

February 19-25, 2024

## 2 Nephi 6–10

“HOW GREAT THE PLAN OF OUR GOD”

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**Summary:** *2 Nephi 6. Jacob recounts Jewish history: The Babylonian captivity and return; the ministry and crucifixion of the Holy One of Israel; the help received from the Gentiles; and the Jews' latter-day restoration when they believe in the Messiah. About 559–545 B.C.*

*2 Nephi 7. Jacob continues reading from Isaiah: Isaiah speaks messianically—The Messiah will have the tongue of the learned—He will give His back to the smiters—He will not be confounded—Compare Isaiah 50. About 559–545 B.C.*

*2 Nephi 8. Jacob continues reading from Isaiah: In the last days, the Lord will comfort Zion and gather Israel—The redeemed will come to Zion amid great joy—Compare Isaiah 51 and 52:1–2. About 559–545 B.C.*

*2 Nephi 9. Jacob explains that the Jews will be gathered in all their lands of promise—The Atonement ransoms man from the Fall—The bodies of the dead will come forth from the grave, and their spirits from hell and from paradise—They will be judged—The Atonement saves from death, hell, the devil, and endless torment—The righteous are to be saved in the kingdom of God—Penalties for sins are set forth—The Holy One of Israel is the keeper of the gate. About 559–545 B.C.*

*2 Nephi 10. Jacob explains that the Jews will crucify their God—They will be scattered until they begin to believe in Him—America will be a land of liberty where no king will rule—Reconcile yourselves to God and gain salvation through His grace. About 559–545 B.C.*

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### Supplemental Jewish and Holy Land Insights

### How important was being “carried away,” or “set apart?”

In the chapters being studied, we read that Jacob is consecrated by his brother. Jesus is our Eldest Brother, He sets us apart, consecrates us to the Father and becomes our King and Protector. “(The word) *Herem* in Hebrew, means banned or set apart. The term is applied in various ways: **1.)** Articles consecrated to God were sacred, irrevocably, and in the highest degree. They could not be redeemed or put to any other use and were forbidden, *Herem*, to the community. **2.)** An idolatrous Israelite was *Herem*. He and all his possessions were to be destroyed. The idolatrous enemy was also to be destroyed, as they were a threat to the purity of the Israelite's faith. The

intention of *Herem* was to protect Israel against the influence of a debased way of life. ‘. . . lest they lead you into doing all the abhorrent things they have done for their gods . . .’ (**Deuteronomy 20:18**). During the conquest of Canaan, Joshua always issued proclamations inviting the nations to choose peace and abandon idolatry. Jericho refused and was destroyed. The Gibeonites, fearing the same fate, chose peace, gave up idolatry and became servants, the ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’ for the sanctuary (see also **Gibeon**). **3.)** *Herem* is also the word used for excommunication, the separation of individuals or a group as punishment for forbidden behavior. Ezra the scribe, one of the leaders who restored communal life in desolate Judea when the exiles returned from Babylon (about 450 B.C.E.) was among the first to use this *Herem*. It was invoked as a punishment to

force obedience to communal authorities and was used most by Ezra to root out intermarriage. *Niddui* (a lighter type of *Herem*) consisted of isolating the offender from the community which then held him in enforced contempt for a period of not less than thirty days. He had to live in confinement with only his family; no outsider could greet him, eat or drink with him. He could not be included in a *Minyan* (quorum) of ten men required for prayer. *Niddui* was announced by the rabbinical court. The more severe *Herem* was proclaimed in the synagogue, either before the open Ark or while holding a Torah scroll. The *Shofar* (ram's horn) was sounded, and a warning was issued, with a plea for the welfare of the faithful. All those present held candles which they put out after the excommunication was declared." ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

#### **How valuable is comparing "carried away," to being "acquired" or "returned?"**

"*Kiddushin* is a legal act of acquisition of the bride by the groom: by handing over an object of value (usually a simple ring) to the bride in the presence of two witnesses and reciting the formula, 'Behold you are consecrated unto me with this ring according to the law of Moses and Israel,' the groom signifies his intent to reserve the bride exclusively to himself, and by accepting the ring the bride signifies her consent." "The most famous Nazirites in Jewish history -- Samson and Samuel --- were consecrated as such by their parents from the moment of their conception, with the intention that they remain *Nazirites* all their lives."

