

3 Nephi 15:1*Doers of the Word*

1 Let me tell you of a young man who really understood these scriptures. He lives in Seoul, Korea. One day, when this young man was 15, his father received a call from a close friend who asked him if he were having financial difficulty. Being in affluent circumstances, he indicated “no, everything is fine.” He then wanted to know why his friend would ask such a question. The man replied that he had seen his son selling newspapers on a street corner in Seoul.

The father couldn’t believe it because his son received quite a liberal allowance and would have no need to work for additional money. When asked if there couldn’t have been a mistake, the friend said, “No, I stopped and talked with him on the corner.”

When the son returned from school; that evening his father asked him about the incident. The son said, “Yes, I was selling newspapers.”

“Isn’t your allowance sufficient to take care of your needs?” the father wanted to know.

“Yes,” he said, “but we had a lesson in seminary on the Good Samaritan, and I wanted to experience what it meant to be a Good Samaritan, not just learn about it. So I have taken my allowance and bought newspapers and asked some of my friends to join me in selling them. We want to raise enough money to help one of our classmates, who is very poor, remain in school. Without the help, he would have to drop out.”

In addition to this, sometime earlier, this young man had asked his mother to double his lunch. She had done so without questioning him, thinking that as a growing teenager he was just extra hungry. He told his father that this other student would have to go hungry each day if he did not share half of his lunch with him.

This is what the Lord means when he encourages us to be doers of the word.

Victor L. Brown, “Do it. “Be Ye Doers of the Word,” *New Era*, March 1985, p. 4

3 Nephi 15:2-102 *Law of Moses*

At the time of Jesus the Jewish scriptures (our Old Testament) were divided into three major sections. *The Law or the Torah*, included the *five* books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). The *Prophets* included the writings of the various prophets (such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel). The third section, the *Writings*, included the historical books (such as Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings) and the poetic books (such as Psalms and Proverbs).

Book of Mormon 121-122 Student Manual, p. 120.

3 The law that was done away with in Christ was the strict ceremonies, observances and offerings peculiar to the law of Moses.

Book of Mormon 121-122 Student Manual, p. 120

BIBLE DICTIONARY—Law of Moses

4 The name assigned to the whole collection of written laws given through Moses to the house of Israel, as a replacement of the higher law that they had failed to obey. The law of Moses consisted of many ceremonies, rituals, and symbols, to remind the people frequently of their duties and responsibilities. It included a law of carnal commandments and performances, added to the basic laws of the gospel. Faith, repentance, baptism in water, and remission of sins were part of the law, as were also the Ten Commandments. Although inferior to the fulness of the gospel, there were many provisions in the law of Moses of high ethical and moral value that equal to the divine laws of any dispensation. The law of carnal commandments and much of the ceremonial law was fulfilled at the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The law functioned under the Aaronic Priesthood and was a preparatory gospel to bring its adherents to Christ. See JST Ex. 34:1-2; Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:19, 24; Eph. 2:14-16; Heb. 7:11, 18-19; Heb. 9:7-14; 2 Ne. 25:24-30; Mosiah 12:27 to 13:32; 2 Ne. 9:17; 3 Ne. 15:1-8; D&C 84: 23-27.

One of the major questions the early Church in Palestine had to decide was about the obligation of Christians to the ceremonial law of Moses. The matter was partially solved by the conference held in Jerusalem, as recorded in Acts 15 and Ga. 2. The Jewish Christians in particular had difficulty giving up the ritual of the law of Moses. The Nephites, on the other hand, seemed to have had much less of a problem doing so (see 3 Ne. 15:1-5).

The law as given through Moses was a good law, although adapted to a lower spiritual capacity than is required for obedience to the gospel in its fulness. However, the Jewish leaders had added many unauthorized provisions, ceremonies, and prohibitions to the original law, until it became extremely burdensome. These innovations were known as the “traditions of the elders.” By N.T. times among the Jews the law had become so altered it had lost much of its spiritual meaning almost to the point that the law was worshipped more than the Lord. It is this form of the law that is so harshly spoken against by Jesus and by Paul (see Matt. 15: 109; Mark 7:1-13; Gal. 2:16-21). There is no evidence that the law of Moses had become as altered among the Nephites as among the Jews, and this may partially explain why the Nephites had less trouble in giving it up when the Savior came.

