

**BM#37 "Whosoever Will Come, Him Will I Receive"**  
**3 Nephi 8-11**

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**I. Introduction**

In these four chapters, we see great promises that were fulfilled. For the wicked, the day of their repentance had passed and they faced the promised destruction that had been prophesied by Samuel, the Lamanite. For the righteous, the glorious day arrived when the resurrected Savior of the World appeared to the righteous gathered at the temple in the land of Bountiful. We begin what will be three days of his ministry to the people who were gathered to hear his teachings.

We have read in the four gospels of Jesus' three year ministry to those in Palestine. We now read of his words to those whom he visited in ancient America. How blessed we are to have his teachings as he delivered them to those whose hearts were open to receive eternal truths. While we weren't there, we can read His words, as transcribed by those who were there on that sacred occasion. We are blessed to have the words of Christ as recorded in the four gospels. We are doubly blessed to have his words given to those in ancient America. The Bible and the Book of Mormon stand as dual witnesses to the divinity of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of the World.

Outline of 3 Nephi 8-11:

- "A. 3 Nephi 8-10    Signs of crucifixion and death of Christ. Great tempests, whirlwinds, and fires so predicted by Samuel the Lamanite. Voice of Christ heard over the land.
- "B. 3 Nephi 11    Dramatic appearance of Jesus. Multitude personally touch his wounds. Calling of Twelve. Teaches doctrine of repentance, and of baptism of water

and Holy Ghost. (Sidney B. Sperry. *Book of Mormon Compendium*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968, 391).

## II. 3 Nephi 8

Thirty and three years had passed since the sign of the Savior's birth ["one day and a night and a day as if it were one day and there were no night" (Helaman 14:4)] as had been prophesied by Samuel, the Lamanite. He had also prophesied that at the time of the Savior's death, "there shall be no light upon the face of this land, even from the time that he shall suffer death, for the space of three days, to the time that he shall rise again from the dead" (Helaman 14:20).

3 Nephi 8:4

**4 And there began to be great doubtings and disputations among the people, notwithstanding so many signs had been given.**

It is of interest to note that rather than preparing themselves spiritually for this prophesied event, the people were arguing about the meaning of the signs that were being fulfilled.

3 Nephi 8:5

**5 And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land.**

**6 And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder.**

**7 And there were exceedingly sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land.**

Daniel H. Ludlow states,

"The New Testament account of the crucifixion of Christ would seem to indicate that the Savior was crucified the very week he became thirty-three years of age. The Book of Mormon not only substantiates this account, but also provides us with an exact date of the crucifixion. According to the Nephite calendar system, the Savior was

crucified 'in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month.' (3 Nephi 8:5.) Although we are not certain when the first month of the Nephite calendar would occur, if the Nephites were using the same calendar system as the Hebrews, the first month would be in the spring of the year sometime between about the middle of March and the middle of April." (*A Companion To Your Study Of The Book Of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, 258-259).

Bryan Richards contrasts the events of the Nephite destruction [3 Nephi 8], with the prophesied destruction at the Second Coming.

**Chart 1: Nephite Destruction and Destruction at 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming**

Nephite Destruction	Destruction at 2 <sup>nd</sup> Coming
1) a great storm (v.5)	An overflowing rain and great hailstones (Ezek 38:22)
2) terrible thunder (v.6)	There were voices and thundering and lightening (Rev 8:5)
3) exceeding sharp lightings (v.7)	Fierce and vivid lightnings (D&C 87:6)
4) Zarahemla did take fire (v.8)	I will send a fire on Magog (Ezek 39:6)
5) City Moroni did sink into the depths of the sea (v.9)	The waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds (D&C 88:90)
6) the whole face of the land was changed (v.12)	Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low (Isa 40:4)
7) many...were slain (v.15)	Seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them (Ezek 39:12)
8) some...were carried away in the whirlwind (v.16)	The whirlwind shall take them away as stubble (Isa 40:24)
9) the rocks were rent in twain (v.18)	The voice...shall break down the mountains (D&C 133:22)
10) there was darkness upon the face of the land (v.19)	The sun shall be darkened (D&C 29:14)
11) the inhabitants...could feel the vapor (v.20)	Blood and fire, and vapors of smoke (D&C 45:41)

12) they were heard to cry and mourn (v.25)	There shall be weeping and wailing among the hosts of men (D&C 39:15)
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Reference: ([www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3 Nephi-8](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3%20Nephi-8)).

Spencer W. Kimball states,

"These tremendous convulsions of nature not only impressed the Nephites greatly so that they recorded them in their history, but the memory of them also stayed in the minds of the Lamanites, or the American Indians, for fifteen hundred years. Shortly after the discovery of America, the Catholic missionaries and explorers learned that the American indians had a tradition of the great convulsions of nature that took place at the time of Christ's death. For example, I would like to quote from a Lamanite, an Indian prince named Ixtlilxochitl, who lived near the city of Mexico and wrote his book in 1600 A.D.:

'...the sun and the moon eclipsed, and the earth trembled, and the rocks broke, and many other things and signs took place,...This happened...at the same time when Christ our Lord suffered, and they say it happened during the first days of the year.' (Works of Ixtlilxochitl, cited in Milton R. Hunter and Thomas Stuart Ferguson. *Ancient American and the Book of Mormon*, 190)." (Conference Report, April 1961, 50-51).