([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#)) The scattering and gathering of Israel are models of repentance and forgiveness. The contrast of Israel with the Gentiles is another model of repentance. Nowadays, to the Jews, there is a new concept of *Hasidei Ummot Ha'olam*, righteous gentiles. It is a beginning of the concept of being "saved"

or "gathered" by Gentiles. "Migration, wandering from place to place, has been one of the major components of Jewish history, for since the time of the Patriarchs the 'wandering Jew' has suffered from a lack of territory, government, and defense. Major Jewish migrations in search of favorable living conditions and in flight from harassment, persecution, and expulsion, include the Exodus from Egypt, the Babylonian exile, Jewish settlement outside Erez Israel during the Second Temple period, the dispersion under the Roman and Near Eastern empires after the destruction of the Second Temple. The scattering of Jews throughout the Christian and Islamic states, culminating in the expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula in 1492 and their settlement in the New World since the early stages of the European colonization, a process that greatly accelerated in the latter half of the 19th century. Throughout the period of the Diaspora, small numbers of Jews made their way back to Erez Israel, the land promised them in covenant with their God." ([Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.](#))

#### **What is a helpful definition of "repent?"**

Some of the names of the Lord and words that represent the Savior's mission and atonement include: Deliver: ([2 Nephi 6:17, 7:2](#)); Redeem: ([2 Nephi 7:2](#)); Comfort, Comforteth: ([2 Nephi 8:3, 12](#)); Light: ([2 Nephi 8:4](#)); Judgement, Judge: ([2 Nephi 8:4-5](#)); Salvation: ([2 Nephi 8:5-6](#)) To receive His personal atonement we are invited constantly to confess and to repent. The Hebrew word to repent is *LaShuv* and includes the meanings of to turn, to return, to go back, and to start again. ". . . the two confessions *Ashamnu* and *Al-Het* were introduced into the prayers for the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kippur*) which is a special occasion for repentance and forgiveness. However, even when a sinner has done all these things, his repentance is still not final until he has

been exposed to the same temptation and withstood it. Of course, he should not deliberately put himself on that spot again.” “Repentance in Hebrew is known as *teshuvah*, which literally means “return,” and signifies a return to God.” “An opportunity for salvation would be given Israel by their merciful God: ‘Turn to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with lamentation’ (Joel 2:12). Repentance will bring forgiveness and the Lord will turn His terrible wrath on the exilers of His people and the plunderers of His Temple.” (Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.)

### How can “less” be “more?”

In the New Testament we read that Jesus’ life was about 12,053 days long. Yet, there is only an account of 31 of those days recorded in the New Testament. What did the writers choose to report? The more significant events, doctrine, prophecies, miracles and testimonies were included for our benefit. Maybe, much like the Book of Mormon prophets, they wrote “a hundredth part.”

- (1) Testimonies that testify of Christ, especially in a local context. “And now there cannot be written in this book even a *hundredth part* of the things which **Jesus did truly teach** unto the people;” (3 Nephi 26:6)
- (2) Use the Lord’s spirit to help us choose what to report. You could consider, even creating several entries, then choose as directed. “Wherefore, I **chose these things**, to finish my record upon them, which remainder of my record I shall take from the plates of Nephi; and I cannot write the *hundredth part* of the things of my people.” (Words of Mormon 1:5)
- (3) We also learn from contrasting views. The “profiles” (80-100 pages) might be compared to the “large plates,” and

the “summarized” (phase-2), 8-9 pages) might be compared to the “small plates.” The smaller version could be the future generation’s poignant spiritual understanding and guideline. “And a *hundredth part* of the proceedings of this people, which now began to be numerous, cannot be written upon these plates; but many of their proceedings are written upon the **larger plates**, and their **wars**, and their **contentions**, and the **reigns of their kings**.” (Jacob 3:13)

