1:5) “The warm, shimmering glow of candles has illuminated Jewish homes and synagogues for many centuries. Although horses have given way to automobiles and ancient handicrafts are being replaced by modern machines, the old-fashioned candle will continue to symbolize for Jews the spirit of God, the light of the *Torah*, the conclusion of the Sabbath and the memory of those who have passed away.” “Before candles became commonplace, oil lamps were used for ritual purposes, including the *ner tamid* ("eternal light") suspended above the Ark in the synagogue, the Hanukkah and Sabbath lights, and the flickering reminder of a loved one during the seven-

day mourning period and on the anniversary of his death. In those days, the oil lamp was preferred to candles, which were often made from the fat of non-kosher animals. The invention of paraffin, a waxy substance extracted from petroleum, led to the widespread use of candles by the Jewish people, and it has continued up to our own times.”

([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

How do I bring the light of the temple into my home?

“Women usher in the Sabbath each week by lighting candles and blessing God “who sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us to kindle the Sabbath light.” On Saturday night, traditional Jewish families light a *Havdalah* candle made of several wicks braided together, raise a cup of wine and sniff fragrant spices, thus bidding farewell to the Sabbath peace and beginning a new week. *Sephardic* Jews often use a single, unbraided candle for this ceremony. On the evening before Passover, the head of the household searches for the forbidden leaven (*Bedikat Hamez*) with the aid of a simple candle, and in various parts of the world, candles are carried on weekdays before the scroll of the *Torah* and held while it is being read in the synagogue. At weddings, too, the parents of the bride and groom sometimes hold candles when they escort the young couple to the *Huppah*.” “Oil was the basic fuel in biblical times and was used not only for ordinary lamps but also for the *Menorah* in the Temple which burned continuously. The destruction of its oil supply by the Syrians in the second century B.C.E. and the subsequent discovery of one portion of oil which

lasted for eight days is the basis of the *Hanukkah* celebration. The oil used in the Temple had to be ritually pure, which meant it had to be prepared and stored in a special way.” “Numerous oil lamps in all shapes and sizes have been recovered from archaeological excavations in the Middle East, attesting to their frequent usage in ancient times. Many of these lamps were used as Sabbath lights and *Hanukkah Menorot* and are therefore decorated with religious symbols and Hebrew writing.” ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#)) The tradition of a constantly burning candle at the biblical Temple is echoed with a *Ner Tamid* (always burning light) at the *Torah* cabinet in most synagogues. Temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are always lighted!

What is meant by the “virgin’s lamp?”

The common household oil lamp of two thousand years ago had enough capacity for an evening’s light. It was small enough to be cradled in the palm of the hand and was about an inch or slightly more in height. It had a hole in the middle on the top for oil. The oil lamp also had an elongated spout-like extension where the cotton string wick protruded. Extending the wick provided a brighter flame while consuming the oil faster. Trimming the lamp meant extending the wick just enough to keep a flickering flame and using a minimal amount of oil. When more light was needed, a pin could be used to pull the wick out a little further, thereby increasing the light. In the parable of the ten virgins, they were invited to light the way of the bridegroom (still being done in the Middle East). It may include a lesson of irresponsibility or self-service. The foolish virgins may have used up too

much light (oil) for themselves early in the evening and were left unprepared for the Master when He arrived later. Were they dedicated to serve Him or themselves?

How will the covenant people be returned to their Savior?

As a repeat of ancient Joseph saving his brothers when famine was sore in the Holy Lands, so did a modern-day Joseph save his brothers when the spiritual famine became sore in every land. “And after our seed is scattered the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles, which shall be of great worth unto our seed; wherefore, it is likened unto their being nourished by the Gentiles and being carried in their arms and upon their shoulders. And it shall also be of worth unto the Gentiles; and not only unto the Gentiles but unto all the house of Israel, unto the making known of the covenants of the Father of heaven unto Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. (1 Nephi 22:8-9)

Who am I, to which family do I belong?

There is a reason that our Father in Heaven wants us to know our lineage from Israel. Some will need to be adopted into the House of Israel and assigned a biblical tribal lineage – so, we can fulfill our mission to help as many of Father’s children as desire to return to him. “The time has come for us to separate from the gentiles and the next step is to unite with the Jews.” (Council of Fifty, Minutes, March 1844–January 1846; Volume 2, 1 March–6 May 1845, p. 184, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed January 19, 2024) The Children of Israel were God’s covenant people. They

strayed and forgot their part of the covenant. The Gentiles were given a chance to embrace that covenant. “[A]s they [the Gentiles] have rejected the fulness of the gospel by killing the prophet of the last days, we (Ephraim) turn to the Jews and the house of Israel.” (“The Conference,” Nauvoo Neighbor, 16 Apr. 1845, [2]) When religious Jewish families bring children into the world, a “baby blessing” is pronounced. It is often repeated weekly at the beginning of Sabbath days. The words of the *Bracha* (blessing) are taken from the biblical priestly blessing; “The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.” (Numbers 6:24-26) “For boys, the introductory line is: May you be like Ephraim and Menashe . . . Usually the person giving the blessing places one or both hands on the child’s head. Some parents bless each child in succession, working from oldest to youngest.”

(https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/520258/jewish/Why-do-we-bless-our-sons-to-be-like-Ephraim-and-Manasseh.htm#:~:text=%22Be%20like%20Manasseh%20and%20Ephraim, Friday%20nights%20before%20the%20kiddush) It was the Prophet Joseph Smith, a descendant of Ephraim and Judah who testified that he saw the Father and the Son, their faces shone upon him. It was the Prophet Joseph Smith who revealed the names of Father and Son, so that the Children of Israel can put His name upon themselves.