As we review the events that occurred in ancient America at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, we are struck with the sweeping effects of the destruction that occurred. We may even wonder how anyone could have survived the widespread effects of nature.

3 Nephi 8:17, 19

**17 And thus the face of the whole earth became deformed, because of the tempests, and the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the quaking of the earth.**

**19 And it came to pass that when the thunderings, and the lightning, and the storm, and the tempest, and the quakings of the earth did cease--for behold they did last for about the space of three hours; and it was said by some that the time was greater;**

**nevertheless, all these great and terrible things were done in about the space of three hours--and then behold, there was darkness upon the face of the land.**

Three hours is a long time to experience the violence of nature. I recall being in an earthquake that lasted only a minute or two, and it was frightening. I can't imagine adding to the terror of the earthquake, the thunder, lightening, and whirlwinds that occurred. It is understandable that some might believe that the time was far greater than three hours.

3 Nephi 8:20, 23

**20 And it came to pass that there was thick darkness upon all the face of the land, insomuch that the inhabitants thereof who had not fallen could feel the vapor of darkness;**

**23 And it came to pass that it did last for the space of three days that there was no light seen; and there was great mourning and howling and weeping among all the people continually; yea, great were the groanings of the people, because of the darkness and the great destruction which had come upon them.**

George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl state,

"For three days and nights all was dark. To the inhabitants of this favored land, who had not fallen victims of the overwhelming catastrophe, three days seemed endless. They mourned the loss of loved ones, and friends who vanished in the night. Despair and anguish took possession of their souls. They wept and howled. It was the custom among oriental peoples, from who the ancestors of the Nephites came, to wail, loudly and long because of the death of a love one. They often hired mourners to howl, showing by their noise made, the extent of their grief." (*Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol.7. Amplified and Arranged by Philip C. Reynolds. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1961, [1976], 98-99).

3 Nephi 8:24-25

**24 And in one place they were heard to cry, saying: O that we had repented before this great and terrible day, and then would our brethren have been spared, and**

they would not have been burned in that great city of Zarahemla.

25 And in another place they were heard to cry and mourn, saying: O that we had repented before this great and terrible day, and had not killed and stoned the prophets, and cast them out; then would our mothers and our fair daughters, and our children have been spared, and not have been buried up in that great city Moronihah. And thus were the howlings of the people great and terrible.

George Reynold and Janne M. Sjodahl state,

"Remorse, like a gnawing pain, excited by a sense of guilt, mingled with a repentant regret, took possession of each sufferer's conscience. An awareness of his own blameworthiness together with a feeling of obligation that if there was any further, to do only good, collectively lifted them out of the moral depths into which they had plunged, and restored in them the hopes expressed in the prophets' words...Thus there was a continuous round of mourning, weeping, and howling, heard throughout the whole land." (*Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol.7. Amplified and Arranged by Philip C. Reynolds. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1961, [1976], 99).

N. Eldon Tanner states,

"Today the world is rejecting the messages of the prophets of God. Is it not true that there is weeping and wailing over the face of the land because men are at war one with another? Do we not have among us many who lament the waywardness of their youth and the tragedies that befall them as they turn away from righteousness and suffer the consequences of tampering with alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, and other forbidden things? How many mourners do we have as a result of the lawlessness that is extant in our communities? We need to heed the lessons of history of the past lest we be consumed as were some of those earlier civilizations." ("Christ in America," in *Ensign*, May, 1975, 34-35).

We will learn from the lessons of the past, or we will continue to repeat them. If we make God a part of our life and follow his counsel and direction, we may be spared. If we do not, we will suffer the similar consequences of those in the Book of Mormon.

### III. 3 Nephi 9

3 Nephi 9:1-2

**1 And it came to pass that there was a voice heard among all the inhabitants of the earth, upon all the face of this land, crying:**

**2 Wo, wo, wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth except they shall repent; for the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice, because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people; and it is because of their iniquity and abominations that they are fallen!**

We learn the voice is "Jesus Christ the Son of God" (3 Nephi 9:15). In the following verses, he will state that he is the one who is responsible for the destruction of many of the cities either through their being "burned with fire...sunk in the depths of the sea... [or] covered with earth" (3 Nephi 9:3-5). His reason for the destruction is "because of their wickedness and their abominations" (3 Nephi 9:12). Were he not to act with the promised destructions, "their iniquities and their abominations [would continue to come] from before my face [and] that the blood of the prophets and the saints...[would continue to come up] against them" (3 Nephi 9:5).

Thomas R. Valletta states,

"We often think of Jesus as the Savior, the Good Shepherd, the God of Mercy, and the God of Love. Those name-titles are all true and accurate, but what do we learn in these verses about Jesus Christ as the God of Justice?" (*The Book of Mormon Study Guide: Start To Finish*. Thomas R. Valletta, General Editor. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2015, 650).

Bryan Richards states,

"Nephi prophesied saying, 'after the Messiah shall come their shall be signs given unto my people of his birth, and also of his death and resurrection; and the great and terrible shall that day be unto the wicked, for they shall perish; and they perish because they cast out the prophets, and the saints, and stone them, and slay them; wherefore the cry of the blood of the saints shall ascent up to God from the ground against them' (2 Ne 26:3).

