

BM#39 "Behold, My Joy Is Full" - 3 Nephi 16-19

- I. Introduction
- II. 3 Nephi 16
- III. 3 Nephi 17
- IV. 3 Nephi 18
- V. 3 Nephi 19
- VI. Conclusions

I. Introduction

Monte S. Nyman states,

"Christ's three day ministry begins shortly after his [appearance]...with Day One covered in 3 Nephi 10:8--18:39; Day Two covered in 3 Nephi 19:1--26:12, and Day Three covered in 3 Nephi 26:13--30:2." (*Book of Mormon Commentary: Divine Ministry The First Gospel*. Orem, Utah: Granite Publishing and Distribution, LLC, 2003, iii-iv).

In chapter 16-18, we continue our focus on Day One of Christ's ministry to the Nephites at the Temple in Bountiful. Chapter 19 begins Day Two.

Outline of 3 Nephi 16-19:

- "A. 3 Nephi 16 He is commanded to visit yet other sheep of the house of Israel. Blessings upon believing Gentiles of the latter-days [and warning to unbelieving Gentiles]. Isaiah 52:8-10 to be fulfilled at that time.

- "B. 3 Nephi 17--19 Savior heals the sick. Prays to Father in marvelous manner. Blesses little children. Institutes sacrament of bread and wine. Teaches necessity of prayer. Disciples given power to confer Holy Ghost. [Day Two] Nephite Twelve baptized with water and Holy Ghost. Ineffable outpouring of prayer."
(Sidney B. Sperry. *Book of Mormon Compendium*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968, 391).

II. 3 Nephi 16

3 Nephi 16:1-3

1 And verily, verily, I say unto you that I have other sheep, which are not of this land, neither of the land of Jerusalem, neither in any parts of that land round about whither I have been to minister.

2 For they of whom I speak are they who have not as yet heard my voice; neither have I at any time manifested myself unto them.

3 But I have receive a commandment of the Father that I shall go unto them, and that they shall hear my voice, and shall be numbered among my sheep, that there may be one fold and one shepherd; therefore I go to show myself unto them.

Who are these "other sheep" of whom the Savior will visit? We may assume that these are those of the lost ten tribes of Israel. (see 3 Nephi 17:4.)

Bryan Richards states,

"After king Solomon, the kingdom of Israel was divided into two kingdoms, the kingdom of Ephraim [Israel] to the north and the kingdom of Judah to the south. Between 740 and 720 B.C., the ten northern tribes were sacked by the Assyrians in a series of conquests (2 Kgs 17). The inhabitants were taken north. Over the subsequent years, some of them were scattered all over the earth, but a group of them retained their identity and were able to preserve that identify for generations. A knowledge of them has been hidden from the world, much like the knowledge of the descendants of Lehi has been hidden from most of the world. They have been known as the lost ten tribes, but they were 'not lost unto the Father, for he knoweth whither he hath taken them' (3 Ne 17:4). From the Book of Mormon, we learn that [a group of] these ten tribes retained their own identity, were taught directly by the Savior, had their own prophets and their own records (2 Ne 29:12-14)."

www.gospeldoctrine.com/content/3Nephi-16).

Bruce R. McConkie adds,

"In due course the Lost Tribes of Israel will return and come to the children of Ephraim to receive their blessings. *This great gathering will take place under the direction of*

the President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for he holds the keys of the 'gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north' (D&C 110:11.) Keys are the right of presidency the power to direct, and by this power the Lost Tribes will return, with 'their prophets' and their scriptures to 'be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.' (D&C 133:26-35)." (Mormon Doctrine. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, [Second Edition, 1966], 458).

3 Nephi 16:4

4 And I command you that ye shall write these sayings after I am gone, that if it so be that my people at Jerusalem..do not ask the Father in my name, that they may receive a knowledge of you by the Holy Ghost, and also of the other tribes whom they know not of, that these sayings which ye shall write shall be kept and shall be manifested unto the Gentiles, that through the fullness of the Gentiles, the remnant of their seed, who shall be scattered forth upon the face of the earth because of their unbelief, may be brought in, or may be brought to a knowledge of me, their Redeemer.

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

"The Book of Mormon and the gospel message would be restored through the Gentiles--lineal Israelites but cultural Gentiles, the Latter-day Saints (see 1 Nephi 22:7; D&C 109:60)--and then brought to Israel (Lamanites and Jews) in the last days." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 4. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 109).

3 Nephi 16:6-7

6 And blessed are the Gentiles, because of their belief in me, in and of the Holy Ghost, which witnesses unto them of me and of the Father.
7 Behold, because of their belief in me, saith the Father, and because of the unbelief of you, O house of Israel, in the latter-day shall the truth come unto the Gentiles, that the fullness of these things shall be made known unto them.

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

"This seems to be a specific commendation to the Saints in America--the Gentiles who receive the gospel and live worthy of its privileges." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol.4.* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 110).

