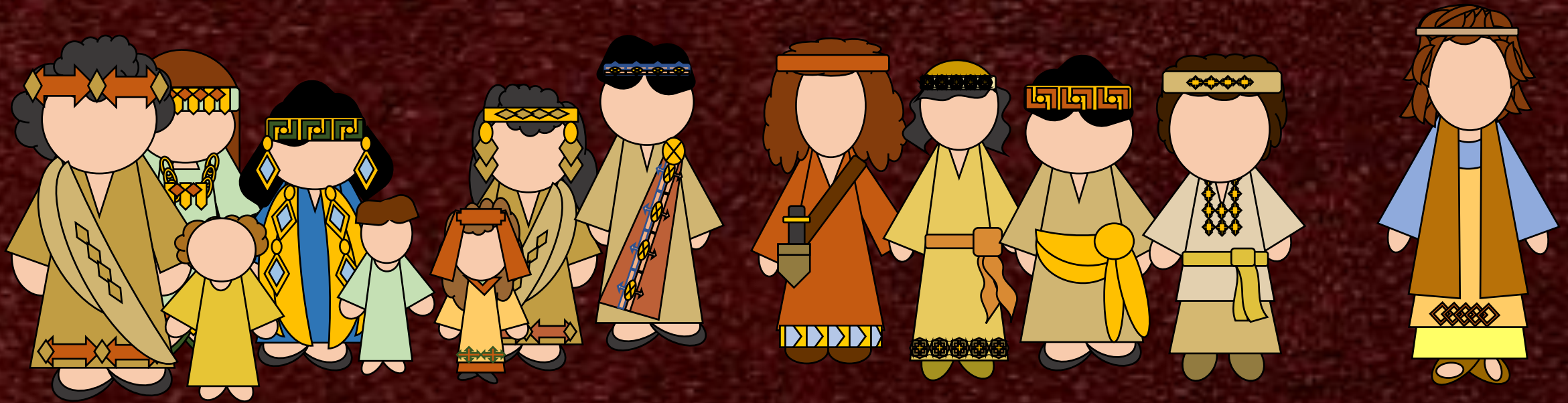
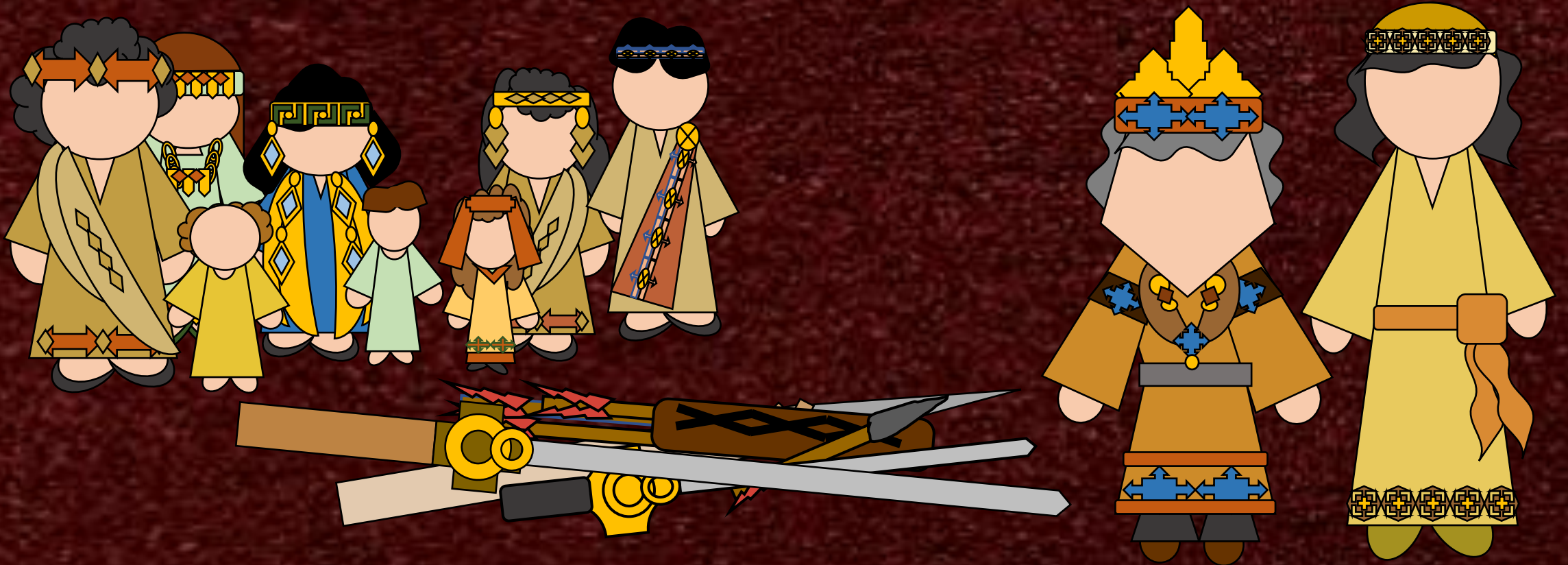


Alma 23-29



Laying Down Your Weapons

Alma 23-24



Religious Freedom

Everyone needs to have that freedom, no matter what they believe.”

“Religious freedom is more than just the freedom to believe what you want.

It’s also the freedom to talk about and act on your core beliefs without interference from government or others, except when necessary to protect health and safety.

“Agency is essential in Heavenly Father’s plan of salvation, and religious freedom ensures we can use our agency to live and share what we believe.

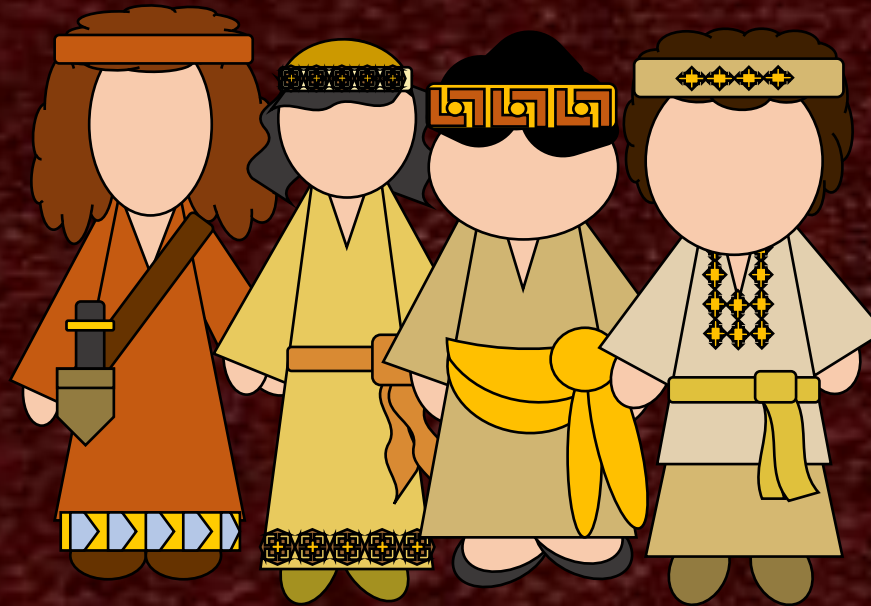
It also allows people with similar beliefs to form religious organizations that govern their own affairs. ...



