

# STUDY NOTES

## Lesson 11: Exodus 35-40

### WILLING HEARTS

There were many sacrifices enjoined upon the nation of Israel: tithes and offerings and specified sacrifices. But the offerings to build the tabernacle, as Moses makes clear, are to be entirely free will offerings. As we have learned to expect, Moses begins with a reminder of the solemn necessity that they must keep the Sabbath day holy. Since this was a sign between the people and their God, they were never to neglect it, and even more so now when beginning an important endeavor. Obedience is always the key to a fresh beginning with the Lord; our obedience seems to turn the key so that the Lord's spirit can begin to move in a human life. We can usually mark our times of greatest spiritual progress by some discipline of obedience that we have set our hearts and wills to offer up. Spiritual death, on the other hand, follows on from the central sins of unbelief, pride, fear and rebellion, all of which we have seen and will continue to see among these people. But not, for a change, in the interlude this chapter provides.

This marks a high point in the narrative of the House of Israel during the Exodus. Their wretched failure to trust God or His prophet in the matter of the golden calf brought them such shame and remorse, as to bring an unexpected revival and lift in the overall devotion of the nation to God because of the humility that came on the heels of their repentance. The people turned with real energy to the building of the temple. Moses asks the people in verse four to bring "an offering" to the Lord. No certain amount is specified, only that they must bring from "a willing heart." They seem anxious to respond and repair the rift between them and God through their willing outpouring of material to build the tabernacle.

The phrases that are used all strike the same chord: "a willing heart"; "every wise hearted among you"; "every one whose heart stirred him up"; and "as many as were willing hearted". A second, related theme is the empowerment of the Spirit of God given to some to play their particular part with skill and wisdom beyond normal human limitations. Bezaleel and Aholiab are mentioned and seemed to function as general contractors, leaders who could not only oversee the building, but were Spirit-led in their ability to teach others.

### OUR TALENTS

The offerings given to the tabernacle included many kinds of offerings of time and talents, such as weaving, embroidery, metal-craft and woodworking. These are not things we normally regard as spiritual gifts, but in this case, as they were offered up to the Lord's work, we see how the Spirit worked through these talented people (men and women) to beautify the tabernacle. This should hearten all the craftswomen among us. God's spirit can enliven every work of our hands!

As we liken this story to our own lives, let us also realize how *everything* we do with a willing heart in the Lord's service is sanctified—whether that be as a receptionist in the temple answering the phone with a cheery voice, or as a Young Women's leader teaching cooking skills to her girls, or as a music leader creating visual aids in Primary—there is simply no ability or skill that can not be lifted to new heights and given greater purpose through the Spirit of the Lord. No one should ever feel they have nothing to give. That is faithless. God will always give us something to give back to Him if we have a wise, willing heart.

### MORE THAN ENOUGH

They brought their jewels, gold, silver, brass, badgers' skins, goat's hair and the dyed skins of rams. They brought oil and spices and embroidered work and fine linen. They brought and brought until Moses had to tell them to stop bringing for it was "too much." (Ex. 36:7) This is a test that many modern day religious leaders or leaders of charities have a hard time resisting, continuing to ask for more money even after the original goals have been met. But Moses was a humble man, without guile and seeking no personal gain in anything he did.

## **A NEW BEGINNING**

The Israelites left Egypt on the fourteenth of the month Abib, which God designated as the first month of their year. It took three months of journeying to reach the place where they encamped at the foot of Mt. Sinai. (Ex 19:1-2) The two 40 day absences of Moses, with an unknown number of days in between, add up to about three more months. The final time that Moses came down from the mountain, he came with detailed plans for a sanctuary, a place in which God could dwell among them. That work began in the sixth, possibly the seventh month and was finished late in the year. This meant a new year was approaching—the first anniversary of their freedom from slavery in Egypt. All the work was completed and the people waited for the signal to raise the tabernacle. God chooses according to His own ways and wisdom the times and even the exact day to fulfill His purposes<sup>1</sup>. And so the command came to Moses, “On the first day of the first month shall you set up the tent of the tabernacle of the congregation.” (Ex 40:2) What better way for a new year to begin!