5 *Why Did the Lord Give Israel a Lesser Law?*

To Moses the Lord first gave the higher priesthood and revealed the fullness of the gospel. But Israel rebelled and manifest such gross unworthiness that their God took from them the power whereby they could have become a kingdom of priests and of kings and gave them instead a lesser law, a law of carnal commandments, a preparatory gospel, a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ and the fullness of his gospel. He gave them instead the law of Moses. (D&C 84:17-28; Gal. 3; Heb. 4:2; Inspired Version, Ex. 34:1-2).

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* p. 434.

6 The doctrine of the atonement is unchanging, but the procedure for how we remember the atonement changed from sacrifice to sacrament. “Keep in mind that the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ are divine. Nobody changes the principles and doctrines of the Church...

But methods change as the inspired direction comes to those who preside at a given time. If you will analyze all that is being done and the changes that are taking place, you will realize that the fundamental doctrines of the Church are not changing. The only changes are in the methods of teaching that doctrine to meet the circumstances of our time.”

Harold B. Lee, *Ensign*, January 1971, 10.

- 7 One of the ironies which is fostered, at times innocently, in the Church, is the feeling we have that the spirit of the law is superior to the letter of the law because for some reason it seems more permissive or less apt to offend others. The reverse is true. The spirit of the law is superior because it demands more of us than the letter of the law. The spirit of the law insists that we do more than merely comply superficially. It means, too, that we must give attention to the things that matter most and still not leave the others undone.

Neal A. Maxwell, *For the Power is in Them*, pp. 46-47.

3 Nephi 15: 9

- 8 *Endure to the End.*

Patient endurance is to be distinguished from merely being “acted upon.” Endurance is more than pacing up and down within the cell of our circumstance; it is not only acceptance of the things allotted to us but also the determination to “act for ourselves” by magnifying what is allotted to us (Alma 29:3, 6)....

True enduring therefore represents not merely the passage of time but also the passage of the soul—and not merely from A to B, but amid “mighty change” all the way from A to Z. To endure in faith and do God’s will thus involves much more than putting up with a circumstance.

Neal A Maxwell, *Men and women of Christ*, 69-70.

3 Nephi 15:10

- 9 *All law given through Jesus Christ*

All revelation since the fall has come through Jesus Christ... He is the God of Israel, the Holy One of Israel; the one who led that nation out of Egyptian bondage, and who gave and fulfilled the Law of Moses

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:27

- 10 True and perfect worship consists in following the steps of the Son of God; it consists in keeping the commandments and obeying the will of the Father to that degree that we advance from grace to grace until we are glorified in Christ as he is in his Father. It is far more than prayer and sermon and song. It is living and doing and obeying. It is emulating the life of the great Exemplar. With this principle before us, may I now illustrate some of the specifics of that divine worship which is pleasing to him whose we are?

To worship the Lord is to follow after him, to seek his face, to believe his doctrine, and to think his thoughts. It is to walk in his paths, to be baptized as Christ was, to preach that gospel of the kingdom which fell from his lips, and to heal the sick and raise the dead as he did.

To worship the Lord is to put first in our lives the things of his kingdom, to live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God, to center our whole hearts upon Christ and that salvation which comes because of him. It is to walk in the light as he is in the light, to do the things that he wants done, to do what he would do under similar circumstances, to be as he is.

To worship the Lord is to walk in the Spirit, to rise above carnal things, to bridle our passions, and to overcome the world.

It is to pay our tithes and offerings, to act as wise stewards in caring for those things which have been entrusted to our care, and to use our talents and means for the spreading of truth and the building up of his kingdom.

To worship the Lord is to be married in the temple, to have children, to teach them the gospel, and to bring them up in light and truth. It is to perfect the family unit, to honor our father and our mother; it is for a man to love his wife with all his heart and to cleave unto her and none else.

To worship the Lord is to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. It is to work on a welfare project, to administer to the sick, to go on a mission, to go home teaching, and to hold family home evening.

To worship the Lord is to study the gospel, to treasure up light and truth, to ponder in our hearts the things of his kingdom, and to make them part of our lives. It is to pray with all the energy of our souls, to preach by the power of the Spirit, to sing songs of praise and thanksgiving.

To worship is to work, to be actively engaged in a good cause, to be about our Father's business, to love and serve our fellowmen. It is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to comfort those that mourn, and to hold up the hands that hang down and to strengthen the feeble knees.

