

11

EXPOSING CHRIST'S ENEMIES

FOR OUR DAY



LESSON
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EXPOSING
CHRIST'S
ENEMIES:
NEPHI'S
SOLUTION
TO THE
DARKNESS

WHY WERE THE NEPHITES DESTROYED?

“And after the Messiah shall come there shall be signs given unto my people of his birth, and also of his death and resurrection; and great and terrible shall that day be unto the **wicked**, for they shall **perish**; and they perish **because they cast out the prophets**, and the **saints**, and stone them, and slay them; wherefore the cry of the blood of the saints shall ascend up to God from the ground against them.”



2 Nephi 26:3

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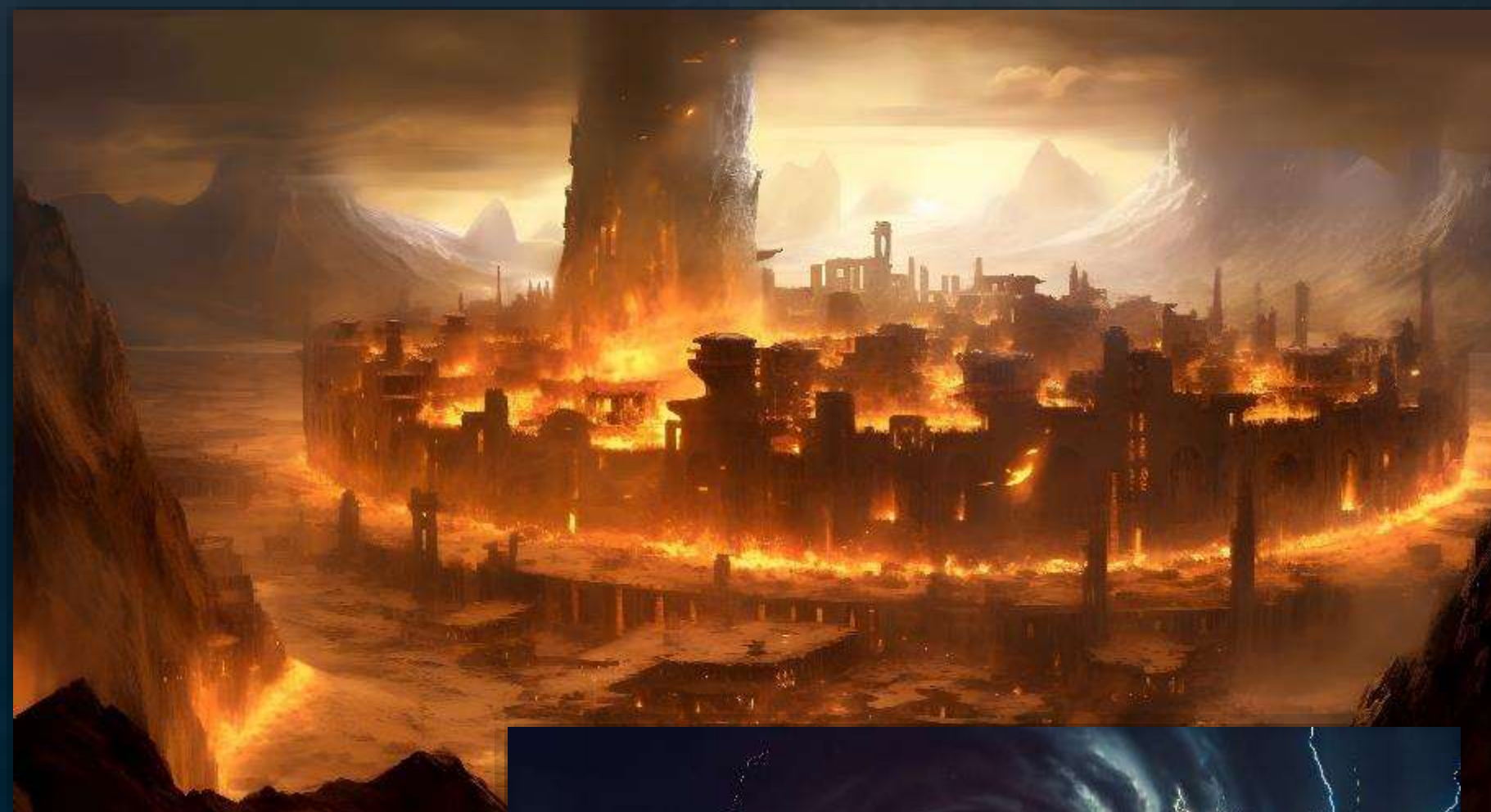
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WHY WERE THE NEPHITES DESTROYED?