"John taught that there are three things which bear witness in the earth, and one of them is blood (1 Jn 5:8). The blood of the righteous, spilt on Mother Earth, testifies against the wicked. This blood speaks as if with a voice. The Lord asked Cain, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground (Gen 4:10). Similarly, the earth is polluted by this blood and wearied with the wickedness of men. Enoch looked upon the earth; and he heard a voice from the bowels thereof, saying: Wo,wo is me, the mother of men; I am pained, I am weary, because of the wickedness of my children. When shall I rest, and be cleansed from the filthiness which is gone forth out of me? (Moses 7:48).

"Even after the blood of the righteous is cleaned up, the stain never leaves until there is retribution. The earth continues to be pained and wearied and the voice of the blood continues to testify until the wicked are punished. Accordingly, the Savior warned the Jews, That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias...whom ye slew between the altar (Matt 23:35). The destructions which befell that generation of Jews cleansed the earth from the righteous blood previously spilt. Among the Nephites, the same process was taking place. The earth was being cleansed from the blood of the prophets and the saints among the Nephites. The voice of their blood would not be silenced until their cities had been buried, burned, or sunk."  
[www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3 Nephi-9](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3%20Nephi-9)).

**Chart 2: Cities destroyed (3 Nephi 9:3-10)**

Burned with Fire	Sunk to depths Sea	Buried depths Earth
1) Zarahemla (v.3)	1) Moroni (v.4)	1) Moronihah (v.5)
2) Jacobugath v.9)	2) Onihad (v.7)	2) Gilgal (v.5)
3) Laman (v.10)	3) Mocum (v.7)	3) Gadiandi (v.8)
4) Josh (v.10)	4) Jesusalem (v.7)	4) Gadiomnah (v.8)
5) Gad (v.10)		5) Jacob (v.8)
6) Kishkumen (v.10)		6) Gimgimno (v.8)

3 Nephi 9:13

**13 O all ye that are spared because ye were more righteous than they, will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?**

Eldred G. Smith states,

"Let us not be self-righteous that we think that we have no need of repentance, for the Savior himself preached repentance to the more righteous who were spared from the great destruction at the time of his crucifixion. At that time, on this hemisphere there was darkness for three days and great destruction, many cities and all their inhabitants were destroyed." (*Conference Report*, April 1954, 88).

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, and Brent L. Top state,

"The Savior's statement to the remnant Nephites and Lamanties ["that I may heal you], is not merely symbolic but also literal. Through faith in Him and repentance, sick, sin-ridden, souls are healed by the Great Physician as much as bodies were in the cleansing of the lepers. The Savior's healing declaration, 'Be thou clean' (see Matthew 8:2-3), is a literal promise to the faithful and repentant. It may be that all of the miraculous healings performed by Jesus were by tangible symbols of the greatest healing that he alone could perform--the healing of sick spirits and the cleansing of sin-stained souls. 'The greatest miracles I see today,' declared President Harold B. Lee, 'are not necessarily the healing of sick bodies, but the greatest miracles are the healing of sick souls, those who are sick in soul and spirit and are downhearted and distraught, on the verge of nervous breakdowns' (CR, April 1973, 178)." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol.4. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 41).

While the words of the Savior were that those who had been spared..."were more righteous than [those who were not]", he also makes it clear that they also need to "repent of [their]...sins, and be converted, that I may heal you" (3 Nephi 9:13). This infers that those remaining were also in need of repentance before they would be able to receive the full blessings the Savior desired to bestow upon them. When we consider that we will be judged by our thoughts and desires as well as our actions, many would acknowledge they have sins needing repentance.

3 Nephi 9:17, 19

**17...for behold, by me redemption cometh, and in me is**

**the law of Moses fulfilled.**

**19 And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings.**

Byran Richards states,

"In one statement, the schoolmaster was dismissed. The Law which had governed the Israelites for over 1500 years was finally fulfilled...For years after Christ's ascension, the apostles dealt with issues like preaching to the Gentiles, circumcision, etc. At times, they wondered which of the old traditions were to be thrown away, which were to be kept, and which were to be tolerated. In the New World, there is no controversy. They seemed more ready to give up the ancient traditions and sacrifices."  
([www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3 Nephi-9](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3%20Nephi-9)).

3 Nephi 9:20

**20 And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not.**

Bryan Richards states,

"The doctrine of a "broken heart and a contrite spirit" begins with the law of sacrifice as contained in the Old Testament. Under that law, the firstborn was sacrificed in similitude of the Only-Begotten Son. We are quick to teach that the law of animal sacrifice was fulfilled in the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We are sometimes slow to realize that there was a replacement 'law of sacrifice.' The new law, as taught by the Savior, requires just as regular and frequent a sacrifice. The difference is that we are to sacrifice a broken heart and a contrite spirit upon the altar of discipleship.

"Through our faith in Jesus Christ we become his disciples and offer up a broken heart and contrite spirit. It is through this faith and sacrifice that we can obtain

forgiveness of sins, for 'sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God' (Hel. 3:35). 'Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered' (2 Ne. 2:7). This doctrine is even contained in the Old Testament, 'For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it*: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart' (Ps 51:16-17)."  
([www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3 Nephi-9](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3%20Nephi-9)).

Truman Madsen states,

"...in the scriptural usage a broken heart is a malleable, meltable, moveable heart, and a contrite spirit is an honest, acknowledging spirit that says, 'I am, in fact, dependent...' There is no self-deprecation here, only honesty: 'I need help.' And when that is acknowledged, help comes." ("Elijah and the Turning of Hearts," in *Five Classics by Truman G. Madsen*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2001, 376-377).