To worship the Lord is to stand valiantly in the cause of truth and righteousness, to let our influence for good be felt in civic, cultural, educational, and governmental fields, and to support those laws and principles which further the Lord's interests on earth.

To worship the Lord is to be of good cheer, to be courageous, to be valiant, to have the courage of our God-given convictions, and to keep the faith. It is ten thousand times ten thousand things. It is keeping the commandments of God. It is living the whole law of the whole gospel.

To worship the Lord is to be like Christ until we receive from him the blessed assurance: "Ye shall be even as I am."

These are sound principles. As we ponder them in our hearts, I am sure we shall know increasingly of their verity. True and perfect worship is in fact the supreme labor and purpose of man. God grant that we may write in our souls with a pen of fine the command of the Lord Jesus: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Luke 4:8); and may we in fact and with living reality worship the Father in spirit and in truth, thereby gaining peace in this life and eternal life in the world to come.

Bruce R. McConkie, *Ensign*, December 1971, p. 130.

3 Nephi 15: 11-13*Land of your inheritance*

- 11 Each of the twelve tribes of Israel was assigned an area of land for their inheritance in the land of Canaan. In addition to what they received in the Holy Land, the descendants of Joseph were also promised the land of the Americas as part of their inheritance. The Savior told the twelve Nephite disciples that they and their people were “a remnant of the house of Joseph” (3 Nephi 15:12) and “this is the land of your inheritance” (v.13).

BYU Book of Mormon Student Manual, 2009, p. 313.

- 12 Another name for America, authorized by the Book of Mormon, is the Land of Joseph, referred to by the Patriarch Jacob in blessing his twelve sons (Gen. 49:22-26), and by the Prophet Moses in his farewell benediction upon the twelve tribes of Israel (Deut. 33:133-15). Jacob’s allusion to Joseph as “a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall, was fulfilled in the migration of Lehi and his companions from Asia to America over the Pacific Ocean. It is hardly necessary to add, that one of the main features of these western continents are those mighty mountain ranges, the Andes and the Rockies, well termed by the Hebrew Patriarch ‘the everlasting hills,’ nature’s depositories for ‘the precious things of the earth’—gold, silver, and other minerals—and for ‘the precious things of heaven’—the sacred records already discovered and others that are yet to come forth’

Orson F. Whitney, “The Book of Mormon: Historical and Prophetic Phases,” *Improvement Era*, Sept. 1927, 944-45

- 13 The Lord gave this land upon which we dwell, America, as an everlasting possession to Joseph, the son of Jacob. His posterity, when cleansed from sin, and when they come forth in the resurrection, shall inherit this part of the earth. This land shall be theirs forever. The Lord gave this land also to others at an earlier date, the Jaradites, and they, too, who are righteous among them, shall possess it forever.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:88.

3 Nephi 15:17

- 14 *Other Sheep, One Shepherd*

Addressing Himself to the Twelve He affirmed that never had the Father commanded Him to inform the Jews concerning the existence of the Nephites, except indirectly by mention of other sheep not of the Jewish fold; and as, “because of stiffneckedness and unbelief,” they had failed to comprehend His words, the Father had commanded Him to say no more with reference either to the Nephites or to the third fold—comprising “the other tribes of the house of Israel, whom the Father hath led away out of the land.” To the Nephite disciples Jesus taught many other matters that had been withheld from the Jews, who through unfitness to receive had been left in ignorance.

James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 728.

- 15 By day and by night the shepherd is always with his sheep... This was necessary on account of the exposed nature of the land, and the presence of danger from wild animals and robbers.

One of the most familiar and beautiful sights of the East is that of the shepherd leading his sheep to the pasture... He depends upon the sheep to follow, and they in turn expect him never to leave them...

As he is always with them, and so deeply interested in them, the shepherd comes to know his sheep very intimately... One day a missionary, meeting a shepherd on one of the wildest parts of the Lebanon, asked him various questions about his sheep, and among others if he counted them every night. On answering that he did not, he was asked how he knew if they were all there or not. His reply was, "Master, if you were to put a cloth over my eyes, and bring me any sheep and only let me put my hands on its face, I could tell in a moment if it was mine or not."
George M. Mackie, *Bible Manners and Customs* [n.d.], 33, 35.