“And they that kill the prophets, and the saints, the depths of the earth shall swallow them up, saith the Lord of Hosts; and mountains shall cover them, and whirlwinds shall carry them away, and buildings shall fall upon them and crush them to pieces and grind them to powder.”

2 Nephi 26:5

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NEPHI CRIES FOR HIS CHILDREN

“O the **pain**, and the **anguish** of my soul for the loss of the slain of my people! For I, Nephi, have seen it, and it well nigh **consumeth** me before the presence of the Lord; but I **must cry** unto my God: Thy ways are **just**.”

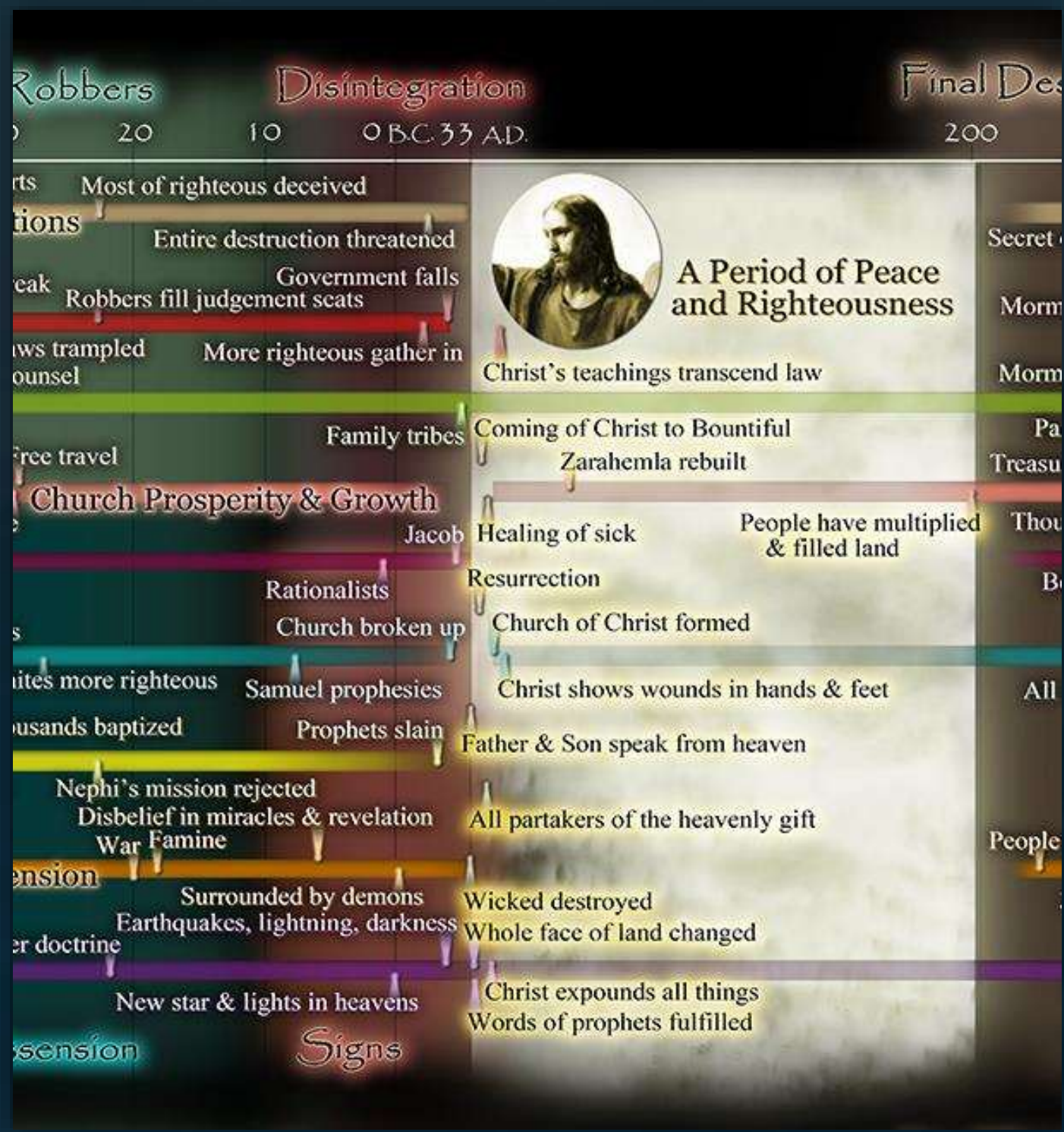
2 Nephi 26:7

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Book of Mormon/Nephite History



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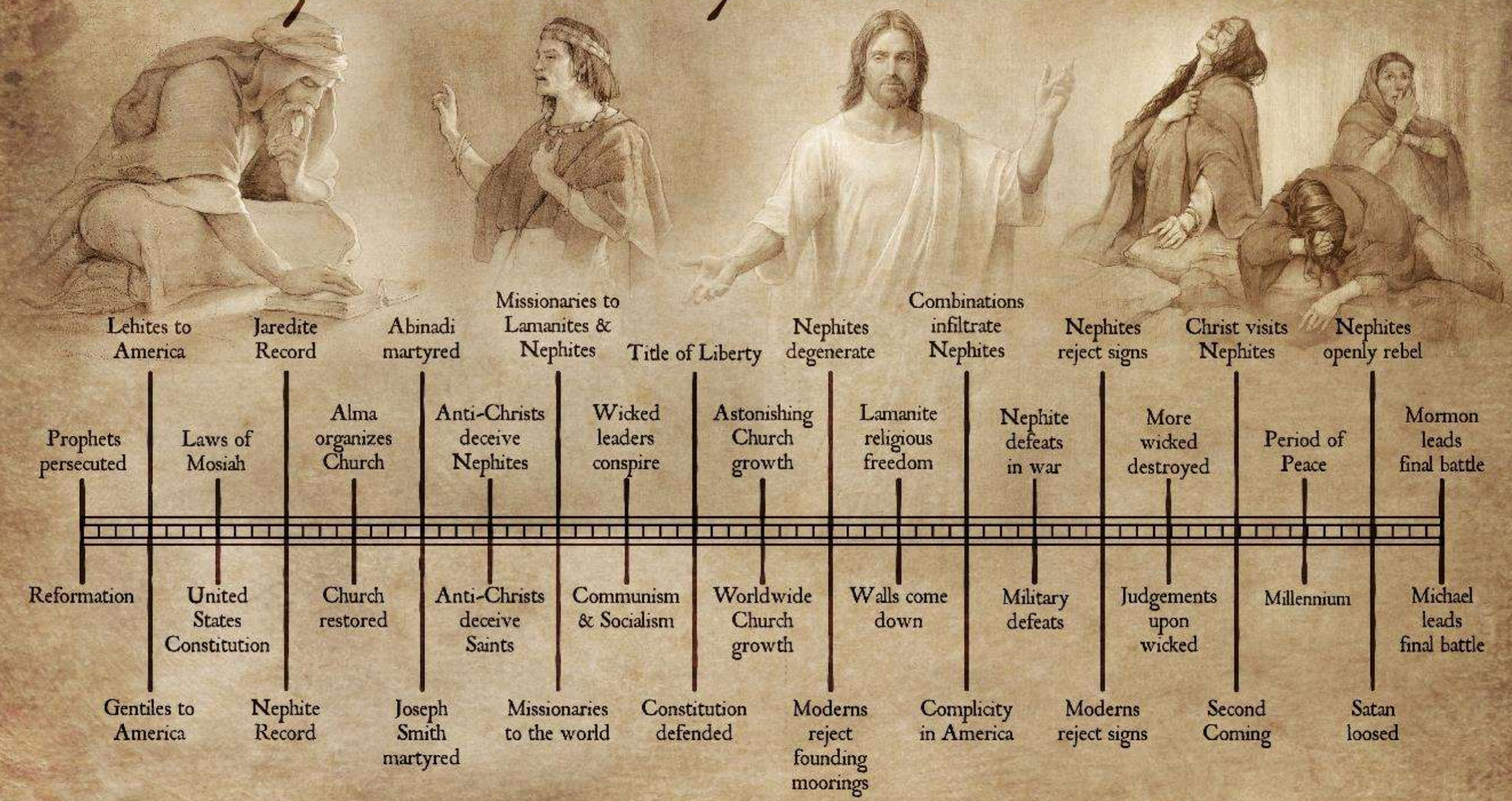
Timelines taken from "For Our Day Model" poster