Neal A. Maxwell continues,

"The real act of personal sacrifice is not now nor ever has been placing an animal on the altar. Instead, it is a willingness to put the animal that is in us upon the altar- and then willingly watching it be consumed! Such is the 'sacrifice unto [the Lord of] a broken heart and a contrite spirit.' (3 Nephi 9:20)." (*Meek and Lowly*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987, 94).

3 Nephi 9:21-22

**21 Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.  
22 Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved.**

Dallin H. Oaks states,

"We are not saved *in* our sins, as by being unconditionally saved through confessing Christ and then, inevitably,

committing sins in our remaining lives (see Alma 11:36-37). We are saved *from* our sins (see Hel.5:10), by a weekly renewal of our repentance and cleansing through the grace of God and His blessed plan of salvation (see 3 Ne. 9:2-22).” (“Have You Been Saved?” in *Ensign*, May 1998, 56).

As the apostate Nephites came to realize, repentance is not a one time experience, even after having embraced the teachings of the Savior. It involves a daily, even lifelong commitment, to strive to become perfect, even as He, Our Savior, is.

#### **IV. 3 Nephi 10**

3 Nephi 10:1

**1 And now behold, it came to pass that all the people of the land did hear these sayings, and did witness it. And after these sayings there was silence in the land for the space of many hours.**

The words of Christ had a powerful affect upon the people. It may have been even more powerful for they were uttered while the inhabitants were still in darkness. (see 3 Nephi 10:9.) They then realized that they, too, could have lost their lives in the destruction that had just occurred just as easily as their loved ones. Their lives had been spared and that, by itself, gave them cause for reflection. They had learned that there was hope for them if they would come unto Christ with full hearts and minds. No longer were they to offer animal sacrifices, they were to instead offer their “broken heart and [their] contrite spirit” (3 Nephi 9:20).

3 Nephi 10:3-7

**3 And it came to pass that there came a voice again unto the people and all the people did hear, and did witness of it, saying:**

**4 O ye people of these great cities which have fallen, who are the descendants of Jacob, yea, who are of the house of Israel...**

**5 ...O ye people of the house of Israel, who have fallen; yea, O ye people of house of Israel, ye that dwell at Jerusalem,...**

**6 O ye house of Israel whom I have spared, how oft will I gather you as a hen gathereth her chickens**

**under her wings, if ye will repent and return unto me with full purpose of heart.**

**7 But if not, O house of Israel, the places of your dwellings shall become desolate until the time of the fulfilling of the covenant to your fathers.**

In these verses, Jesus addresses four groups of people: (1) "Descendant of Jacob, who are of the house of Israel, which have fallen"; (2) "People of the house of Israel who have fallen; (3) "People of the house of Israel, ye that dwell in Jerusalem, as ye that have fallen; and, (4) "Ye house of Israel whom I have spared" (3 Nephi 10:4-6). Each of these groups, he sought to "gather them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing, and have nourished [them]...and [they] would not." (see 3 Nephi 10:4.)

Mae Blanch states,

"The image of the hen calling after her chickens to come to shelter and safety of her wings portrays the love of the Savior, his desire to nourish his children, to keep them safe from their common enemy, Satan, to shelter them from the storms of life, to give them the opportunity to grow and fulfill the promise of their nature." ("Repentance: The Gift of Love," in *The Book of Mormon: 3 Nephi 9-30, This Is My Gospel*, Vol. 8. Edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1993, 79).

Philip A. Allred states re: "Mother Hen Symbolism"

"A few years ago, a colleague of mine at Idaho State University related one of his student's experiences that help illustrate this mother hen symbolism. The student, a young man, had been helping inspect some fire damage just outside of town from a recent blaze. As he and the other volunteers were assisting one of the inspectors, they noticed several smoldering mounds across the scorched earth. Intrigued, he asked the inspector what these were. The inspector replied that he should kick one of the piles. He did. To his great surprise several baby Sage Grouse chicks ran out from under the upturned mound. The young man asked the inspector how the chicks knew about the natural shelter. To his amazement, the inspector replied that they were not natural at all; instead this smoldering heap was none other than the remains of the mother. The inspector continued to explain that when the fire breaks out the

mother hen calls out to her young ones and stretches out her arm [wing] so they can run inside to her protective embrace. The young man was profoundly moved by this mother's loving and sufficient self-sacrifice. How fitting that the Lord would personify the mother hen in his words to the Nephites and Lamanites. How perfect is this example for us today! "O ye house of Israel whom I have spared, how oft will I gather as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings" (3 Nephi 10:6)." (Lesson 37: "Whosoever Will Come, Him Will I Receive" 3 Nephi 8-11. [www.ldsmeridianmagazine.com/gospeldoctrine/bom#37](http://www.ldsmeridianmagazine.com/gospeldoctrine/bom#37)).

This is such powerful experience regarding the love of the mother hen and her willingness to give her life to protect her children symbolic of the love of the Savior for us.

Mae Blanch continues,

"The image suggests other ideas as well. The chickens have strayed from the hen. They have been lured from safety by their desire for adventure or rebellion, out into the tempting world where danger lurks beside every step. The hen calls to her chickens, but they must come of their own volition. They are not forced under her wings; they are invited, even urged, but they must exercise their own agency...The Savior's love is always there. His arms are always extended in mercy as long as there is any hope for his children to return to him. The true nature of repentance is not a test, not an indulgence, but a gift of love. It is one that we must take--it cannot be forced upon us." ("Repentance: The Gift of Love," in *The Book of Mormon: 3 Nephi 9-30, This Is My Gospel*, Vol.8. Edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1993, 79).

