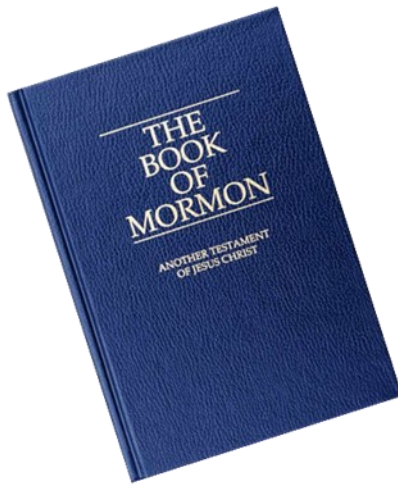


# THE FUTURE AND



“And I (Mormon) cannot write the hundredth part of the things of my people.”<sup>1</sup>

“I am Moroni; and were it possible, I would make all things known unto you. ...The Lord hath shown unto me great and marvelous things concerning that which must shortly come, *at that day when these things shall come forth among you*. Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But...Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and *I know your doing*.”<sup>2</sup>

*The Book of Mormon* was written for our day. Mormon, as he was guided by the Spirit, carefully selected a small fraction of the nearly 1,000 years history and teachings of his people to include in this extraordinary condensation of these records. In addition, he attached a set of plates that contained the written words of Nephi, son of Lehi, and a “small account” of the Nephite people from the prophet Jacob to King Benjamin. He specifically stated his reason for doing so:

“The things which are upon these plates pleasing me because of the prophecies of the coming of Christ; and my fathers knowing that many of them have been fulfilled; yea, and I also know

---

<sup>1</sup> Words of Mormon 1:5

<sup>2</sup> Mormon 8:12, 34-35; emphasis added

that as many things as have been prophesied concerning us down to this day have been fulfilled, *and as many as go beyond this day must surely come to pass. ...And I do this for a wise purpose; for thus it whispereth me, according to the workings of the Spirit of the Lord which is in me. And now, I do not know all things; but the Lord knoweth all things which are to come; where he worketh in me to do according to his will.*<sup>3</sup>

Moroni added his observations to *The Book of Mormon* and a brief account of the Jaredites who preceded Lehi's coming by perhaps a few thousand years. Clearly, what he and his father, Mormon, chose to record and pass on to us by miraculous means had direct application to those in our day.

*The Book of Mormon* is a powerful witness of the reality of Jesus Christ and the teachings that pertain to the doctrine of Christ or the Plan of Salvation that defines our purpose here on earth. It came forth by Divine means to bring about the establishment of Christ's church for the last time. It contains the "fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ"<sup>4</sup> including truths pertaining to our eternal nature and divine potential. Its appearance initiated the return of priesthood authority to administer empowering and exalting ordinances and covenants. Millions of God's children who have embraced these covenants as a result, are now enabled to help prepare the way for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

But in addition, and critical to us today, Mormon and Moroni were guided to also include prophecies pertaining to our day as well as specific temporal events that occurred in the history of their people that parallel those that have happened and will happen in our time. They have, in essence, given us a map to help us prepare for the ultimate latter-day coming of Jesus Christ.

I have categorized these prophecies and events into three specific but inter-related parts:

**HIDDEN UP**—The discovery of the plates of Nephi and other records hidden up by Mormon from which he derived the *Book of Mormon*

**SHATTERED**—The division of the United States and the world into small geographic entities and the destruction of the Old City in Jerusalem

**PROPHECY FULFILLED**—The physical gathering of the Saints, the cataclysmic devastation of the world, and the coming of Christ

For each of these areas I quote and discuss specific *Book of Mormon* prophecies and events that pertain to it. As applicable, I refer to contemporary happenings that have occurred, are currently occurring, or are likely to occur that are possible manifestations of those prophecies

---

<sup>3</sup> Words of Mormon 1:4,7; emphasis added

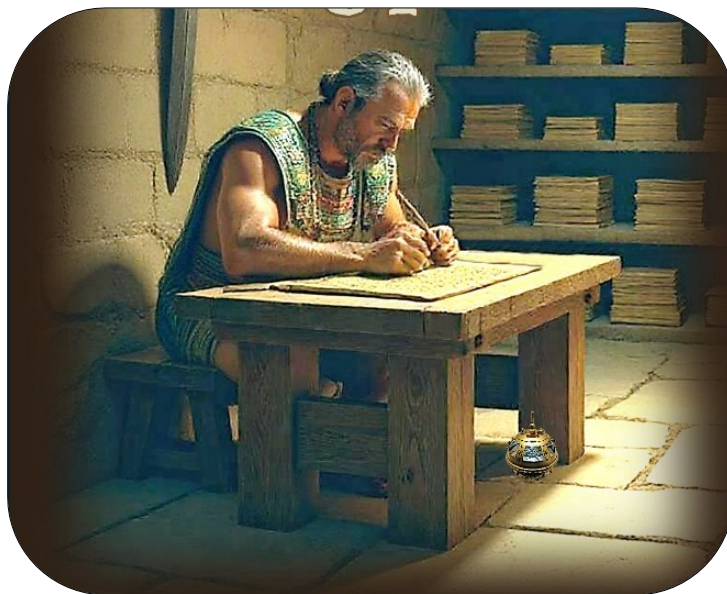
<sup>4</sup> See Doctrine and Covenants 20:9

and/or echoes of *Book of Mormon* events. I also include a few speculations as to possible future prophesy fulfillment using edited excerpts from my fiction trilogy, *The Course of Fate*.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Self-published on Amazon in 2020. Currently unavailable for purchase.

# HIDDEN UP



*The discovery of the plates of Nephi and other records hidden up by Mormon from which he derived The Book of Mormon*

The physical *Book of Mormon* and how it came to be is integral to preparing the world for the Second Coming. However, I believe the “marvelous work” prophesied throughout *The Book of Mormon* refers to both the miraculous coming forth of that book through Joseph Smith, and the as yet to come discovery of the Nephite records from which it was derived.<sup>6</sup> That this subsequent finding would occur is both implied and stated by *Book of Mormon* writers from Nephi to Mormon. I have included in the addendum to this section many of these specific *Book of Mormon* references.

Mormon “hid up all the records that had been entrusted to (him)” except the plates that were passed on by Moroni to Joseph Smith which *The Book of Mormon* was translated from.<sup>7</sup> I believe Mormon did this so they would remain intact to be found at the appropriate time in our day. I believe Moroni gives us a clue to this actually happening when he said, referring to Ether, “he finished his record...and *he hid them in a manner that the people of Limhi did (could) find them.*”<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, 1 Nephi 14:7

<sup>7</sup> See Mormon 6:6

<sup>8</sup> Ether 15:33; emphasis added

I believe Mormon likewise “hid up” all the Nephite records in such a way they can and will be discovered.

The stated purpose of *The Book of Mormon* is: “To show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever—And also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations.”<sup>9</sup> I believe that both the transcendent coming forth of *The Book of Mormon* nearly two hundred years ago *and* the future expected discovery of the records from which it was taken are necessary to accomplish this.

Before Christ’s coming, the scattered House of Israel are *to know* of the covenants God has made with them, and both Jew and Gentile are *to be convinced* that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God. While *The Book of Mormon* serves that purpose for those who read it sincerely and by the Spirit,<sup>10</sup> the vast majority of people living today know little or nothing about it.

The discovery of the records from which it was derived will be such an extraordinary and rare event, nearly everyone in the world will know about it.<sup>11</sup> Those records will indisputably substantiate the miracle of the coming forth of *The Book of Mormon* and, therefore, the divine origin of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with its doctrines, ordinances, and priesthood.

Most important, *The Book of Mormon* and the hold it in your hands records from which it was abridged will irrefutably testify of the reality of Jesus Christ and His divinity. They will be the convincing means to allow virtually all living Jews and Gentiles to choose whether to follow Jesus Christ having undeniable knowledge of who He is.

I believe, therefore, the discovery of the Nephite records some 200+ years after the divinely assisted coming forth of *The Book of Mormon* is integral to the prophesied separation, gathering, and cataclysmic destruction that will precede the Savior’s coming.

But where are these records “hid up,” and how and when will they be discovered?

There is much conjecture regarding their possible location, and *The Book of Mormon* gives some geographic hints as to where they are located.<sup>12</sup> However, we do not yet know where that is.

---

<sup>9</sup> Book of Mormon title page

<sup>10</sup> See Moroni 10:4-5

<sup>11</sup> See 3 Nephi 21:8 for example

<sup>12</sup> Here are two online articles/sites regarding possible locations with comprehensive references that are of interest:

<https://scripturecentral.org/search?q=Hill%20Cumorah>;

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proposed\\_Book\\_of\\_Mormon\\_geographical\\_setting#:~:text=The%20Niagara%20Falls%20Peninsula%20has,late%20to%20be%20considered%20Jaredites.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proposed_Book_of_Mormon_geographical_setting#:~:text=The%20Niagara%20Falls%20Peninsula%20has,late%20to%20be%20considered%20Jaredites.)

In my fictional *Course of Fate* trilogy,<sup>13</sup> I speculate the location as being somewhere near Misantla, Veracruz, Mexico, but there are many other locations that are just as plausible. I believe that the limited evidence currently available points to the likely place being somewhere in Mesoamerica.

That the records Mormon “hid up” were collected over many hundreds of years means they are extensive and would need to be stored in a relatively large room/cave. My fictional description of that room in *The Course of Fate*, I believe, is credible. It is depicted there as being an enlarged existing cave in a mostly solid rock cliff. A large stone that conformed to the outward appearance of the cliff was fit into the entrance of the cave to seal it up.

I do not know how these records will ultimately be discovered, but I am certain they will be found. In my fictional account, anachronistic Mayan writings lead to their unearthing. That is one possibility. Another is they are found “naturally” by archeologists who, as a result of other discoveries, are led to them. It is also conceivable that the location will be revealed directly by the Lord to a key person who would facilitate the find. I believe that regardless of how they are found, the discovery will be made by those who are not directly affiliated with the Church as that will enhance the credibility of the find.

As an example of how this could come about, I have included below the concluding chapter of Book One in *The Course Of Fate* trilogy announcing the discovery of the Nephite records to the world.

---

<sup>13</sup> The *Course of Fate* trilogy was published in 2020 on Amazon and a precursor first book, *Sealed Up*, was published in 2016. They are no longer being published.

## **THE ANNOUNCING OF THE FINDING OF THE NEPHITE RECORDS**

A motorized wheelchair rumbled onto the stage in front of drawn curtains. The arms of the man sitting in it were bent at the elbows and strapped to the chair by thick black bands. His neck was rigid against the black sheepskin-lined headrest that kept his head in place, and a gray hose connected his throat to the ventilator that sat on a tray at the back of his chair. By blowing and sucking on a straw device in his mouth, he manipulated his chair into the large space between three other chairs. A trim fifty-ish Hispanic woman was with him. She removed the straw from his mouth and sat in the chair on his left. Two men who had followed them, occupied the other chairs.

A petite Mexican woman in a scarlet pantsuit went to the rostrum on the stage. Her white hair was pulled tight and wrapped in a bun. She gazed out at the representatives of news organizations from around the world who filled the auditorium at Mexico City's National Museum of Anthropology. "Good afternoon," she said in English. "I am Adella Maria Mata and am director of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia." She smiled. "Better known as INAH. Thank you for joining us. Let me first introduce several people."

She faced the chairs on stage. "On my immediate left is Dr. Raul Zepeda, director of research at INAH." The heavysset man with coffee-colored skin and thick gray-black hair nodded. "Next to him is Dr. Nathan Hill, professor of anthropology at UCLA." He was trim and angular, his translucent blue eyes framed by black-rimmed glasses. He raised a hand in acknowledgement. "And the other gentleman is Dr. Hyrum Bentley, professor of anthropology at the University of Texas. The lovely woman on his left is his wife, Gabriella."

Adella looked down at the front row seats and motioned for a striking Sino-Caucasian woman in a yolk-yellow suit to arise. "This is Audra Chang-Hill. She is Dr. Hill's wife and was instrumental in the discovery of what we will show you this afternoon."

Audra sat down, and the small copper-skinned woman wearing a Maya Azul huipil and turquoise skirt next to her stood. Adella motioned for the tall Afro-American man who sat by her to stand as well. "This is Dr. Itzel Soto-Olsen, professor of anthropology at Tulane University, and her husband Dr. Paul Olsen, also professor of anthropology at Tulane. Itzel and Paul were involved in this discovery and have been vital participants in the subsequent study and translation."

She motioned for the last two to stand. "Dr. Hayim Kleinman is Professor of Linguistics at Hebrew University and Dr. Shula Rivlin is professor of Jewish Studies and Egyptology at the University of Oxford. We are most fortunate to have them as part of our translation team."

Adella looked up at the audience. "At the conclusion of our session today, you will receive comprehensive summaries with far more detail than we will present here. Full reports can be ordered from INAH or viewed online."

She glanced at her tablet. "We have invited you here today to announce a singular archeological find. Proyecto La Colina, the Hill Project, has been a covert focus of INAH for over a year now. There will be two parts to our presentation this afternoon, and they will be brief and introductory. Dr. Hill will first speak of the discovery of extraordinary ancient Mesoamerican chronicles. Dr. Bentley will give an overview of the results of the extensive studies and translations that have taken place. Following their presentations, Dr. Zepeda, the INAH coordinator for the project, will conduct a short question and answer period."