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

"In the days of Jesus and his apostles the gospel went first to the Jews and then (under the direction of Peter and Paul) to the Gentiles. In this final dispensation the gospel was restored through 'Gentiles' in a Gentile nation and will eventual go primarily to Israel (Lamanites and Jews). The era in which the gospel goes to the nations of the Gentiles is called 'the times of the Gentiles.' The era when, as we shall see shortly, the Gentile nations sin against the gospel and refuse its powers and blessing, is known as 'the fullness of the Gentiles.' This is not a single moment; it will instead be a period of time. To some degree we are today in a period of transition: the gospel is going forth to the Gentile nations, but at the same time wickedness is increasing and more of the children of men are sinning against the light of the gospel." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 4.* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 109).

3 Nephi 16:10-11, 13

10 And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you: At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fullness of my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fullness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fullness of my gospel from among them.
11 And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them.

13 But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, said the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel.

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

"This is a sober warning, a warning directed fairly specifically to the Gentiles in America, including the members of the Church. At that point in time when pride, deceit, hypocrisy, priestcraft, whoredom, secret abomination, and murder proliferate in America--and to some degree even among the Latter-day Saints--then the Lord's judgments will be poured out upon the land. That the Saints will be involved in the abominations of the land is frighteningly evident in the Savior's careful use of language. He states that if 'the Gentiles will repent and *return unto me*, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people. O house of Israel' (verse 12, italics added). One cannot *return* to a place where he has not been; this seems to be a reference to the return to the faith." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 4. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 110).

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"When will the Lord take the gospel from the unbelieving Gentiles? It will be when the fullness of the Gentiles is come in, when he remembers the covenant made with his own people, when the hour for millennial glory has arrived." (*Millennial Messiah*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982, 241).

3 Nephi 16:15

15 But if they will not turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, I will suffer them, yea, I will suffer my people, O house of Israel, that they shall go through among them, and shall tread them down, and they shall be as salt that hath lost its savor, which is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of my people, O house of Israel.

When will all the Gentiles who are guilty of rejecting the teaching of the gospel and serious transgression be

destroyed, along with members of the Church who have not repented?

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

"It would seem that the image of the remnant of Israel rending its Gentile enemies is symbolic of Israel's ultimate victory over its foes, a victory which comes when the Savior returns and the wicked are destroyed."

(*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol.4.* Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 111).

3 Nephi 16:17-20 / Isaiah 52:8-10

17 And then the words of the prophet Isaiah shall be fulfilled, which say:

18 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion.

19 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

20 The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.

George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl state,

"This prophecy uttered by Isaiah does not refer to the watchmen who were set about Jerusalem in the towers of its walls to warn of approaching enemies, but to all the holy prophets who in times past have raised their voices to declare the coming of the Lord, the Messiah, and like *watchmen* notify the people of Jerusalem of the wonderful reception due Him Who is their King, and to warn them of the error of His rejection." (*Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Vol. 7.* Amplified and Arranged by Philip C. Reynolds. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1961, [1976], 167).

Melvin J. Ballard states,

"I rejoice, my brethren and sister, to belong to a Church that has watchmen, who sing together in unison, who indeed have the vision, the light, and the inspiration of the living God, to direct this people...We are not groping in the

dark, and we live in the day that Isaiah was talking about when upon the mountains of Ephraim, where we stand, the watchmen shall sing together in unity; the day when the waste places shall be redeemed; and Jerusalem, as we heard at this conference, stands on the threshold of her redemption, for the Lord hath decreed it." (*Conference Report*, April 1922, 82-83).

How blessed we are to have modern day Prophets and Apostles who speak in one voice give the Lord's counsel to the members of His Church in these latter-days. Our task is to listen and then act upon their guidance and direction. If we do so, we will be able to follow the clearly marked path that will lead us back to God's presence, even during the perilous times in which we now live.

III. 3 Nephi 17

3 Nephi 17:1-3

1 Behold, now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words he looked round about again on the multitude, and he said unto them: Behold, my time is at hand.

2 I perceive that ye are weak, that ye cannot understand all my words which I am commanded of the Father to speak unto you at this time.

3 Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand, and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again.

Bryan Richards states,

"Of all the recipes designed to increase our spiritual understanding, this must be the greatest. Directly from the Savior, we are given a three-step instruction: 1) ponder; 2) pray for understanding, and 3) prepare your minds for more. [The Lord reminded Oliver Cowdery], 'Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me. But behold, I say unto you, that *you must study it out in your mind; then ye must ask me* (D&C 9:7-8, italics added). (www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-17).

Joseph B. Wirthlin states,

"Pondering--which means to weigh mentally, to deliberate, to mediate--can open the spiritual eyes of one's understanding. Also, the Spirit of the Lord may rest upon the ponderer,..." (*Finding Peace in Our Lives*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1995, 209).

Only as we take time to quietly reflect upon the things of the spirit, can the Lord continue to enlighten our minds regarding the spiritual truths He would have us understand. We must not short-change ourselves, by reading, but not pondering, the truths we have read or heard.