## **GOD’S WRATH AND GOD’S GRACE**

Deuteronomy Chapter Nine happens forty years after Exodus Chapter Forty. When the children of Israel arrived the first time at the borders of the Promised Land, they utterly failed in their faith and were sent back into the wilderness to wander for forty more years, until the faithless ones all died. You remember the story of the twelve “spies” who were sent into the land to explore it and bring back a report? Ten of the spies lose all courage when they see “giants” in the land and strong walled cities. Their fear-filled report infects the waiting people who begin to wail that God brought them into the desert to kill them and their children. Horrified at this faithlessness, Joshua and Caleb, the only two men with courage and faith in God’s promises, try to rally the people to trust God. But alas, the people had failed to learn the lessons that their year under God’s personal tutelage should have taught them. Under the spell of their mob mentality, they threaten Caleb and Joshua.

We read the story of what follows in Numbers 14:

22 Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice;

23 Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it...

25 ...To morrow turn you, and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea.

26 And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

27 How long *shall I bear with* this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.

28 Say unto them, *As truly as I live*, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you:

29 Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,

30 Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, *concerning* which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

31 But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised.

32 But *as for* you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness...

34 After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, *even* forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, *even* forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.”

We have in this sad story the love of God displayed. What? His love? Isn’t this a story of wrath poured out upon man’s rebellious sin? Yes, but they are one and the same. God’s wrath always comes from His inexorable love. And God never used a harsh chastisement when it was possible to bring His people to Himself in a less drastic way. All is designed by His love to bring His people ultimately to a place where they trust Him, and are willing to come towards Him and away from their own destructive wills. However, as long as the people were in

so low and primitive a state as to turn to a golden statue for their God, Jehovah had no hope of bringing them to His heart of love and tenderness. So their bond with God would have to start from where they were.

First they needed to feel correction that fit the crime and the current state of their own hearts. The very worst sentence they could receive from God at that moment was to go back into the burning desert they so despised, full of scorpions, scarce water and burning heat but which had in it the cleansing power of that fire. Though they do not want to obey the sentence of God upon them, they do obey it, showing the first necessary step of “fearing God.”<sup>2</sup> But it is the medicine Perfect Love always prescribes beloved children of God who are sick with sin and know it not. As He stated to Moses on the day He revealed His “name” to the prophet, He “will by no means clear the guilty,” though He readily forgives the penitent. (Exodus 34:7) To attach no penalty to their sin would have condoned their fear and lack of faith. God loved them too much not to call them back to Him through discipline. The first step in knowing God is to know that He means what He says.

God never punishes to satisfy some sadistic need to hurt those who oppose Him, but rather, to give them a chance to save their souls. Were they to continue in their blindness, sensuality, and their whining insistence on their own wills, they would never come to know Him and would be doomed to hell without Him. So they must meet Him through His justice, because the people have not learned to trust God through His mercy, His repeatedly offered grace—unearned forgiveness through the mediation of Moses—and His continuous miraculous sustenance of their lives. Because they did not trust God, they must now walk a low, hard road to learn respect for Him whose help they need to survive. Learning to fear the consequences of sin is the first step in learning not to put their trust in themselves, which is always the ultimate self-deception. There is no movement *toward* God until there is movement *away* from insistence on one’s own human will.

### **DEUTERONOMY 9: A HUMBLING WARNING**

To clarify, the Israelites that in Deuteronomy 9 stand on the brink of entering the land God promised to give them, are the surviving children of those who failed the test of faith forty years before. Moses tells them the story of their fathers and mothers whose “carcasses fell in the wilderness” to humble them, for humility is a necessary state of mind for those who receive great blessings. Moses is frank in his assessment of them: “Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you.” (Deuteronomy 9:24)

5 Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

6 Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou *art* a stiffnecked people.

7 Remember, *and* forget not, how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord.

### **MOSES THE MEDIATOR**

In Deuteronomy 9, Moses tells the children about the terrible sin of their parents. He tells again the shocking story of Israel’s unfaithfulness to Jehovah when they acknowledged a golden statue to be the God who led them out of Egypt. In this retelling, Moses makes very clear that the first generation had broken their promises to God and that “the Lord was angry with you to have destroyed you.” He tells them the awful words of God: “Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.” (Deut. 9:14) There is no question at all in Moses’ mind that the people merited this sentence. Moses did not try to argue that the people deserved another chance.