Religious Liberty

Aaron and his brothers were
allowed to preach

Religious
freedom
allows the
word of God
to go forth
without
obstruction



Aaron and his
brothers are
allowed to
establish
churches in
the Lamanite
cities

As a result of this proclamation many thousands of
Lamanites were converted

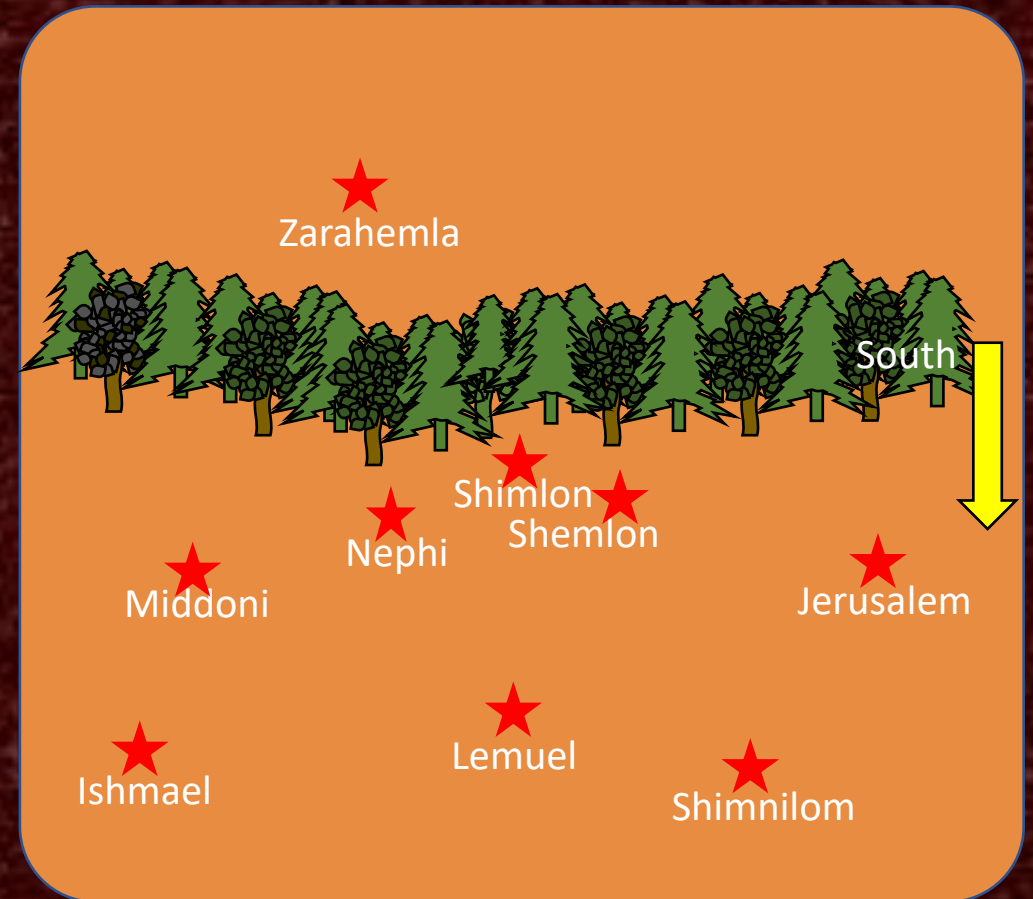
The Covenant

That they would lay down their weapons of rebellion



The Lamanites who converted:

In the land of Ishmael
In the land of Middoni
In the city of Jerusalem
In the land of Shimlon
In the land of Shemlon
In the city of Lemuel
In the city of Shimnilom



Converted Unto the Lord

They were converted unto the Lord and not to the Church and not to the missionaries that taught them

When have you experienced the power of God helping you become converted?



When have you seen the power of God working to help someone else become converted?

When we face difficult circumstances and adversity, why is it important that we be converted to the Lord rather than to other people or ideas?

Never did they fall away



“To set aside cherished ‘weapons of rebellion’ such as selfishness, pride, and disobedience requires more than merely believing and knowing.

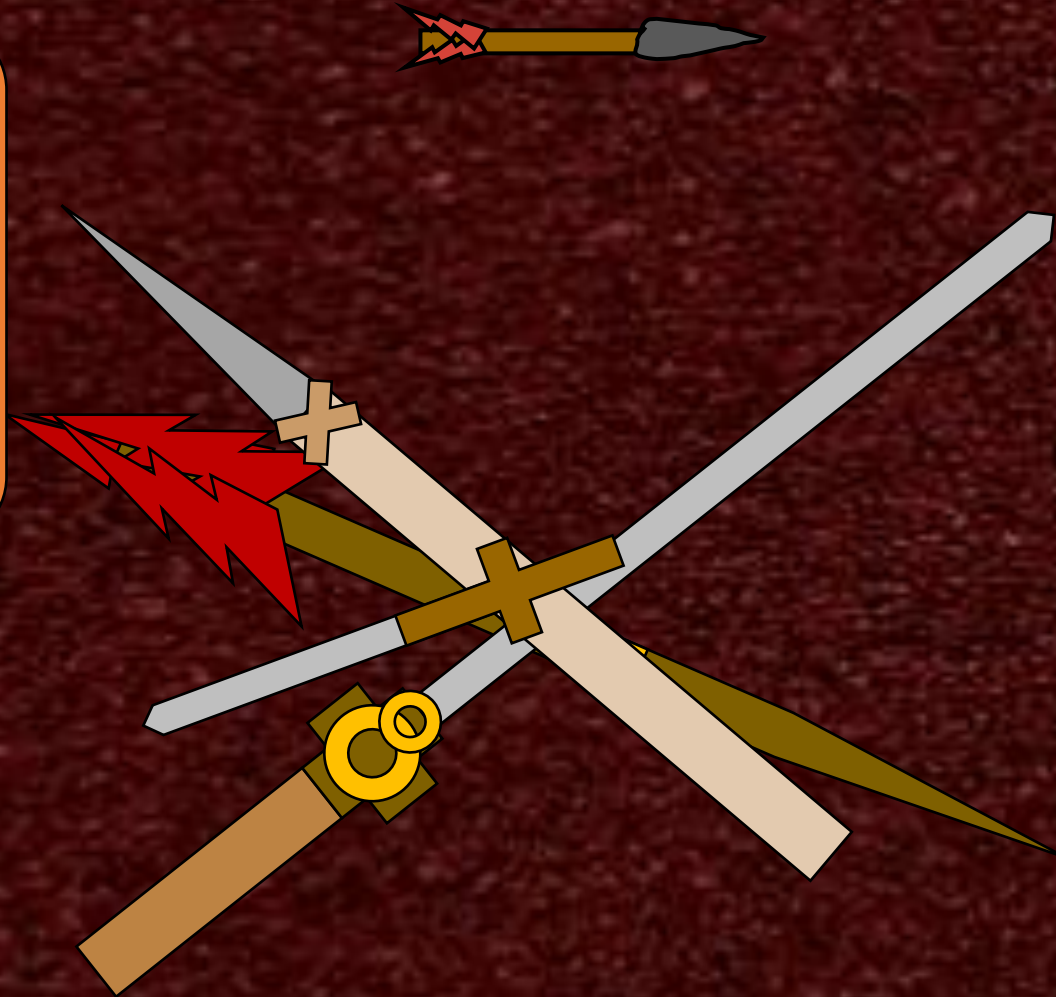
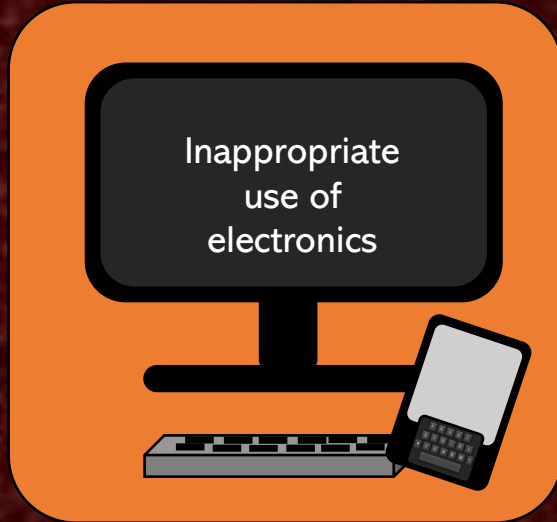
Conviction, humility, repentance, and submissiveness precede the abandonment of our weapons of rebellion.

Do you and I still possess weapons of rebellion that keep us from becoming converted unto the Lord?

If so, then we need to repent now.”
David A. Bednar



What Are Our Weapons of Rebellion?



Name Change



The Amalekites were not converted, save only one

The Amulonites also were not converted



“And it came to pass that they called their names Anti-Nephi-Lehies; and they were called by this name and were no more called Lamanites.”

1982
Webster's
Dictionary



Anti—means “like” or “mirror image of”

Example: Anti-Christ would mean not just opposed to Christ but also deceptively similar to Christ...

Perhaps the name Anti-Nephi-Lehies would symbolize their desire to be as Nephi and Lehi of old, that is, that they might remember the goodness and faithfulness of their first Nephite prophet leaders.” JFM and RLM (Helaman 5:6)

An Industrious People

They had an open correspondence with the Nephites and were friendly with them.

The curse of God did not follow them.



This curse lasted only as long as the people were wicked. When the Lamanites repented and chose to live the gospel, “the curse of God did no more follow them”. The Book of Mormon includes many examples of Lamanites who repented and received the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord. The book of Helaman tells of a time when the Lamanites were more righteous than the Nephites.

Seminary Teacher Manual 2017 Lesson 27

They had their sins remitted, had their souls reoriented toward the things of God, and began to enjoy rich outpouring of is Spirit...It may also be that the mark of the curse, the dark skin (2 Nephi 5:21) was removed from them.

Read 3 Nephi 2:14-16

Conversion means changing and becoming a new person through the power of God.

“It takes exactly as long to repent as it takes you to say ‘I’ll change’—and mean it. Of course there will be problems to work out and restitutions to make. You may well spend—indeed you had better spend—the rest of your life proving your repentance by its permanence.”
Jeffrey R. Holland



Wickedness Rebel Against Righteousness

“ And it came to pass that the Amalekites and the Amulonites and the Lamanites who were in the land of Amulon, and also in the land of Helam and who were in the land of Jerusalem, and in fine, in all the land round about, who had not been converted and had not taken upon them the name of Anti-Nephi-Lehi, were stirred up by the Amalekites and by the Amulonites to anger against their brethren.”



King Lamoni's father confers the kingdom over to another son, Anti-Nephi-Lehi—he dies that same year



Amalekites and Amulonites

The Amalekites and Amulonites, who were former Nephites, stirred many Lamanites up to anger against their king and the other Anti-Nephi-Lehies.

