

## **BM#04 "The Things I Saw While I Was Carried Away in the Spirit" 1 Nephi 11-14**

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### **I. Introduction**

Chapters 11-14 of 1 Nephi are often referred to as the Apocalypse of Nephi.

Breck England states,

"An apocalypse is a vision given to a prophet in which the veil is parted and some aspect of the Lord's plan is laid out to the prophet's view. In fact, the word, 'apocalypse' means "the opening of the veil. Such apocalyptic visions are often symbolic in nature and require a heavenly messenger to explain the meaning of the symbols. Apocalyptic visions were given to Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, perhaps most strikingly to John the Revelator—the great example being the book of Revelation (known to many as the Apocalypse)." ([www.meridianmagazine.com/gospeldoctrine/bm4/1Nephi12-14](http://www.meridianmagazine.com/gospeldoctrine/bm4/1Nephi12-14)).

Nephi's vision highlights the events from the birth of the Savior and his ministry; the Nephite-Lamanite civilization; destruction and degeneration as well as the establishment of the "great and abominable church." It includes the discovery of America and her early history and the restoration of the Lord's Church and the concluding period of "wars and rumor of wars" (Matthew 24:6), that Christ foretold would occur during the last days. It also includes the battle against the saints by Satan's minion's.

The Book of Mormon Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual states,

The purpose is "to help [Us] understand Nephi's vision of the future and how the writings and promises in it apply to us today." (*Book of Mormon Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1999, 16).

### **II. 1 Nephi 11**

Nephi's vision begins with his desire "to know the things that my father had seen [Vision of the Tree of Life]," and his belief "that the Lord was able to make them known unto me." (1 Nephi 11:1). As we seek to understand the things of God, our inquiry begins with our sincere desire to know without doubt and coupled with faith, that our prayer will be answered.

As Nephi was in the process of "pondering in mine heart," or meditating upon the words his father had shared, he "was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord,...into an exceeding high mountain" (1 Nephi 11:1), which he had not previously seen or visited.

The initial words of the Spirit are directed to Nephi as he inquires of him, "Behold, what desirest thou?" (1 Nephi 11:2). Nephi states that he wants to see "the things which my father saw" (1 Nephi 11:3). The second question by the Spirit is, "Believest thou that thy father saw the tree of which he hath spoken?" (1 Nephi 11:4). The Spirit seeks to know what Nephi wants of the Lord and then to determine his level of faith. Nephi, having previously stated his desire, confirms to the Spirit his faith, "Yea, thou knowest that I believe all the words of my father" (1 Nephi 11:5).

The Spirit is delighted with Nephi as he states, "blessed art thou, Nephi, because thou believest in the Son of the most high God; wherefore, thou shalt behold the things which thou hast desired" (1 Nephi 11:6).

Nephi's vision begins with the Spirit stating, "after thou hast beheld the tree which bore the fruit which thy father tasted, thou shalt also behold a man descending out of heaven, and him shall ye witness; and after ye have witnessed him ye shall bear record that it is the Son of God" (1 Nephi 11:7). Nephi shall be shown the vision of the Tree of Life that his father saw, but shall also be taught regarding the birth and divinity of Jesus Christ.

The details of this chapter were previously presented in BM#03, under Nephi's Additions to Understanding Lehi's vision, and will not be repeated, but only summarized.

Nephi was shown the city of Nazareth where he beheld "a virgin, most beautiful and fair above all virgins" (1 Nephi 11:15). He was taught regarding the condescension of God as

he learned that "virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh" (1 Nephi 11:18). He sees the "virgin bearing a child in her arms," and is told by an angel, "Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!" (1 Nephi 11:20-21).

Nephi is now shown in vision, further events that will occur during the Lord's earthy ministry. These include: (1) "the prophet who should prepare the way before him"; (2) "he was baptized"; (3) At the time of his baptism, "the heavens open, and the Holy Ghost come down...and abide upon him in the form of a dove;" (4) "he went forth ministering unto the people, in power and great glory;" (5) "they cast him out from among them"; (6) "twelve others following him"; (7) Nephi "saw angels descending upon the children of men; and they did minister unto them;" (8) "multitude of people...sick, and...afflicted...devils and unclean spirits...were healed by the power of the Lamb of God; and the devils and unclean spirits were cast out"; (9) Nephi "beheld the Lamb of God;...taken by the people...judged of the world"; (10) "he was lifted up upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world"; (11) "I saw...multitudes of the earth...gathered together to fight against the apostles of the Lamb"; and, (12) "the house of Israel...gathered together to fight against the twelve apostles" (1 Nephi 11:27-35).