Fourteen hundred years later, Jesus became “the mediator of the new covenant<sup>3</sup>.” Moses, as a type and shadow of what was to come, demonstrates the love and sacrifice necessary to this role. Moses describes his reaction to God’s just decision to wipe out Israel and start over. “Thus I fell down before the Lord forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first; because the Lord had said he would destroy you.” (Deut. 9:25) Moses, who had recently finished a fast from food and water of forty days, chose from his own heart (not because of any command of God) to fast again for another forty days, to soften the heart of God and plead with all his strength

that the sentence might be averted. Though it is not mentioned in the Deuteronomy retelling, please remember that Moses offered up his own life if God would spare the people. (Ex.32:32) In the pure love of Moses that is willing to suffer and sacrifice for the children of Israel, we see the sense of Christ's mediation for us, and are reminded that our own salvation is based, like Israel's, not on our own merits, but on the work of a mediator. In D&C 45: 3-5, we can hear Christ's prayer to the Father, of which Moses' prayer was a foreshadow.

3 Listen to him who is [your] advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him—

4 Saying: Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified;

5 Wherefore, Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life.

Just as Moses did not plead the merits or righteousness of the Children of Israel, but rather begged God to spare them based on his love for them and his willingness to suffer for them and even die for them, so does Christ plead for us based on his love and suffering for us. Both mediators identified themselves fully with those they prayed for. They lived with them, became one with them, and suffered along with them. Notice that Christ refers to the saved as "my brethren." He was not a Savior who remained remote, sending His mercy down from the heavens, but He became Immanuel, "God with us," walking the dusty roads along with us, as did Moses.

### **WHO'S YOUR DADDY?**

We will miss the lessons of these chapters entirely if we dismiss these stiff-necked people with a shake of the head, a cluck of the tongue and our pity. We dare not rejoice like the Zoramites<sup>4</sup> that we are the holy and elect of God, while that generation was a hopeless failure. Everything else in the story of the Exodus is typical of some stage in the development of the life of a Christian. Surely the intractability of the Children of Israel is too. Surely they were not just a bad batch. If we think that, we miss the lesson this story has to teach us. For the story of the failings of the Israelites is in the scriptural record so that we may see our own failings. They are our spiritual ancestors, and their weaknesses are inherent in us. Would we have done any better?

While we are lucky enough to have been born at the end of a long receiving line of amazing blessings secured to us by men and women we don't even know, much less think to thank—those who created alphabets and printing presses and died securing rights to religious liberty and freedom, as well as those who listened to God and brought a flood of revelation to the earth in our day, not only religious revelation, but the whole scope of scientific advances that makes our modern world possible. They were in a primitive state while we are the most blessed of Saints, but we are no different from our stiff-necked early brothers and sisters at our human cores. The human will *is* stiff-necked, until it bows in loving, trusting submission to the greater will of God. Well did the cartoon figure Pogo discover, "We have met the enemy, and he is us!" All of us have to defeat this same enemy, and we would do well not to scoff at those who fought with far fewer weapons than we do<sup>5</sup>.

### **DEUTERONOMY 11**

After we have recognized how greatly *we have been blessed*, we should say humbly, "There but for the grace of God go I." For it is literally grace in the work of God's Holy spirit, shed forth first on the early Christians at Pentecost, and again in our dispensation, that powers the rebirth that makes a holy life possible. Specifically, the "Holy Priesthood" which God took out of the midst of the children of Israel (D&C 84:25), was the needful thing. "This greater priesthood administereth the gospel.... Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest." The corollary to this is that *without* the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is *not* manifest in the flesh. The great guiding and governing force for the Jewish Nation remained *The Law*, given through Moses. This was what shaped their civic life and their individual lives for 1400 years of history between Moses' death and the coming of the Savior in his earthly ministry.

While this law did not have the "power of godliness" as Section 84 puts it, because it lacked the ordinances which require Melchizedek priesthood authority, we have only to compare Israel just after the Exodus, with the nation it was 1400 years later or even with the nation of Israel today to witness the law's beneficial ef-

fects. The Law given to Moses was made up of statutes and judgments that came from the hand of God himself. They had a powerful effect upon Israel; between their efforts to keep the Law, and the strong chastisements they received when they disobeyed it, they made great strides in their 1400 year history before Christ's advent.