In their anger, these Lamanites prepared to attack the Anti-Nephi-Lehies.

At this time of strife, the king of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies died.

The kingdom was conferred on one of his sons.

Ammon gathered with the new king and with Lamoni and others to counsel together and determine how to defend themselves against the Lamanites.



Anti-Nephi-Lehi

The New King: He was the brother of King Lamoni, the son of King Lamoni's father (Alma 24:3)

Under his leadership, the Anti-Nephi-Lehies chose a path of nonviolence, refusing to take up arms against their attackers. This astonishing commitment to their covenant with God led to the conversion of many of their assailants, when they were deeply moved by the Anti-Nephi-Lehies' willingness to lay down their lives rather than shed blood

The Blessings:

That the Lord had sent the Nephites to preach to them

That the Lord has softened our hearts

That the correspondence has been opened between them and the Nephites

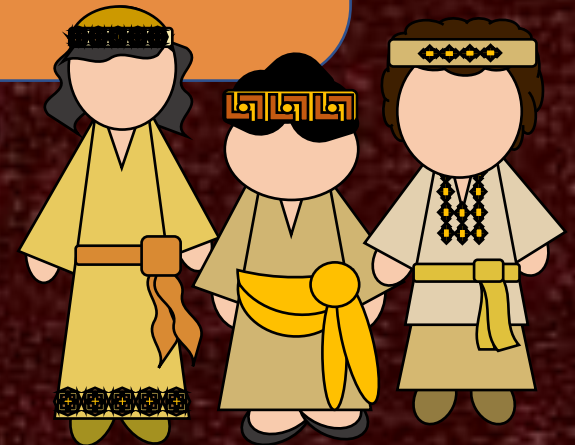
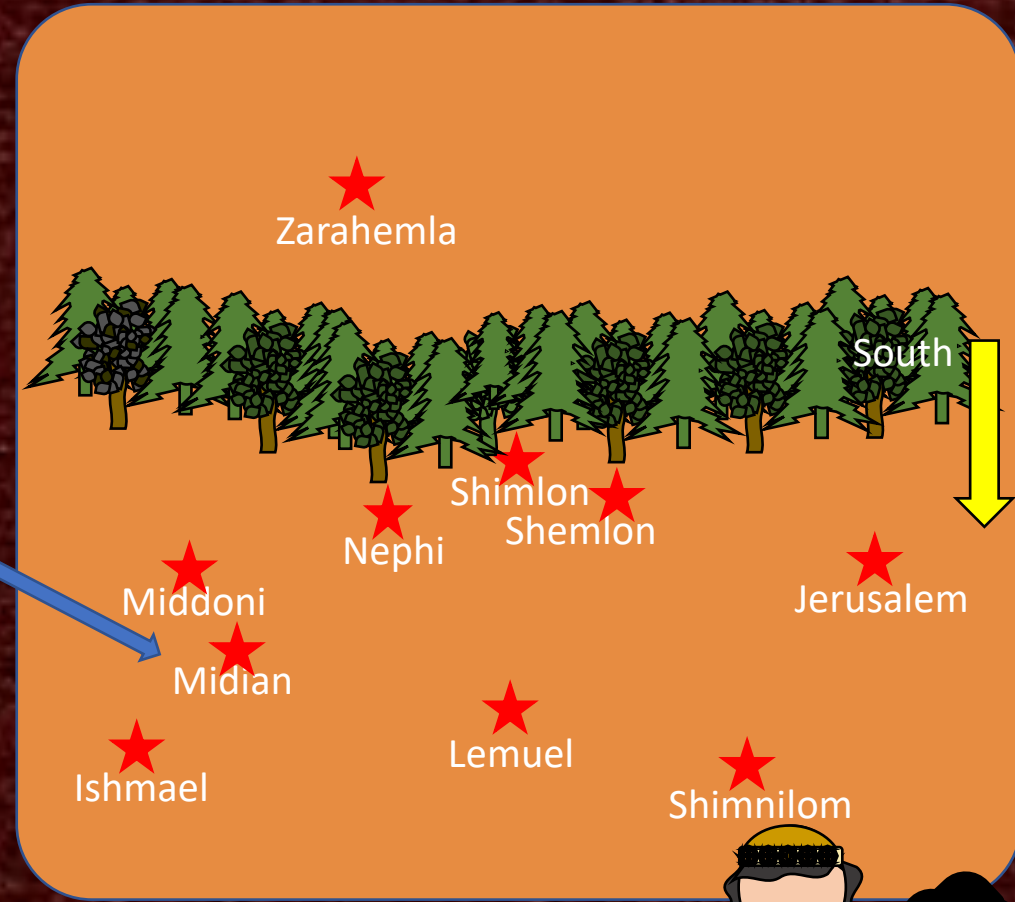
That God had granted repentance and forgiveness for the sins and murders they had committed

That through the Atonement their guilt had been taken away



The Counsel

Ammon, his brethren, King Lamoni, and his brother Anti-Nephi-Lehi met in the land of Midian to decide how to defend against the rising rebellion



To Remain Clean

“...let us stain our swords no more”



“In abandoning sin one cannot merely wish for better conditions. ... He must be certain not only that he has abandoned the sin but that he has changed the situations surrounding the sin. He should avoid the places and conditions and circumstances where the sin occurred, for these could most readily breed it again. He must abandon the people with whom the sin was committed. He may not hate the persons involved but he must avoid them and everything associated with the sin”
President Spencer W. Kimball

“...we will hide away our swords...bury them deep”



“Because of the atonement of Christ, the truly repentant have not only the burden of sin lifted from them but also the burden of guilt.”



Through the Atonement we become yoked to Christ; he thereby shares our burden.”
JFM and RLM

To remain clean after we have repented and received God's forgiveness, we must avoid circumstances that may lead us to sin

Burying Your Weapons

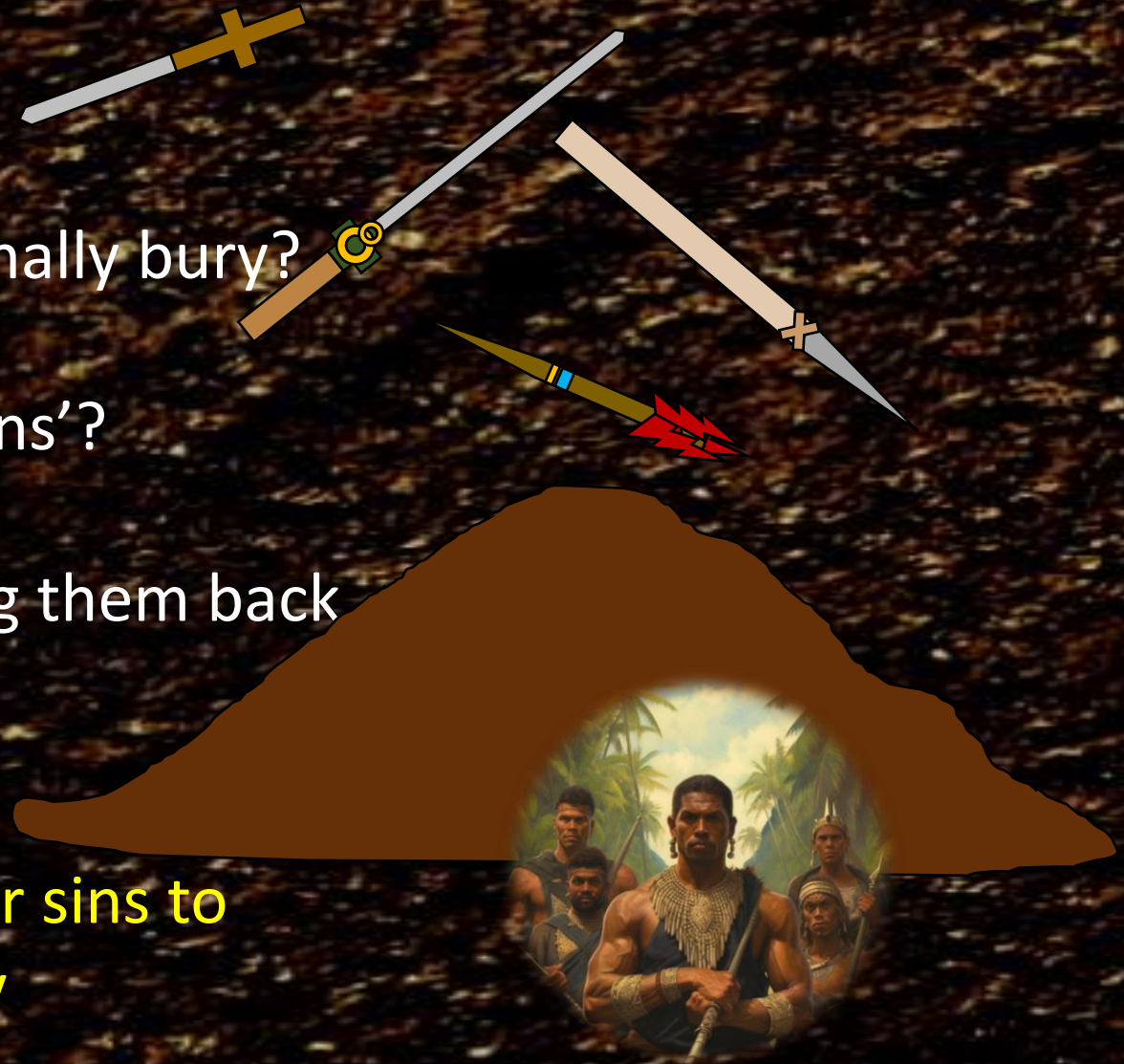
What weapons do you need to bury?