3 Nephi 10:8

**8 And now it came to pass that after the people had heard these words, behold, they began to weep and howl again because of the loss of their kindreds and friends.**

While the words of the Savior had brought them some peace, they yet remained in darkness and the groaning of the earth continued. Their feelings were tender regarding the loss of

their loved ones. Surely, some whom they had tried to save, but they would not listen.

3 Nephi 10:9-10

**9 And it came to pass that thus did the three days pass away. And it was in the morning, and the darkness dispersed from off the face of the land, and the earth did cease to tremble, and the rocks did cease to rend, and the dreadful groanings did cease, and all the tumultuous noises did pass away.**

**10 And the earth did cleave together again, that it stood; and the mourning and the weeping, and the wailing of people who were spared alive did cease; and their mourning was turned into joy, and their lamentations into the praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord Jesus Christ, their Redeemer.**

Finally it was morning, and this time the darkness was lifted and there was light. There was also an end to the tremulous events of nature that had occurred. Once again their thoughts turned to the words of the Savior and the promises he offered them. Their lives had been spared.

3 Nephi 10:12

**12 And it was the more righteous part of the people who were saved, and it was they who received the prophets and stoned them not; and it was they who had not shed the blood of the saints, who were spared—**

George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl state,

"Mormon seeks in these verses to impress upon [us] that it was because of their desire unto righteousness that the more righteous were saved. Those who were delivered from untimely death and also destruction, were 'they who receive the prophets, and stoned them not; and it was they who are not shed the blood of the Saints.' Let us not forget that not only were the righteous among them, delivered from physical destruction, and their annals corroborate this fact, but they were all of that generation emancipated from sin. It is recorded of them, 'For none of them are lost.' The Savior's own words confirm this: 'And now, behold, My joy is great, even unto fullness, because of you, and also of this generation; yea, and even the Father rejoiceth, and

also all the holy angels, because of you and this generation; for none of them are lost.' (3 Nephi 27:30)."  
(*Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol.7. Amplified and Arranged by Philip C. Reynolds. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1961, [1976], 124).

This near death experience did have a powerful impact upon its survivors. They made the necessary changes in their lives in order to qualify for the forgiveness of their sins. They were about to have one of the most special experiences that any group of people has had upon the earth.

3 Nephi 10:14

**14 And now, whoso readeth, let him understand; he that hath the scriptures, let him search them,...and all these things are not unto the fulfilling of the prophecies of many of the holy prophets.**

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, and Brent L. Top state,

"The commandment to search the scriptures is again emphasized. Through searching the scriptures we can have testimonies strengthened by seeing the fulfillment of prophecy (compare D&C 1:37), can be instructed in righteousness (compare 2 Timothy 3:15-17), can come to know Christ more fully (compare John 5:39), and from the 'words of Christ' learn 'all things that [we] should do' (2 Nephi 32:3-5))." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 4. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 49).

One of the purposes of these lessons has been to assist each of us to come to know the scriptures in a more personal manner by increasing our understanding of them. As our understanding increases, it is hoped that so will our appreciation for both the Father and the Son. The scriptures bear witness of their love for us and their desire to bless our lives for good. It is, however, not enough to search the scriptures as important as that is, unless we also give the precepts daily application in our lives. The words of the prophet and apostles are designed to help us to change our lives so we may become like the Savior.

3 Nephi 10:18-19

18 And it came to pass that in the ending of the thirty and fourth year, behold, I will show unto you that the people of Nephi who were spared, and also those who had been called Lamanites, who had been spared did have great favors shown unto them, and great blessings poured out upon their heads, insomuch that soon after the ascension of Christ into heaven he did truly manifest himself unto them--

19 Showing his body unto them, and ministering unto them; and an account of his ministry shall be given hereafter. Therefore for this time I make an end of my sayings.

It had previously been my understanding that the Savior appeared to those gathered at the temple shortly after the darkness and destruction had ended. This was in error. We read in 3 Nephi 8:5, "And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such as one as never had been known in all the land." The next reference to a date is 3 Nephi 10:18, "And it came to pass that in the ending of the thirty and fourth year, behold, I will show unto you that the people of Nephi who were spared...insomuch that soon after the ascension of Christ into heaven, he did truly manifest himself unto them--"

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"The Nephites adjusted their calendar so as to begin a new dating era with the birth of Jesus; and according to their chronology, the storms and the darkness and the crucifixion came to pass on the fourth day of the first month of the thirty-fourth year. (see 3 Nephi 8:5). Then Mormon states 'in the ending of that year (3 Ne. 10:18-19), [several months after the Ascension of Christ on Olivet] Jesus ministered personally among the Nephites for many hours on many days.'" (*The Mortal Messiah, Book 4*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1981, 306-307, underline added).

## V. 3 Nephi 11

Ezra Taft Benson states,

"It is clear that 3 Nephi contains some of the most moving and powerful passages in all scripture. It testifies of

Jesus Christ, His prophets, and the doctrines of salvation. What a blessing it would be if every family would frequently read together 3 Nephi, discuss its sacred contents, and then determine how they can liken it unto themselves and apply its teachings in their lives!

"Third Nephi is a book that should be read and read again. Its testimony of the resurrected Christ in America is given in purity and beauty." (*A Witness and A Warning*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1988, 42-43).