But all law, no matter how just and wise, has an inherent powerlessness to bestow upon its followers any special ability to keep it. In the end, it is just rules, words on paper, that describe good actions. Whether the training-wheels-laws of Moses, or the higher moral laws of the Sermon on the Mount, no law is more than a description of how a good man or woman ought to live. As Paul said, "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin...Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ..." (Galatians 3:21,24)

### **I SET BEFORE YOU BLESSING AND CURSING**

Deuteronomy 11 sets before the people in a powerful way the blessings and the cursings of keeping or not keeping God's law. If you listen carefully, you can hear the pleading voice of a parent who knows what is best for his children, but also knows they will not heed his advice. His love longs for them to live worthy of the blessings He wants to give—of the rain in due season and a life of peace from their enemies. But these beautiful blessings are all conditional upon an "if."

13 And it shall come to pass, *if* ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,

14 [Then] I will give *you* the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.

15 And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.

16 *Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them.*

God, the loving parent, cannot *force* His children to choose Him. He can plead with them through His prophets, and eventually, if that doesn't work, He pleads with a voice of earthquake, storm and disaster<sup>6</sup>. Remember, the choice is ours, always ours. Here is that choice presented in heart-rending simplicity:

19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: *therefore choose life*, that both thou and thy seed may live:

20 That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: *for He is thy life*, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

### **FAITHLESS HEARTS**

What was it the people had to do to be a blessed and protected people? In a nutshell, they had to choose God, for "He is thy life<sup>7</sup>." They had to love, worship and serve Jehovah only, and not turn aside to any other gods in the cultures surrounding them. It seems so easy. What made it so hard? Why did Israel not destroy all the idols in the Promised Land quickly and diligently? Why did it take hundreds of years of wars with surrounding nations and finally a 70-year captivity in Babylon before Israel turned their back on idol worship forever?

The only way to really answer this is to be honest about our own faithless hearts. We must choose God in the very same way that is set out in Deuteronomy 11 or Deuteronomy 30. But there is a missing piece in the puzzle of why this obviously better choice is hard for human beings to make, especially when we attempt to answer this question only from the Old Testament. But we do find some types and shadows that hint at an answer coming in the Meridian of Time. Two Old Testament prophets, Ezekiel and Jeremiah both saw the coming day when God would give, not only a law, but a life-changing power to enable us to keep that law.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord:

33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

God has always wanted the intimacy, the “dwelling with,” that would come when His people would love Him as He loved them. The repeated failures of the peoples of the Old Testament bear testimony that something more is needed, even a rebirth, which would give a new heart and a new spirit to the people. Ezekiel also looked forward to that day:

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

## OUR OWN EXODUS

The Story of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt presents us with a perfect picture of the spiritual problem that faces mankind. We have a God who is “for us” and wants to bless us. He wants to free us from bondage to our enemy, Satan, who with his great chain, enslaves all mankind in spiritual death and looks up and laughs<sup>8</sup>. But we are used to life in Egypt. We are accustomed to her sights, and sounds and flavors. We like the sensuality and false sense of freedom that comes with her ways of worship. Each of these, like tentacles, attaches itself in invidious and invisible grip upon our bodies and souls. When God is revealed to us, as he was to the Children of Israel through mighty miracles, they first rejoice. But freedom is not that easy. It doesn’t come the day we are baptized, just as it didn’t come the day the Israelites walked through the parted Red Sea. Why not?

Because the appeal of the flesh-pots of Egypt still pulls us, hypnotizes us, and makes us grumble. “God is a God of miracles isn’t He? Then why doesn’t He just make it easy for us? Why do we have to keep making sacrifices and doing without? Why does He demand so much? The gods of Egypt—(yes, I know I should have thrown out that little cat statue of Bastet, but it’s so tiny and cute and this awful tent needs something to make it seem like a home, and besides, I think my pregnancy went so much easier because of it)—are not so mean and heartless. They let us have a little fun.”

Paul does as good a job as anybody at describing the warfare that goes on between our flesh and the demands of God’s laws. “17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 16 *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” (Galatians 5:17-18,16) How we should rejoice to live in the day of the restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, when all that was foreshadowed in Exodus has come to a vibrant, living reality in the lives of the Saints of the last days. Through the gift of the Holy Ghost, bestowed upon us by the authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, we can do what the Israelites of Moses’ day could never do. We can choose to “be not conformed to this world, but be transformed.” (Romans 12:2) We can overcome the weaknesses of the flesh and put on the “new man,” (Ephesians 4:24) being made over into the image of Christ as we follow His leading in our lives.