These events, yet future, will occur as Nephi saw in vision. They include: The preparing of the way of Christ by John the Baptist; The baptism of Jesus with the witness given of the Father and the Holy Ghost; The calling of his twelve apostles; Jesus going forth and healing all manner of disease and casting out devils; His rejection by the people and his crucifixion; and, The death of his apostles. These familiar events had previously been witnessed by Nephi, a prophet in the Book of Mormon and are now part of the New Testament.

During Nephi's vision, an angel shows him events from the life and ministry of Jesus Christ concluding with his crucifixion. It's specific purpose is so that Nephi, in his record, separate from the Bible, may bear his witness to the world of the divinity of Jesus Christ, his ministry, and his crucifixion, approximately 600 years prior to its occurrence.

### **III. 1 Nephi 12**

Nephi continues to share the vision he experienced while he was on "an exceedingly high mountain" (1 Nephi 11:1).

1 Nephi 12:1-2

1 And it came to pass that the angel said unto me: Look, and behold thy seed, and also the seed of thy brethren. And I looked and beheld the land of promise; and I beheld multitudes of people, yea, even as it were in number as many as the sand of the sea.

2 And it came to pass that I beheld multitudes gathered together to battle, one against the other; and I beheld wars, and rumors of wars, and great slaughters with the sword among my people.

Nephi learns that his family does reach the land of promise of which his father referred (1 Nephi 2:20), and that they are very numerous upon the land. However, there is friction between the people and they gather to fight against one another, including the people of Nephi.

Nephi observes that over many generations the wars and contentions continue, but numerous cities are built, even more than can be numbered. (See 1 Nephi 12:3.)

He then views a great upheaval that occurs upon the land as the result of forces of nature being unleashed.

1 Nephi 12:4-6

4 And it came to pass that I saw a mist of darkness on the face of the land of promise; and I saw lightnings, and I heard thunderings, and earthquakes, and all manner of tumultuous noises; and I saw the earth and the rocks, that they rent; and I saw mountains tumbling into pieces; and I saw the plains of the earth, that they were broken up; and I saw many cities that they were sunk; and I saw many that they were burned with fire; and I saw many that did tumble to the earth, because of the quaking thereof.

5 And it came to pass after I saw these things, I saw the vapor of darkness, that it passed from off the face of the earth; and behold, I saw multitudes who had not fallen because of the great and terrible judgments of the Lord.

6 And I saw the heavens open, and the Lamb of God descending out of heaven; and he came down and showed himself unto them.

These horrific events occurred approximately A.D. 34 in ancient America, prior to the appearance of the resurrected Lord, Jesus Christ, to the people. They are recorded in detail in 3 Nephi 8-11.

Nephi also records that during his visit to the America's that Jesus called twelve disciples to minister to Nephi's seed. (See 1 Nephi 12:7-8).

Nephi observes that

1 Nephi 12:11-12

**11 ...three generations pass away in righteousness; and their garments...are made white in the blood of the Lamb, because of their faith in him.**

**12 And I Nephi, also saw many of the fourth generation who passed away in righteousness.**

This was the golden age of the Nephites and Lamanites. For almost two hundred years, they were able to live in a state of peace and righteousness. There were no "ites" as all people lived together without dissension or conflict. During this time, harmony prevailed amongst all people.

Following this period, the people once again began to be divided into groups. The main groups were again designated as Nephites and Lamanites. This occurred in approximately A.D. 231. (See 4 Nephi 1:38-46)

1 Nephi 12:14-15

**14 and the angel said unto me: Behold thy seed, and also the seed of thy brethren.**

**15 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the people of my seed gathered together in multitudes against the seed of my brethren; and they were gathered together to battle.**

This battle will occur in approximately A.D. 385 (See Mormon 6.)