Jesus tells the people that they are to return to their homes and ponder his words as "now I go unto the Father, and also to show myself unto the lost tribes of Israel,..." (3 Nephi 17:4). Before he departs, however, "he casts his eyes round about again on the multitude, and beheld they were in tears, and did look steadfastly upon him as if they would ask him to tarry a little longer with them" (3 Nephi 17:5).

This scripture exemplifies the great love that the Savior has. On his agenda is a meeting with his Father and a visit to the lost ten tribes of Israel, but he takes time to render compassionate service to those gathered at the temple. His priority is always to administer to his Father's children.

3 Nephi 17:7-8

7 Have ye any that are sick among you? Bring them hither. Have ye any that are lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, or leprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf, or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will heal them, for I have compassion upon you; my bowels are filled with mercy.
8 For I perceive that ye desire that I should show unto you what I have done unto your brethren at Jerusalem, for I see that your faith is sufficient that I should heal you.

Over six hundred years previous, in vision, Nephi had seen the ministry of the Savior upon the earth.

1 Nephi 11:31

31 And he spake unto me again, saying: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the Lamb of God going forth among the children of men. And I beheld multitudes of people who were sick, and who were afflicted with all manner of diseases, and with devils and unclean spirits; and the angel spake and showed all these things unto me. And they were healed by the power of the Lamb of God; and the devils and the unclean spirits were cast out.

Surely this event is evidence of the fulfillment of Nephi's vision, that when the Savior came, he would heal those who were afflicted with all manner of disease, physically as well as spiritually.

3 Nephi 17:9-10

9 And it came to pass that when he had thus spoken, all the multitude, with one accord, did go forth, with their sick and their afflicted, and their lame, and with their blind, and with their dumb, and will all them that were afflicted in any manner; and he did heal them every one as they were brought forth unto him.

10 And they did all, both they who had been healed and they who were whole, bow down at his feet, and did worship him; and as many as could come for the multitude did kiss his feet, insomuch that they did bathe his feet with their tears.

Having healed all their sick, physically as well as spiritually, He now became the recipient of their heartfelt gratitude as they knelt down and "bathe[d] his feet with their tears" (3 Nephi 17:10). What a special outpouring of gratitude on the part of those who were gathered.

He now "commands" (3 Nephi 17:11), that their little children should be brought to him.

3 Nephi 17:12

12 So they brought their little children and set them down upon the ground round about him, and Jesus stood in the midst; and the multitude gave way till they had all be brought unto him.

Michaelene P. Grassli states,

"His invitation in verse 11 was neither casual nor inconsequential. 'He *commanded* that their little children should be brought.' (Emphasis added.) And notice that verse 11 *doesn't* say. It doesn't say never mind the little ones because they aren't accountable yet. It doesn't say the children were to be taken elsewhere so they wouldn't disrupt the proceedings. And it doesn't imply that the children won't understand. But it *does* teach that children need to learn the significant things of the kingdom.

"God's children share with all of us the divine right to spiritual enlightenment." ("Behold Your Little Ones," in *Ensign*, November, 1992, 92).

Following his gathering the children unto himself, He, along with the multitude knelt upon the ground and prayed. The only words known of that prayer, are, "Father, I am troubled because of the wickedness of the house of Israel" (3 Nephi 17:14). We may assume that his words were directed toward the house of Israel collectively, for individually, he was surrounded by some of the most pure members of Israel, her innocent children. It may have been because of the smallness of the group of believers; it may have been in response to all those who lost their lives because they would not repent; it may even be because of the wickedness that lay in the future; we don't know. Only these words are recorded.

3 Nephi 17:16-17

16 And after this manner do they bear record: The eye hath never seen, neither hath the ear heard, before, so great and marvelous things as we saw and heard Jesus speak unto the Father;

17 And no tongue can speak, neither can there be written by any man, neither can the hearts of men conceive so great and marvelous things as we both saw and heard Jesus speak; and no one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us unto the Father.

The words that Jesus spoke to the Father on behalf of all gathered brought great joy to those present. While Jesus may have felt pain regarding those who were absent, he also spoke words to His Father on behalf of those present that

brought them great joy and happiness for they saw and heard "marvelous things" (3 Nephi 17:17).

3 Nephi 17:20-21

20 And they arose from the earth, and he said unto them: Blessed are ye because of your faith. And now behold, my joy is full.

21 And when he had said these words, he wept, and the multitude bare record of it, and he took their little children, one by one, and blessed them, and prayed unto the Father for them.

22 And when he had done this he wept again;

Jesus confirmed his joy in the faith of the people who were present for they were among those who had survived the destruction and carnage that had occurred in their land. He then took the children, "one by one," and blessed them and prayed to the Father for them. These children are the future of the Nephite civilization. They are those who will be numbered among its leaders. How great was Jesus love for them.

3 Nephi 17:23-24

23 And he came unto the multitude, and said unto them: Behold your little ones.

24 And as they looked to behold they cast their eyes towards heaven, and they saw the heavens open, and they saw angels descending out of heaven as it were in the midst of fire; and they came down and encircled those little ones about, and they were encircled about with fire; and the angels did minister unto them.