- 16 Jesus is so personal in His shepherding and tutoring!... Jesus knows and cares for each individual; He watches carefully over the seemingly smallest of things.
Neal A. Maxwell, *That Ye May Believe* [1992], 204-5.

3 Nephi 15:18-19

- 17 As far as we degenerate from God, we descend to the devil and lose knowledge, and without knowledge we cannot be saved, and while our hearts are filled with evil, and we are studying evil, there is no room in our hearts for good, or studying good.
Joseph Smith, *Teachings*, 217

3 Nephi 15:22-24

Gentiles

- 18 It is thought by some that he had reference to the Gentiles, but he said himself that he was not sent to the Gentiles, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [See Matthew 10:5, 6; 15:24.] He must have referred to Israelites who were not in Palestine, and the visitation must have been one after his resurrection. There is no reference to such a visit in any of the four gospels, and the remark was made shortly before his death. When the Savior visited the Nephites, he told them plainly that this reference to other sheep was a reference to them; but because of the hardness of the hearts of the disciples in Jerusalem, his Father commanded him to make no further reference to the nation of Nephites while instructing the Jews.
Doctrines of Salvation, 3:214.

- 19 In 721 B.C. the ten northern tribes of Israel were taken captive into Assyria. From there they were led into the lands of the north and were thereafter lost from the annals of history. They have thus come to be known as the lost ten tribes...

In one of his concluding testimonies in the Book of Mormon, Mormon said: "I write unto all the ends of the earth; yea, unto you, twelve tribes of Israel" (Mormon 3:18). If words mean what they say and Mormon knew whereof he spoke, the twelve tribes of Israel were then scattered from one end of the earth to the other and but waiting for the message of the Book of Mormon that they might be gathered. When the ten tribes return, among the sacred treasures that they will

have with them will be the Book of Mormon (see 2 Nephi 29:13). Because he wrote so eloquently on this subject, we here quote extensively from Elder Bruce R. McConkie:

“Our friend Mormon, as he nears the end of his divinely appointed work, that of preserving the everlasting word as it was had among the Nephites, says: ‘I write unto you, Gentiles, and also unto you, house of Israel, when the work shall commence, that ye shall be about to prepare to return to the land of your inheritance.’ Then, as though this salutation was not sufficient, and lest any should be confused as to the people to whom the Book of Mormon shall go, Mormon wrote: ‘Yea, behold, I write unto all the ends of the earth; yea, unto you, [the] twelve tribes of Israel.’ The *Book of Mormon* is written to the twelve tribes of Israel. And this includes the lost Ten Tribes. For that matter, the New Testament is addressed ‘to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad.’ (James 1:1.)

And these things doth the Spirit manifest unto me; therefore I write unto you all—all the house of Israel. Why? That ye may believe the gospel of Jesus Christ which ye shall have among you; and also that the Jews, the covenant people of the Lord, shall have other witness besides him whom they saw and heard, that Jesus, whom they slew was the very Christ and the very God. And I would that I could persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent and prepare to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. (Mormon 3:17-22) That is to say, all Israel, the Lamanites and the Ten Tribes included, shall be gathered if and when they believe the Book of Mormon. The Ten Tribes shall return after they accept the Book of Mormon; then they shall come to Ephraim to receive their blessings, the blessings of the house of the Lord, the blessings that make them heirs of the covenant God made with their father Abraham...

Millennial Messiah, pp. 215-217.

20 In speaking of the return of the lost tribes, a modern revelation attests: “He [Christ] shall command the great deep, and it shall be driven back into the north countries, and the islands shall become one land; and the land of Jerusalem and the land of Zion shall be turned back into their own place, and the earth shall be like as it was in the days before it was divided.” And now we note the millennial setting for this gathering: “And the Lord, even the Savior, shall stand in the midst of his people, and shall reign over all flesh. And they who are in the north countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves.” (D&C 133:23-26.) As to the prophets among the ten tribes in our day, Elder McConkie has written: “Their prophets are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They are stake presidents and bishops and quorum presidents who are appointed to guide and direct the destinies of their stakes and wards and quorums.” (*Millennial Messiah* 326) That is the ten tribes shall be gathered into the fold in the same way as all others: missionaries shall search them out, they shall hear the message of the Restoration through the Book of Mormon shall be baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and shall thereafter locate themselves in the quorums and wards and stakes where the Saints congregate.

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 4:104.