1 Nephi 12:19

**19 And while the angel spake these words, I beheld and saw that the seed of my brethren did contend against my seed, according to the word of the angel; and because of**

**the pride of my seed, and the temptations of the devil, I beheld that the seed of my brethren did overpower the people of my seed.**

In response to having their hearts set on pride and succumbing to the temptations of Satan, they rejected the words of warning given by the prophets. As a result, they experienced total destruction. Like other civilizations before them, they had reached the pinnacle of righteousness and then fell to the depths of wickedness. It is a lesson for all nations to learn, including the United States. Nevertheless, it must have caused Nephi to weep as he viewed the future destruction of his people.

1 Nephi 12:21-23

**21 And I saw them [the seed of his brethren] gathered together in multitudes; and I saw wars and rumors of wars among them; and in wars and rumors of war I saw many generations pass away.**

**22 And the angel said unto me: Behold these shall dwindle in unbelief.**

**23 And it came to pass that I beheld, after they had dwindled in unbelief they became a dark, and loathsome, and a filthy people, full of idleness and all manner of abominations.**

Brian D. Garner observes,

“Following the destruction of the Nephites, the Lamanites will live for many generations in unbelief and wickedness.” (*Search These Things Diligently*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2003, 20).

When a nation and the majority of her citizens reject the teachings of the Prophets, regardless of their level of domination as a result of their armament, leadership, technology, or education, they will be destroyed. This was true for the Babylonian and Assyrian Empires as well as for world domination by the Roman and Greek nations. In the end, Satan will not support his citizens, but instead will gradually drag them to destruction.

#### **IV. 1 Nephi 13**

Nephi’s vision continues as he now sees many nations and kingdoms.

1 Nephi 13:2-4

**2 And the angel said unto me: What beholdest thou? And I said: I behold many nations and kingdoms.**

**3 And he said unto me: There are the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles [Europeans].**

**4 And it came to pass that I saw among the nations of the Gentiles the formation of a great church.**

Initially one may be pleased that amongst the nations of the Gentiles or Europeans, a great church is founded. However, that observation is quickly altered as Nephi learns more about its workings.

1 Nephi 13:5-7, 9

**5 And the angel said unto me: Behold the formation of a church which is most abominable above all other churches, which slayeth the saints of God, yea, and tortureth them and bindeth them down, and yoketh them with a yoke of iron, and bringeth them down into captivity.**

**6 And it came to pass that I beheld this great and abominable church; and I saw the devil that he was the founder of it.**

**7 And I also saw gold, and silver, and silks, and scarlets, and fine-twined linen, and all manner of precious clothing; and I saw many harlots.**

**9 And also for the praise of the world do they destroy the saints of God, and bring them down into captivity.**

Stephen E. Robinson states,

"The church of the devil is any church that teaches the philosophies of man mingled with scripture, which dethrones God in the church and replaces him with man (2 Thess. 2:3f) by denying the principle of revelation and turning instead to human intellect. It is for this reason that creeds which are the product of human intellect are an *abomination* to the Lord—for they are idolatry: men worshipping the creations not of their own hands but of their own minds and knowing all along it is a creation of their intellect that is being worshipped." ("Early Christianity and 1 Nephi 13-14," in *First Nephi: The Doctrinal Foundation*. Edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. Provo: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1988, 189).

Stephen L. Robinson continues,

"No single organization meets all the requirements [of the great and abominable church] that include:

"(1) It must have been formed among the Gentiles and must have controlled the distribution of the New Testament scriptures, which it edited and from which it deleted plain and precious things.

"(2) It must have slain the Saints of God and killed the Apostles and prophets.

"(3) It must be in league with civil government and use their police power to enforce its religious views.

"(4) It must have dominion over all the earth.

"(5) It must pursue wealth, luxury, and sexual immorality, and must last essentially [to] the end of the world.

"...no *single* entity can be *the* great and abominable church from the beginning of the world to the end. Rather, the role has been played by many different actors in many different times, and the great and abominable church that Nephi described in 1 Nephi 13 is not the same one that crucified Christ or that martyred Joseph and Hyrum." ("Early Christianity and 1 Nephi 13-14," in *First Nephi: The Doctrinal Foundation*. Edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. Provo: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1988, 187).