She lifted a large bowl that was under the rostrum. "We have each of your business cards here and will randomly select a few of you to ask questions." She gestured to Nathan. "The time is yours, Dr. Hill."

Nathan pushed his glasses further up on his nose and came to the rostrum. He clicked a wireless transmitter on the podium. Two pictures appeared, one on each of the large screens at the sides of the stage. The one on the left was an ancient document spread out to reveal eight panels with Latin script and Mayan hieroglyphs. The label below the picture read, NAJA BOOK OF CHILAM BALAM.

The picture on the right showed two pages of another antique manuscript. Mayan script appeared at the bottom of each of the pages, and above that, writing that no one in the audience had ever seen before. The label under this picture read, NAJA CODEX.

"The two documents you see here," Nathan began, "were furtively kept and passed down from one Maya shaman to another for centuries. We became aware of the existence of the Naja Book of Chilam Balam several years ago and the codex six months later." He glanced around the room. "Are most of you familiar with the books of Chilam Balam?" Almost all hands went up.

"Okay. I'll say this about the Naja book. Of the few accounts we have of Maya history and prophecies written after the Spanish conquests, this one is different in its content and age. It has been carbon dated from 1511 CE to 1682 CE, a hundred years earlier than any other known book of Chilam Balam. The Maya codex you see, we've named the Naja Codex because it was with the book of Chilam

Balam. It carbon dates from 737 CE to 814 CE. That document has been passed on for well over 1200 years. You will notice the bottom part of the Codex is in Mayan script, and the top part in a completely unknown script. Turns out this codex is a Rosetta Stone of sorts."

A noticeable murmur swept through the audience, and Nathan let it die before continuing. "Both documents came to us from a shaman residing in the tiny Lacandón village of Naja in eastern Chiapas near the Usumacinta River. That's why we gave them the Naja moniker.

"The details about all of this are fascinating, and you will want to read them. The Naja book of Chilam Balam mentions the existence of hidden ancient chronicles and gives cryptic directions that led us to find them. Bottom line, they were sealed up behind a cliff wall near Misantla, Veracruz, and here's what we found."

Nathan nodded to someone offstage, and the curtains behind them opened. No murmurings from the audience this time. Just loud gasps. There sat a full-sized replica of the room of archaic records that Nathan's team had discovered. When the noise ceased, Nathan continued. "This is an exact model of the room and its contents that we uncovered.

"Carbon dating of the tables in the room puts them in the early fourth century CE. The bark paper codices you see represented here were written over approximately a 1,000-year period. The earliest dating is around 607 BCE and the latest about 397 CE. The sword represented on the table was of mid-eastern origin and made around the 8th century BCE. The brass ball next to it, we didn't have a clue what that was until we got into our translating.

"With the exception of the brass-appearing plates you see on the one table and the large metal plates on the table with the sword and ball, the writing on all of the records is the same as, or a form of, the writing on the top half of the pages in the Naja Codex. We used the Codex to translate some of those records. We have been unable to decipher the writing on the large plates by the sword.

"The writing on the brass sheets," Nathan's face remained stoic as he paused for several seconds, "is Hebraic and a form of hieratic Egyptian." He glanced over at Adella. "That's all I have." He took his seat as near verbal pandemonium broke out.

Adella came to the rostrum and lifted her hands for silence. "Thank you, Dr. Hill. This replicated room will be on permanent display in the museum and will feature original individual pieces from time to time. We will now hear from Dr. Bentley regarding research and translation associated with this discovery. Dr. Bentley is a quadriplegic as a result of an accident on a previous archeology dig. He needs to coordinate his

speaking with his ventilator, so his presentation style is a little different.” She smiled. “You are in for a treat.”

She took her seat as Hyrum maneuvered his wheelchair to near the edge of the stage. Gabriella followed him, removed the navigation straw from his mouth, tapped the microphone attached to his collar to make certain it was on, then went back to her chair.

“That’s the first time my,” Hyrum paused as his ventilator cycled, “whoosh punctuated monologues have been called treats.” That generated some polite laughs, and he continued. “My ventilator recycles every twelve seconds, ---- and even if I’m in the middle of a sentence ---- when it starts to suck in, I have to stop talking. ---- Thanks for being patient with my idiosyncratic speaking style. ---- As Dr. Hill mentioned, we ---- used the Naja Codex for the translation. ---- We decided to first translate the inscribed ---- metal sheets that were on the same table as the brass sheets. ---- You can see we have five sets of those gold appearing sheets. ---- That collection is a running history ---- or journal of the people who kept the records ---- from when they began about 600 BCE to the ---- sealing up of the records somewhere around 400 CE.

“The other records in the room ---- contain background historical detail ---- along with peripheral and anecdotal elements ---- relating to the records we translated. ---- Compelling mysteries lurk in those other records ---- that will be brought out with future translating.”

He stopped as his machine cycled twice. “Before I get into the content ---- of what we’ve translated so far, I need to ---- tell you something about the translation process. ---- We have chosen English as the primary language of translation. ---- Dr. Kleinman from Hebrew University and Dr. Rivlin from Oxford have focused on the ---- translation of what I will refer to as the brass plates. ---- As Dr. Hill mentioned, these plates were written ---- in Hebraic and Egyptian script. ---- That translation into English is now complete.

“The translation of the series of ---- gold-like metal sheets was a more complicated process. ---- Using the Codex, we first translated them ---- into Mayan, then re-translated into English. ---- That translation is also now complete. ---- Adella, the first image please.”

A picture of a partial page of the brass plates appeared on the left screen, and Hyrum spoke. “What were the results of our translation? ---- First, the brass plates interpreted by Dr. Kleinman and Dr. Rivlin. ---- Please Adella.”

A bright circle popped up and enclosed several lines of script on the image at the left, while a picture of several English sentences appeared on the right screen. “Here

is a sample. I will read it to you. ---- 'The Gods counseled with each other after forming ---- the earth and all that it contained. ---- The Gods in counsel said we will put man on the earth ---- to rule over the earth and all that is on the earth. ---- The Word of the Gods brought forth man in the very likeness of the Gods. ---- The Word of the Gods brought forth ---- woman in the very likeness of the Gods. ---- The man and the woman were of the Gods. ---- The man and the woman were ---- children of the Gods.'"

Hyrum smiled. "Sound familiar?"

His question was met with stone silence and not a few gaping mouths. He continued. "Check out Genesis 1: 26-27 in just about any ---- version of the Bible for a comparison. ---- These enigmatic brass plates, hid up in a cliff near what is now ---- Misantla, Mexico, over sixteen hundred years ago, ---- contain the Pentateuch, Jewish history ---- down to the reign of Zedekiah, ---- extensive genealogies, and prophecies ---- of both Jewish prophets as well as ---- prophets descended from the Israel tribes ---- of Ephraim and Manasseh."

The silence gave way to hands punching the air and questions shouted from every area of the auditorium. The cacophony continued until Adella stepped to the microphone. "You will have a chance to ask some questions in a few minutes. And I remind you, details are in the summaries you will receive."

When order returned, Hyrum spoke. "I will now show you a sample of the ---- translation of a few lines from the gold sheets. ---- Adella, please." On the left screen appeared an image of a segment of a gold page with a red circle drawn around some of its lines. On the right screen, several English sentences appeared.

"I will read these to you as well," Hyrum said. "The translation is exact, but for the sake of space ---- I have only included highlight sentences and thoughts ---- from the selection circled. ---- 'Their eyes were pointed to or focused on the sky. ---- As they watched, a man came down. ---- They did not know where he came from ---- this man in clothes like lightning. ---- All were silent. ---- His hands reached out. He said, ---- I am the anointed one whom your wise men ---- have spoken of. I am the source of light. ---- I bring breath to this world. ---- The cup of my father has pressed my lips. ---- The sour nectar has reached my stomach. ---- I have obeyed from the first time.'"

Hyrum let his ventilator cycle twice. "For some of you, this also may sound somewhat familiar." A few heads shook, their faces mirroring something akin to amazement. Hyrum continued. "Of the hundreds of pages we translated, one word-form ---- or another of this anointed one is mentioned ---- over twenty-five hundred times. While the context of these records ---- is historical, and countless events are

described, ---- their overarching theme is the teaching and prophesying ---- about the coming of this anointed one to the earth ---- and his visiting the people who wrote these accounts. ---- The keepers of these records taught ---- and strived to live the principles---- they connected to this anointed one.”

Hyrum paused. “Gabriella. Water, please.” She brought him a glass and straw to drink from. He took a few long sips. “Thank you.” She left, and he continued. “Given the brass plates and their contents, ---- and what was recorded on the golden sheets, ---- the first of these people who kept the records ---- had to have come from Jerusalem sometime around 600 BCE plus or minus. ---- They brought the brass plates with them at that time. ---- The anointed one they speak of was ---- Jesus Christ.”

The auditorium was morgue-like, the silence shouting disruption.

“Adella, please,” he said. The picture on the left changed to show several English sentences. “I will read the sentences and phrases on the left. ---- Please notice how close they correlate with those on the right. ---- ‘They cast their eyes up again towards heaven, ---- and behold they saw a Man descending out of heaven; ---- and he was clothed in a white robe; ---- and they durst not open their mouths; ---- He stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people saying ---- I am Jesus Christ whom the prophets testified ---- shall come into the world. ---- I am the light and the life of the world; ---- I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father ---- hath given me. I have suffered ---- the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.’”

For a moment all that could be heard was the whooshing of Hyrum’s ventilator. Then he spoke. “Some of you may recognize ---- that this passage is from The Book of Mormon. ---- Many hundreds of such correlations exist between ---- the records we translated and The Book of Mormon. ---- They both tell the same story. ----

“The Book of Mormon claims to be an abridgment ---- of records kept by an ancient people residing on the American continent ---- who originally came from Jerusalem. - --- There is no question now ---- that that claim is legitimate. ---- These are the records it was taken from.”

His machine cycled and he said, “That’s all I have, Adella. ----Gabriella, please.”

The audience sat as if in shock as Gabriella came forward and moved the straw-like tube into Hyrum’s mouth. He turned his chair around and maneuvered it to where the others were sitting.

Adella spoke into the microphone while Nathan put on a lapel mic. “Thank you, Dr. Hill and Dr. Bentley. Dr. Zepeda will now conduct a short question and answer session.

Raul came to the podium. "We'll take a few questions. General questions, I will field. If you have a question for a specific person, please address the question to them."

He stirred his hand around in the bowl and pulled out a card. "Hiroki Nakahara, Jiji news agency, Japan."

Hiroki stood and bowed slightly. "My question is for you, Dr. Zepeda. Why didn't INAH announce their find when the records were first uncovered? Why wait until now to make this public?"

Raul nodded. "We knew that the find, when made public, might generate a worldwide political, social, religious, and academic maelstrom. We didn't want to create unnecessary tumult if our initial take on what we found wasn't substantiated by careful scientific tests and objective evaluations. That takes time. And we took it."

Raul pulled out another card. "Petrina Carvalho from Rede Globo television, Brazil."

A statuesque woman with shoulder-length raspberry-blond hair and penetrating hazel eyes stood, looking like she were ready for the 7:00 PM news. "Dr. Bentley please. I'm still trying to grasp and process what we heard today. It sounds like you think these records prove that Jesus Christ is who he said he was. Is that what you are saying?"

Hyrum smiled. "Here's what we know for certain. --- We have records sealed up 1600 years ago in a cave in Mesoamerica. --- They contain the Pentateuch and a history --- of the Jewish nation including --- prophecies of the coming of who they always referred to --- as a divine being, Jesus Christ. --- For nine hundred years the dominant theme in the records we translated --- concerned this same being, --- and his remarkable visit to this people after His resurrection. --- A description of which they recorded in detail. ---"

"And all of this confirms the stark witness --- of Jesus Christ contained in The Book of Mormon, --- which book came about..." He raised a corner of his mouth as his respirator cycled. "Well, I don't know any other --- word to use but, miraculously. --- These unmistakable, undeniable witnesses are --- in addition to the testimony of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. --- So, for me, the evidence here that --- there was a Jesus Christ and --- he is who he said he was...the Son of God --- is not just compelling. --- It is indisputable." Hyrum blinked his eyes to signal he was through.

"Thank you," Raul said, and drew another card. "Hilly Beckham from The New York Times, United States."

A bewhiskered man with a crewcut stood. "Dr. Hill, where exactly did these people live, and why don't we have other archeological evidence of them?"

Nathan stood. "Good question. Or rather questions. In our comprehensive reports we lay out a probable geographic area based upon descriptors we found in the text. We believe the people who kept the records lived at least as far southeast as the Guatemala City area and at least as far northwest as the Misantla region. Why we don't have obvious archeology evidence yet for their existence is explainable.

"According to their records, they were continually under attack by those around them, and their enemies wanted to destroy their writings and wipe away any vestige of their civilization. That's why, when they saw that they were going to be virtually annihilated, they hid up their records to make it impossible for their enemies to destroy them.

"We assume that nearly everything else that would speak of the existence of this unique people was wiped out by those who detested them and their society. By the way, history tells us that's what conquering civilizations seem to do."

Raul pulled out another card. "Glen Traynor from ABC News, Sydney, Australia."

A lanky sunbaked man stood up. "G'day. The brass ball on the table there. What is it? It looks manufactured, and how could something like that be a couple of thousand years old?"

Raul motioned to Nathan to answer.