There is a wonderful scriptural passage that we would like to end our study with. Why this obscure passage? Well, you probably don’t know it because in the King James English, it is nearly unintelligible. But we think you should know it and appreciate it. It’s a wonderful witness to the vital importance of the part the Holy Ghost plays in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If our story is not to end in failure as so many of the Old Testament stories do, then we must do all in our power to build up and sustain the influence of the Holy Ghost in our lives.

“(Paul Speaking) Are we beginning to praise ourselves again? Are we like others, who need to bring you letters of recommendation, or who ask you to write such letters on their behalf? Surely not! <sup>2</sup> The only letter of recommendation we need is you yourselves. Your lives are a letter written in our hearts; everyone can read it and recognize our good work among you. <sup>3</sup> Clearly, you are a letter from Christ showing the result of our ministry among you. This “letter” is written not with pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. It is carved not on tablets of stone, but on human hearts.

<sup>4</sup> We are confident of all this because of our great trust in God through Christ. <sup>5</sup> It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. <sup>6</sup> He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. This is a covenant not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life.” (2 Corinthians 3:1-6 NLT)

The Spirit is the difference between our dispensation and Moses’ dispensation. The former was a dispensation of Law, and ours is a dispensation of the Spirit. Deuteronomy 30:20’s haunting phrase: “for He is thy life,” can become our reality. God can indeed become our life and our strength, and through Him, we can do all necessary things. The great unfulfilled promise of the Old Testament was expressed in Exodus 29:45. “And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God.” That never happened.

But we now live in a day when the least Saint in the farthest reaches of the Latter-day Church, whether in Mongolia, Alaska or Sao Paulo, can receive this promise of God “dwelling with them” through the Gift of the Holy Ghost. When we receive that gift *we become a tabernacle* of the indwelling Holy Spirit. There is no greater gift. Our prayer for us all is that we never take this gift of the Spirit for granted or wonder if there is something better for us in Egypt, or in other words, in the Great and Spacious Building, filled with all its sensuality, false philosophies and deceitful bargains. All of that will turn to dust, but for those who realize that God “is their life,” at the end of the road is the beautiful Tree of Life, with its precious white<sup>9</sup> fruit that is able to fill us with “exceedingly great joy.” May that be our choice.

<sup>1</sup> Did you know that the angel Moroni delivered the gold plates to Joseph Smith on September, 27, 1827. On this exact day, the Jews were celebrating Rosh Hoshana, the Jewish New Year, also known as the Feast of Trumpets. It’s one of the ways that God shows He is in complete control of history. Interesting reading from Meridian Magazine: <http://www.johnpratt.com/items/docs/lds/meridian/1999/hebrew.html>

<sup>2</sup> Not every Israelite was willing to take the medicine and march back out into the desert. Numbers 16 and 17 tell the story of Korah’s rebellion. Korah rebelled after the order to return to the wilderness was received, seeking to overthrow Moses and establish new leadership. Korah, and all who followed him were destroyed by the Lord, establishing His authority once more over the chastened people.

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 12:24; D&C 76:69; D&C 107:19; JST Galatians 3:20

<sup>4</sup> Alma 31:14-20

<sup>5</sup> <sup>16</sup> This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

<sup>17</sup> For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

<sup>18</sup> But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. (Galatians 5:16-18)

<sup>6</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 43:25 “How oft have I called upon you by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunderings, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trump, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not!”

<sup>7</sup> Notice that Deuteronomy 9 did not say, “...for the Law is thy life.” Any law given by God will work to improve the spiritual condition of the one who tries to live it, if their motivation for living it resides in their love of God. This is why the law proved such a stumbling block to the Jews of Jesus’ day. In the end, they loved the Mosaic Law more than they loved God. It became the identity by which they defined themselves. They were so focused upon it that they missed the very person of Jehovah who had given them the law when He walked among them as the man Jesus Christ. No law lived with focus on *self*, with its resultant pride in how that law makes one superior to those who don’t live it, does a person any real good.

<sup>8</sup> Moses saw this vision. “And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.” (Moses 7:26)

<sup>9</sup> Sorry. Just one more thing. Did you ever wonder why Lehi reported that the fruit is “white”? Is it not that the fruit is *light itself*, a source we can ingest, or take into ourselves, of that pure light, love and truth which is the character and holiness of God? “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” (1 Corinthians 2:9)