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Book of Mormon Prophetic Parallels Timeline



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Art by Joseph F. Brickey
www.JosephBrickey.com

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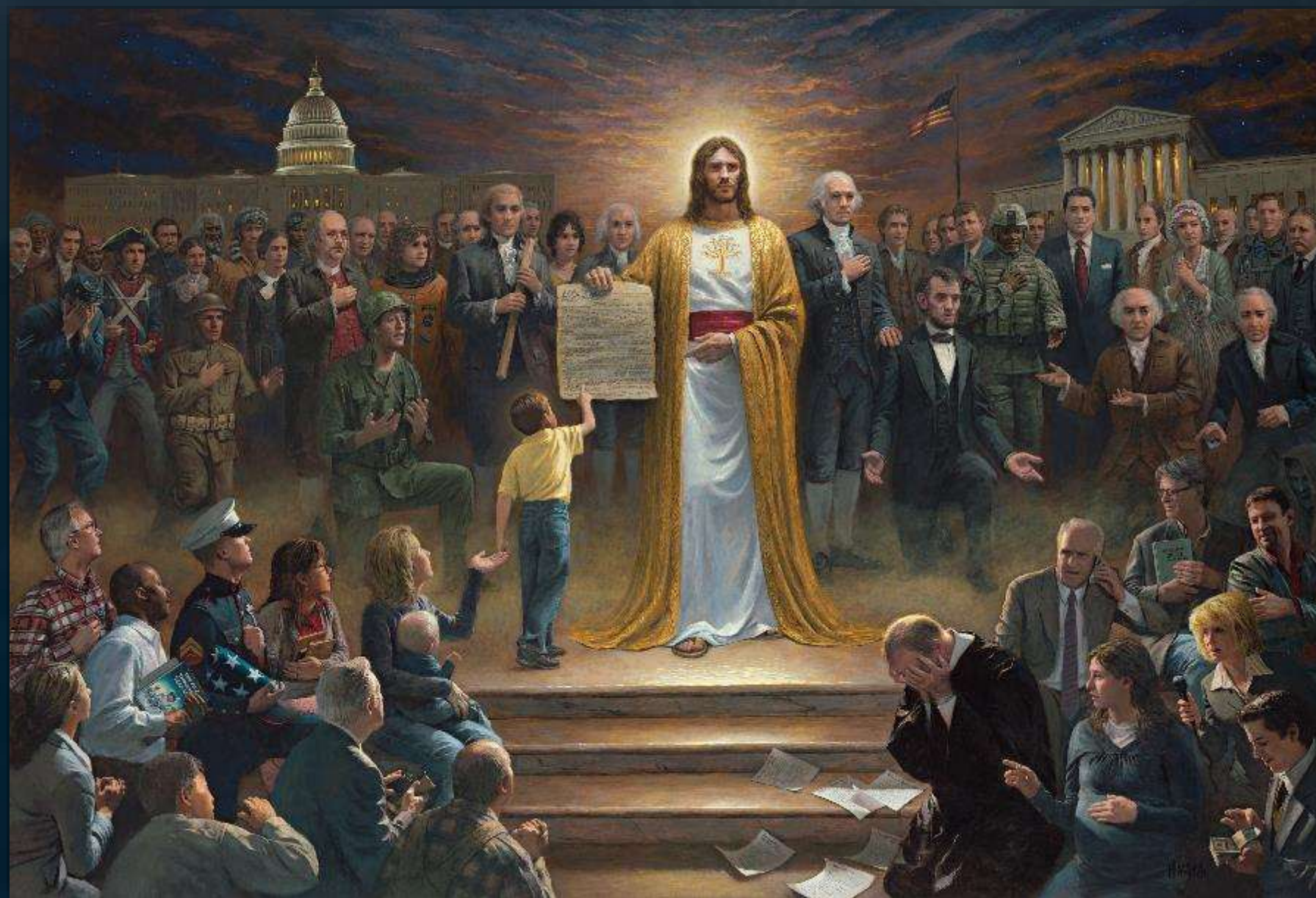
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“THEY SHALL HAVE PEACE”