Nathan stood. "According to the records, this just showed up one day outside of the travelers' tents while they were migrating from Jerusalem. It seems it had at least two functions. One was directional, like a compass. The other was instructional. Words just appeared on it. It hasn't worked for us though. And you're right. It's an anachronism." Nathan took a breath. "Where did it come from? The text says from God." He sat down.

Raul reached into the bowl. "This will be the last question." He pulled out a card. "Lefa Bapela from ANN7 TV, South Africa."

A stocky man with deep ebony skin stood. "The ramifications of what you've shown us today are just settling on me. The reality of angels, as Joseph Smith claims, are valid? There is life after death? The divinity of Jesus Christ is a fact? The veracity of the Bible is now proven? And the Book of Mormon is what it claims to be? So, my question is, what is this going to do to the world?"

Raul looked back at Adella and asked, "Okay if I take this one?" She nodded. "I don't have a clue how the world will respond," he said. "Some serious re-thinking is going to happen that's for sure." He half-smiled at his gross understatement. "I used the word maelstrom before. I guess we'll see if that's an apt descriptor. By the way, you need to be aware that no church or organization or people, outside of the handful

Adella mentioned, have been involved in any way with this finding or its translation. You here today are the first to know about it." His glance at Adella told her he was through, and he sat down.

Adella came to the rostrum and spoke. "In the Naja book of Chilam Balam that provided the clues that led to this extraordinary find, is written the following about these records. 'They hold the seed of oneness, of unity. They hold the seed of chaos, of disruption. The world will change.' Adella smiled. "What does all this mean for our future?" She paused, then said, "Your guess is as good as ours. Thank you for being here. This concludes our session."

# ADDENDUM

## Book Of Mormon Passages Referring to the Discovery of All Nephite Records

*(Note: All emphases added)*

### 1 Nephi 5:16–19

16 And thus my father, Lehi, did discover the genealogy of his fathers. And Laban also was a descendant of Joseph, wherefore he and his fathers had kept the records.

17 *And now when my father saw all these things, he was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed—*

18 *That these plates of brass should go forth **unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people who were of his seed.***

19 *Wherefore, he said that these plates of brass should never perish; neither should they be dimmed any more by time.* And he prophesied many things concerning his seed.

### 1 Nephi 13:35

For, behold, saith the Lamb: I will manifest myself unto they seed, that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious; and after thy seed shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief, and also the seed of thy brethren, behold, *these things shall be hid up, to come forth unto the Gentiles, by the gift and power of the Lamb.*

### 2 Nephi 25:17-18

17 *And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men.*

18 *Wherefore, he shall bring forth his words unto them, which words shall judge them at the last day, for they shall be given them for the purpose of convincing them of the true Messiah, who was rejected by them; and unto the convincing of them that they need not look forward any more for a Messiah to come, for there should not any come, save it should be a false Messiah which should deceive the people; for there is save one Messiah spoken of by the prophets, and that Messiah is he who should be rejected of the Jews.*

## Enos 1:13–18

13 And now behold, this was the desire which I desired of him—that *if it should so be, that my people, the Nephites, should fall into transgression, and by any means be destroyed, and the Lamanites should not be destroyed, that the Lord God would preserve a record of my people, the Nephites; even if it so be by the power of his holy arm, that it might be brought forth at some future day unto the Lamanites, that, perhaps, they might be brought unto salvation—*

14 *For at the present our strugglings were vain in restoring them to the true faith. And they swore in their wrath that, if it were possible, **they would destroy our records and us, and also all the traditions of our fathers.***

15 *Wherefore, I knowing that the Lord God was able to preserve our records, I cried unto him continually, for he had said unto me: Whatsoever thing ye shall ask in faith, believing that ye shall receive in the name of Christ, ye shall receive it.*

16 And I had faith, and *I did cry unto God that he would preserve the records; and he covenanted with me that he would bring them forth unto the Lamanites in his own due time.*

17 And I, Enos, knew it would be according to the covenant which he had made; wherefore my soul did rest.

18 And the Lord said unto me: *Thy fathers have also required of me this thing; and it shall be done unto them according to their faith; for their faith was like unto thine.*

## Words of Mormon 1:6–11

6 But behold, *I shall take these plates, which contain these prophesyings and revelations, and put them with the remainder of my record, for they are choice unto me; and I know they will be choice unto my brethren.*

7 *And I do this for a wise purpose; **for thus it whispereth me, according to the workings of the Spirit of the Lord which is in me.** And now, I do not know all things; but the Lord knoweth all things which are to come; wherefore, **he worketh in me to do according to his will.***

8 And my prayer to God is concerning my brethren, that they may once again come to the knowledge of God, yea, the redemption of Christ; that they may once again be a delightsome people.

9 And now I, Mormon, proceed to finish out my record, which I take from the plates of Nephi; and I make it according to the knowledge and the understanding which God has given me.

10 *Wherefore, it came to pass that after Amaleki had delivered up these plates into the hands of king Benjamin, he took them and put them with the other plates, which contained records which had been handed down by the kings, from generation to generation until the days of king Benjamin.*

11 *And they were handed down from king Benjamin, from generation to generation until they have fallen into my hands. **And I, Mormon, pray to God that they may be preserved from this time henceforth. And I know that they will be preserved; for there are great things written upon them, out of which my people and their brethren shall be judged at the great and last day, according to the word of God which is written.***

### **Mosiah 28:20**

20 *And now, as I said unto you, that after king Mosiah had done these things, he took the plates of brass, and all the things which he had kept, and conferred them upon Alma, who was the son of Alma; yea, all the records, and also the interpreters, and conferred them upon him, and commanded him that he should keep and preserve them, and also keep a record of the people, handing them down from one generation to another, even as they had been handed down from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem.*

### **Alma 37:**

2 *And I also command you that ye keep a record of this people, according as I have done, upon the plates of Nephi, and keep all these things sacred which I have kept, even as I have kept them; for it is for a wise purpose that they are kept.*

3 *And **these plates of brass**, which contain these engravings, which have the records of the holy scriptures upon them, which have the genealogy of our forefathers, even from the beginning—*

4 ***Behold, it has been prophesied by our fathers, that they should be kept and handed down from one generation to another, and be kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord until they should go forth unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, that they shall know of the mysteries contained thereon.***

5 *And now behold, if they are kept they must retain their brightness; yea, and they will retain their brightness; yea, and also shall all the plates which do contain that which is holy writ.*

6 *Now ye may suppose that this is foolishness in me; but behold I say unto you, that by *small and simple things* are great things brought to pass; and *small means* in many instances doth confound the wise.*

7 *And the Lord God doth work by means to bring about his great and eternal purposes; and by very small means the Lord doth confound the wise and bringeth about the salvation of many souls.*

8 *And now, it has hitherto been wisdom in God that these things should be preserved; for behold, they have enlarged the memory of this people, yea, and convinced many of the error of their ways, and brought them to the knowledge of their God unto the salvation of their souls.*

9 *... these records and their words brought them unto repentance; that is, they brought them to the knowledge of the Lord their God, and to rejoice in Jesus Christ their Redeemer.*

12 *And it may suffice if I only say they are preserved for a wise purpose, which purpose is known unto God; for he doth counsel in wisdom over all his works, and his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round.*

14 *And now remember, my son, that God has entrusted you with these things, which are sacred, which he has kept sacred, and also which he will keep and preserve for a wise purpose in him, **that he may show forth his power unto future generations.***

16 *But if ye ... do with these things which are sacred according to that which the Lord doth command you, (for you must appeal unto the Lord for all things whatsoever ye must do with them) behold, no power of earth or hell can take them from you....*

17 *For he will fulfil all his promises which he shall make unto you, for he has fulfilled his promises which he has made unto our fathers.*

18 *For he promised unto them that he would preserve these things for a wise purpose in him, that he **might show forth his power unto future generations.***

19 *And now behold, one purpose hath he fulfilled, even to the restoration of many thousands of the Lamanites to the knowledge of the truth; and he hath shown forth his power in them, **and he will also still show forth his power in them unto future generations; therefore they shall be preserved.***

### **3 Nephi 21:2-11**

2 *And behold, this is the thing which I will give unto you for a sign—for verily I say unto you that when these things which I declare unto you, and which I shall declare unto you hereafter of myself, and by the power of the Holy Ghost which shall be given unto you of the Father, shall be made known unto the Gentiles that they may know concerning this people who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, and concerning this my people who shall be scattered by them;*

3 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, when these things shall be made known unto them of the Father, and shall come forth of the Father, from them unto you;*

4 For it is wisdom in the Father that they should be established in this land, and be set up as a free people by the power of the Father, that these things might come forth from them unto a remnant of your seed, that the covenant of the Father may be fulfilled which he hath covenanted with his people, O house of Israel;

5 *Therefore, when these works and the works which shall be wrought among you hereafter shall come forth from the Gentiles, unto your seed which shall dwindle in unbelief because of iniquity;*

6 *For thus it behooveth the Father that it should come forth from the Gentiles, that he may show forth his power unto the Gentiles, for this cause that the Gentiles, if they will not harden their hearts, that they may repent and come unto me and be baptized in my name and know of the true points of my doctrine, that they may be numbered among my people, O house of Israel;*

7 *And when these things come to pass that thy seed shall begin to know these things—it shall be a sign unto them, that they may know that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the people who are of the house of Israel.*

**8 *And when that day shall come, it shall come to pass that kings shall shut their mouths; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.***

**9 *For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.***

10 But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.

11 *Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto him power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant.*

### **3 Nephi 26: 6-12**

**6 *And now there cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach unto the people;***

**7 *But behold the plates of Nephi do contain the more part of the things which he taught the people.***

*8 And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.*

*9 And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.*

10 And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation.

*11 Behold, I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: I will try the faith of my people.*

*12 Therefore I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord. And now I, Mormon, make an end of my sayings, and proceed to write the things which have been commanded me.*

#### **4 Nephi 1:48-49**

48 And it came to pass that when three hundred and twenty years had passed away, *Ammaron, being constrained by the Holy Ghost, did hide up the records which were sacred—yea, even all the sacred records which had been handed down from generation to generation, which were sacred—even until the three hundred and twentieth year from the coming of Christ.*

*49 And he did hide them up unto the Lord, that they might come again unto the remnant of the house of Jacob, according to the prophecies and the promises of the Lord.* And thus is the end of the record of Ammaron.

#### **Mormon 2:18**

*18 And upon the plates of Nephi I did make a full account of all the wickedness and abominations; but upon these plates I did forbear to make a full account of their wickedness and abominations, for behold, a continual scene of wickedness and abominations has been before mine eyes ever since I have been sufficient to behold the ways of man.*

### Mormon 5:12-16

12 Now *these things are written unto the remnant of the house of Jacob; and they are written after this manner, because it is known of God that wickedness will not bring them forth unto them; and they are to be hid up unto the Lord that they may come forth in his own due time.*

13 *And this is the commandment which I have received; and behold, they shall come forth according to the commandment of the Lord, when he shall see fit, in his wisdom.*

14 And behold, ***they shall go unto the unbelieving of the Jews; and for this intent shall they go—that they may be persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that the Father may bring about, through his most Beloved, his great and eternal purpose, in restoring the Jews, or all the house of Israel, to the land of their inheritance, which the Lord their God hath given them, unto the fulfilling of his covenant;***

15 *And also that the seed of this people may more fully believe his gospel, which shall go forth unto them from the Gentiles; for this people shall be scattered, and shall become a dark, a filthy, and a loathsome people, beyond the description of that which ever hath been amongst us, yea, even that which hath been among the Lamanites, and this because of their unbelief and idolatry.*

### Mormon 6:6

6 And it came to pass that when we had gathered in all our people in one to the land of Cumorah, ***behold I, Mormon, began to be old; and knowing it to be the last struggle of my people, and having been commanded of the Lord that I should not suffer the records which had been handed down by our fathers, which were sacred, to fall into the hands of the Lamanites, (for the Lamanites would destroy them) therefore I made this record out of the plates of Nephi, and hid up in the hill Cumorah all the records which had been entrusted to me by the hand of the Lord, save it were these few plates which I gave unto my son Moroni.***

### Ether 15:33

33 And the Lord spake unto Ether, and said unto him: Go forth. And he went forth, and beheld that the words of the Lord had all been fulfilled; and *he finished his record; (and the hundredth part I have not written) and he hid them in a manner that the people of Limhi did find them.*

# SHATTERED



*The division of the United States and the world into small geographic entities and the destruction of the Old City in Jerusalem*

I believe that some events prior to the coming of Jesus Christ to the Nephite and Lamanite people that Mormon was impressed to include in *The Book of Mormon* are a type of our day. These, I think, are precursors to the prophesied universal destruction and the second coming of Jesus Christ.

## **King-men (Dictators)**

A democracy of sorts was created by King Mosiah about 91 years before the birth of Jesus Christ with judges elected by the people overseeing their government and to be subject to the people. From time to time, however, a significant number wanted to have kings and supported unscrupulous would-be dictators to that end. This back and forth occurred until several years before Christ appeared to them. Here are two explicit examples.