3 Nephi 11:1-2

**1 And now it came to pass that there were a great multitude gathered together, of the people of Nephi, round about the temple which was in the land of Bountiful; and they were marveling and wondering one with another, and were showing one to another the great and marvelous change which had taken place.**  
**2 And they were also conversing about this Jesus Christ, of whom the sign had been given concerning his death.**

Bryan Richards states,

"This is the third temple mentioned in the Book of Mormon. The first one was built by Nephi, after the manner of the temple of Solomon (2 Ne 5:16), in the land of Nephi. the second one was located in Zarahemla and was the site of King Benjamin's great sermon (Mosiah 2:1). The third was located in Bountiful. From other passages, we know that many other temples were build and used but their specific locations are unknown (see Alma 16:23; 23:2)...Temples are gathering places for saints in all ages...The temples are also a place of refuge--the best place to be in time of crisis.

"Later, Mormon tells us that the number of the multitude was 2500 people (3 Ne 17:25). Undoubtedly, there were some who considered making this trek to the land of Bountiful [to attend the temple], but decided not to go. Can you imagine how sorry they were to hear...what happened that day? Think of what they missed because they were...[unable] to attend the temple on that particular occasion? We never know what kind of spiritual experience is waiting for us in the temple of the Lord. There may be times when we have missed out on incredible spiritual experiences because we

didn't take the opportunity to attend the temple. On those occasions when Satan disturbs our routine, makes temple attendance inconvenient, or otherwise places a roadblock to temple attendance, we would do well to remember the 2500 in Bountiful who were so greatly blessed because they had made the effort." ([www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/3Nephi-11](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/3Nephi-11)).

Howard W. Hunter states,

"Let us truly be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people..We should go not only for our kindred dead, but also for the personal blessing of temple worship, for the sanctity and safety that are within those hallowed and consecrated walls. As we attend the temple, we learn more richly and deeply the purposes of life and the significance of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us make the temple, with worship and temple covenants and temple marriage, our ultimate earthly goal and the supreme mortal experience." ("A Temple--Motivated People," in *Ensign*, February 1995, 5).

3 Nephi 11:3

**3 And it came to pass that while they were thus conversing one with another, they heard a voice as if it came out of heaven; and they cast their eyes round about, for they understood not the voice which they heard; and it was not a harsh voice, neither was it a loud voice; nevertheless, and notwithstanding it being a small voice it did pierce them that did hear to the center, insomuch that there was no part of their frame that it did not cause to quake; yea, it did pierce them to the very soul, and did cause their hearts to burn.**

Why did they not understand the voice the first time? It took three times before they understood what they initially had only felt. "And behold, the third time they did understand the voice which they heard;..." (3 Nephi 11:6). How many times does the Spirit speak to us, before we hear?

Henry B. Eyring states,

"Now, I testify it is a small voice. It whispers not shouts. And so you must be very quiet inside. That is why you may wisely fast when you want to listen. And that is why you will listen best when you feel, 'Father, they will,

not mine, be done.' You will have a feeling of 'I want what you want.' Then, the still small voice will seem as if it pierces you. It may make your bones to quake. More often it will make your heart burn within which will lift and reassure." ("To Draw Closer to God," in *Ensign*, May 1991, 67).

3 Nephi 11:6-7

**6 And behold, the third time they did understand the voice which they heard; and it said unto them:**

**7 Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name--hear ye him.**

D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner state,

"The voice of the Father is heard on rare and sacred occasions in this telestial world. When the Father does come, he comes to say one specific thing: 'This is my Son.'" Why does he testify of this one, single fact? Because it is the most important thing he could say, the most needed testimony he could bear...It is a unique and powerful witness of the divinity of that Son; his own Father bears solemn testimony of that fact at each momentous occasion in the Old World and in the New World, in ancient times as well as in modern times." (*Verse By Verse, The Book of Mormon*, Vol. 2. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2011, 131).

3 Nephi 11:8-10

**8 And it came to pass, as they understood they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a Man descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe; and he came down and stood in the midst of them; and the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what it meant, for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them.**

**9 And it came to pass that he stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people, saying:**

**10 Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.**

Jeffrey R. Holland states,

"He speaks and says simply, with a voice that penetrates the very marrow of your bones, 'I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.' (3 Nephi 11:10).

"There it is--or, more correctly speaking, there *he* is. The focal point and principle figure behind every fireside and devotional and family home evening held by those Nephites for the last six hundred years, and by their Israelite forefathers for thousands of years before that.

"Everyone has talked of him and sung of him and dreamed of him and prayed--but here he actually is. This is the day and yours is the generation. What a moment! But you find you are less inclined to check the film in your camera than you are to check the faith in your heart.

"I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.' Of all the messages that could come from the scroll of eternity, what has he brought to us? Everyone listens.

"He speaks: 'I am the light and the life of the world;...I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world;...I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.' That is it. Eight lines. Fifty-two words.' And...when Jesus had spoken these words the whole multitude fell to the earth.' (3 Nephi 11:11-12)." (*On Earth as it is in Heaven*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1989, 125).

Twenty-five hundred people were gathered at the temple in Bountiful that day and at the appearance of the Savior, Jesus Christ, they all fell to the earth. How natural. For how could you stand in His presence? No other life has ever impacted the lives of so many as this one solitary life.