“But behold, the righteous that hearken unto the words of the prophets, and destroy them not, but **look forward** unto **Christ** with **steadfastness** for the **signs** which are given, notwithstanding all **persecution**—behold, they are they which shall **not perish**. But the Son of Righteousness shall appear unto them; and he shall **heal** them, and they shall have **peace** with him . . .”

2 Nephi 26:8-9

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PROPHETS REJECTED & SEERS COVERED

“For behold, the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of **deep sleep**. For behold, ye have **closed** your **eyes**, and ye have **rejected** the **prophets**; and your rulers, and the **seers** hath he **covered** because of your **iniquity**.”



2 Nephi 27:5

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BOOK OF MORMON AWAKENS CAPTIVE ISRAEL

“And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a **book**, and they shall be the words of them which have **slumbered**. And behold the book shall be **sealed**; and in the book shall be a **revelation** from God, from the **beginning** of the **world** to the **ending** thereof.”

2 Nephi 27:6-7

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THE NEW PROGRESSIVE “NEPHI”

- Nephi was a “**wounded** and **resentful** man who writes two generations later.”
- Nephi **downplays** his father’s “goodness” and “effectiveness as a prophet.”
- “Nephi, with **much to prove** in these first six chapters, **convinces** us that he speaks for deity through his father’s influence, that he **justifies** violence and crime in the name of the Lord . . .”
- “Although there is **much room to doubt** Nephi’s story, his approach to us is straightforward and believable. We can take him seriously, even if we **do not always approve** of his behavior. I do not question Nephi’s story as **generally** true and factual, but I do suggest that he, like every other writer, has **manipulated the record.**”
- “Nephi needs to establish his authority, leaving **no hope** of retrieving the lost group. When Nephi lists his credentials, he writes in **anger** and **sorrow**. . . . He **presents himself as a chosen** one.”
- Nephi “snatched” the story and replaced it with his “**darker** account.”
- “Laman and Lemuel are **not allowed to tell their own tale**. Damned from the beginning by their **arrogant, pen-wielding brother**, they get **no respect**, and considerable **denunciation**. . . . I wish that Nephi had **played fair** with their earlier actions . . . When Nephi speaks to us, he **has to be right.**”
- “They were **not that bad**. But Nephi **makes them look as bad as he can.**”

Excerpts from Claudia Bushman’s essay “I, Nephi” (published in Perspectives on Mormon Theology: Scriptural Theology)

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“WISE” & “LEARNED” PERISH

“Therefore, I will proceed to do a **marvelous work** among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a **wonder**, for the wisdom of their **wise** and **learned** shall **perish**, and the **understanding** of their prudent shall be **hid**.”