*“(About 87 years before the birth of Jesus Christ) there began to be a contention among the people; for a certain man, being called Amlici, he being a very cunning man, ... (drew) away much people after him; even so much that they began to be very powerful; and they began to endeavor to establish Amlici to be a king over the people. Now this was alarming to...all those who had not been drawn away after the persuasions of Amlici; for they knew that according to their law that such things must be established by the voice of the people. Therefore, if it were possible that Amlici should gain the*

*voice of the people, he, being a wicked man, would deprive them of their rights and privileges... The people assembled themselves together throughout all the land, every man according to his mind, whether it were for or against Amlici, in separate bodies, having much dispute and wonderful contentions one with another. And thus they did assemble themselves together to cast in their voices concerning the matter. ... (And) the voice of the people came against Amlici, that he was not made king over the people. Now this did cause much joy in the hearts of those who were against him; but Amlici did stir up those who were in his favor to anger against those who were not in his favor.<sup>14</sup>*

*(About 67 years before Jesus Christ was born) there began to be a contention among the people concerning the chief judge...for behold, there were a part of the people who desired that...the law should be altered. Those who were desirous that the law should be altered were angry...and there arose a warm dispute...but not unto bloodshed. (The dissenters) were called king-men, for they were desirous that the law should be altered in a manner to overthrow the free government and to establish a king over the land. ...This matter of their contention was settled by the voice of the people. And it came to pass that the voice of the people came in favor of the (free government). ... (This) caused much rejoicing among the...people of liberty, who also put the king-men to silence, that they durst not oppose but were obliged to maintain the cause of freedom.<sup>15</sup>*

Throughout the world in our day where forms of democracy have been established, we are seeing this dynamic between would be tyrants and their supporters and those seeking to maintain the freedoms that exist in a government that is ostensibly by and for the people. In the United States we are likewise currently experiencing this age-old conflict albeit perhaps more subtle. Prominent political personalities have emerged that exhibit dictatorial traits more so than previous leaders, and a king-men mentality seems to have arisen among much of the U.S. population.

### **Pride, Unrighteousness, Divisiveness, Violence**

While significant pride, unrighteousness, divisiveness, and violence existed off and on throughout much of the Nephite history, that condition reached its apex leading up to the massive destruction that occurred prior to the Savior's appearance. Righteousness, order, humility, kindness, and the rule of law are requirements for peace and spiritual, mental, and emotional prosperity. When the majority of a nation chooses to go contrary to these fundamentals, in essence rejects Jesus Christ and all that He represents, they are "ripe for destruction."<sup>16</sup> This was the state of the Nephites and Lamanites preceding their cataclysmic destruction.

---

<sup>14</sup> Alma 2:1-8

<sup>15</sup> See Alma 51:2-8

<sup>16</sup> See Alma 37:31; Helaman 5:2; Helaman 13:14

Mormon describes it as follows:

*And the people began to be distinguished by ranks, according to their riches and their chances for learning: yea, some were ignorant because of their poverty, and others did receive great learning because of their riches. Some were lifted up in pride, and others were exceedingly humble. ...And thus there became a great inequality in all the land. ...Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this—Satan had great power, unto the **stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world.** ...And thus...the people having been delivered up for...a long time to be carried about by the temptations of the devil whithersoever he desired to carry them, and to do whatsoever iniquity he desired they should, ...they were in a state of awful wickedness. **Now they did not sin ignorantly, for they knew the will of God concerning them, for it had been taught unto them; therefore they did willfully rebel against God.**<sup>17</sup>*

Within a short time their government was destroyed “and the people were divided one against another; and they did separate one from another into tribes, every man according to his family and his kindred and friends.”<sup>18</sup>

When I was younger, I marveled at how rapidly *The Book of Mormon* people changed from being righteous to a wickedness that made them “ripe for destruction.” I lived in Idaho, Utah, Missouri, and California as I grew up. Immorality among the people I associated with, whether members of the Church or not, was rare. Most professed to follow Jesus Christ. While there were substantial political differences of opinion, that did not generally result in cruelty, unkindness, or disrespect for one another. There was universal love for our country and a desire to help the less fortunate both here in the United States and abroad. The need for and obedience to the rule of law was just understood by the vast majority of citizens.

Over the decades since then, I have come to see first-hand the kind of rapid degeneration I read about in *The Book of Mormon*. I believe that in many ways, Mormon’s descriptions could apply to the United States and the world today. The extraordinary and unprecedented divisiveness, disregard for the rule of law, violence, and rampant amorality we are seeing today may well be on a par with those in *The Book of Mormon* who were “ripening for destruction.”

Unrighteousness is the cause of wars and violence. *The Book of Mormon* is replete with examples of devastating wars, particularly in the 100 years or so preceding the coming of the Savior then. In our day, just in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is estimated as many as 230 million people died as

---

<sup>17</sup> See 3 Nephi 6:12-18; emphasis added

<sup>18</sup> 3 Nephi 7:1-2

a result of wars.<sup>19</sup> And there have been many millions of war related deaths so far in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>20</sup>

Aggressive confrontation and violence are literally promoted in our day. Movies, music, television, and videos are satiated with violent acts and themes.<sup>21</sup> It is estimated that some 90% of children in the United States play video games, and 85% of those games include substantial violence. There is a direct correlation between this ubiquitous portrayal of violence and hostility and personal aggressive behavior.<sup>22</sup>

We are in many ways in the pre-cataclysmic destruction phase of *The Book of Mormon*. I believe when the Nephite records with their irrefutable evidence of Jesus Christ and the restoration of His gospel through Joseph Smith are discovered, then Mormon's words will apply directly to us now: "They did not sin ignorantly, for they knew the will of God concerning them...therefore they did willfully rebel against God."<sup>23</sup>

And the die for universal destruction will be cast.

I believe there will be two shattering events that will be forerunners to the calamitous devastation that will precede the second coming of the Savior. Following the pattern of the dissolution of the government prior to the appearance of Jesus Christ in *The Book of Mormon*, I believe the United States will break apart into small political/cultural/geographic units, and most of the large nations of the world will follow suit. I also believe that in order for Jerusalem to assume its prophesied role at the coming of Christ, Temple Mount and the Old City will be completely destroyed. I have included below excerpts from *The Course of Fate* that portray fictional but possible scenarios for these events along with some of my observations.

---

<sup>19</sup> <https://cisssm.umd.edu/research-impact/publications/deaths-wars-and-conflicts-20th-century>

<sup>20</sup> <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/figures#:~:text=Human%20Toll%20Including%20Indirect%20Deaths,are%20described%20in%20this%20paper.>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/violence-media-entertainment.html#:~:text=Multiple%20studies%20have%20shown%20either,status%2C%20and%20poor%20school%20performance.>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/resolution-violent-video-games.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> 3 Nephi 6:18

# THE SHATTERING OF THE UNITED STATES

Since I published *The Course of Fate* in 2020 there have been some significant changes take place on the world's stage including Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the wars in the middle east. In the United States, Donald Trump lost his re-election bid in 2020, and he encouraged a mob to attack Congress as they prepared to make the election official. They were unsuccessful in stopping the Constitution directed certification of the election. He was subsequently federally indicted on criminal charges of "conspiring to defraud the government and disenfranchise voters and corruptly obstructing an official proceeding." He faced scores of criminal felony charges on other matters as well.<sup>24</sup> All cases that had not yet been decided were dropped when he was elected president in the 2024 election.

The political and cultural polarization that this has caused is unprecedented since the US Civil War, and Donald Trump's strong-arm tactics as president that numerous view as despotic has caused many to fear that our constitution based government may be in crisis. Had I written *The Course of Fate* today, these events would certainly have played a role in the specifics leading to the ultimate dissolution of the United States that I portrayed. If anything, they have confirmed that we are on that "shattering" path.

That there will be a separation of the righteous from the wicked is a matter of extensive prophecy and critical for the selective nature of the "final" destruction.<sup>25</sup> In a sense, "separating" and "gathering" define the same events. It is a tares-wheat thing. The tares and the wheat grow together, then the wheat is *separated* from the tares and *gathered*. The tares are left to be destroyed and the wheat preserved.<sup>26</sup> I believe the dissolution of the United States will play a significant role in this separating and gathering.

How I depict the United States being dramatically divided in *The Course of Fate* I believe is plausible regardless of what ultimately triggers that action. The following edited excerpts from my book portray that possible course.

## **Conversation between Ariel, reporter for The Washington Post, and Letitia (Tish), his future wife and prominent pollster**

And what was going to happen to the United States? The NORC tracking polls Tish oversaw showed the handwriting on the wall. A huge majority of the people wanted a Constitutional Convention now that would dissolve the United States. The breakup

---

<sup>24</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indictments\\_against\\_Donald\\_Trump](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indictments_against_Donald_Trump)

<sup>25</sup> [https://rsc.byu.edu/book-mormon-fourth-nephi-through-moroni-zion-destruction/gatherings-last-days-saved-sheaves-burned-bundles#:~:text=Once%20recognized%2C%20God's%20pattern%20of,\(Omni%201:12\).](https://rsc.byu.edu/book-mormon-fourth-nephi-through-moroni-zion-destruction/gatherings-last-days-saved-sheaves-burned-bundles#:~:text=Once%20recognized%2C%20God's%20pattern%20of,(Omni%201:12).)

<sup>26</sup> See Doctrine and Covenants 86:1-7 and 3 Nephi 6-7

of the United States with up to 50 small countries, united in some ways but separate in most, looked like it was going to happen. The discovery of the Nephite records was clearly the catalyst.

Ariel spoke. "Okay, Dr. Letitia Bentley Leavitt, PhD in political behavior from the famed University of Michigan Survey Research Center, and senior survey director at NORC, give me five reasons why you think there will be a Constitutional Convention."

"I'll give you just one," she said, "and you can quote me with all my titles. The governors of forty-one states want it."

Ariel laughed.. "Okay, here's my follow-up question. 'Can you give me five reasons why eighty percent of our governors want a Constitutional Convention?'"

Tish thought a moment. "Okay. Here they are in no particular order. One. Most states are capable of being independent, and that's what they want. Two. For decades, the federal government has moved to ignore states' rights, and this president and some of her predecessors have blatantly ignored the rule of law. Three. This president's unrelenting push to delegitimize religion, especially now with the blow the Nephite records has been to secularization. Four. The real option for independence that being a member of the North American Union gives. (Note: The North American Union was a defense and economic agreement between all North American countries) Five. Because everyone in the states is registered in the International Citizen Pool, (i.e. complete background checks available for all on demand) the new state-countries would automatically be members of the international Coalition of Safe States. (countries whose citizens were all included in the International Citizen Pool.)"

"Agreed. Question about your point two. In what ways does the president and the federal government ignore states' rights and the rule of law?"

She and Ariel had had this discussion a million times. She answered anyway. "The big culprit is the federal bureaucracy. There's a reason people call it the administrative state. There are over five hundred departments, agencies, and sub-agencies that operate outside of our checks and balances government, and they have a couple of million employees. These departments set up their own laws they call regulations, they judge who is in violation, and they enforce those judgments. They're a government unto themselves. They don't answer to the people. They don't answer to anybody. The rule of law, including constitutional guarantees for states' rights, is often disregarded by them." She shook her head. "Especially by this president as she directs them."

Ariel waited to see if she had more to say. She didn't. He went on. "Okay. How about the delegitimizing of religion? What affect did the discovery of the Nephite records have in bringing this concern to the front?"

"Bigtime. Our polls show that something like three-fourths of the people have had their faith in God increased because of that discovery. That runs opposite to President Hodge's (the current U.S. president) push to trample religion with her regulations and her stacked Supreme Court. I think the Nephite records have shoved at least sixteen more states into the pro-Constitutional Convention camp. That's why we're going to have it."

"What about the North American Union? I think I understand why you feel that's a motivation for the states to want the Convention, but would you mind elucidating on that?"

Tish laughed. "Elucidating? Ariel, with words like that you sound like you're interviewing Governor Novak." (Note: He is the governor of Missouri and the lead governor to establish a Constitutional Convention to dissolve the United States)

Ariel laughed. "Hey, just habit."

"Well, I'll answer your question anyway," she said. "The NAU would accept any state that wants to join. So, the state keeps its independence plus has the economic, political, and defense clout of the combined countries in the NAU. A cake-and-eat-it-too for the states."

"And the International Citizen Pool and Coalition of Safe States?" he asked.

"That effect may be a little subtler," Tish said, "but here's my take. We're all in the International Citizen Pool's data bank including our vital information and financial and social status and history. So, with our ICP card and universal foolproof iris scanning, we already have unrestricted access to all Coalition of Safe States countries no matter which new piece of the former United States we choose to live in."

### **Conversation between Ariel and Governor Novak**

Ariel had never met Governor Novak before. Two days earlier, congress, on a voice vote in both houses, announced it had set July 2 as the date the Convention would be held. Governor Novak would captain that process as chairman of the National Governors Association. Ariel was anticipating this interview.

For nearly four years, Novak led the charge for a Constitutional Convention. He assembled an unlikely combination of states from all over the political spectrum, including large secular ones, like California and New York, whose governors and state legislatures clamored for independence. California had a larger population now than the United States had at the outbreak of the Civil War, and many states were at least as large as some of the countries making up the European Union.

Until the announcement of the discovery of the Nephite records, the states wanting a Convention numbered 25. A significant number, but substantially short of the 34 needed. That count held for nearly two years. Since the Nephite records though, 16 more states joined the original 25. Having a Constitutional Convention, the only one since 1787, was now a fait accompli.

Ariel picked up his briefcase and went to the front door of the mansion where Governor Novak greeted him. Ariel's surprise at seeing him at the door rather than a staff member momentarily silenced him. The governor laughed. "Hey, it's my house. At least for a while." He put out his hand. "Good to meet you, Ariel. Thanks for seeing me on a Saturday. It'll be more comfortable here than at the capitol. And call me Mike, not Governor, okay? Come on in."