- (4) Reveal the fulfillment of promises. “And the Lord spake unto Ether, and said unto him: Go forth. And he went forth, and beheld that the **words of the Lord had all been fulfilled**; and he finished his record; (and the *hundredth part* I have not written) and he hid them in a manner that the people of Limhi did find them.” (Ether 15:33)
- (5) Reveal what made the event extraordinary. I have found that the better histories report on the WHAT, HOW, WHEN, WHERE, and WHO, in such a way that the WHY is revealed. “And there had many things transpired which, **in the eyes of some, would be great and marvelous**; nevertheless, they cannot all be written in this book; yea, this book cannot contain even a *hundredth part* of what was done among so many people in the space of twenty and five years;” (3 Nephi 5:8)

A mathematic review of the events of Jesus’ life seems to give us a key to understanding the purpose of the scriptures, namely, teaching us the atonement. Jesus’ 1st 30 years (18 events); 1st year ministry (18 events); 2nd year ministry (27 events); 3rd year ministry (150 events, 75 occurred in the last days/hours/moments).

**How do His names have meaning, a way of illuminating the atonement?**

ADVOCATE	KING
ALMIGHTY	KING OF
ANCHOR	RIGHTEOUSNESS
ASHES	LAMB
AXE	LAW GIVER
BANNER	LAW
BEAUTIFUL	LAWYER
BEGGAR	LEAST
BEGOTTEN	LIFTER
BELOVED	LIGHT
BLOOD	LIVING WATER
BODY	LORD
BOUGH	LORD OF HOSTS
BRANCH	LORD OF THE SABBATH
BREAD	MASTER
BREAD OF LIFE	MEDIATOR
BRIDE	MERCIFUL
BRIDEGROOM	MERCY
BRIGHT STAR	MESSENGER
BRIGHTNESS	MESSENGER OF
BUCKLER	COVENANT
CAPTAIN	MESSIAH
CHILD	MIGHTY
CHRIST	MORNING STAR
CLOTH, NEW CLOTH	NEW WINE
CORNER STONE	OLD WINE
COUNSELOR	ONLY BEGOTTEN
COVER, COVERT	PRINCE
CRAFTSMAN	RABBI
(CARPENTER)	REDEEMER
CREATOR	REFUGE
DIVINE SON	RESURRECTION
DOOR	RIVER
EXEMPLAR	ROCK
FATHER	ROD
FIRSTBORN	SALVATION
FORGIVENESS	SAVIOR
FOUNDATION	SERVANT
FOUNTAIN	SHADE, SHADOW
GLORY	SHEPHERD
GOD	SHIELD
GOOD SHEPHERD	SIGHT
GOODNESS	SON
GRACIOUS	SON OF DAVID
GREAT	SON OF GOD
GREATEST	SON OF MAN
HEAD	SPRING
HELP	STEM
HIDING PLACE	STONE
HIGH TOWER	STRENGTH
HOLY ONE	SUN
I AM	TRIED STONE
IMMANUEL	TRUTH
JEHOVAH	WATER
JOY	WINE
JUDGE	WORD
KEY	

**What do I perceive as “resurrection?”**

The concept of resurrection in Judaism is a fading and sometimes a forgotten principle. “Jewish theology, as opposed to Jewish philosophy, has no clear doctrine

on the relationship between body and soul. Some *Talmudic* rabbis did not consider views on such a purely theoretical subject important; rather, they focused their interest on the practical question of the resurrection of the body, and God's future judgment. Other sages did speculate on the subject.” “The whole subject of afterlife is not explicitly stated in the Bible and many scholars are of the opinion that belief in afterlife was adopted by Jews during the Babylonian exile after the destruction of the First Temple when they came into contact with eastern religions such as Zoroastrianism.