Is there something you need to personally bury?

Why is it difficult to 'bury your weapons'?

If we bury our weapons, should we dig them back up again?

The Anti-Nephi-Lehies did not want their sins to return---this was their testimony



Keeping Their Covenants

The Anti-Nephi-Lehies saw the armies approaching and they 'prostrated' themselves down and did not fight and 'call on the name of the Lord'

The Lamanites began to slay them---more than a thousand



Minerva Terchert

When righteous people die, we have no reason to doubt that they are saved. They are "...received into a state of happiness, which is called paradise, a state of rest, a state of peace, where they shall rest from all their troubles and from all care, and sorrow" (Alma 40:12)

When the Lamanites saw their brethren lay down their lives they did 'forebare from slaying'--their hearts were swollen from those who had fallen under the sword—they also threw down their swords

Those Who Have Fallen

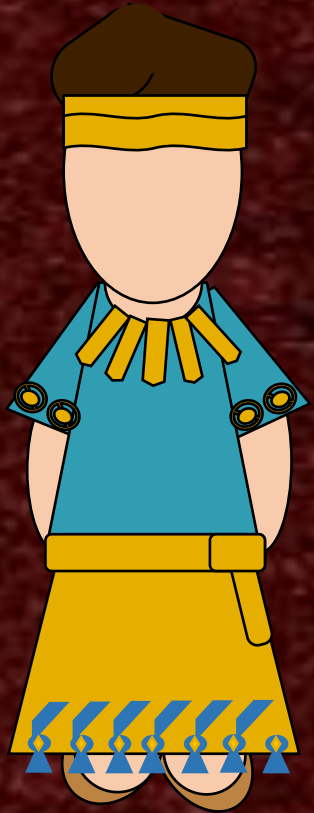
Those who have fallen away from righteousness tend to become more bitter and hardened.



“From apostates the faithful have received the severest persecutions. Judas was rebuked and immediately betrayed his Lord into the hands of His enemies, because Satan entered into him...What nearer friend on earth, or in heaven, had Judas than the Savior? And his first object was to destroy Him”
Prophet Joseph Smith

What Does Mormon Want Us To Know?

If those who have been enlightened by the Spirit of God fall away from the truth, their condition will be worse than if they had never known the things of God.



Sources:

“Religious Freedom,” lds.org/religious-freedom

David A. Bednar, “Converted unto the Lord,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2012, 108–9

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet Doctrinal Commentary of the Book of Mormon
Vol. 3 pg. 165, 168

Jeffrey R. Holland (“For Times of Trouble,” *New Era*, Oct. 1980, 11–12).

President Spencer W. Kimball (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*[1969], 171–72).

Prophet Joseph Smith Teachings pg. 67

For more information: What it means to be converted

Bonnie L. Oscarson *Be Ye Converted* Oct. General Conf. 2013 or Nov. 2013 Ensign

Ammon Glories in the Lord



Trust

In whom can we place our trust?



Why is it easier to place our trust in some people and not others?

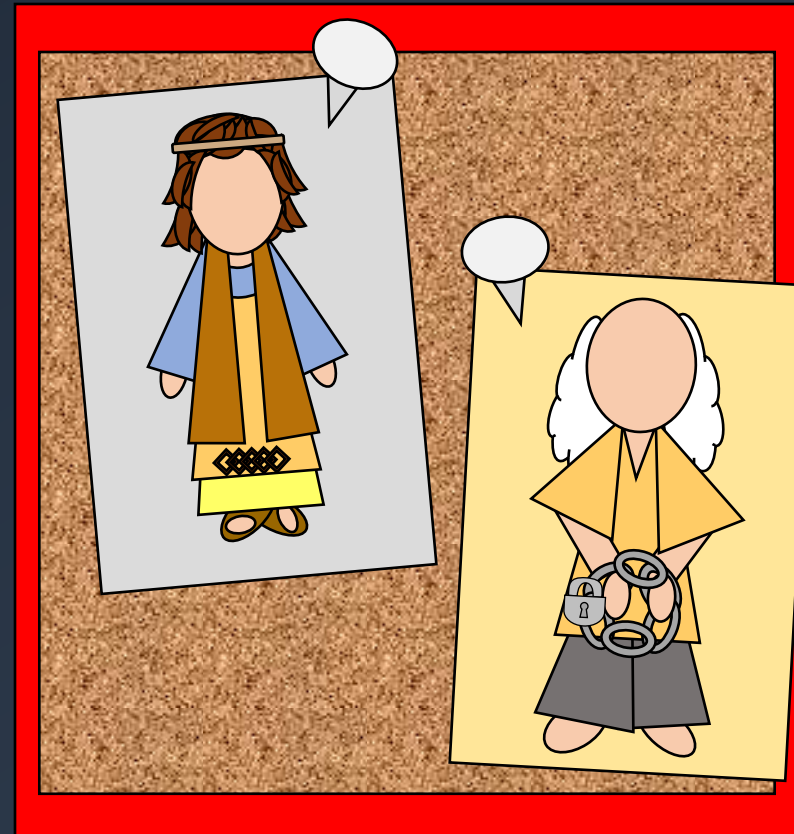
The Prophecies

What had Alma prophesied of
the city of Ammonihah?
(Alma 9:12)

Read: Alma 25:1-2

What did Abinadi prophesy
would happen to the
descendants of King Noah and
his priests?
(Mosiah 17:14–19)

Read: Alma 25:4-9



Prophecies and Promises

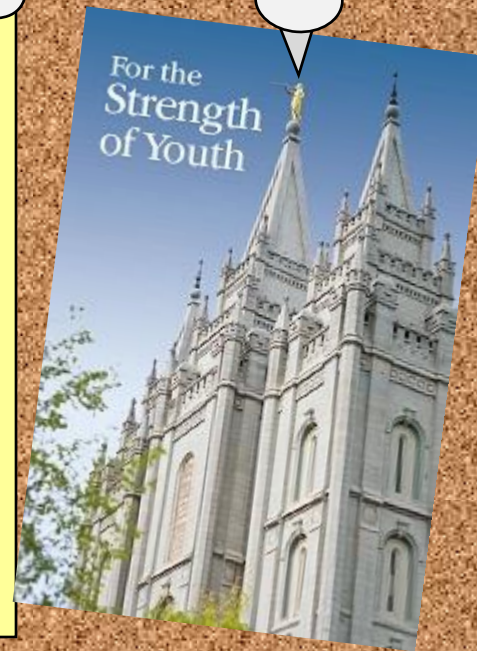
The inspired words of the prophets will all
be fulfilled

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same.” D&C 1:38



From the First Presidency

“The standards in this booklet will help you with the important choices you are making now and will yet make in the future. We promise that as you keep the covenants you have made and these standards, you will be blessed with the companionship of the Holy Ghost, your faith and testimony will grow stronger, and you will enjoy increasing happiness”

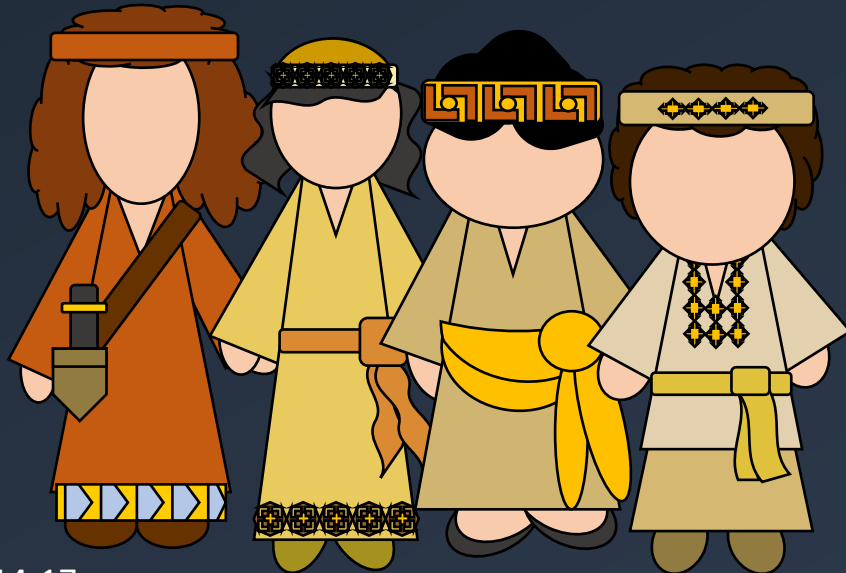


A Successful Mission

The Lamanites destroyed the people of Ammonihah, wiping out the seed of Amulon who were the priest of Noah. (Abinidi's Prophecy)

They returned home and many went to dwell in the land of Ishmael.