... "Thanks again for seeing me," Ariel said. "If you're ready, shall we start?" The governor nodded, and Ariel clicked his phone to record. "Congress has set the date for only the second Constitutional Convention in our history," he began. "You've been working on this for several years. Now that it's going to happen, how do you feel?"

For a time, Governor Novak stared at the small fire burning in the great fireplace. When he spoke, his smile was gone. "Like I've been punched in my gut. The great adventure in freedom begun by our founding fathers is over."

"Because of the scheduled Constitutional Convention and the proposed Declaration of Dissolution that would abolish the Union?" Ariel asked.

"No." The governor's voice was a forced calm. "The Declaration and the upcoming Convention are a *result* of the demise of our Constitution, not the *cause* of it. We killed it decades ago. Or rather, began poisoning it then."

"Poisoning? How?"

"For one thing, over time we've become a polarized people. We've separated into self-serving factions to become a bunch of cultural tribes with little or no tolerance for anyone who won't adhere to their way of thinking or acting."

"And that's poisoned our Constitution?"

"Yes. It has. We've survived as a government for as long as we have because of the general willingness on the part of our national, state, and local leaders to work together. To cooperate and compromise. That reduced contention, and the wellbeing of the country was, for the most part, first and foremost in their minds. That kind of cooperation hasn't existed for a long time now."

Ariel thought of the constant sniping between members of partisan factions including childish name calling and character assassination of those who opposed them. Our

government seemed to be filled with 5<sup>th</sup> grade playground bullies. "So, you think what has become of our political parties is a huge factor here?" he said.

The governor nodded. "Yes, but they're not alone. They're only a reflection of the people who they represent. Then we have those from the media and press, as well as from powerful social, political, and economic organizations, who contribute massively to the contention. Bottom line, we live in a polarized culture from top to bottom. Our Constitution can only work in a society where cooperation and compromise are the standards."

"I think you implied that there may be other things that have contributed to the downfall of the Constitution as well," Ariel said. "Did I hear you right?"

"You did. Perhaps the cause, and certainly an enabler, of our divided nation has been the adopting of secularism as our state religion. At least the anti-religion version of it."

"State religion?" Ariel interjected. "You think secularism is a religion?"

"Absolutely. The gods of its proponents are their minds and their bodies and their positions. Their priests are countless college professors here and abroad." He smiled wryly. "Just look at the robes academicians wear whenever they get the chance."

Ariel grinned at that observation, and Mike continued. "Secularist morality is whatever the latest whims are. And the virulent versions of this secular religion that now sits in the White House and controls our federal government, the judiciary, and most of our state governments, is at least as intolerant of any other belief system as the most radical Muslims or Christians or Jews ever were. There's ultimately only one form of government these people will be satisfied with. Totalitarian. And with them in charge, their ideology demands complete control."

"So, are you saying that secularism is the primary cause for our Constitution's demise?"

"The ongoing attempt of many secularists by their words and actions to kill God is what has killed the Constitution," Mike responded. He rummaged through the folder he'd placed on his lap and pulled out a sheet. "John Adams wrote this more than two-hundred years ago. 'We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. . . . Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.'"

His eyes locked on Ariel. "Adams was right. To let what our government has become go on any longer, is to first guarantee anarchy and then dictatorship."

"Most of the governors and legislators of those states that first opted for the Convention are secularists too," Ariel said. "So, why do they want that Declaration passed?"

Mike's eyes closed, and his look became pensive. He finally spoke. "Motivations vary, but I think there are at least two reasons. The leaders of those states unanimously point to the de-federalizing of our government as a reason for wanting the Convention. States' rights have become passé. That erosion of states' rights has occurred over many decades.

"How so?" Ariel asked.

"Over the years, we've created a national government of elites entrenched in a bureaucracy that's not accountable to the people," the governor said. "That's why it's called a shadow government or the administrative state."

"Not accountable to the people?" Ariel said.

"Not accountable to anybody. These executive agencies and departments consistently write their own laws, and they have the power to enforce them. We no longer have a true federal system with checks and balances and where power is divided between the national government and the states."

"Are you saying we're not a federal republic now?" Ariel asked.

"I'm saying that that's the claim put forth by the leaders of these states, and for the most part, I agree with them. They argue, why pretend any longer that we have a federal system? We're more than capable of running our own show, so why continue to be dictated to by a handful of prima donnas and a make-your-own-laws-and-enforce-them presidency and bureaucracy that doesn't answer to anybody?"

He stopped talking and looked at Ariel. "Pretty compelling reason, I think, to want to dissolve the United States."

"You said there were at least two reasons why these secularist states wanted a convention," Ariel said. "What's the other reason?"

Mike's lips curled in a sardonic smile. "This has to do with tribalism, I suppose. For at least some coastal state governors I know, the thought is why subject yourself to someone else's rule when you can be the dictator over your own sizeable fiefdom of like-minded followers." He held up his hand. "Don't quote me on that."

Ariel nodded. "I'd like to ask you about the Nephite records, but before I do, is there anything else you'd like to say about what we've discussed?"

"Just this. We aren't seeing the dissolution of the United States today just because of Jill Hodges (the current president of the United States). She and her cronies are there because we put them there, and for years, we elected her secularist brand of leaders who preceded her." He grunted. "Ironically, we even threw in a rightwing would-be dictator as president along the way. He tried to undermine the constitution and our election process that's kept us a democracy for over two centuries, then continued to sow seeds of anarchy for years after he was out of office. And it sure didn't help our cause that he was as irreligious as they come but nominally embraced religion to further his political agenda. He was even seen by some deluded followers as a sort of savior."

Mike slowly shook his head. "We had the makings of a Hitler here in our own country! Thank God..." He inhaled deeply. "In any case, his actions ultimately brought such a backlash that it opened the door for a complete intellectual secularist takeover of our national government and many state governments as well." He sat back, and his face took on an almost rueful look. "Thanks for letting me get that off my chest!" He pointed his hand at Ariel. "Next question."

Ariel kept his face unreadable. This interview had to be objective, and what the governor was saying resonated deeply with him. "What role do you think the discovery of the Nephite Records has played in bringing about the Convention?"

"A huge wake-up call for many. I don't know if there would be a Convention without them."

"Why?"

"Call it conversion if you want," the governor answered. "Not to any particular church per se, but to non-secular religion. In the group of governors of the twenty-five states who first supported our Declaration of Dissolution, most were, in fact, anti-religion secularists. They want to be independent for the reasons I've already given.

"But of the sixteen states that've come on board since that discovery, much of their population, as per the polls, claim to be committed Christians. Or at least believers of some sort. Those same polls show the Nephite Records have led to a substantial increase in faith in God among a good share of them. That has heightened their desire to be able to follow God as they choose."

"And that's pushed the governors and legislatures of those states off the anti-dissolution dime?" Ariel asked.

"Yes. They seem to now want to get rid of a government that undermines religion and shows every sign of pushing for religion's total demise."

"What about the nine states that aren't yet for the Convention?"

"They are mostly smaller states and among the most irreligious. The largest is Maryland. People in that state are highly dependent for their economic wellbeing on the national government and those who deal with it. A pretty good reason not to want its dissolution."

"You and the state of Missouri have been leaders in this movement, Mike. Why?"

Mike took a deep breath. "For us, for me, it's always been a battle against a government that's tried to flush our Constitution down the drain and to destroy the religious foundation of our country. So, I say, thank God for the Nephite Records. They've brought the religious revival that's making this convention possible."

Ariel looked at the notes on his pad. "Why, after all these years?" he asked. "Why do we now have enough states ready to call an Article V Convention? We have a long history of failed attempts at a Convention."

Mike's look intensified. "What our Convention will be considering is vastly different from any Article V Convention sought in the past. We're not looking at an amendment to the Constitution. We're looking to dissolve the United States of America. Most people want that now."

Ariel looked at his watch. "You've been extremely generous with your time, Gov... I mean Mike. Would you have time for just one or two more questions?"

"You bet. I've enjoyed this. I can see why you come so highly regarded."

Ariel laughed. "I know a few people who would disagree with you on that. I have a question about preparations for the Convention. How are you going to handle this? You don't have any precedence here."

"We're all set. As you know, our nine-member Executive Committee oversees its planning and conducting. We'll hold it at Constitution Center in Philadelphia in the Grand Hall Overlook, with Independence Hall as our backdrop. Voting members, of course, include the governors and majority and minority party leaders from the two legislative bodies in each state."

"How long do you think the Convention will last?"

"We'll have the vote on July Fourth. There'll be some talks, presentations, and information sessions before then, but there's really no need for open discussion. That's all occurring now. By Convention time, over three-fourths of the states will agree as to what will happen, and ratification by the states will be a formality."

"What about the disposition of federal assets, settling government obligations, and transition of power to states once the Declaration passes?"

"The governors appointed a Dissolution Commission that's preparing specific recommendations to present to the states at the Convention. I'll send you details on how we propose to do all of this."

"Thank you," Ariel said. "I feel like we're on a rollercoaster with unknown twists and turns and drops ahead. What's your take on what things will look like in five or ten years?"

Mike shrugged. "I don't have a crystal ball, but I'm optimistic. One thing I'm certain of. We'll all be better off than if we keep the status quo. My state will thrive and be a mecca for God-fearing people. So will several other states. If people can continue to move where they want to, I believe like-minded folks are going to gather in states that are conducive to their way of life."

"Interesting," Ariel said. "You're saying that you expect substantial population shifts then?"

"I am. Look what happened years ago when the Supreme Court decided to do away with Roe vs Wade. People who wanted access to abortions moved out of states that wouldn't allow them. Folks in my state who prefer Hollywood's morals or New York's secularism, may want to move where that's the standard. They might have a tough time with laws we enact here."

"What will you call yourself here when you become a country?" Ariel asked.

"That'll be up to the legislature or a public referendum, but I'm assuming we'll still call it Missouri. Maybe, the Republic of Missouri." Mike smiled. "Lots of things to think about, huh?"

### **Ariel at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia**

All attendees at the Constitutional Convention were in hotels within walking distance of the Center. Walking was the only way they could get to it. Federal and state forces had set up several rings of security. All public transportation into that area was stopped, and only authorized vehicles were allowed past a cordon set up in a three-block radius from the Center. Within a one block radius, only authorized foot traffic was allowed. Passes had to be shown and random iris checks made.

Getting into the Center itself was even more grueling, with intense checks of handbags and briefcases, pat downs, and iris scans of everyone who entered. The Center had been pronounced safe from any biological, chemical, or explosive devices. It had been closed for a week before the Convention and inspected with state-of-the-art chemical detection equipment. The whole area swarmed with armed uniformed and plainclothes officers. There was a 10-mile radius no-fly zone, and several military helicopters were over the area constantly. The proceedings of the Convention were televised on giant

screens at three locations in Independence Park for those who couldn't get seating in the Center.

Today, Ariel slept in a little later and skipped breakfast. He hadn't talked with Tish since arriving late Friday evening. Given his schedule, all he could do was text her. He was at the Center from early morning until late at night and phones had to be checked in when entering the building. This morning was the first he had a chance to call her. He stopped at a bench near Independence Hall and glanced at the time. 8:05 AM. He had to be at the Center in 25 minutes for the opening session, so this call would be brief. He touched her name on the screen, and she answered immediately.

"What's happening?" she said anxiously. "I've been worried."

"I didn't think you wanted a call at four in the morning or after midnight. That's been my window."

"I know. I've been watching the proceedings. It's been painful to see our country disintegrate."

"It was already disintegrated," Ariel reminded her. "I hope we're watching the salvation of at least some of the pieces. The last two mornings I've come early enough for breakfast and for the raising of the flag. I've stayed for the closing dinner and to watch the lowering of the flag."

"O say can you see, by the dawn's early light," she said solemnly. "What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming."

"Yeah," Ariel's voice caught. "I couldn't bring myself... to watch it raised... for the last time this morning."

They were both silent for a moment. Tish was the first to speak. "The traitors to the freedoms and values and civility that our fathers fought for, we've tolerated for decades. Then we embraced them. That's what we did."

Ariel thought of Mike Novak. A hero governor who wouldn't let freedom of conscience and faith and belief die. He stared at the giant flag at the front of the National Constitution Center and sucked in a breath. "Maybe this Convention's the savior of the Constitution, huh?"

"Maybe," she said. "For some. What's your schedule today?"

"More organizational and formal approval stuff. So far everything's gone as smooth as Mike hoped it would. This afternoon is the last of the nitty-gritty business, then they vote on the Declaration of Dissolution. Afterwards, there's a dinner, the flag is lowered for the last time, and we all go home."

## Constitution Center, Pennsylvania

The mood was a strange mix of cooperation, resignation, and hope. There was even exhilaration on the part of many, but everyone seemed weighed down at times by the realization that the most extraordinary government the world had ever seen was at an end.

Governor Novak saw Ariel at the back of the hall and motioned for him to come forward. Ariel looked for physical signs of what Mike might be feeling, but he hid them well. They shook hands. "You have to be satisfied with how things have been going," Ariel said.

The governor's expression was solemn. "I can't say I'm surprised. All the governors have been cooperative, leading up to this. We'll see how things go during transition."

"I suspect that each governor having his or her own slice of pie without fear of another taking a bite out of it, accounts for much of that cooperation," Ariel observed.