2 Nephi 27:26

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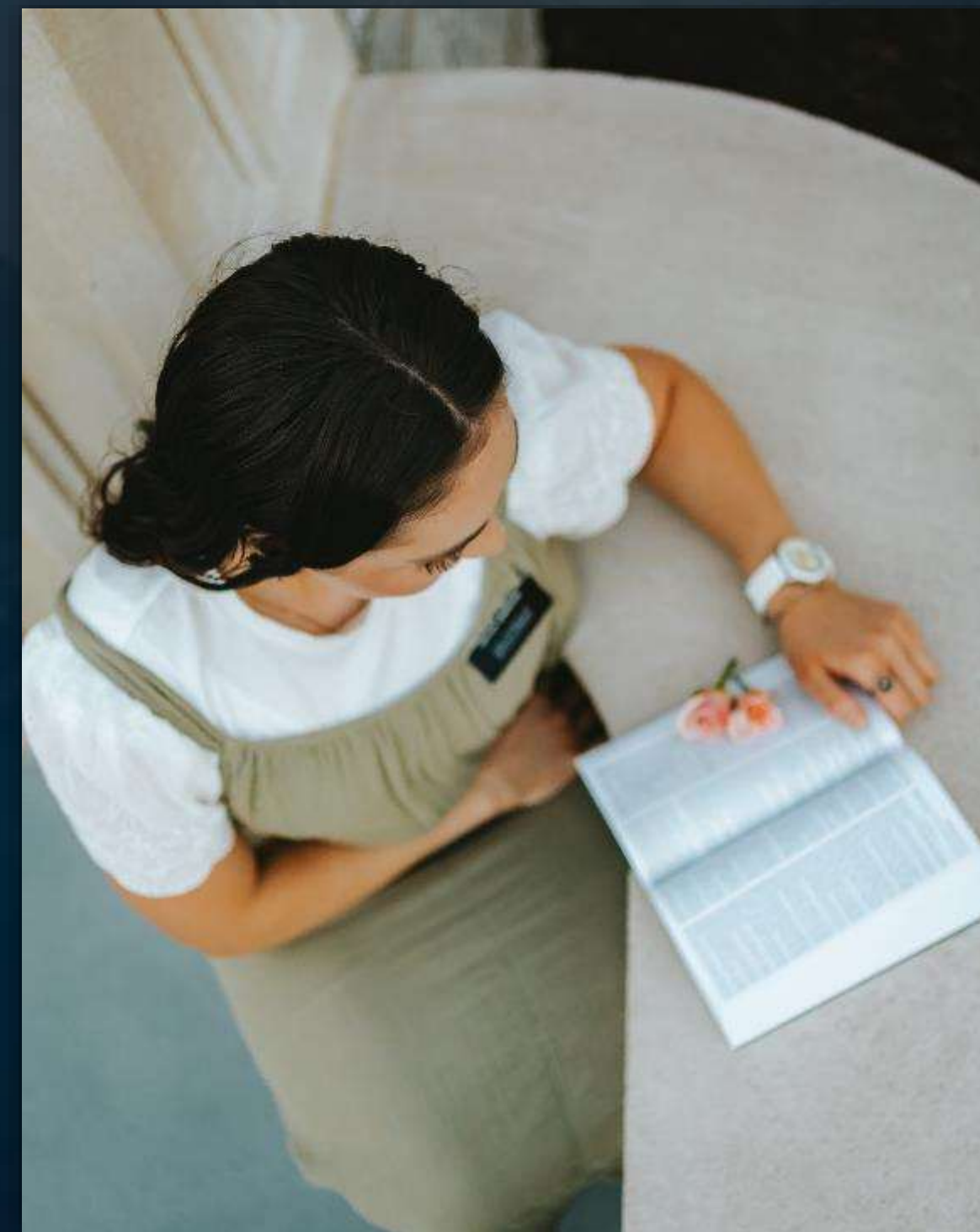
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“OF GREAT WORTH” TO ISRAEL

“And the things which shall be written out of the **book** shall be of **great worth** unto the children of men, and especially unto our seed, which is a **remnant** of the **house of Israel.**”

2 Nephi 28:2

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“ALL GONE ASTRAY”

“... there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, **false and vain and foolish doctrines**, and shall be **puffed** up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to **hide** their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark.

“... Yea, they have **all** gone out of the way; they have become **corrupted**.

“Because of **pride**, and because of **false teachers**, and **false doctrine**, their **churches** have become **corrupted**, and their churches are lifted up; because of pride they are puffed up.

“They **rob** the **poor** because of their fine sanctuaries; they rob the poor because of their fine clothing; and they **persecute** the **meek** and the **poor** in **heart**, because in their pride they are puffed up.