They also buried their weapons of war and began to walk in the ways of the Lord and kept His commandments.



The Law of Moses:

“...did serve to strengthen their faith in Christ”

They retained hope through faith, unto eternal salvation

They relied on the spirit of prophecy which was to come

Instruments



God had made Ammon and the other missionaries instruments, or tools, in His hands in doing a great work among the Lamanites.

Instruments in the Hands of the Lord



Alma 26:3

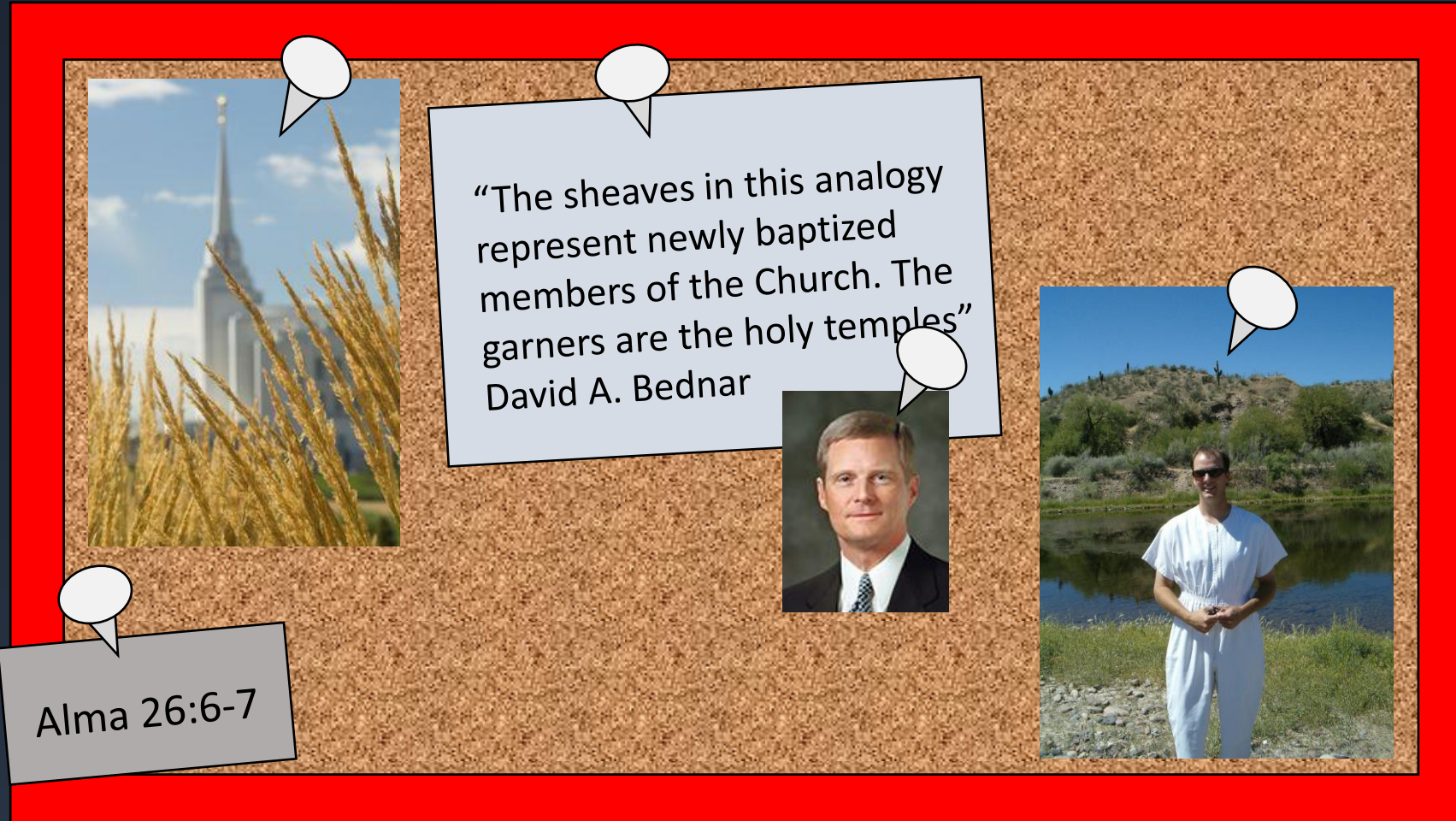
Sheaves and Garners

“Behold, the field was ripe, and blessed are ye, for ye did thrust in the sickle, and did reap with your might, yea, all the day long did ye labor; and behold the number of your sheaves! And they shall be gathered into the garners that they are not wasted.” Alma 26:5

Alma 26:6-7



Baptism and Temples



“The sheaves in this analogy represent newly baptized members of the Church. The garners are the holy temples”
David A. Bednar

Alma 26:6-7

The corkboard features four items: a photograph of a temple spire behind golden sheaves of grain; a portrait of David A. Bednar; a photograph of a man in white clothing standing by a river; and a text box containing a quote and the scripture reference Alma 26:6-7. Each item is accompanied by a white speech bubble icon.

As we become instruments in the Lord's hands, we can help God's children find safety through the blessings of the temple

What are the Blessings of the Temple?

The saving ordinances we receive in the temple—the endowment and temple sealing and the spiritual protection and peace we receive as we worship in the temple.



We can encourage others to become temple worthy and to attend the temple, and we can perform ordinances in the temple for people who have died without having had the opportunity to receive them.



Songs of Praise and Joy

We experience joy as we faithfully serve the Lord and His children



Alma 26:8-10





Music and song have been an important part of the worship of the Saints in all gospel dispensations.



My Joy is Full



Alma 26:16

Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more
D&C 58:42

Mysteries of God

The mysteries of God
will be revealed to those
who repent and exercise
faith and do good works
and pray continually

Alma 26:22



“Letters come from those who have made tragic mistakes.

They ask, ‘Can I *ever* be forgiven?’

“The answer is *yes!*”

“The gospel teaches us that relief from torment and guilt can be earned through repentance.

Save for those few who defect to perdition after having known a fulness, there is no habit, no addiction, no rebellion, no transgression, no offense exempted from the promise of complete forgiveness.”

President Boyd K. Packer



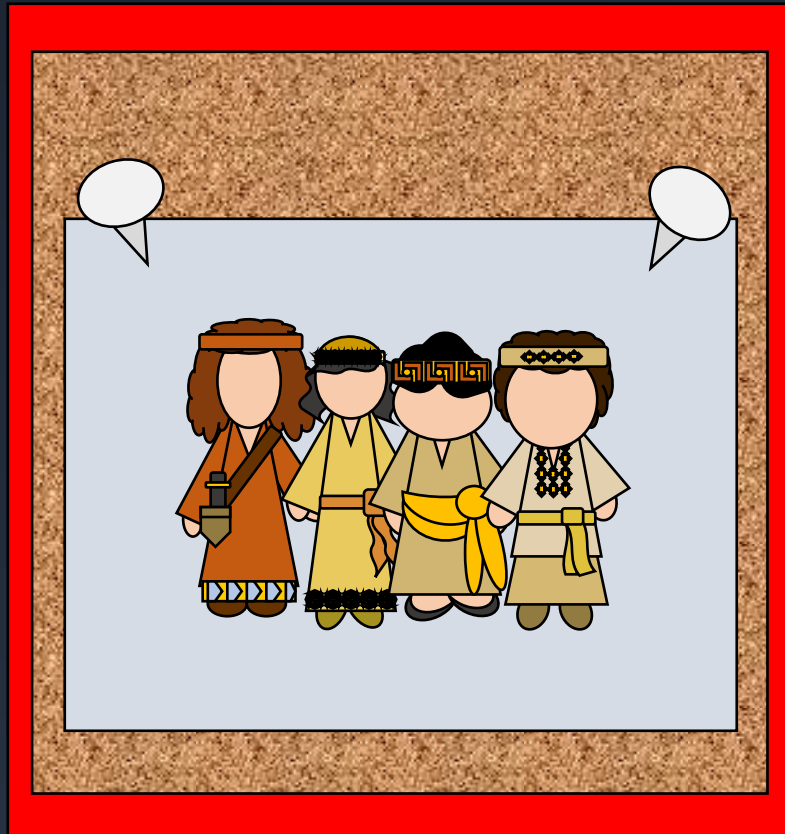


“However late you think you are, however many chances you think you have missed, however many mistakes you feel you have made or talents you think you don’t have, or however far from home and family and God you feel you have traveled, I testify that you have *not* traveled beyond the reach of divine love.

It is not possible for you to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ’s Atonement shines.”
Jeffrey R. Holland

God is merciful to all who repent and believe on His name.