"You're right," Mike said. "We'll have some vastly different countries in a few days. It will be interesting how relationships fare as time goes on."

"Are all states on board to vote for Dissolution?"

"Yes. All fifty have committed now. By the time the next hundred-eighty days are up, though, we'll have something less than fifty state-countries if the intended mergers are approved by the electorate in those states who say now, they want to merge." He looked at his watch. "I have to go. There are still some last-minute decisions concerning the order the states will vote beginning at three o'clock."

Ariel watched Mike leave then walked out of the auditorium and into the Grand Hall Overlook. He gazed out over Independence Park and at the 20-foot-long flag snapping in the brisk breeze that had just come up. In an hour or two, the flag of the United States of America would have no more meaning than any other historical relic.

## THE SHATTERING OF JERUSALEM

Moroni quotes Ether regarding the status of Jerusalem at the second coming of Jesus Christ. “*After it should be destroyed it should be built up again, a holy city unto the Lord; ... And the inhabitants thereof, blessed are they, for they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb; and they are they who were scattered and gathered in from the four quarters of the earth, and from the north countries, and are partakers of the fulfilling of the covenant which God made with their father, Abraham.*”<sup>27</sup>

Clearly, this destruction has not yet happened. Jerusalem is not yet a “holy city unto the Lord,” and its inhabitants have not “been washed in the blood of the Lamb.” Joseph Smith said, “Judah must return, Jerusalem must be rebuilt, and the temple, and water come out from under the temple... It will take some time to rebuild the walls of the city and the temple etc.; and all this must be done before the Son of Man will make His appearance.”<sup>28</sup>

Jesus Christ said, “There shall not be left here, upon this temple, one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.”<sup>29</sup> The destruction wrought upon Jerusalem in 70 A.D. notwithstanding, I believe the annihilation of the old city including Temple Mount and the temple remnants that still exist under Temple Mount will be completely destroyed.<sup>30</sup> All of this in preparation and purification of Jerusalem for the coming of Jesus Christ.

In *The Course of Fate*, the old city of Jerusalem, including all of Temple Mount, is completely shattered by a missile with an atomic warhead. The Prime Minister of Israel sent the following proclamation to his people.

To the Citizens of Israel:

On Thursday, August fourth, at approximately 2:01 PM Israel Daylight Time, a nuclear device, carried by a missile, was detonated over Temple Mount.

The carefully preserved remnants of thousands of years of civilization are gone. Temple Mount no longer exists. Every quarter of the Old City has been reduced to rubble. The walls, the gates, the homes, the irreplaceable landmarks. Everything within more than one-half mile radius of Temple Mount, both in and outside of the Old City, is razed, and severe damage extends nearly a mile from the point of explosion. The historic and cultural loss to the world is incalculable.

Radiation effects have been limited to the areas of destruction, and lingering radiation is rapidly dissipating. The area struck will eventually be habitable. The toll in lives lost

---

<sup>27</sup> See Ether 13:5-12; emphasis added

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Smith, DHC, Vol 5, p. 337, Apr 6, 1843

<sup>29</sup> See Joseph Smith Matthew 1-3

<sup>30</sup> <https://history.vcu.edu/news/newsroom/history-news/uncovering-herodian-archaeology-the-temple-mount-and-the-holy-city.html#:~:text=The%20temple%20likely%20stood%20where,access%20to%20the%20Temple%20Mount.>

and injuries sustained, however, is staggering. Our aggregate count can only be an estimate. Over 32,000 have lost their lives, with another 50,000 requiring hospitalization or urgent care.

We thank the countries of the world for their immediate and exceptional response to our needs. Patient airlifts to hospitals throughout Europe, Africa, and the Middle East have saved thousands of lives. The generosity of countries in supplying critical manpower and resources puts us forever in their debt.

We do not rule out the possibility we have been attacked by a sovereign nation. We reserve the right to respond with corresponding force. We are working closely with international security agencies and governments to determine from where this missile was launched and by whom.

We have declared martial law to expedite our response to this historic attack and ask for your cooperation and patience during this very temporary suspension of civil government administration.

Our people are no strangers to pain. Through the grace of G\_d, we will overcome again.

Melech Celnik

Prime Minister, Israel

# PROPHECY FULFILLED



*The physical gathering of the Saints, the cataclysmic devastation of the world, and the coming of Christ*

*The Book of Mormon* and the records that it was abridged from are key to the prophesied events that will usher in the second coming of Jesus Christ. The “ripe for destruction” wickedness of the people of the world,<sup>31</sup> the United States and the world divided into clusters of what is tantamount to tares and wheat, and the demolishing of old city Jerusalem, will lead to last day prophecy fulfillment.

Specifically, I believe the Latter-day Saints and those who choose to be righteous will be gathered into geographic locations for their spiritual, emotional, and physical safety. A series of devastating destructive events will occur as a result of the non-repentance of the vast majority of people. And, the Savior will appear to the cleansed world.<sup>32</sup> I have included below my thoughts regarding these events along with fictionalized accounts of how they might occur using edited excerpts from *The Course of Fate*.

---

<sup>31</sup> See Alma 37:31; Helaman 5:2; Helaman 13:14

<sup>32</sup> See the following scriptures and article for detailed prophecies. Doctrine and Covenants 45; Joseph Smith Matthew; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second\\_Coming\\_in\\_Mormonism#:~:text=According%20to%20LDS%20Church%20teachings,prior%20to%20the%20Second%20Coming](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Coming_in_Mormonism#:~:text=According%20to%20LDS%20Church%20teachings,prior%20to%20the%20Second%20Coming).

# THE GATHERING

The latter-day gathering of the followers of Jesus Christ began when the Church was established in 1830 and has been in progress since. President Nelson has repeatedly called the gathering the most important mission of the Church today.<sup>33</sup> The physical gathering to establish Zion will be centered around two prophesied temples—one in Jackson County Missouri and one in the cleansed Jerusalem.<sup>34</sup> In addition, I believe the dissolution of the United States and countries throughout the world will aid in establishing Zion Centers that will be geographic areas of safety for the Saints and others who are seeking to be righteous.<sup>35</sup> I believe these centers will be defined by a temple in their midst. The 1000's of stakes today and nearly 400 temples in operation or have been announced or in construction in over 80 countries I believe are the precursor for this.

I include fictionalized accounts here regarding the building of the Jerusalem and Independence, Missouri temples and Zion Centers that have been established throughout the world.

## Jerusalem Temple & Zion Center

### *Characters:*

**Sari**—young woman who stayed with the Hebel's in Jerusalem just before it was destroyed 10 years before and is visiting with them now

**Hebel Leser**—Former Chief Rabbi of Israel

**Keila Leser**—Hebel's wife

**Jon Patema**—Temporal administrator in the Jerusalem Zion Center and head of the Zion Council

"This is the first chapel the Church built in Israel," Hebel said as he pointed to a Latter-day Saint chapel near his home in a Jerusalem suburb. Now we can't build them fast

---

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/mycalling/young-women/training-gathering-israel?lang=eng>; [https://speeches.byu.edu/topics/gathering-of-israel/#:~:text=President%20Russell%20M.,Moses%20in%20the%20Kirtland%20Temple](https://speeches.byu.edu/topics/gathering-of-israel/#:~:text=President%20Russell%20M.,Moses%20in%20the%20Kirtland%20Temple;); Topical Guide Israel, Gathering of

<sup>34</sup>; [https://www.mormonwiki.com/Last\\_Days#:~:text=Zion%20will%20be%20on%20the%20American%20continent,will%20also%20be%20called%20the%20%22New%20Jerusalem.%22](https://www.mormonwiki.com/Last_Days#:~:text=Zion%20will%20be%20on%20the%20American%20continent,will%20also%20be%20called%20the%20%22New%20Jerusalem.%22;); <https://askgramps.org/one-of-the-signs-of-the-second-coming-is-a-temple-built-in-jerusalem-is-this-new-jerusalem-or-old-jerusalem/>; <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1246&context=interpreter>; <https://history.churchofjesuschrist.org/content/historic-sites/missouri/questions-and-answers-about-the-temple-lot-in-independence-missouri?lang=eng>

<sup>35</sup> See Doctrine and Covenants 9:7-8; 63:34,54; 64:24; 101:22-24; <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/zion-new-jerusalem?lang=eng>

enough to accommodate the influx. We have comparable buildings now from Haifa down to Tel Aviv on the coast and from Nazareth down to Beersheba inland."

"Why's all this happened in just ten years?" Sari said. She knew. Everyone in the Church knew, but she wanted to hear it from Hebel. She wanted to see it herself. That's why she was here.

Hebel let the car drive itself and swiveled his seat to face her. "Here are the nutshell answers. The discover of the Nephite records. The death of the Old City. We Jews accepting Jesus Christ. The Gathering."

"Dad's talked about the Chabad," Sari said, "and how maybe most of them have accepted the Book of Mormon now because of the finding of the Nephite records. Who are they?"

"They're the largest single movement in all Jewry," Hebel answered. "They're practical, conservative, deeply spiritual, and their influence among most Jews is very significant."

"Why didn't they follow the Book of Mormon twelve years ago when the discovery of all the records was first announced?" Sari asked.

"You will meet Jon Patema tonight. I'll let him tell you about the Chabad and answer your question about the timing of their conversion. Whole Jewish congregations join us now and thousands of other Jewish Christians come into the country weekly. Now, there are over a million here."

"A million in Israel?" Sari's eyes widened.

"Those are actual members of Christian congregations," Hebel said. "There are probably three times that many who I call ATJ's. That's my acronym for Another Testament Jews." He laughed. "Another Testament as in 'Another Testament of Jesus Christ' on the cover of The Book of Mormon. These Jews, because of the finding of the Nephite records, accept the Book of Mormon and recognize Joseph Smith as an Old Testament-like prophet. But they haven't been baptized Christians yet. They meet in their own synagogues and seem to be trying to have the best of both worlds. At least as they see it."

"And they're all ZC's?" Sari asked.

Hebel laughed at the acronym many of those in the Zion Centers called themselves. "Yes. They are Zion Centerists. Full-fledged members of our Zion Center community."

"I don't see how you can take care of all the new people who've come into Israel," Sari exclaimed.

"That's been a challenge, of course," Hebel said. "We have a Zion Council that..."

"I know about that!" Sari interrupted. "We have that where we live. My mom's on it."

"Yes, I know. You're aware then that the Council exists to manage temporal affairs and to help the emigration of those who want to gather to Zion Centers like Jerusalem and where you live. Here, the fates have been with us in a way. When the Old City was destroyed, that changed everything. Temple Mount, with the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa mosque that were sacred to Islam, are no more. So, the primary reason for Palestinian Muslims to gather here was gone and most have left." He shrugged. "And given the abysmal way that many of us Jews have treated them over the years, why would they want to stick around now?"

"That's why there's no longer a West Bank or a Palestinian Authority?" Sari said. "Because they've all moved out?"

"Not all, but the majority. The barrier walls we built back in the early part of this century have all come down, and Israel is whole now." He looked resolutely at Sari. "This is our land. The horrors of ten years ago have brought about that reality."

"Didn't the Muslims have their own name for Temple Mount?" Sari asked.

"They called it Haram esh-Sharif or noble sanctuary. It was the third most holy site in Islam. Now that it has gone, most of the Palestinians here have migrated to Muslim countries like Jordan and especially Saudi Arabia where their most sacred sites still exist."

"How many of them have left Israel?"

"I don't know but probably as many as two million over the last ten years."

"Weren't mostly Palestinians killed when the Old City was destroyed?" Sari asked.

"Yes. Most were Palestinians." Hebel said somberly.

Sari was near tears. "Then they're the ones who really suffered with all of this."

"All of us have suffered," Hebel said defensively. "We lost thousands of years of our precious history. Many of the physical remnants of our culture and the symbols of our very being were obliterated." He softened his tone. "But yes, without question the Palestinians lost the most in terms of lives and homes." His look hardened. "That so many of them have left Israel, though, is their choice. They haven't been forced to go. They have chosen not to be here among those of us they call kafir."

"Kafir?"

"That's their word for non-Muslims, or infidels." Hebel answered.

"What did they do with their homes when they left?" Sari asked. "Who would buy them?"

"Very few owned their homes or land," Hebel said. "That was the same then for most living in the Jerusalem area. Almost all the land in the Old City and surrounding areas was owned by the Greek Orthodox Church and a couple of other Christian churches. In other areas throughout Israel, the government owned most of the land. The land was leased on long term leases to those who occupied it. When the Old City was destroyed and the Palestinians moved out en masse, it was the lease holders that were the overwhelming losers financially. Those leases and the land to which they were attached became practically worthless."

"Nobody owns their own land here?" Sari asked in amazement.

"Not very many did then. Keila and I were fortunate that we did. That has changed. I won't go into the details of the rather complicated transactions, but now most people own the land they live on. As it turns out, the ATJ's own much of what is left of the Old City and the land and buildings throughout Jerusalem."

His gaze went off somewhere. "I suppose this particular fallout from what has happened could be considered something of a silver lining. It has opened a wide door for mass Jewish migration to Israel. The Palestinians and others leaving has left the resources and vacant property here to provide most of our immigrants with both jobs and places to live."

He looked at Sari. "Another thing that's important. Because of this, the Church of Jesus Christ owns, not leases, the land on Mount Scopus where the temple is being built, along with most of the surrounding land on that hill and the area around it."