1 Nephi 13:10-11

**10 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld many waters; and they divided the Gentiles from the seed of my brethren.**

**11 And it came to pass that the angel said unto me: Behold the wrath of God is upon the seed of thy brethren.**

Because of the unbelief and the wickedness of those who had destroyed the Nephi nation, ancient America will now be

opened up to others who will come to settle the America's being led by the Spirit of God.

1 Nephi 13:12

**12 And I looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles, who was separated from the seed of my brethren by the many waters: and I beheld the Spirit of God, that it came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land.**

Ezra Taft Benson states,

"God inspired 'a man among the Gentiles' (1 Nephi 13:12), who, by the Spirit of God was led to rediscover the land of America and bring this rich new land to the attention of the people of Europe. That man, of course, was Christopher Columbus, who testified that he was inspired in what he did.

"Our Lord,' said Columbus, 'unlocked my mind, sent me upon the sea, and give me fire for the deed. Those who heard of my enterprise called it foolish, mocked me, and laughed. But who can doubt but that the Holy Ghost inspired me' (Jacob Wasserman, *Columbus, Don Quixote of the Seas*, pp. 19-20). [577].

"When Columbus and his men sighted the lands of this hemisphere [America's] in October 1492, one of their first acts was to fall on their knees and give thanks to God. This is evidence that they were directed to these shores by the hand of Providence (1 Nephi 13:12)." [569] (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988, [5<sup>th</sup> Printing, 1993], 577, 569).

1 Nephi 13:13, 15-16

**13 And it came to pass that I beheld the Spirit of God, that it wrought upon other Gentiles; and they went forth out of captivity, upon the many waters.**

**15 And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the Gentiles, and they did prosper and obtain the land for their inheritance; and I beheld that they were white, and exceedingly fair and beautiful, like unto my people before they were slain.**

**16 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles who had gone forth out of captivity did humble themselves before the Lord; and the power of the Lord was with them.**

Ezra Taft Benson continues,

"The Pilgrims of Plymouth, the Calverts of Maryland, Roger Williams, William Penn—all had deep religious convictions that played a principal part in their coming to the New World. They too, I believe, came here under the inspiration of heaven. (1 Nephi 13:13)." *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988, [5<sup>th</sup> Printing, 1993], 569).

1 Nephi 13:17-19

**17 And I beheld that their mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the waters, and upon the land also, to battle against them.**

**18 And I beheld that the power of God was with them, and also that the wrath of God was upon all those that were gathered together against them to battle.**

**19 And I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles that had gone out of captivity were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all others nations.**

Surely the event described by Nephi was the Revolutionary War, fought by the citizens of the New World against England who ruled the world. How is it possible that these ill-equipped, untrained, even undisciplined rag-tag soldiers could have defeated the powerful, disciplined, and fully trained British military machine?

Spencer W. Kimball states,

"I have a firm conviction that the Lord led the Pilgrims across the ocean, perhaps permitted the persecutions that would bring them here, so that when they came to the American shores with their righteous blood and their high ideals and standards, they would form the basis of a nation which would make possible the restoration of the gospel. I am sure that since there was no religious liberty, nor political liberty here, the Lord permitted these few poorly armed and ill-clad men at Valley Forge and elsewhere to defeat a great army with its trained soldiery and its many mercenaries, a few against the many, but the few had on their side the Lord God of

heaven, that gave them victory. And there came political liberty and religious liberty with it, all in preparation for the day when a young boy who would come forth and would see and make contact with the Lord and open the doors of heaven again. Following that great manifestation to Joseph Smith came the opening of Cumorah Hill and the speaking of the dead from the dust." ("Untitled talk," in *Conference Report*, October, 1950, Second Day, Morning Meeting, 64)

1 Nephi 13:20-23

**20 And it came to pass, that I, Nephi, beheld that they did prosper in the land; and I beheld a book, and it was carried forth among them.**

**21 And the angel said unto me: Knowest thou the meaning of the book?**

**22 And I said unto him: I know not.**

**23 And he said: Behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew. And I, Nephi, beheld it; and he said unto me: The book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, which contains the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the plates of brass, save there are not so many; nevertheless, they contain the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the Gentiles.**

When the book, which we know as the Holy Bible, proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jews, "it contained the fullness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record;...(1 Nephi 13:24). Then after the Holy writings had gone "forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles,...that great and abominable church,...they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have taken away...that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men" (1 Nephi 13:26-27).