Michaelene P. Grassli states,

"To me the word *behold* is significant. It implies more than just 'look and see.' When the Lord instructed the Nephites to *behold* their little ones, I believe he told them to give attention to their children, to contemplate them, to look beyond the present and see their eternal possibilities...It's significant to me that later the Savior gave the most sacred teachings only to the children, then loosed their tongues so they could teach the multitude (See 3 Ne 26:14). Is it any wonder that following the Savior's visit to the Nephites, they lived in peace and righteousness for two hundred years? Because of miraculous instructions,

blessings, and attention they and their children received, righteousness was perpetuated by their children's children for many generations. Let us not underestimate the capacity and potential power of today's children to perpetuate righteousness. No group of people in the Church is as receptive to the truth." ("Behold Your Little Ones," in *Ensign*, November, 1992, 93-94).

George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl state,

"Can we imagine anything more lovely, more touching, and more glorious, than this scene must have been? Can we conceive the joy that must have filled the hearts of these Nephites as they beheld the angels of Heaven descending from the Courts of Glory and ministering to their little ones? How deep must have been their love for the Savior. Who had brought these blessings to them? How strong must have grown their faith in Him? We cannot recall a circumstance in recorded history that draws Earth nearer to Heaven than this, or that seems to bind the ties so strongly that unite the Powers of Eternity with the children of mortality." (*Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 7. Amplified and Arranged by Philip C. Reynolds. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1961, [1976], 175).

M. Russell Ballard states,

"When we truly behold our little ones, we behold the glory, wonder, and majesty of God, our Eternal Father. All children are His spirit offspring. We have no more eloquent testimony that our Heavenly Father lives and that He loves us than the first raspy cry of a newborn child. All babies have faith in their eyes and purity in their hearts." ("Great Shall Be the Peace of Thy Children," in *Ensign*, April 1994, 59).

How blessed were those who were gathered at the temple in Bountiful on that day. These approximately "two thousand and five hundred souls" (3 Nephi 17:25), were privileged, along with their wives and children, to see the Savior of Mankind, to feel his wounds, and to listen to his words. They then witnessed angels come down and encircle their children with fire and minister unto them. This experience surely was engraven on their hearts as they then became witnesses of the resurrected Lord and his love for mankind.

IV. 3 Nephi 18

3 Nephi 18:1-4

1 And it came to pass that Jesus commanded his disciples that they should bring forth some bread and wine unto him.

2 And while they were gone for bread and wine, he commanded the multitude that they should sit themselves down upon the earth.

3 And when the disciples had come with bread and wine, he took of the bread and brake and blessed it; and he gave unto the disciples [twelve] and commanded that they should eat.

4 And when they had eaten and were filled, he commanded that they should give unto the multitude.

Before Jesus departed from the presence of the 2500 who were gathered at Bountiful, he yet had important lessons to teach them. He began by inaugurating the Sacrament that consisted of the elements of bread and wine.

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

"...every ordinance of the gospel focuses in one way or another on the atonement of Jesus Christ, and surely this is why this particular ordinance [Sacrament] with all its symbolism and imagery comes to us more readily and more repeatedly than any other in our life. It comes in what has been called 'the *most sacred*, the *most holy*, of all the meetings of the Church.'" (*Doctrine of Salvation*, Vol. 2. Compiled by Bruce R. McConkie. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955, [20th Printing, 1978], 340).

D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner state,

"At the first Nephite sacrament meeting, with twenty-five hundred in attendance (3 Nephi 117:25), the Savior himself administered the emblems of his body and blood. The people ate and drank and 'were filled'--filled not so much with those physical elements but with the Holy Ghost (3 Nephi 12:6)..." (*The Book of Mormon Verse-by-Verse*, Vol. 2. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2011, 186-187).

Jesus now spoke directly to his twelve disciples and gave instructions regarding the authority necessary to administer

the sacrament; those qualified to partake of the bread and wine; and, its purpose.

3 Nephi 18:5-8; 10-11

5 And when the multitude had eaten and were filled, he said unto the disciples: Behold there shall one be ordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall break bread and bless it and give it unto the people of my church, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name.

6 And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done, even as I have broken bread and blessed it and given it unto you.

7 And this shall ye do in remembrance of my body, which I have shown unto you. And it shall be a testimony unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.

8 And it came to pass that when he said these words, he commanded his disciples that they should take of the wine of the cup and drink of it, and that they should also give unto the multitude that they might drink of it.

10 ...and this doth witness unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you.

11 ...and ye shall do it in remembrance of my blood, which I have shed for you, that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.

D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner state,

"The instructions he gave as he administered the sacramental elements constituted the very points of the sacrament prayers: we partake to show our willingness to keep his commandments, to always remember him, and to have his Spirit to be with us." (*The Book of Mormon Verse-by-Verse*, Vol. 2. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2011, 186-187).