Sari almost glared at him. "Are you saying it was God's will that all of those thousands of people and children were killed so all this could happen? That God wanted this to happen?" The bite to her voice and the condemnation in her look brought silence.

Hebel and Keila stole a glance, then Hebel spoke. "Legitimate questions, I think." His tone was gentle and caring. "Many have wondered the same thing. Including me. I'm not sure I have the answer for that, but I have an answer that satisfies me." Sari waited expectantly as Hebel cleared his throat and took a drink from the water bottle at the side of his seat.

"There's a difference between what God causes or wants to happen and what he knows will happen," he said. "Did God direct or impress those people to commit this atrocious act? Of course not!"

"Then why didn't God stop it!" Sari demanded.

"Or why didn't He stop the holocaust?" Keila interjected kindly.

"Or the countless unspeakable atrocities that have occurred throughout history," Hebel added. "Look at the world here in our day. Europe. Asia. Africa. Even here in the Middle East and throughout much of the Americas. There seems to be no regard for life at all, if it gets in the way of someone seeking power or wealth." His voice became reflective. "None of this makes sense, of course, without understanding we are eternal beings, and we left a spiritual world to come down to this one." He cocked his head. "I suppose that leaving there could be called a death too, huh? Like we call it death when we leave this temporary world and go back to where we came from."

Sari didn't respond, but he could see, or rather hoped, that she was thinking. He reached over and took her hand. "Here is what I think is eternally important. No external thing, event, or person can in the least harm us permanently. Ever. Because our forever status, our eternal life, is one hundred percent our choice. So, when somebody dies, or whether one leaves this world in a Nazi gas chamber, by a bomb, disease, accident, or old age, doesn't matter a whole lot. Only who we choose to be does."

Hebel's face and voice turned somber. "The terrible destruction of our Jerusalem that we witnessed ten years ago was foretold by prophets through the ages and by Jesus Christ Himself." Hebel's eyes were glistening. "They also foresaw that it would be restored as a holy and pure city." He smiled. "That's what's happening now, Sari." He removed his hand from hers, his look solemn. "Be assured though, those who were responsible for this destruction and the pain and anguish and death that we've seen here, will be held eternally accountable."

"Arriving at our destination in thirty seconds," the car's voice interrupted. Hebel turned his seat to face the steering wheel. "My ATJ friends seem to be convinced that what the Church of Jesus Christ is doing on Mount Scopus will be the anticipated Third Temple," Hebel said quietly. "We have about forty-five minutes before sunset," he continued. "Jon will have time to take us around a bit while it is still light."

The car pulled onto a short, landscaped road that led to a large iron gate set into a twelve-foot-high, three-foot thick Jerusalem limestone wall. Hebel stopped the car aside a monitoring post and gazed at the lens it contained. In a few seconds, a deep voice from somewhere said, "Welcome, Mr. Leser." The gate slid into the wall.

Sari hardly recognized anything from what had been the BYU Jerusalem Center 10 years before. She could tell the building she saw now had been the Jerusalem Center, but the whole front part had been expanded on the east and west, and another story had been added. The building still cascaded down the hill but had taken on a simple elegance that wasn't there before. She also noticed that a massive wall now

surrounded the whole area including the lush gardens and reflective pools that were on the grounds.

"Wow! This is a temple now?" she whispered.

"It is a temple now," Hebel said. "Or almost. They're working on the inside, and it should be completed and dedicated in about six months."

"It's huge! How big is it?"

"I'll let Jon tell you all about that."

"Why is there such a big wall around everything?" Sari said.

"Looks and security," Hebel replied. "All our temples, of course, have fences or walls around them and their grounds. In Jerusalem, we have some aggressive people who aren't happy with what we're doing here. We have to be careful."

They drove another 200 feet into a large parking lot. Autonomous trucks and robotic construction equipment were in the far corner. The parking lot was dotted with limestone planters and nearly surrounded by aesthetically trimmed stands of cypress, palm, and olive trees. They parked next to a broad walkway with an arched limestone cover leading through an extensive rose garden to large cut-glass doors at the building's entrance. The 150-foot walk was pleasant. The temperature was in the high 70's and the humidity not quite balmy. The air was clear and the sky nearly cloudless. The sun was sinking low over what used to be the Old City.

Sari stopped, shaded her eyes with her hand, and squinted toward the southwest. Where they stood was over 200 feet higher than where Temple Mount used to be, and she remembered being able to see the Dome of the Rock and the wall surrounding the Old City from where they were. But there was no Dome of the Rock now. No Temple Mount. No walled city. Newer homes were scattered over where they had been, and construction was going on all around.

Hebel put his hand on her shoulder. "It's good you didn't see this after the missile struck. I think it remarkable how my country has rebounded from such a catastrophe." He glanced toward where the sun was setting. "But, thanks to God, we always have."

"Hebel, Keila," a man called as he stepped out the door of the building. His shock of grey-tinged white hair, mustache, and portly build were unremarkable. His face, though, seemed to shoot out light that embraced the three of them as they approached him. He greeted them warmly and clasped Sari's hand with both of his.

"You must be Sari," he said. "I'm Jon Patema. Please call me Jon."

Sari stared at him. His face was ordinary in its look, but there was something about him that wasn't ordinary at all. She could not define what. She tried to place him somewhere age-wise. He didn't look as old as Hebel, yet she felt he was much older. She realized she was gawking and turned away.

He smiled. "Thank you for coming. I've heard lots about you." Sari glanced back, a blush forming. "All good," he chuckled. "Hebel said you would like to see how our temple is coming. It will be dark soon, so let's take a few minutes and walk down the hill a little so you can get an idea what we're doing. Then we'll go inside."

"Jon is the temporal administrator in the Jerusalem Zion Center and heads the Zion Council," Hebel said. "He oversees all of the building projects, including chapels and temples. This temple, of course, is the ..." He stopped and looked at Jon.

"The prophesied one," Jon said completing Hebel's sentence.

He led them through more gardens as he explained what they were doing with the temple and its progress. He pointed to a stone trough resembling one where wine had been made anciently by tramping on grapes, and an olive press that produced oil like it was done at Jesus' time. "These were here for use by the students when this was the BYU Jerusalem Center," he said. "They gave them a hands-on..." he smiled, "...and feet's-on feel for how it would have been anciently."

"Are these really what they were like?" Sari asked.

Jon's face took on a momentary far-off look, then he said, "Close enough."

They walked quietly around the grounds, Jon describing various features of the temple. Then Sari asked, "Why is the temple being built up here and not down where Temple Mount used to be and how big is it and why wasn't it destroyed when that bomb hit?" She'd taken the lid off her question box.

"I'll see if I can remember those in that order," Jon said, amused. He motioned for them to sit on a bench. "The two ancient temples built on what used to be Temple Mount were violated repetitively," he continued. "What happened in them, even when they were functioning as the Lord directed, was not according to the higher law. All of that was done away when Jesus Christ came the first time.

"In any case, the space where those temples were, has ceased to be sacred. Perhaps two New Testament statements are applicable here. You've heard these sayings of Jesus' before. 'New wine must be put into new bottles,' and referring to the temple of his day, 'There shall not be left here one stone upon another.' Law of Moses temples would be no more."

He gestured to the imposing building they had been walking around, his face solemn. "This temple...His temple...sits on the north end of the ridge we call the Mount of Olives. At the foot of this sacred rise is the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus Christ wrought his perfect atonement. And from a certain place on this Mount He spoke to His disciples, then ascended into heaven."

For a moment, Jon's eyes were elsewhere, then he turned to Sari and smiled. "This is where the Lord wants His house to be."

All were quiet as they gazed up at the temple. Jon held up two fingers signifying Sari's second question. "Size? The original BYU Center was about 125,000 square feet. We have added nearly another 100,000 square feet to that. This temple, and the one we're building at Independence, Missouri, will be about the same size."

The sun had set, and the crescent moon gave off little light. The lighting around the temple cast it in a golden glow. Jon stood up. "Let's head back to the temple entrance," he said. "We'll go inside for a few minutes." He put his arm through Sari's. "Your third question. When the BYU Center was built, they used premium quality construction. It was designed to survive just about any kind of disaster. They anchored the building to the mountain's bedrock using some four hundred micropiles. Those are high-strength, small diameter steel casings. When the bomb rocked the Old City, this building wasn't going anywhere. Some windows shattered and some walls suffered minor damage from the explosion, but that was all. Thank goodness, no one was hurt."

They walked inside the temple. The entry was a vast room of understated beauty. The floor was a pinkish-cast marble, and the walls were also marble, with teak paneling artistically interspersed. To the left of a grand limestone stairway was a unique fountain with water tumbling down a trellis-like bronze rectangular structure. There was no furniture, as construction was still underway.

Jon pointed to the fountain. "That was here when this was the BYU Center, as was much of the marble and woodwork." His eyebrow raised slightly. "This building seems to have been designed with a temple in mind." He pointed to several upholstered folding chairs. "That's as good as I can offer you to sit on, but I can assure you, when we're ready, the furnishings will be equal to their surroundings."

They sat for a minute looking at and listening to the fountain. "Where does all the water come from?" Sari asked. "Outside, when we were walking around, it almost looked like it was coming from underneath the temple."

Jon smiled. "Yes. Just like it's supposed to." He didn't elaborate on what he meant but went on. "The underground water here is plentiful. We dug a number of wells to supply

our culinary and utility needs, as well as to irrigate our gardens and provide water displays on our grounds.”

Hebel looked at his watch. It was nearly nine o'clock. “Sari had a few other questions I felt you could best answer,” Hebel said. “She would like to know a little bit more about the Chabad and why it took so long after the discovery of the Nephite records was announced for the Jewish conversion rate to arrive at the level it is now.”

He glanced at Sari. “By the way, for several years, Jon led Chabad-Lubavitch. He was the first rebbe they had had in decades and the final one. He’s affectionately known throughout Jewry as ‘Acheron Rebbe—meaning, Last Rabbi.”

“I was with Chabad Lubavitch for about fifteen years,’ Jon began. “They have been kind to me. The word, Chabad, is an acronym of three Hebrew words meaning wisdom, comprehension, and knowledge. Their purpose is to help people govern themselves, including what they do, say, and think, in an ever more refined, perfect way. Their focus is on God, his creations, and his purpose for us.

“The movement began several centuries ago in a town in White Russia called Lubavitch. That word, by the way, means ‘city of brotherly love.’ While they have been considered Orthodox and Hasidic in their worship and practices in the past, over the years their unique uncondemning outreach to all Jews has made them, by far, the largest and most influential movement in all of Jewry.”

Jon motioned toward Hebel. “Hebel and I have been in close communication since the announcement of the Nephite records find. We both saw in that discovery that God was speaking to our people in our day. At my urging, most of the Chabad hierarchy, as well as many other Jews, began to closely study all that that discovery held and meant. Particularly what has been referred to as the Brass Plates. I also encouraged the study of The Book of Mormon, which is, of course, the condensed version of the history and information contained in much of the Nephite records.

“This was not an unusual assignment by me, as Chabad teachings, particularly as they developed over the years, mirrored closely those included in Nephite records.” The corner of his mouth turned up drolly. “After all, according to The Book of Mormon itself, it was ‘written to Jew as well as Gentile.”

His eyes held Sari’s. “Why did it take our people as long as it did to start coming into the fold, as such?” His eyes sparkled. “Well, that’s a Jew for you. Thousands of years have taught us to be patient and to not rush to judgment. Some though might say we’re stubborn. Both descriptions are likely accurate.

“The few years after the Nephite records came on the scene was a settling time for the Jews as a people. A time to mull over what we now had. The destruction of the

Old City was the wakeup call. Perhaps my decision then, and certainly Hebel's decision as Chief Rabbi of Israel, to announce our intended affiliation with the Church of Jesus Christ helped spur what we've seen among our people since the Old City catastrophe."

He stopped speaking and silently listened to the fountain's soothing sound for a moment, then continued. "In any case, it has been the Chabad who have led and continue to lead the flow to Jesus Christ. While many of our people are what Hebel calls the ATJs, their hearts are linked to ours, and the time isn't far off when they'll take the step that over a million of our Jewish brothers and sisters, have already taken and become members of the Church of Jesus Christ." He signaled to Hebel that he was through speaking.

"Thank you, Jon," Hebel said. "I think it's time to go."

They walked to the entrance, and Jon opened the door. He looked up and stopped abruptly. Mesmerized, he motioned for the rest to see what he saw. The sky was ablaze with what appeared to be stars falling from the heavens. Sari's mouth fell open. "What...what is it?" she stammered.

"A meteor storm!" Keila declared as she stood in awe. "It must be! But not like anything I've ever..." She stopped speaking and stared.

Thousands of brief bright streaks along random vectors had turned the whole sky into a latticework of light.

An inscrutable look settled on Jon's face as he whispered, "It has begun."

### **Independence Missouri Temple & Zion Center**

#### ***Characters:***

**Tish**—member of Independence Zion Council

**Jonas Silver**—Chairman of Independence Zion Council

Tish Schaeffer gazed around the plush paneled conference room she was sitting in. The building itself had been constructed by a small church many years before. They called it a temple, but it was nothing like the temples Tish was familiar with. The Church of Jesus Christ had quietly bought this building and over time, they also purchased thousands of acres in the Independence, Missouri area.