Traditional believers claim that there are ‘hints’ to future life in the Torah, such as the verse ‘Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song’ (**Exodus 15:1**). The Hebrew word for ‘sang’ is in the future tense and the sages took this to mean that Moses and the Israelites will sing in the future, that is, in the world to come.” “The unity of the Jewish nation was considered an historic and spiritual concept, in addition to being a social reality. All generations of Jews (including converts to Judaism) were viewed as having been present at Mount Sinai and sharing in the responsibilities of the covenant with God. Likewise, the righteous of all generations will be reunited at the time of the resurrection of the dead during the messianic period. This concept of and shared fate is referred to often in the *Talmud* with the terms *Kelal Yisrael* and *Keneset Yisrael*.” (**Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.**)

**How is the “Gathering of Israel” a metaphor for resurrection?**

Look how (**Ezekiel 37**), teaches the concept of resurrection and gathering in the same metaphors. A powerful metaphor in the scriptures is the word “*ruah*.” As mentioned in previous lessons, the word “*Ruah*” means wind, breath and spirit. *Ruah Elohim* is the spirit or breath of God. “Flesh is the term used in the Bible to

distinguish mortal man from God. The Hebrew word for flesh, *Basar*, is contrasted with the Divine Spirit, *Ru'ah*, with which man is temporarily endowed. Thus: 'My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for that he is also flesh; therefore shall his days be a hundred and twenty years' (**Genesis 6:3**). The *Talmud* and *Midrash* refer to man as *Basar va-Dam* ('flesh and blood') to indicate his mortality as against the eternity of God." "*Ruah ha-Kodesh* (holy spirit) is often used as a synonym for prophecy. However, according to some rabbis, unlike prophecy, there are some types of *ruah ha-kodesh* which also can be attained by doing good deeds." "The *Talmudic* rabbis thought the body to be separable, in a sense, from the soul. God breathed the soul into the body of Adam (**Genesis 2:7**)." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

### **How can I visualize the resurrection of true religion?**

Ezekiel spoke of breath and of wind bringing life into a dead skeleton. As the sticks (*ETZ- emot*) of the body are clothed again with flesh and come alive, so shall the stick (*ETZ*) of Judah, the dead skeleton of a once true and living religion come together with the stick of Joseph, embodying the true religion and with the "breath" of the Lord, his spirit - a resurrection - a new life begins again. That new life will include a new sanctuary of the Lord. ". . . and the bones came together, bone to his bone . . . the sinews and the flesh came up upon them . . . and the breath came into them, and they lived . . . Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel . . . And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will

take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel

his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side And I will make them one nation Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore." (**Ezekiel 37**) The Bible is the "skeleton" of the true religion; the Book of Mormon is the "Flesh" of the true religion. Brought together they become the resurrection of true religion . . . never to die again, new and everlasting!

### **What happened when the reality of God was forgotten?**

The term "Presence of God" is used in Judaism, yet the personal reality of God and His presence have also been forgotten or at least have become obscured. "The exact nature of this afterlife is the subject of great discussion in classical Jewish sources. All agree that after death the soul continues to live. The souls of the righteous enter paradise, or *Gan Eden* (Garden of Eden) as it is generally called. In that state 'there is no eating or drinking no envy, hatred or competition but only this: that the righteous sit with crowns on their heads and delight in the splendor of God's presence' (*Talmud*). The souls of the wicked enter hell, or *Gehinnom*, as it is known, where they undergo purification before they too can enter paradise. The general view is that the stay in *Gehinnom* is not longer than 11 months and can only be permanent in the case of exceedingly wicked persons." (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

### **What are resonances of the "Presence of the Lord?"**

Some time ago at a *Bar Mitzvah* celebration at the Western (Wailing) Wall, I observed a grandfather restraining his *Bar Mitzvah* grandson from retrieving the *Torah* Scroll out of the “Ark” until he had first knocked. The boy questioned the “knocking” procedure. The only explanation that his grandfather would give was that inside the Ark, behind the curtain, represented the “Presence of God.” The scrolls were “His Word,” and it was only polite to knock before entering. Inside the Ark were several *Torah* scrolls

draped with beautiful cloths or enclosed in beautiful containers. Retrieving them is often accompanied by a gentle kiss on the scroll and a prayer utterance. This visual action is expressed in the words: “Wherefore, we shall have a perfect knowledge of all our guilt, and our uncleanness, and our nakedness; and the righteous shall have a perfect knowledge of their enjoyment, and their righteousness, being clothed with purity, yea, even with the robe of righteousness.” **(2 N phi 9:14)**