Neal A. Maxwell states,

"We partake 'in remembrance,' so that we may 'always remember' what Jesus has done for us (3 Nephi 18:11; Moroni 4,5).

"If we fail to stir remembrance of blessings received, the human tendency is to say, in effect, whether to one's God or to one's fellows. 'What have you done for me lately?' Indeed, prophets of the Lord have asked directly whether their people had 'sufficiently retained in remembrance' His deliverances and blessings (Alma 5:6-7). It is best to cultivate our 'remembering' capacity now and to be guided accordingly, since at judgment day we will have 'perfect remembrance' (Alma 5:18)." (*A Wonderful Flood of Light*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1990, 51).

Words of instruction specifically for the Twelve disciples:

Those people who are worthy, have been baptized, and have taken of the name of Jesus Christ, can partake of the Sacrament. In other words, they had built their lives "upon the rock" of Jesus Christ. Those who continue to "keep my commandments, which the Father hath commanded me that I should give you" (3 Nephi 18:12, 14), shall be blessed and protected from the buffings of Satan. Those who are not faithful in keeping the commandments, are likened to those who would build their house [testimony?] upon the sand [philosophies of the world], and "when the rain [doubts?] descends, and the floods [persecution?] come, the winds [mocking words?] blow, and beat upon them, they shall fall [forsake membership in Christ's Church?], and the gates of hell are [then] ready open to receive them" (3 Nephi 18:13).

3 Nephi 18:15-16

15 Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye must watch and pray always, lest ye be tempted by the devil, and ye be led away captive by him.

16 And as I have prayed among you even so shall ye pray in my church, among my people who do repent and are baptized in my name. Behold, I am the light; I have set an example for you.

Jesus knew that the twelve he had chosen would be under great temptation by Satan and his minions. He, therefore, instructed them to build their testimony upon Jesus Christ; keep his commandments, and to watch and pray always. If they were not diligent in these areas they would become vulnerable to the temptations of Satan. Satan desired to destroy them, thereby preventing the work of the Savior to go forth among the people.

Words of Savior spoken directly to multitude:

Jesus now gives to the multitude the following instructions: (1) "Watch and pray" in order to avoid temptation; (2) "Always pray unto the Father in my name"; (3) "Ask the Father, in my name, [what is] right, believing ye shall receive, [and] it shall be given unto you"; (4) "Pray in your families, always in my name,...[your] wives and...children may be blessed"; (5) "Meet together oft; ...not forbid [others]...from [meeting with] you"; (6) Pray for [those who meet with you]"; (7) "Hold up your light" [Jesus Christ] unto the world; and, (8) "Come unto me, that ye might feel and see; even so shall ye do unto the world;...whosoever breaketh this commandment suffereth himself to be led into temptation" (3 Nephi 18:18-25).

Thomas S. Monson states,

"As a people, aren't we grateful that family prayer is not an out-of-date practice with us? There is no more beautiful sight in all this world than to see a family praying together. The oft-repeated phrase is ever true, 'The family that prays together stays together.'" (*Conference Report*, April 1964, 130).

Jesus had freely shared his love for his children who had come unto Him. It was important that they would be an example to others who did not have this blessing in their lives: To invite them into their meetings; To pray for them, and, Always be an example to them.

Words of counsel to the Twelve disciples:

3 Nephi 18:28-30

28 And now behold, this is the commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily, when ye shall minister it;

29 For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul; therefore if ye know that man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood ye shall forbid him.

It is important that the disciples understand that no one is to partake of the emblems of the sacrament who is unworthy. If the individual does so, he brings condemnation

upon him/herself. Therefore, the individual should not be allowed to partake of the sacrament until he/she had repented of their sins.

3 Nephi 18:30-32

30 Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out from among you, but ye shall minister unto him and shall pray for him unto the Father, in my name; and if it so be that the repenteth and is baptized in my name, then shall ye receive him, and minister unto him of my flesh and blood.

31 But if he repent not he shall not be numbered among my people, that he may not destroy my people, for behold I know my sheep, and they are numbered.

32 Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out of your synagogues, or your places of worship, for unto such shall ye continue to minister; for ye know not but what they will return and repent, and come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I shall heal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them.

In these verses, the Savior expresses his concern for those individuals who knowingly partake of the emblems of the Sacrament unworthily. While they are to be prevented from partaking of the Sacrament, they are not to be prevented from continuing to attend the places of worship and meeting with the members who are gathered together. The individuals who are not repentant regarding their unworthiness are, however, not to be numbered among the membership of the Church.

Dallin H. Oaks states,

"The shepherd has a responsibility to protect the flock against all of these threats. That responsibility may require him to deny a predator the fellowship of the Saints or even to sever his membership in the flock. As Jesus taught: 'If he repent not he shall not be numbered among my people, that he may not destroy my people, for behold I know my sheep, and they are numbered' (3 Nephi 18:31; see also Mosiah 26:34-36)." (*The Lord's Way*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1991, 227).