They began massive construction here within a year after the United States was dissolved ten years ago. This building, where Tish and the Zion Council were meeting, had been remodeled extensively into offices and assembly areas. The configuration of desks in the Council room was like what Tish remembered the U.S. Senate chamber

to be...when there was a U.S. Senate. Each desk had an unobstructed view of the entire room with a microphone and a light that could be turned on to signal that the councilor sitting there wished to speak.

Like everyone else on the Council, Tish's eyes were often drawn to the floor to ceiling windows that occupied the wall behind the chairman's desk. They were nearly 20 feet tall and the extraordinary temple that was next to this building and under construction, was in full view. When the Council was in session, a drape raised out of the floor to give them privacy from onlookers below and keep members from being distracted by the view. This temple and its sister temple on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem were looked upon as remarkable fulfillments of prophecy.

Tish was only semi-listening to the discussion among the 43 members of the 50-member Independence Zion Center Council who were in attendance today. Tish turned her mind back to the meeting. It had been going on for nearly a half hour without getting to the agenda. Last night's meteor storm was on everyone's mind. The talk had moved from quoting last-day scriptures to conjecturing where this surprise phenomenon came from.

Jonas Silver looked at the clock on his podium. "Let's get to our agenda," he said. His stern drawn face was light in complexion and deep lines were embedded on his forehead. He rarely smiled, but his luminous hazel eyes seemed to say, "I'm interested in you." Tish was enthralled with his mind. He could talk knowledgeably about everything from irrigation to Shakespeare to quantum mechanics. Yet he was humbly self-effacing and quiet.

As chairman of this Zion Council, he oversaw all temporal matters of the Zion Center in western Missouri and was responsible for the smooth transitioning of the masses that had flooded into the area over the last several years. He was also CEO of Zion Digital Communication (ZDC), the Zion Centers' global quantum internet and machine learning center.

Neither Tish nor anyone she was acquainted with knew much about his background, only that he was an organizational and technical genius. He had been a key player in setting up the Zion Center's exclusive and ultra-secure 7G wireless network that linked all Zion Centers throughout the world. Tish knew little about how it worked, only that it was based on quantum entanglement and impervious to anything, including a cyberattack or a massive solar eruption. That network had created a literal nation by embracing all the far-flung Zion Centers through its instantaneous communication capability.

She looked around the room, her mind drifting again. The Zion Council? A Zion Center? Twelve years ago, when the discovery of the Nephite records was announced,

such things weren't on anyone's mind. Not on hers anyway. She figuratively shook her head at all that had happened since. The United States dissolved. She and Ariel married. Jerusalem destroyed. The whole world in upheaval. And...The Gathering. The separation movement broke like a tsunami across the planet. Behemoth nations like China and India had fractured into almost unrecognizable fragments, and virtually every country with a population over 40 or 50 million had divided into smaller principalities.

"As we look at the coming election in October, precedence, of course, is on our side." Jonas said. His mention of election brought Tish back to the meeting. She needed to pay attention. She was on the agenda. Jonas continued. "Three years ago, Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire combined together to form their own nation and last year another country was carved out of the former California. That's four entities created out of that original state. What is..."

"The Nephite records!" The thought popped into Tish's mind. She let it stay. Jonas wasn't ready to call on her yet. The Nephite records had absorbed her mind almost constantly for 12 years. And why not? They had affected just about everything. But they were just the catalyst. A goad. They weren't the cause of anything. They just facilitated people in seeing what they really wanted to do and think. Who they really wanted to be.

She knew what triggered the devastating changes in the world over the last 10 years. Who and what people had chosen to become was the cause. Tribalism and identity politics and divisiveness were the cause. The refusal of the world to be moral was the cause. Radical secularism and the rejection of anything associated with the Divine, despite the unquestioned evidence of the Nephite records that Jesus Christ was real, was the cause.

Her tight smile reflected the irony of it all. The Nephite records had nudged the world to separate into clusters of like-minded people with their beliefs or disbeliefs and their moral or decadent thoughts and lifestyles. And that separation opened the door for the temporal gathering of members of the Church of Jesus Christ along with faithful Christians and other good people who espoused virtue and goodness and peace. Zion Centers around the world, with temples at their core, were the result.

"I don't know how many more settlers we'll see come into the Independence area," Jonas said. That caught Tish's attention again. "As you know," he continued, "the flow here, as well as into all Zion Centers, except Jerusalem, has slowed significantly."

Tish looked at the faces around the room. She marveled at the mix the Council represented. There was Becca Stevens, a Seventh-day Adventist pastor. Marilee Hunter, a Reformed Baptist. And Jesse Atwood, a Catholic lay minister. She smiled as

she eyed Chris Thurgood. He claimed to be an on-the-fence agnostic. Tish had told him he was just saying the same thing twice.

His response was a smile with his patented mischievous look. "I hope you Christians are right," he said, "and you'll pull us hangers-on along with you. I'm counting on it, so don't let me down!"

Tish was glad these good people wanted to attach themselves to a Zion Center. They were welcome.

A Councilman turned on his light to speak, and Jonas acknowledged him. "Jonas, what are the latest population figures for our area here?" he asked.

"We're just under six million," Jonas answered. "That's thirty percent more than what it was five years ago." He looked at each of those on the Council and smiled a rare Jonas smile. "And we are most grateful to have so many of our friends with us."

There were good reasons for all peace-loving people to want to live near or in a Center. Centers were literally sanctuaries from the turmoil, violence, and amorality that defined most of the rest of the world. ZC's were increasingly isolated from those around them. While often ridiculed by many of those outside, they were also seen as neutral entities. Productive forces that supplied important, quality goods and services at fair prices to those not affiliated with the Centers. So far, they had been left alone.

Jonas looked at Tish. "Your report please, Tish."

She unfolded her phone's screen to turn it into a pad, then tapped an icon. "I've just sent it to everyone," she said. "I'll summarize it now and answer any questions."

Each month, Tish, under assignment from the Council, conducted a 500-respondent poll among registered voters in the 23 counties forming the west-northwest third of Missouri. "The vote for our cessation from the Republic of Missouri, of course, will be held in two months," Tish said after giving Council members time to look at what she sent. "If that election were held today, the vote among registered voters for forming our own country of Independence, would be 77% for, 15% against, and 8% undecided. There is a 95% probability that the margin of error here is plus or minus 4%. There has been no substantive change since we began these polls in February. Ninety-seven percent of all respondents were knowledgeable of the proposed Independence constitution, its articles, and the mandating of the Zion Council to be its governing body.

"As a reminder, under the Missouri constitution, any contiguous geographic area within the country having at least two million population may secede if at least 60% of all registered voters residing in that area vote for that cessation in a general election." Tish paused as she gazed around the room. "Since virtually every registered voter will

vote in this election, it would appear that this Council will be governing our own country come October."

To live in a Zion Center, everyone, contractually agreed to abide by the standards of the Church of Jesus Christ. The Zion civil tax was 10% of income. There were no other taxes. One could leave a Zion Center at any time, but they were contractually required to sell the property they owned within Zion Center jurisdiction to the Zion Council. They were guaranteed a fair market price. Those who violated Zion Center standards could be expelled from the Center, and the property they owned within the Center would be bought by the Council at a fair market price.

There was harmony and peace in Zion Centers because Jesus Christ was the focus.

## THE CATAclySMIC DEVASTATION

I believe the catastrophic destruction that will take place just prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ will be worldwide and will follow the pattern of “natural” forces that destroyed much of the Nephite and Lamanite nations prior to Christ appearing as reported in *The Book of Mormon*. I believe that destruction will be selective and those in Zion centers will generally be protected. The earth is to be cleansed of those who choose to sin with full knowledge against the greater truth so that the prophesied righteous millennial era can be introduced.<sup>36</sup>

The following is an edited account in *The Course of Fate* describing what that destruction might be like.

In our outer planetary system, tens-of-thousands of huge asteroid-comets, called centaurs, cross the trails of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune in unpredictable orbits. These massive bodies range in size up to more than 100 miles in diameter. Just one has a greater mass than all Earth-crossing asteroids that have ever been seen or accounted for.

Seven years ago, a 53-mile diameter centaur was deflected by the planetary gravitational fields of the giant planets to the inner solar system on a path that would cross earth's orbit. Over time, it disintegrated into pieces ranging in size from dust to a few miles across. Earth would collide with some of those fragments.

On that critical day, a directive was sent by Zion Center chairmen to all residents of Zion Centers throughout the world.

*If you are not at home now or in a secure location with provisions to last a few days, go at once to one and stay inside. You have no need to fear. You are safe. We are prepared.'*

A centaur fragment, just over two miles in diameter, smashed into the Pacific Ocean 190 miles off the coast of California, approximately 220 miles southwest of San Francisco, and 340 miles northwest of Los Angeles. A crater over 30 miles wide opened in the water and six cubic miles of water were vaporized. Within two seconds, a fireball some 70 miles across was seen by those on the coast and for 14 minutes its radiation baked them. Houses were set on fire, deciduous trees and grass ignited, and people died with third degree burns.

---

<sup>36</sup> See 3 Nephi 7, 8, 9 for details about what possibly may transpire. See also Joseph Smith Matthew 24, 3 Nephi 25, and Doctrine and Covenants 45:16-75.

Just over a minute after impact, there was a great seismic shaking, that would have registered 8.9 on the Richter scale, rocking skyscrapers and collapsing ordinary buildings and structures along California's coast. The jolt ripped into the San Andreas, Hayward, and other faults, and spawned a domino series of major and great earthquakes up and down the state and into Oregon and Washington.

Five minutes later, three inches of fine dust from the impact covered the coast and into the interior, blackening the sky and making unprotected breathing impossible.

In just under 20 minutes, an air blast hit up and down the coast with wind velocities approaching 700 mph. The Bay Bridge and Golden Gate Bridge, already damaged by the quakes, swung radically, and collapsed. Skyscrapers were snapped. Wood frame buildings were no more. Ninety percent of all trees were blown down.

Forty-five minutes after impact, a tsunami bolting at over 200 mph hit all along the coast. Waves with heights from 700 to 1,500 feet high rammed to scores of miles inland and killed whatever was left.

With the swarm of earthquakes, the magma within the Lassen, Mount Shasta, Mount Hood, Mount Rainier, and Mount St. Helens volcanoes was pushed to the eruption point. Over the next 10 to 24 hours, they all blew.

As the day wore on, a rain of uncounted pieces of the centaur fell upon all the world, varying in size from less than a foot in diameter to hundreds of yards. They lighted the sky from east to west and north to south creating a visual spectacle, each carrying its own corresponding destruction. Every continent, ocean, and sea was affected, and earthquakes and volcanoes were spawned across the globe. It was as though a fuse had been lit to the Pacific Ring of Fire.

Two more massive fragments struck.

At 5:05 PM, Central Time, a nearly three-mile diameter rock buried itself thousands of feet into the Antarctic ice shelf. Its jolt and explosion activated scores of the sub-continent's volcanoes. Within hours, ash-laden clouds, thousands of feet thick, were blowing around the earth, and the millions of years old ice shelf was transformed to steam and water. Oceans and seas across the world rose precipitously. New York City, London, Tokyo, Shanghai, Rio de Janeiro, Sydney, Rome, Cairo, Mumbai, Lagos, and every city on or near ocean coasts that were at less than 200 feet elevation were submerged.

At 5:42 PM, Central Time, the last of the largest asteroid-comet sections hit five miles north of Vladimir, Russia, 150 miles from Moscow. A one and three-quarter mile diameter rock with seismic force, winds, and radiation, decimated everything within a 200-mile radius. Including Moscow.

Lightning bolts crisscrossed the heavy darkness that hung over the entire earth. Thunder cracked incessantly, threatening to shake apart whatever was still standing.

While not completely unscathed, Zion Centers around the world survived.

## THE COMING OF THE SAVIOR

The second coming of Jesus Christ will be witnessed by all in the world who have survived the cataclysmic destruction preceding it. The following fictional depiction of that event is the last chapter in *The Course of Fate* and follows the pattern of the appearance of Jesus Christ given in *The Book of Mormon*.<sup>37</sup>

Lightning bolts crisscrossed the heavy darkness that hung over the entire earth, and thunder cracked incessantly.

Then, silence.

For three days and three nights there was darkness. Oppressive. Thick. Everywhere. Moans and lamentations filled the earth. But not in Zion Centers. There, expectation had taken hold.

Suddenly, the sky ignited as if on fire. All saw. Trembled with fear. Or wonder. Or both. Then a sound like a trumpet blaring. A sound that enveloped the mountains and the seas and the whole earth.

A voice spoke. Soft. Piercing. Heard by every ear. Understood by every soul. Not a single word to be forgotten. Ever.

"I am that I AM. I have trodden the winepress alone. The great whore of abominations that ruled the earth and prostituted every nation has been bound. Is burned. Is no more."

The voice ceased.

Trumpet-thunder roiled across the earth. Again. Each heard. Felt. Shuddered.

It stopped.

Deathly silence. Absorbing. Terrible.

And REALITY WAS RENT!

The very curtain of heaven opened like the unraveling of a rolled-up scroll. Another dimension. Another universe. And emerging, with a countenance that would shame the sun, was a man in robes dyed in blood.

Every surviving woman, man, and child knew—

IT WAS HIM!

---

<sup>37</sup> See 3 Nephi 8-10

## **Conclusion**

Exactly how everything will happen, we do not know yet. What we do know is it *will* happen. The wheat will be separated from the tares and gathered. The world will suffer unprecedented destruction. And Jesus will come in His glory. Prophecy will be fulfilled.