3 Nephi 11:13-14

**13 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto them saying:**

**14 Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that**

**ye may know that I am the God of Israel [Jehovah], and the God of the whole earth, [Jesus Christ, the Son of God], and have been slain for the sins of the world.**

Why would the Savior and Redeemer of the World, invite those gathered to come forth and feels the prints of the nails in his hands and feet, and the wound of the soldier's spear in his side? One reason may be that these 2500 individuals would now go forth and share their witness that they saw, and physically felt for themselves, the wounds of the Savior. They became eye-witnesses of the reality of his resurrection.

Recall the words of the Savior to his apostles following his resurrection, "Jesus...stood in the midst, and saith unto them [Ten Apostles], Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord" (John 20:19-20). Thomas was not there and when he heard their testimony, he said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side. I will not believe" (John 20:25). Eight days later, the eleven were gathered and Jesus again appeared to them. He said specifically to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" (John 20:27). Not all will have the opportunity of physically feeling the tokens of his crucifixion, therefore, the words of the Lord to Thomas are meant to also guide us, "be not faithless, but believing" (John 20:27).

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"I testify that he is the Son of the Living God and was crucified for the sins of the world. He is our Lord, our God, and our King. This I know of myself independent of any other person.

"I am one of his witnesses, and in a coming day I shall feel the nail marks in his hands and in his feet and shall wet his feet with my tears.

"But I shall not know any better then than I know now that he is God's Almighty Son, that he is our Savior and Redeemer, and that salvation comes in and through his

atonement blood and in no other way." ("The Purifying Power of Gethsemane," in *Ensign*, May 1985, 9).

3 Nephi 11:16-17

**16 And when they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord, saying:**

**17 Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him.**

All who were present knew and did witness that He who had appeared to them was the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world. After such an outpouring of the spirit, how could anyone stand? Nephi, the son of Nephi, is asked by the Savior to come forth. He also "bowed himself before the Lord, and did kiss his feet" (3 Nephi 11:19).

3 Nephi 11:21-23

**21 And the Lord said unto him: I give unto you power that ye shall baptize this people when I am again ascended into heaven.**

**22 And again the Lord called others, and said unto them likewise; and he gave unto them power to baptize. And he said unto them: On this wise shall ye baptize; and there shall be no disputations among you.**

**23 Verily I say unto you, that whoso repenteth of his sins through your words, and desireth to be baptized in my name, on this wise shall ye baptize them-- Behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water, and in my name shall ye baptize them.**

Bryan Richards states,

"Nephi already had the power to baptize...(see 3 Nephi 7:24-25.) Later, we learn that the 12 disciples [apostles] and the multitude were baptized again (3 Ne 19:12-13; 27:1). So why did the Lord give Nephi this power when he already had it? And why did the people need to be baptized when they had already been baptized?"

"The visitation of Christ represented a new dispensation, with a new covenant, a new law, new priesthood keys, and new ordinances. The new and everlasting covenant was being presented anew to a new dispensation. To borrow the

language of the scriptures, old things are passed away; and behold all things are become new (2 Cor 5:17).”  
([www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-11](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-11)).

3 Nephi 11:24-26

**24 And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them by name, saying:  
25 Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.  
26 And then shall ye immerse them in the water, and come forth again out of the water.**

Bryan Richards states,

“Imagine for a brief moment if these...words were contained in the Bible. Imagine how the entire history of Christian theology would have been changed by such a simple phrase...If only the Bible had this phrase, then there would have been no disputations.

“The Book of Mormon was given for the confounding of false doctrines and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace (2 Ne 3:120. No single ordinances is covered as completely as is baptism. This is the one ordinances about which the Lord wanted no more contention. We are taught that authority from God is necessary to perform the ordinance (v.21). We are also taught what to say (v.25), how to perform it (v.26), and the doctrinal incorrectness of baptizing infants and little children (Moroni 8:5-22).”  
([www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-11](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-11)).

3 Nephi 11:29-30

**29 For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.  
30 Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away.**

In these brief verses, we learn that the devil is the father of contention, and it is his desire to stir up the

hearts of men to contend with anger. When we fall into his trap of contending with others, we are ourselves in error. It is important that we learn to respect the opinions of others, while finding ways to share our beliefs with them. The best way to do that is to respect their beliefs.

Joseph F. Smith states,

"I pray God that this spirit may especially enter into the hearts of this people, that they may strive for peace among themselves, that peace may dwell in their own hearts and houses, that peace may exist between neighbors, that peace, goodwill, love and union may characterize the associations of members of the Church with their fellow members, and that they may be no contention among them, nor strife, nor bitterness, nor back-sliding, nor back-biting, nor complain of any description, but that peace on earth and good will to men may pervade the hearts and minds of all the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints..."  
(*Conference Report*, October 1914).

In the following verses, [3 Nephi 11:30-31, 35, 39-40], the words "my doctrine" are found.

Bryan Richards states,

"The four doctrines mentioned are 1) that contentions should be put away; 2) that all men are commanded to repent, believe in Christ, and be baptized; 3) that faith, repentance, and baptism are followed by the Holy Ghosts baptism of fire, and 4) that whoso buildeth upon this buildeth upon my rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them."  
([www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nehi-11](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nehi-11)).