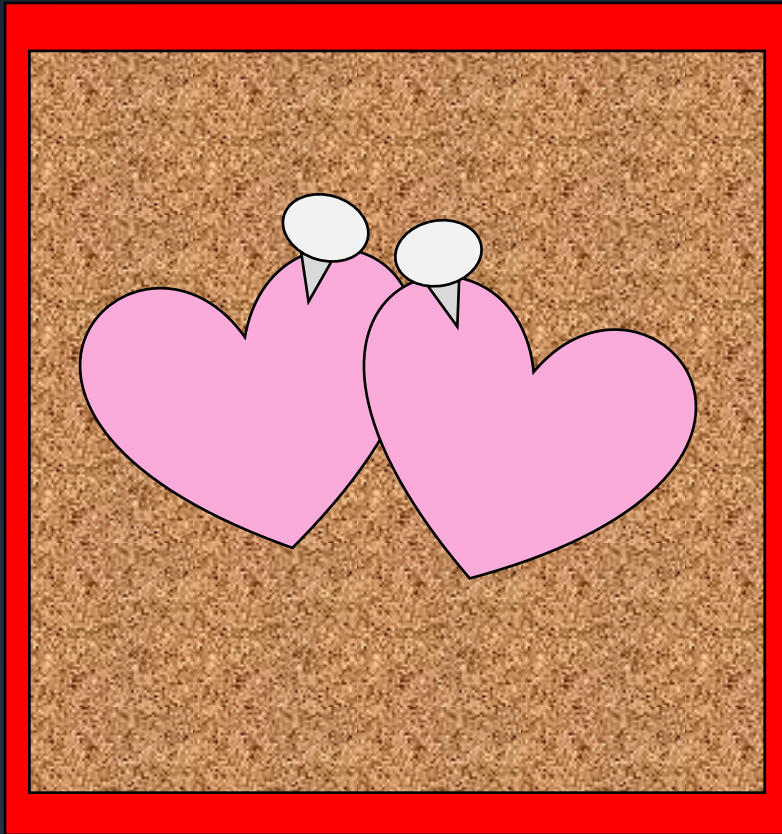
With Patience and Afflictions



Ammon rehearses how the Lord comforted them while they were laboring with the Lamanites and all the afflictions they had to endure.

Because of this they were successful in bringing many unto the Lord
Alma 26:23-32

So Great A Love



Ammon recognizes the love in all the land of those who embraced the teachings of Ammon, Aaron and the other missionaries.

They buried their weapons and would not fight against their brethren...they would rather die than fight...

They would rather love than hate

Alma 26:34

Sources:

David A. Dednar “Honorably Hold a Name and Standing,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2009, 97).

(*For the Strength of Youth* [booklet, 2011], ii).

President Boyd K. Packer

(“The Brilliant Morning of Forgiveness,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 19).

Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Laborers in the Vineyard,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2012, 33

Featured temples: Payson Baptismal Font, Suva Fiji Endowment Room

In Honor of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies and
“O That I Were An Angel”
Alma 27-29



The Anger--Apostasy

The Amalekites devoted the whole energy of their souls to fighting God.

Some of the Lamanites had attacked the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi, who would not defend themselves, and killed more than a thousand of them.

Some of those Lamanites then attacked the Nephites, destroying the city of Ammonihah, but were then driven from the land by a Nephite army.



Because they could not find success in war with the Nephites, they turn on their brethren the Anti-Nephi-Lehies.

The Anti-Nephi-Lehies had embraced light and truth refusing to take arms

The Protector

Ammon saw the destruction of those he loved

Can we gather these people and go to Zarahemla?

I will go and inquire of the Lord and if He says go, will you go?

The Nephites will destroy us because of our wickedness

Yes, and we will be their slaves to repair our sins

Slavery is against our law, let's rely on the mercies of our brethren



Ammon went to the Lord and He said: "Get this people out..."



Ask the Lord

When we commit to follow the direction we receive from the Lord, He will guide us to make wise decisions

Commit to Follow



When we commit to follow the direction we receive from the Lord, He will guide us to make wise decisions

“Once the Lord knows our faith is sufficient that He can be certain we will obey, He will send the Spirit to teach us more clearly and more frequently.

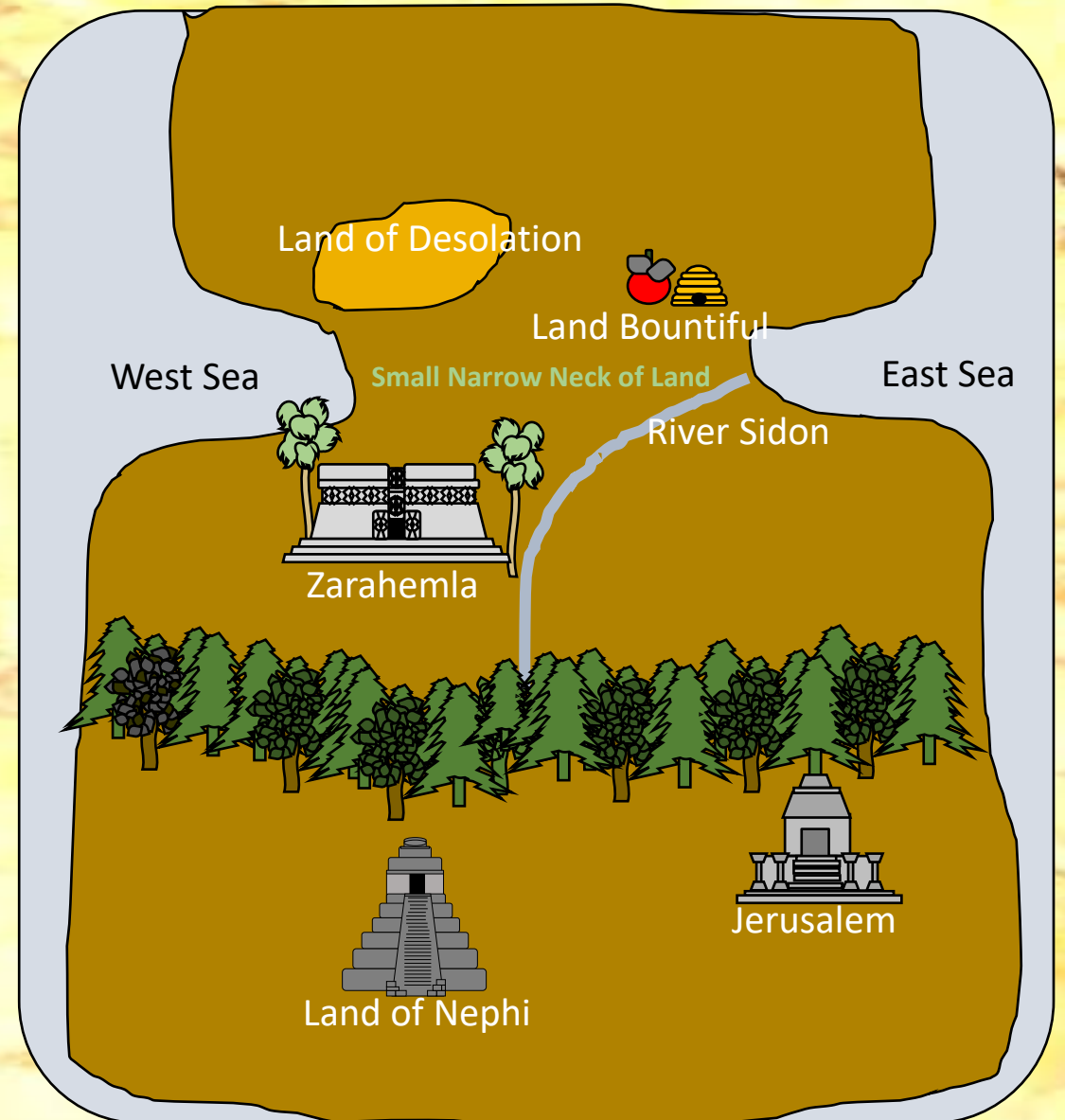
The prayer of faith always includes a commitment to obey.”
Henry B. Eyring



