

The Closer Look Series

Book of Mormon Stories

RLDS along with all other branches of Mormonism believe the *Book of Mormon* to be scripture. Major events in that book, such as departures and arrivals, are described through stories that deserve a closer look:

Brother of Jared

■ Ether 1:43-68 tells the story of a group of people, led by Jared and his brother, who escaped the confounding of tongues at the Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-9).

■ Their escape was done under the direction of the Lord who gave instructions to build eight barges to cross an ocean.

■ The brother of Jared, their spiritual leader, points out to the Lord two flaws in the barges He ordered built: they are air-tight and without light.

■ The Lord responds to the air problem by telling him to drill two holes which both must be uncorked to allow air to enter; but water also will enter, so the holes must both be shut when there is too much water. This is a very poor solution from the Creator of all.

■ The light problem seems too difficult for the Lord, so He asks the brother of Jared to offer suggestions. The brother of Jared presents stones to the Lord for His touch to create “light bulbs” for the voyage.

■ Compare the Lord of this *Book of Mormon* story with the God of the Bible who gave Noah precise and *flawless* instructions several centuries earlier. (Gen 6:13-7:16)

■ Compare Noah’s obedience to the brother of Jared.

Nephites Come to America

■ 2 Nephi 4:14, “*And we did observe to keep the judgements, and the statutes, and the commandments of the Lord, in all things, according to the law of Moses.*”

■ 2 Nephi 4:21-25, “*And I did teach my people to build buildings, and to work in all manner of wood, iron, copper, brass, steel, gold, silver, which were in great abundance. And I, Nephi, did build a temple; and I did construct it after the manner of the temple of Solomon, save it were not built of so many precious things: For they were not to be found upon the land. Wherefore, it could not be built like unto Solomon’s temple. But the manner of construction was like unto the temple of Solomon; and the workmanship thereof was exceeding fine.*”

■ Was there an *abundance* of wood and precious metals *or not*?

■ If their temple was *not* like Solomon’s, what was its purpose?

■ Who was descended from Aaron to serve as priest (Exodus 28:1)? If they were all descended from Joseph, how could they “*observe to keep...the commandments of the Lord, in all things, according to the law of Moses*”?

■ How did five families produce enough offspring in 41 years to build such a structure? Compare this story to the Biblical account: “*Now King Solomon levied forced laborers... 30,000 men... 70,000 transporters... 80,000 hewers of stone... besides Solomon’s 3,300 chief deputies... over the people who were doing the work.*” 1Kings 5:13-16 (**183,300** workers)

Christ’s Appearance in America

■ 3 Nephi 4:6-64 tells a lengthy story of the destruction of wicked Nephites and their cities, beginning at the hour of the crucifixion of Jesus and lasting not for three hours, but for three days. According to 3 Nephi 66, “*And it was the more righteous part of the people who were saved...*” After His resurrection, these are the people to whom Christ appears and ministers.

■ Luke 9:54-56, “*And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to*

destroy men’s lives, but to save them.”

■ Matt. 9:11-13, Mark 2:17-18, Luke 5:31-32, “*...For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*”

■ Why are the sinners destroyed in the *Book of Mormon* and only the more righteous left for Christ to minister to? Isn’t that the exact opposite of Christ’s own words from the Bible?

Greater Things Than These

■ Mormon 4:14, “*And whoso receiveth this record, and shall not condemn it because of the imperfections which are in it, the same shall know of greater things than these.*”

■ Is God’s Word given imperfectly?

■ Compare to 2 Timothy 3:14-17, “*...that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*”

■ Do we need to know of “greater things” than being made wise to salvation and instruction to become perfect?

**God does NOT change.
Read Galatians 1:6-9.**

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Bringing followers of Joseph Smith
into the Light of Christ

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