Those who, however, are repentant, should continue to be welcomed for they may yet repent, come unto the Savior with full purpose of heart, and return to full fellowship.

3 Nephi 18:36-37

36 And it came to pass that when Jesus had made an end of these sayings, he touched with his hand the disciples whom he had chosen, one by one, even until he had touched them all, and spake unto them as he touched them.

37 And the multitude heard not the words which he spake, therefore they did not bear record; but the disciples bare record that he gave them power to give the Holy Ghost. And I will show unto you hereafter that this record is true.

Bryan Richards states,

"Moroni, apparently reviewing older records, recorded the words Christ said as he gave the disciples this priesthood power. 'And he called them by name, saying: Ye shall call on the Father in my name, in mighty prayer; and after ye have done this ye shall have power that to him upon whom ye shall lay your hands, ye shall give the Holy Ghost; and in my name shall ye give it, for thus did mine apostles. Now Christ spake these words unto them at the time of his first appearing; and the multitude heard it not, but the disciples heard it; and on as many as they laid their hands, fell the Holy Ghost (Moroni 2:2-3).

"Interestingly, 3 Nephi 18 is likely the text to which Moroni referred before writing Moroni chapters 2-6. These chapters deal with many of the same topics, and reading them together is recommended."

www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-18).

Today, we understand, Jesus laid his hands upon the heads on each of the twelve, and ordained them to the Melchizedek priesthood. This priesthood included the authority to bestow upon others the gift of the Holy Ghost.

3 Nephi 18:35, 38-39

35 And now I go unto the Father, because it is expedient that I should go unto the Father for your [Twelve disciples] sakes.

38 And it came to pass that when Jesus had touched them all, there came a cloud and overshadowed the multitude that they could not see Jesus.

39 And while they were overshadowed he departed from them, and ascended into heaven. And the disciples saw and did bear record that he ascended again into heaven.

With these final words and while overshadowed by a cloud from the view of the multitude, the Twelve disciples witnessed the ascension of the Savior into heaven. This concluded Day One of the Savior's appearance and teachings to the twenty-five hundred who had been gathered at the temple in Bountiful. While we do not know why these men, women, and children had been gathered at the temple, we do know that it was several months after the widespread destruction had occurred. (see 3 Nephi 8:5; 10:18.)

How very blessed they were to have been witnesses of his resurrection; to be taught his gospel, including the importance of the sacrament; to witness the healing of all present and the ministration of angels to their children. For me, the most wonderful of all the events of the first day, would have been the privilege of being present when Jesus prayed to the Father as they both saw and heard "marvelous things as...Jesus [spoke] unto the Father" (3 Nephi 17:17) on their behalf.

V. 3 Nephi 19

3 Nephi 19:1-2

1 And now it came to pass that when Jesus had ascended into heaven, the multitude did disperse, and every man did take his wife and his children and did return to his own home.

2 And it was noised abroad among the people immediately, before it was yet dark, that the multitude had seen Jesus, and that he had ministered unto them, and that he would also show himself on the morrow unto the multitude.

Many went home that night and possibly gathered as families to ponder the appearance of their resurrected Lord to them, the teachings that he had given them, and His prayer to the Father on their behalf. Who could ever forget the physical and spiritual healing they had observed as He healed everyone. This was only secondary to the appearance of the angels who had descended from heaven and ministered unto the children who were present. Then Jesus himself, who had

shown them the wounds in his hands and feet, had blessed the bread and the wine, and directed them that they were to do always do this in remembrance of Him. It had been a glorious event and then He had told them that He was going to come on the morrow!

Bryan Richards states,

"One can only imagine the excitement which must have spread like a tidal wave throughout the rest of society. This night must have been sleepless, filled with anticipation, exceeding anything they had ever experienced. Even those old enough to remember the night without darkness which heralded Christ's birth over thirty-three years earlier were to have a night of even greater anticipation. How could they sleep when they were soon to see the resurrected Lord? (www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-19).

3 Nephi 19:3

3 Yea, and even all the night it was noised abroad concerning Jesus; and insomuch did they [leaders?] send forth unto the people that there were many, yea, an exceedingly great number, did labor exceedingly all that night, that they might be on the morrow in the place where Jesus should show himself unto the multitude.

We do not know how many had missed the events of the first day when Jesus had appeared at the Temple in Bountiful and taught those who had been gathered. What was important was that the announcement informed everyone that on the morrow, Jesus was going to appear again to those who were gathered at the temple. A countless number would not sleep that night so that as many as possible could receive the invitation to be present.

The next day all were gathered. Surely the twelve who had been called to serve were introduced to the multitude. They are: Nephi; his brother, Timothy; Nephi's son, Jonas; Mathoni; Mathonihah, brother to Mathoni; Kumen; Kumenonhi; Jeremiah; Shemnon; Jonas 2; Zedekiah, and Isaiah. (see 3 Nephi 19:4.)