The Departure

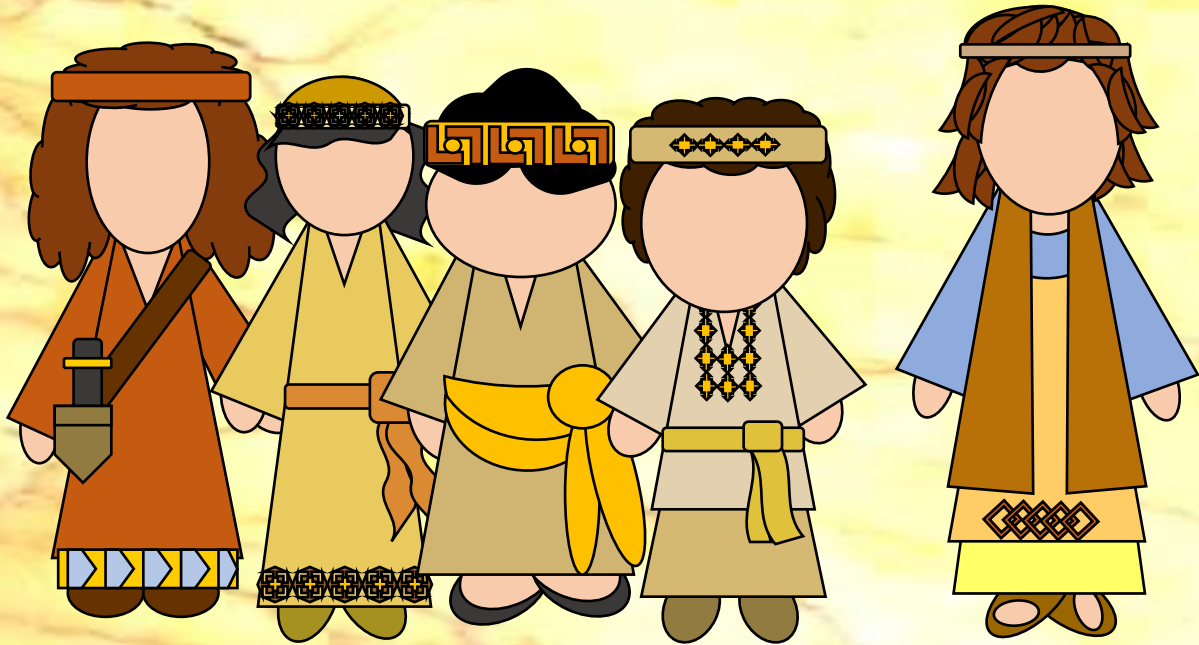
Ammon, the king, and all the people of the Lord gathered together all their flocks and herds and departed out of the land and came to the borders of the land of Zarahemla

Ammon left them in the wilderness while he and his brethren went into the land of Zarahemla



Joyful Reunion

While on their way—
Alma...Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni all had
joyful happiness in meeting



“A fulness of joy is found only among resurrected, exalted beings (D&C 93:3).

In mortality men experience joy only in righteousness...in obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.

Joy is characteristic of the presence of the Holy Ghost... That kind of joy is experienced in the manifestation of our sins being remitted...”

JFM and RLM

The Voice of the People

The missionaries return to Zarahemla and ask the chief judge, recounting their mission, if they could have the converted people come to Zarahemla.



Ammon



Aaron



Omni



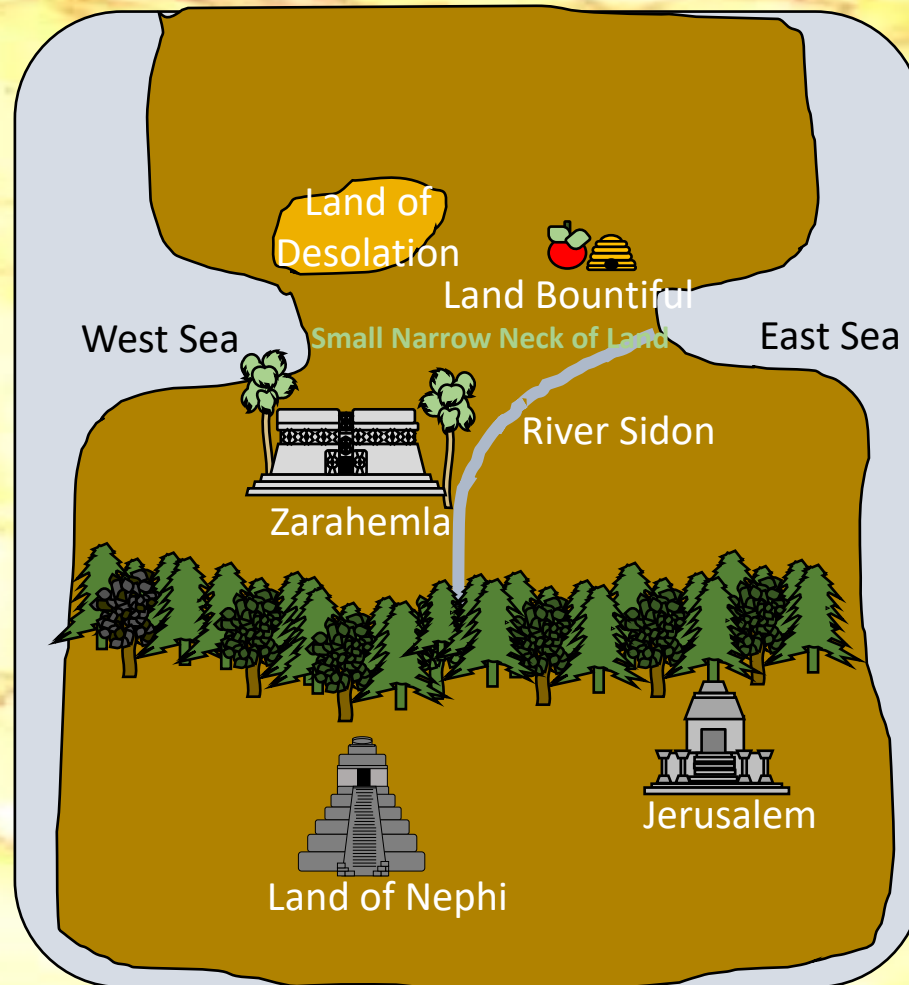
Himni

Proclamation:
Would you allow your brethren who are the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi to live in this land?

“...Behold we will give up the land of Jershon, which is on the east by the sea...for an inheritance...we will set our armies between the land Jershon and the land Nephi, that we may protect our brethren...we will guard them from their enemies...on condition that they will give us a portion of their substance to assist us that we may maintain our armies.”

Jershon

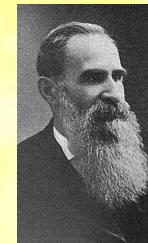
“*Jershon* means the Land of the expelled, or of the strangers. We think it altogether probable that this significant name was given it at the time it was set off for the habitation of these expatriated Lamanites, as it defines their condition as exiles, and their relation to the Nephites as strangers.



The name is not mentioned before this event, and would possibly be the only local name by which it was known to the compiler of the Book of Mormon.

Before the date of exodus of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies, it was, we think, considered a part of the Land of Zarahemla.”

George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl



The People of Ammon

After settling in the land of Jershon the Nephites began to call them the “People of Ammon”

This nation within a nation was named after the chief missionary who had labored among them and who now became their residing high priest (Alma 30:20)



The Ammonites were highly favored of the Lord..they were honest and upright and firm in their faith of Christ.

They never did take up arms against their brethren and did not look upon death with any degree of terror.

The Examples

The Ammonites are examples of a truly faithful group of people whose covenants were etched in their hearts

When we are fully converted to the Lord, we keep the covenants we have made with Him



Within 15 Years



The battles between the Lamanites and the Nephites lost tens of thousand of the Lamanites and a tremendous slaughter among the Nephites.

The Lamanites were driven and scattered

The Nephites return to their land



This was the end of the
15th year of the reign of
the judges

A Time for Sorrow

Mourning and Lamentations—Solemnity--Fasting and Prayer



Zilfikar Ali

“But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.” Psalm 35:13



Wickedness causes great sorrow, while righteousness results in hope and joy because of Christ

Saul: “And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.”

2 Samuel 1:12



The Custom:

“...but it came to pass after they had buried their dead, and also after the days of fasting, and mourning, and prayer, ..”

Alma 30:2

Alma 28:4-6; 11-14

Death



Why might some people experience fear when loved ones die?

Why are some people able to feel hope when loved ones die?



When we have faith in Jesus Christ and the promises of the Lord, we can have hope and joy in times of death



“After hearing that his friend Arthur Patton had died in World War II, young Thomas Monson went to visit Arthur’s mother, who was not a member of the Church. He later recalled:

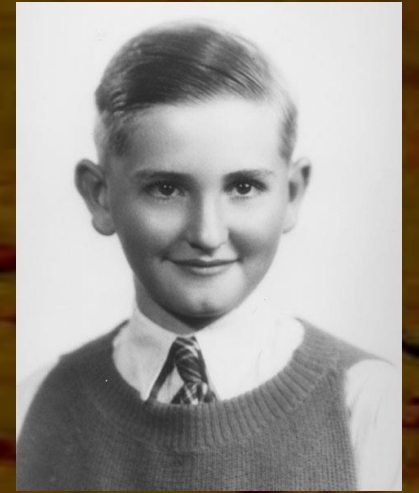
“A light went out in the life of Mrs. Patton. She groped in utter darkness and deep despair.

“With a prayer in my heart, I approached the familiar walkway to the Patton home, wondering what words of comfort could come from the lips of a mere boy.

“The door opened, and Mrs. Patton embraced me as she would her own son. Home became a chapel as a grief-stricken mother and a less-than-adequate boy knelt in prayer.

“Arising from our knees, Mrs. Patton gazed into my eyes and spoke: ‘Tommy, I belong to no church, but you do. Tell me, will Arthur live again?’

“To the best of my ability, I testified to her that Arthur would indeed live again.”