1 Nephi 13:29

**29 And after these plain and precious things were taken away it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles; and after it goeth forth unto all the nations**

of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the Gentiles which have gone forth out of captivity, thou seest--because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God--because of the things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them.

As a result of the "many plain and precious things" that were taken away by the efforts of the great and abominable church, many individuals were confused as to the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. As a result many churches were established based upon the understanding of man, causing many sincere and devout individuals as they searched to and fro for the truth, to ask, "Which of all the churches is true?"

The day will come when the truth will be made known again upon the earth.

1 Nephi 13:34

**34 ...and after the Gentiles do stumble exceedingly, because of the most plain and precious part of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, which is the mother of harlots, said the Lamb--I will be merciful unto the Gentiles in that day, insomuch that I will bring forth unto them, in mine own power, much of my gospel, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb.**

Following the period of darkness upon the earth when the truth had been taken from it, the Lord will bring his gospel to the earth through his appointed servants. Once again, heavenly truths will be found upon the earth, and brought forth, not by the learning of man, but restored by heavenly messengers sent from God.

1 Nephi 13:40

**40 And the angel spake unto me, saying: These last records, which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first [Bible], which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away**

**from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved.**

The angel is referring to the Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ. It bears witness to the divinity of Jesus Christ as Our Lord and Savior as well as restoring to the Bible, many truths that are unclear or have simply been removed. An example of these restored truths include: Why Jesus Christ was baptized and why each of us must be baptized; The "why" of the Atonement and Christ' Resurrection and its meaning for us; The importance of sacred ordinances that are made efficacious only when performed by divine authority; and, the restoration of the prayers for both baptism and the sacrament. These, and many other revealed truths, will become clear as we proceed. The Book of Mormon stands as a witness to the truths contained in the Holy Bible to the world. To the honest seeker of heavenly truth, the Lord has again spoken through divine prophets.

1 Nephi 13:42

**42 And the time cometh that he [Jesus Christ], shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.**

Bryan Richards states,

"This scriptures has been confusing to some...The 'first' refers to the house of Israel; the 'last' refers to the Gentiles...Therefore in Christ's day the Jews heard the gospel first and the Gentiles heard the gospel last. In the last days, the Lord would reestablish his kingdom through the Gentiles; they would be the first to hear the good word and the Jews would be the last."

[www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/1Nephi-13](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/1Nephi-13)).

**V. 1 Nephi 14**

1 Nephi 14:5

**5 And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, Nephi, saying: Thou hast beheld that if the Gentiles repent it shall be well with them; and thou also knowest concerning the covenants of the Lord unto the house of Israel; and thou also hast heard that whoso repenteth not must perish.**

Once the truths of God are restored upon the earth, it is essential for our happiness, now, and our eternal salvation later, that we learn which church is the Church of Jesus Christ. It is only within the Church of Jesus Christ that important covenants can be made, including baptism and receiving the Gift of the Holy Ghost, that will be recognized by God the Eternal Father. None others will be binding.

1 Nephi 14:7

**7 For the time cometh, said the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other--either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, both temporally and spiritually, according to the captivity of the devil, of which I have spoken.**

On April 6, 1830, a "great and marvelous work" was carried out under the direction of Jesus Christ. Joseph Smith had been called to serve as the Lord's anointed prophet upon the earth. All necessary authority had been restored by heavenly messengers. All was in order for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to again be established upon the earth. The night of the apostasy was over. The direct line between heaven and earth had been restored. The heavens were open. God again speaks to man through his Prophets and Apostles in our day.

1 Nephi 14:10, 12

**10 And he [angel] said unto me: Behold there are [now] save two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil;...**

12 And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore [Devil] who sat upon many waters [lands]; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw.