Numerous people attended the next day. They were divided into twelve groups. Once assembled, the twelve disciples taught them. They were then directed to "kneel down upon

the face of the earth, and should pray unto the Father in the name of Jesus" (3 Nephi 19:6). For many, it was the first time they had understood that their prayers were to be directed to the Father, in the Name of Jesus Christ.

3 Nephi 19:7-9

7 And the disciples did pray unto the Father also in the name of Jesus. And it came to pass that they arose and ministered unto the people.

8 And when they had ministered those same words which Jesus had spoken--nothing varying from the words Jesus had spoken--behold, they knelt again and prayed to the Father in the name of Jesus.

9 And they did pray for that which they most desired; and they desired that the Holy Ghost should be given unto them.

They taught the "same words which Jesus had spoken" (3 Nephi 19:8), as it is likely that many who had previously not been present, needed to also hear the message Jesus had given yesterday.

Why did they most desire the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead. One of his roles is as the "testator" of the words of the Father and the Son. This gift would be most desirable as they prepared to receive yet further teachings of the Savior.

Parley P. Pratt states,

"The gift of the Holy Ghost...quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands, and purifies all the natural passions and affections, and adapt them by the gift of wisdom to their lawful use. It inspires virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness, and charity. It develops beauty of person, form and features. It tends to health, vigor, animation, and social feeling. It develops and invigorates all the faculties of the physical and intellectual man. It strengthens, invigorates, and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is, as it were, marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being." (*Key to the Science of Theology*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978, [Tenth Edition], 101).

3 Nephi 19:10-13

10 And when they had thus prayed they went down unto the water's edge, and the multitude followed them.

11 And it came to pass that Nephi went down in the water and was baptized.

12 And he came up out of the water and began to baptize. And he baptized all those whom Jesus had chosen.

13 And it came to pass when they were all baptized and had come up out of the water, the Holy Ghost did fall upon them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

Bryan Richards reminds us,

"Briefly, it is important to understand that only the Twelve were baptized at this time. On day 2 of Christ's visit, the multitude was too large for them to be baptized at once. This was to take place later (see 3 Ne 28:18)." (www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-19).

3 Nephi 19:14-15

14 And behold, they [12 Disciples] were encircled about as if it were by fire; and it came down from heaven, and the multitude did witness it, and did bear record; and angels did come down out of heaven and did minister unto them.

15 And it came to pass that while the angels were ministering unto the disciples, behold Jesus came and stood in the midst and ministered unto them.

This visible outpouring of the Holy Ghost must have had a powerful effect upon those in attendance, followed by angels coming down and ministering unto the twelve. Then, to their astonishment, "Jesus came and stood in the midst and ministered unto them" (3 Nephi 19:15).

Upon Jesus' direction, the multitude then knelt upon the ground, and Jesus directed the disciples to pray. (see 3 Nephi 19:17.)

3 Nephi 19:18

18 And behold, they began to pray; and they did pray unto Jesus calling him their Lord and their God.

Bryan Richards states,

"In praying directly to Jesus, the Twelve deviated from the previously established pattern of praying to the Father in the name of Jesus. Christ explained that they did this because I am with them (v.22). Hereby, we learn that praying directly to Jesus is acceptable under certain conditions." (www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-19).

Jesus now departed from the Twelve and the multitude and offered the following prayer to the Father. (see 3 Nephi 19:19.)

3 Nephi 19:20-23

20 Father, I thank thee that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen; and it is because of their belief in me that I have chosen them out of the world.

21 Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words.

22 Father, thou hast given them the Holy Ghost because they believe in me; and thus seest that they believe in me because thou hearest them, and they pray unto me because I am with them.

23 And now Father, I pray unto thee for them, and also for all those who shall believe on their words, that they may believe in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father art in me, that we may be one.

The words of Jesus are similar to his great intercessory prayer offered on behalf of his Twelve Apostles prior to his atoning sacrifice: (1) "I have manifest thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world"; (2) "They have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me"; and (3) "Keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (John 17:5,8,11).

3 Nephi 19:24-26

24 And it came to pass that when Jesus had thus prayed unto the Father, he came unto his disciples, and behold, they did still continue, without ceasing, to pray unto him; and they did not multiply many words, for it was given unto them what they should pray, and they were filled with desire.

25 And it came to pass that Jesus blessed them as they did pray unto him; and his countenance did smile upon them, and the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold they were white as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus; and behold the whiteness thereof did exceed all the whiteness, yea, even there could be nothing upon earth so white as the whiteness thereof.

26 And Jesus said unto them: Pray on; nevertheless they did not cease to pray.

Catherine Thomas states,

"The Holy Ghost performs two of his functions in these passages; he fills those praying with catalytic desire, and he burns out the impurities and cleanses them. In this process the disciples are transfigured, being empowered to endure the presence of heavenly elements and beings without being wholly consumed. (D&C 76:118.)" ("Theophany," in *Studies in Scripture*, Vol. 8. *Alma 30 to Moroni*. Edited by Kent P. Jackson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1988, 180).