**Chart 3: The Doctrine of Christ: Nephi and Christ**

Doctrine of Christ

Nephi Taught	Christ Taught
<b>2 Nephi 31:2, 4-21</b>	<b>3 Nephi 11:31-41</b>
<b>Doctrine of Christ (2)</b>	<b>This is my doctrine (31)</b>
<b>Repent &amp; be baptized (4-6,11)</b>	<b>Repent &amp; be baptized (32-33)</b>
<b>Holy Ghost (12)</b>	<b>Be visited with fire &amp; the Holy Ghost (35)</b>
<b>Take upon you the name of Christ (13, 21)</b>	<b>In my name (37)</b>
<b>Endure to the end in faith</b>	<b>Inherit the kingdom of God</b>

Reference: *The Book of Mormon Study Guide: Start to Finish*. Thomas R. Valletta, General Editor. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2015, 657.

Jeffrey R. Holland states,

"It is clear at the onset that the sermon in the Book of Mormon is built upon one overwhelmingly important premise that is not so obvious in the New Testament--that the doctrine taught and the blessings promised are predicated upon first principles, on saving ordinances and covenants of the gospel, including the baptismal covenant, which brings people through 'the gate' to the strait and narrow path leading to eternal life. As Christ taught here, so Nephi taught earlier [2 Nephi 31:18-21]--that these first principles and ordinances constitute the 'doctrine of Christ'" (*Christ and the New Covenant*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997, 261-262).

The phrase "my doctrine" is meant by the Savior to remind each of us that these are the basic tenants of His gospel of which all men must comply. If they choose not to do so, their eternal progression will be stopped and the blessings they would have received, if they had complied, would be lost to them.

3 Nephi 11:40

**40 And whosoever shall declare more or less than this, and establish it for my doctrine, the same cometh of evil, and is not built upon my rock; but he buildeth upon a sandy foundation, and the gates of hell stand open to receive such when the floods come and the winds beat upon them.**

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

"Now, there are those who declare more or less than this. They will not repent of their sins. They will not accept Jesus as the Redeemer of the world. They will not believe that He spoke the truth when He declared unto the people that He was the Son of God, and that He came to fulfill the mission that was given to Him of His Father, to redeem the world from sin. They reject these things. They will not believe them; hence they remain in the bondage of sin, and

cannot be redeemed, because they will not receive the principles by which salvation comes. There are many of this class that go around through the country, stirring up the hearts of the people against the truth, declaring that these things are not so, and that it is unnecessary for men to observe these principles, and ordinances that are declared in the scriptures to be essential to salvation." (*Conference Report*, October 1913, 72).

It is one thing to reject the principles of salvation for ourselves. It is another when we actively raise our voice in opposition to the words of the prophets and the doctrines of salvation which they taught. To do so, is to align ourselves with Satan and to join his ranks. Without our full repentance, we will receive the wrath of the Lord as surely as the night follows the day. One cannot treat lightly the words of the Lord without experiencing serious consequences. The destruction that occurred in ancient America stands as a witness of the fulfillment of the Lord's words as declared through his prophets.

## **VI. Conclusions**

As we reflect upon the lessons learned within these chapters, we are again grateful for the privilege of having the Book of Mormon in our day. These chapters mark the beginning of the teachings of the Savior to the Nephites and Lamanites in ancient America. He spent three days with them teaching them his gospel. Lessons we are also privileged to be taught.

In 3 Nephi, Chapter 8, we learn of the great destruction, storms, earthquakes and lightening that occurred at the time of his crucifixion in ancient America. This is similar to the destruction that will occur prior to his Second coming.

As a result, the whole earth was deformed. Especially fearful, were the three days of darkness that occurred and the impact it had upon the people. Many of those who survived these events lost loved ones as well as experiencing deep regret and remorse for their failure to repent and heed the words of the prophets.

3 Nephi, Chapter 9, we learn of sixteen cities that were either burned with fire, sunk into the depths of the sea or buried in the depths of the earth. How tragic for those who lost their lives without having repented of their

wickedness. While those who survived were more righteous, they were also instructed to repent and turn to Christ. He announces to the people that the Law of Moses is now fulfilled. Now the people are to offer "for a sacrifice...a broken heart and a contrite spirit" (3 Nephi 9:20). We learn that repentance is not a one-time event, but a lifelong process.

In 3 Nephi, Chapter 10, Jesus speaks to the house of Israel and his desire to "have gathered them as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing" (3 Nephi 10:6). It is imperative that we must come unto Christ if we are to be saved. Finally the three days of darkness ended, and it was once again light. We are reminded again of the value of searching the scriptures as a means to be strengthened and to see the fulfillment of the prophecies of the prophets. They instruct us in all righteousness "for behold the words of Christ will tell...[us] all things what...[we] should do" (2 Nephi 32:3). We also learn that the Savior did not appear in person to the Nephites until several months after his ascension.

3 Nephi, Chapter 11, is extraordinary for it records the appearance of the resurrected Lord to 2500 people at the temple in Bountiful. His appearance is marked by the voice of God, the Father, declaring, "Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name--hear ye him" (3 Nephi 11:7). Jesus Christ then appeared to the people who were gathered and testified, "I am Jesus Christ..." (3 Nephi 11:10). He then invited each of them to come forth and feel the wounds in his hands and feet and side. These individuals in ancient America, add their names to those who were witnesses of his physical resurrection. He then taught them regarding baptism, the source of contention, and his doctrine. He also gives a warning to those who do not teach his doctrine, for they will suffer dire consequences for their actions.

In the next lesson [BM#38], we will continue to be instructed by the Savior regarding the principles of his gospel as he taught those gathered at the temple in Bountiful.