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet state,

"Nephi had already used the expression 'great and abominable church' in reference to a specific organization identified in his historical time as being more destructive and wicked than all other churches of its day. He used that same expression now in a broader or more general sense. In the context of his vision, the church or kingdom of God had again been established on the earth. With the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the restoration of priesthood and its keys, there was once again an organization upon the earth with the authority to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof; it is by divine testimony that 'only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth' (D&C 1:30), salvation being found in none other." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 1*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987, [11<sup>th</sup> Printing, 1999), 108-109).

Boyd K. Packer states,

"The position that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the only true church upon the face of the earth is fundamental...It is not merely an admission; it is a positive declaration. It is so fundamental that we cannot yield on this point...

"Now that is not to say that the churches, all of them, are without some truth. They have some truth—some of them very much of it. They have a form of godliness. Often the clergy and adherents are not without dedication, and many of them practice remarkably well the virtues of Christianity. They are, nonetheless, incomplete...

"Now we do not say they are wrong so much as we say they are incomplete. The fullness of the gospel has been restored. The power and the authority to act for [Jesus Christ] is present

with us." ("The Only True and Living Church," in *Ensign*, December 1971, 40-41).

1 Nephi 14:13-15

**13 And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God.**

**14 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.**

**15 And it came to pass that I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars, and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth.**

Satan will not relinquish his hold upon the children of God without a battle. It was true in the pre-existence before the world began and it will be true when Satan's power on earth is threatened. In the battle that will yet occur, the number of those who follow Satan will be great in comparison to the members of the Church of Jesus Christ. The outcome will be determined as "the power of the Lamb of God [will]...descend upon the [few] saints of church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord...and they will be armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory" (1 Nephi 14:14). This battle will be preceded by the increase in "wars and rumors of wars" that will occur among all the nations of the earth. The world will truly be in turmoil.

1 Nephi 14:17

**17 And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots, which is the great and abominable church of all the earth, whose founder is the devil, then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.**

Bryan Richards states,

"The 'work of the Father' referred to here has to do with fulfilling specific covenants made with the house of Israel. They include the return of the Jews to the land of their inheritance, the gathering of Israel (Isa. 49:22). He has promised Israel, I will content with him that contend with thee, and I will save thy children (Isa. 49:25), and Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem (Isa. 52:9). Not much progress had been made in the fulfilling of these covenants before the second world war. This places the timing of the events of verse 17 in the 20<sup>th</sup> century." ([www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/1Nephi-14](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/1Nephi-14)).

Chart I. Outline of Nephi's Vision [1 Nephi 11-14]:

AD 1	<b>I. Christ's Ministry Among the Jews</b>  <b>Virgin birth</b>  <b>John the Baptist</b>  <b>Ministry of Christ (11:24); The Apostles (11:24); Miracles (11:31); Trial and Crucifixion (11:32-33); Persecution against Apostles (11:34-35)</b>	  11:13-23  10:7-8;11:27
AD 33  AD 385	<b>II. The Nephite-Lamanite Civilization</b>  <b>Christ's Ministry to Nephites</b>  <b>Battle between Nephites and Lamanites</b> <b>Destruction of Nephites</b> <b>Degeneration of Lamanites</b>	  12:4-6  12:15 12:19-20 12:21-23
1492  1776  1820	<b>III. The Gentile Nations</b>  <b>Foundation of a 'great church'</b> <b>Columbus discovers America</b> <b>Puritans migrate to America</b> <b>American Indian wars-scattering latter-day Lamanites</b> <b>Revolutionary war</b> <b>Changes in the Bible to cause misunderstanding</b> <b>Restoration of the Gospel</b> <b>Bible and Book of Mormon taken to Lamanites</b> <b>Gentile promise</b>	  13:1-10 13:12 13:13 13:14  13;16-19 13:24-29 14:7 13:35-41 13:34,42
Last Days	<b>Wars and rumors of wars</b> <b>Saints of church of the Lamb armed with righteousness</b>  <b>Abominable church destroyed</b>  <b>The end of the world written by Apostle of the Lamb</b>	  14:16 14:14  14:3-4;15-17; 22:23  14:19-22,24,24,27

Reference: *Student Manual Book of Mormon, Vol. 1*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1977, 58).