For the second time, Jesus removed himself from the multitude and prayed to his Father.

3 Nephi 19:28-30

28 Father, I thank thee that thou hast purified those of whom I have chosen, because of their faith, and I pray for them, and also for them who shall believe on their words, that they may be purified in me, through faith on their words, even as they are purified in me.

29 Father, I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world, because of their faith, that they may be purified in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one, that I may be glorified in them.

30 And when Jesus had spoken these words he came again unto his disciples; and behold they did pray steadfastly, without ceasing, unto him; and he did smile upon them again; and behold they were white, even as Jesus.

For the third time, Jesus again removed himself from his disciples and the multitude and prayed to His Father. His words are not recorded. Nevertheless, "the multitude did

hear and do bear record; and their hearts were open and they did understand in their hearts the words which he prayed. Nevertheless, so great and marvelous were the words which he prayed that they cannot be written, neither can they be uttered by man" (3 Nephi 19:33-34).

3 Nephi 19:35-36

35 And it came to pass that when Jesus had made an end of praying he came again to the disciples, and said unto them: So great faith have I never seen among all the Jews; wherefore I could not show unto them so great miracles, because of their unbelief.

36 Verily I say unto you, there are none of them that have seen so great things as ye have seen; neither have they heard so great things as ye have heard.

It is important that as we reflect upon the words of Jesus to the multitude, we ask ourselves, "What is my spiritual receptivity? Am I like the Jews?, or Am I like the spiritual Nephites? We learn from Moroni, "For if there be no faith among the children of men God could do no miracles among them; wherefore, he showed not himself until after their faith" (Ether 12:12)." If we would experience a similar outpouring of the Spirit in our lives, we too must develop and strengthen our faith. We must also pray unto the Father that He will, though the power of the Holy Ghost, burn out all infirmities within us, so that our hearts may be "changed; that they had no more desire to do evil" (Alma 19:33). If we will then be steadfast in our desire to do good to others, the time will come when we too will experience the outpouring of the Spirit these faithful members had in their lives.

Sidney B. Sperry states,

"Even more impressive in Chapter 19 is its description of an ineffable outpouring of prayer when Jesus again stood in the midst of the people (19:15-34). In all scripture there can be found no description of a prayer service as powerful and marvelous as this. Only [those] with a high degree of spirituality can begin to comprehend and appreciate it..

"On account of its drama, loveliness, and high spirituality, I rank this chapter (19) as one of the greatest in the Book of Mormon." (*Book of Mormon Compendium*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968, 411).

VI. Conclusions

As we briefly reflect upon the highlights of these four chapters we recall with fondness the experience of the Nephites as the Savior appeared to them and taught them his precious truths.

In 3 Nephi, Chapter 16, we learn that he will visit the Lost Ten tribes of Israel and teach them his gospel. We additionally learn that those in the Old World knew nothing about his visit to the Nephites for they did not ask. We are reminded that the gospel first went to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles. After the Gentiles reject the gospel, it will go to the Jews and Lamanites. They will be taught the truths found in the Book of Mormon. We are grateful to be privileged to live at a time when we have living Prophets and Apostles upon the earth to give us guidance and direction during these perilous times.

3 Nephi, Chapter 17, continued Jesus' visit to the Nephites at the temple. We learn the importance of pondering, not just reading the scriptures for thereby we may gain further enlightenment. Jesus heals all the sick who are present for their faith is great. He prays to the Father on behalf of the little children and angels came down and ministered to them. We are reminded that we too must become like little children in faith and obedience.

In 3 Nephi, Chapter 18, Jesus institutes the sacrament consisting of bread and wine as elements of his body and blood which we are to partake of in remembrance of Him. We are reminded to build our houses [testimonies] on the rock of Jesus Christ. As we do so, the philosophies of the world, will not cause our faith or testimonies to be shaken. At the conclusion of Chapter 18, Day One ended as the Savior departed, with the promise that he will return on the morrow.

3 Nephi, Chapter 19, begins with the people receiving the announcement the Savior will again appear at the temple in Bountiful the following day. A large multitude are gathered for Day Two of the Savior's appearance. The names of the Twelve Disciples are given and the people are gathered into twelve groups where they are instructed by the Twelve Disciples. They taught them the very words that Jesus had given the day previous. They prayed to the Father in the Name of Christ to be given the Holy Ghost. Following the

baptism of the Twelve, angels came down and ministered to them, and then Jesus appeared in their midst. Jesus offers three prayers, the last one we have no details as his "words could not be written nor uttered" (3 Nephi 19:34).

Due to the unbelief of the Jews, Jesus was unable to do the great miracles he did among the Nephites. An important question for us to ponder is "Are we like the unbelieving Jews or more like the faithful Nephites? Our answer will help us determine the direction of our faith and spirituality.

Our next lesson [BM#40] will address the Lord's teachings and "prophecies of the Restoration of the gospel and the gathering of the house of Israel in the last days" (*Book of Mormon Gosepel Doctrine Teacher's Manual*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1999, 177).