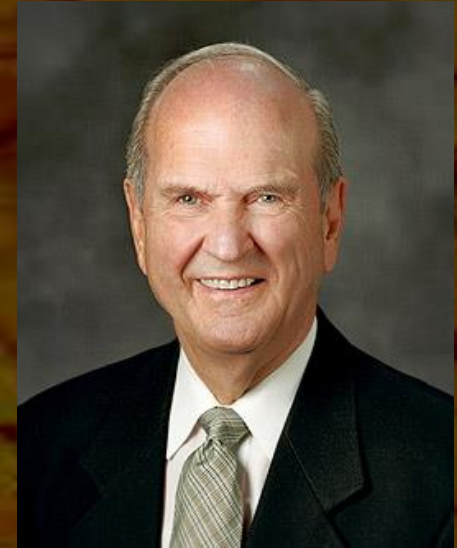
Thomas S. Monson

“Brothers and sisters, we live to die and we die to live—in another realm. If we are well prepared, death brings no terror. From an eternal perspective, death is premature only for those who are not prepared to meet God.

“Now is the time to prepare. Then, when death comes, we can move toward the celestial glory that Heavenly Father has prepared for His faithful children.

Meanwhile, for sorrowing loved ones left behind ... the sting of death is soothed by a steadfast faith in Christ, a perfect brightness of hope, a love of God and of all men, and a deep desire to serve them”

Russell M. Nelson





And Thus We See...

“...men and women establish inequality because of their choices—they either open themselves to the happiness and joy of the blessing of God or they block the blessings of that healing and lifting influence which is within reach of all.”

JFM and RLM



A Desire To Teach

“O that I were an angel, and could have the wish of mine heart, that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God, with a voice to shake the earth, and cry repentance unto every people!”



“Yea, I would declare unto every soul, as with the voice of thunder, repentance and the plan of redemption, that they should repent and ^acome unto our God, that there might not be more sorrow upon all the face of the earth.”

“But behold, I am a man, and do sin in my wish; for I ought to be content with the things which the Lord hath allotted unto me.”

Voice of An Angel

Bringing salvation to everyone

An angel is a messenger of God and Alma is the messenger to this people



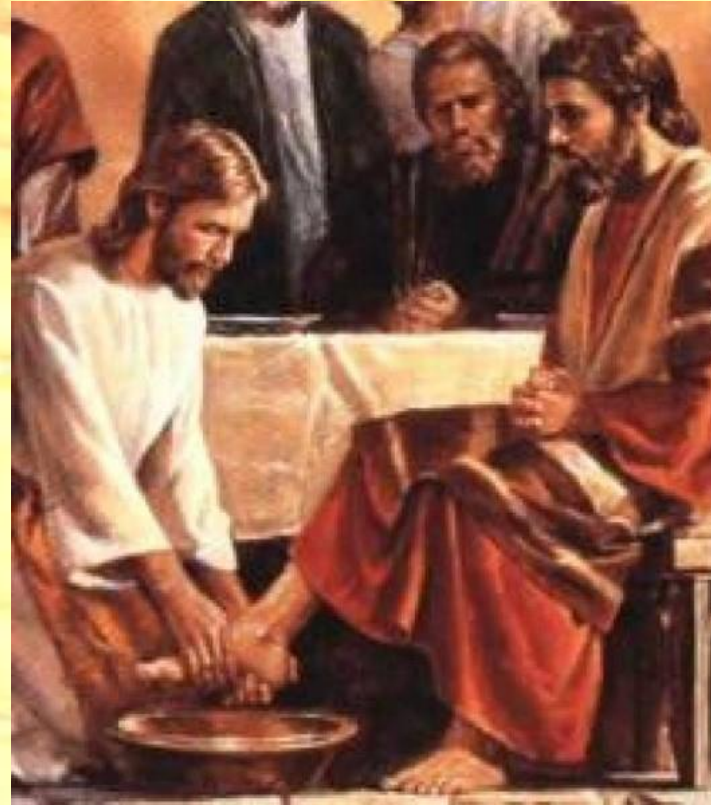
Receiving the Holy Ghost one could speak with the tongue of angels.

“It is our right to speak with the same clarity, the same power, and the same assurance known to angels in declaring the gospel”

JFM and RLM

To Be Content

“Each of us must, through the influence and comfort of the Holy Spirit, come to understand and appreciate and value his or her own assignment, learn to magnify it, and thereby experience the accompanying joy which follow in the wake of faithful service.”



“In the Lord’s service it matters not where we serve but how”

Those With Righteous Desires

Our righteous desires are not fulfilled in this life,
they will be fulfilled in the eternities.

If we desire righteous
things, the Lord will bless us
according to those desires.

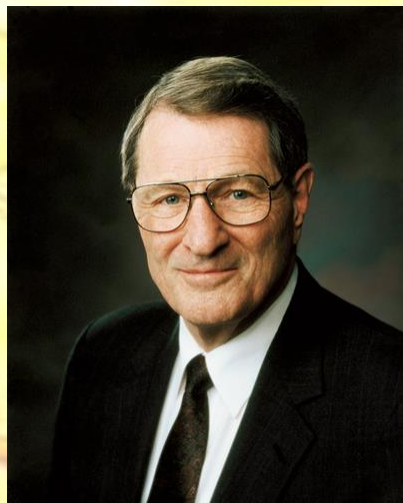
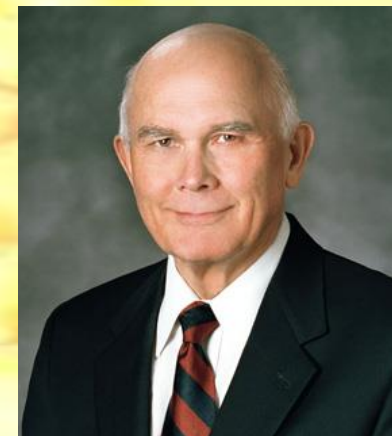


We are born without the abilities to
distinguish between good and evil...but
learn as we grow and become
accountable for our choices--agency





“Desires dictate our priorities, priorities shape our choices, and choices determine our actions. The desires we act on determine our changing, our achieving, and our becoming”
Dallin H. Oaks



“What we insistently desire, over time, is what we will eventually become and what we will receive in eternity. ... Only by educating and training our desires can they become our allies instead of our enemies!”
Neal A. Maxwell

“The laws of God can reward the righteous desire or attitude because an omniscient God can determine it...

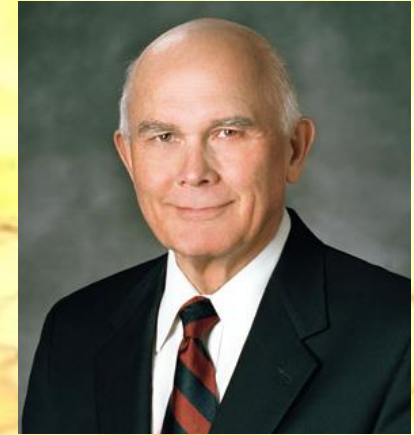
if a person does not perform a particular commandment because he is genuinely unable to do so, but truly would if he could, our Heavenly Father will know this and will reward that person accordingly.

Upon the same principle, evil thoughts or desires are sinful under the laws of God even though not translated into the actions that would make them punishable under the laws of man.

Similarly, if a person performs a seemingly righteous act but does so for the wrong reasons, such as to achieve a selfish purpose, his *hands* may be clean but his *heart* is not ‘pure’.

His act will not be counted for righteousness.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks



Sometimes people have righteous desires that are not fulfilled in this life, such as the desire to marry in the temple or to have children...

However: God will eventually grant us our **righteous desires.**

Heaven's Light

All nations will have the right to receive the treasures of heaven



Alma 29:8

Some nations have chosen to be hard of heart and to walk in the darkness.

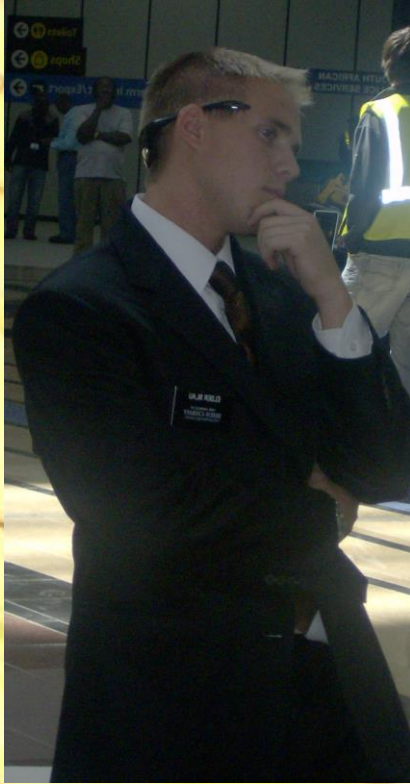


“The Lord will provide an opportunity for every soul to receive the fulness of the everlasting gospel either in this world or in the world to come.”

Joseph F. Smith



Peace and Joy



Alma rejoices over those whom he has been instrumental in bring back into the fold



Peace and Joy are the wages of those who labor in the Lord's vineyard.



We will experience joy when we help others repent and come unto Christ.

Sources:

Suggested Hymn—if you can..obtain the music “Oh, That I Were An Angel”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0aX3evbh5M>

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Thomas S. Monson recalling his youth (“Mrs. Patton—the Story Continues,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 22).

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