1 Nephi 14:19-21, 27-28

**19 And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe.**

**20 And the angel said unto me: Behold one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.**

**21 Behold, he shall see and write the remainder of these things; yea, and also many things which have been.**

**27 And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that the name of the apostle of the Lamb was John, according to the word of the angel.**

**28 And behold, I, Nephi, am forbidden that I should write the remainder of the things which I saw and heard; wherefore the things which I have written sufficeth me; and I have written but a small part of the things which I saw.**

We learn that John the Beloved is the one who has been designated to write the events of the end of the world. He wrote the book of Revelations, the Gospel or Testimony of John and then his three epistles, 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> John.

Bryan Richards states,

"Nephi next sees the events which transpire directly preceding the Second Coming. He is told that John will record these events in the future. Many prophets have prophesied about the same events. In an unusual precedent, Nephi is not allowed to describe the events he sees next. What would this be? There are a couple of reasons. First, apparently John was foreordained to perform this work. (By the way, this is probably the single best scriptural example of the doctrine of foreordination.) Secondly, the Lord in his wisdom does not give the world all his mysteries."

[www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/1Nephi-14](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/1Nephi-14)).

1 Nephi 14:29-30

**29 And I bear record that I saw the things which my father saw, and the angel of the Lord did make them known unto me.**

**30 And now I make an end of speaking concerning the things which I saw while I was carried away in the spirit; and if all the things which I saw are not written, the things which I have written are true. And thus it is. Amen.**

With these final verses, Nephi concludes the vision which he was privileged to observe, with his testimony of its truthfulness.

## **VI. Conclusions**

In this lesson, we have had the privilege of examining the Apocalypse of Nephi. We are reminded of the words by Breck England, that "An Apocalypse is a vision given to a prophet in which the veil is parted, and some aspect of the Lord's plan is laid out to the prophet's view. In fact, the word 'apocalypse' means 'opening of the veil.'" ([www.meridianmagazine.com/gospeldoctrine/bm4/1Nephi12-14](http://www.meridianmagazine.com/gospeldoctrine/bm4/1Nephi12-14)).

Because Nephi was directed to write down his vision, and Mormon was inspired to include it as part of his abridgment, we also have the opportunity to understand the events that Nephi was shown by an angel of the Lord.

These events include: The birth of the Savior and highlights of his ministry; The Nephite-Lamanite civilization including the destruction of the Nephi nation and the degeneration of the Lamanites. We learned about the establishment of the "great and abominable church" and the effect it will have upon those who are members of the Church of the Lamb who will be few in number in comparison to those who become its followers.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"The titles *church of the devil* and *great and abominable church* are used to identify all churches or organizations of whatever name or nature—whether political, philosophical, educational, economic, social, fraternal, civic, or religious—which are designed to take men on a course that leads away from God and his laws and thus from salvation in the kingdom of God." (*Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, [Second Edition], 137-138).

The "*great and abominable church*" is a symbol of apostasy and Babylon in all its forms. It is a representation of all false

doctrine, false worship, and irreligious attitudes. It does not represent any specific church in the world today.

We learned about the discovery and colonization of the Americas. These events included the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus as he was led by the Holy Ghost; the immigration of the Puritan and Quakers and other religious groups seeking for religious freedom; the scattering of the latter-day Lamanites; the Revolutionary War that provided for individual freedom in this new land, including religious freedom; the restoration of the Gospel and the promise to the Gentiles.

There is more ahead including continued wars and rumors of wars; and, the war between the forces of Satan and those who are followers of Jesus Christ. More will yet follow, however, Nephi was not permitted to write further events as that responsibility had been given to John the Beloved.

While the events that are yet to be fulfilled may cause many to be anxious, if we will continue to trust in the Lord and keep his commandments, we will be blessed. We can be certain that there will be some difficult times ahead. The righteous will be tested, just as they were in the past. It is important for us to remember that the Lord is mindful of his children and will provide guidance and protection to them as these events unfold. As we follow the Prophet and our leaders, they will guide us so that we may know what we need to do in order for us and our families to be safe.

In our next lesson, BM#05, "Hearken to the Truth and Give Heed unto It" 1 Nephi 16-22, we will continue to learn of Nephi's example of faith and obedience as he is called upon to face the challenges and adversity of life as they continue their journey in the wilderness.