“They wear stiff necks and high heads; yea, and because of **pride**, and wickedness, and abominations, and **whoredoms**, they have **all gone astray** save it be a few, who are the **humble followers** of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in **many instances** they do **err** because they are taught by the **precepts** of **men**.”

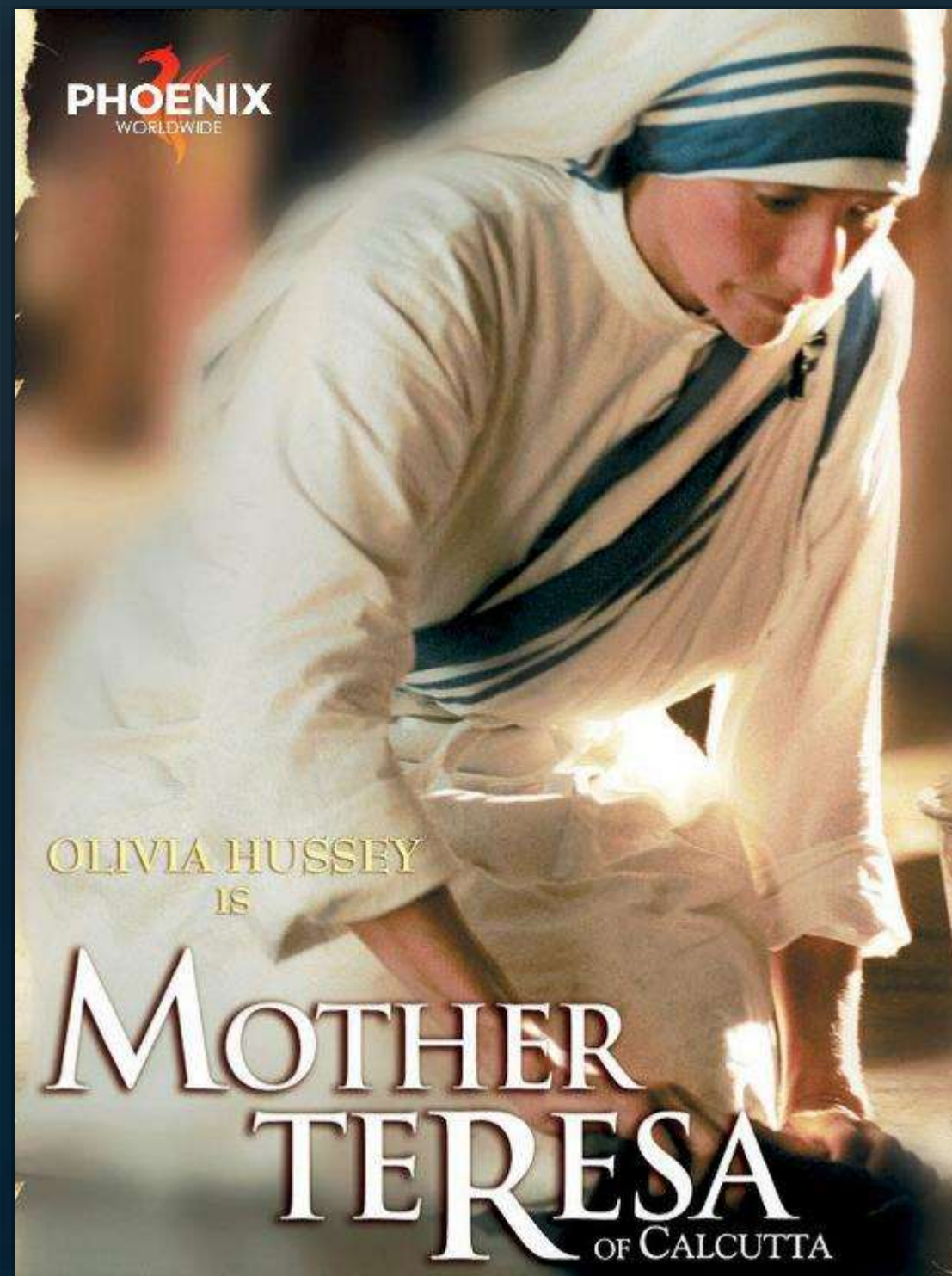
2 Nephi 28:9-14

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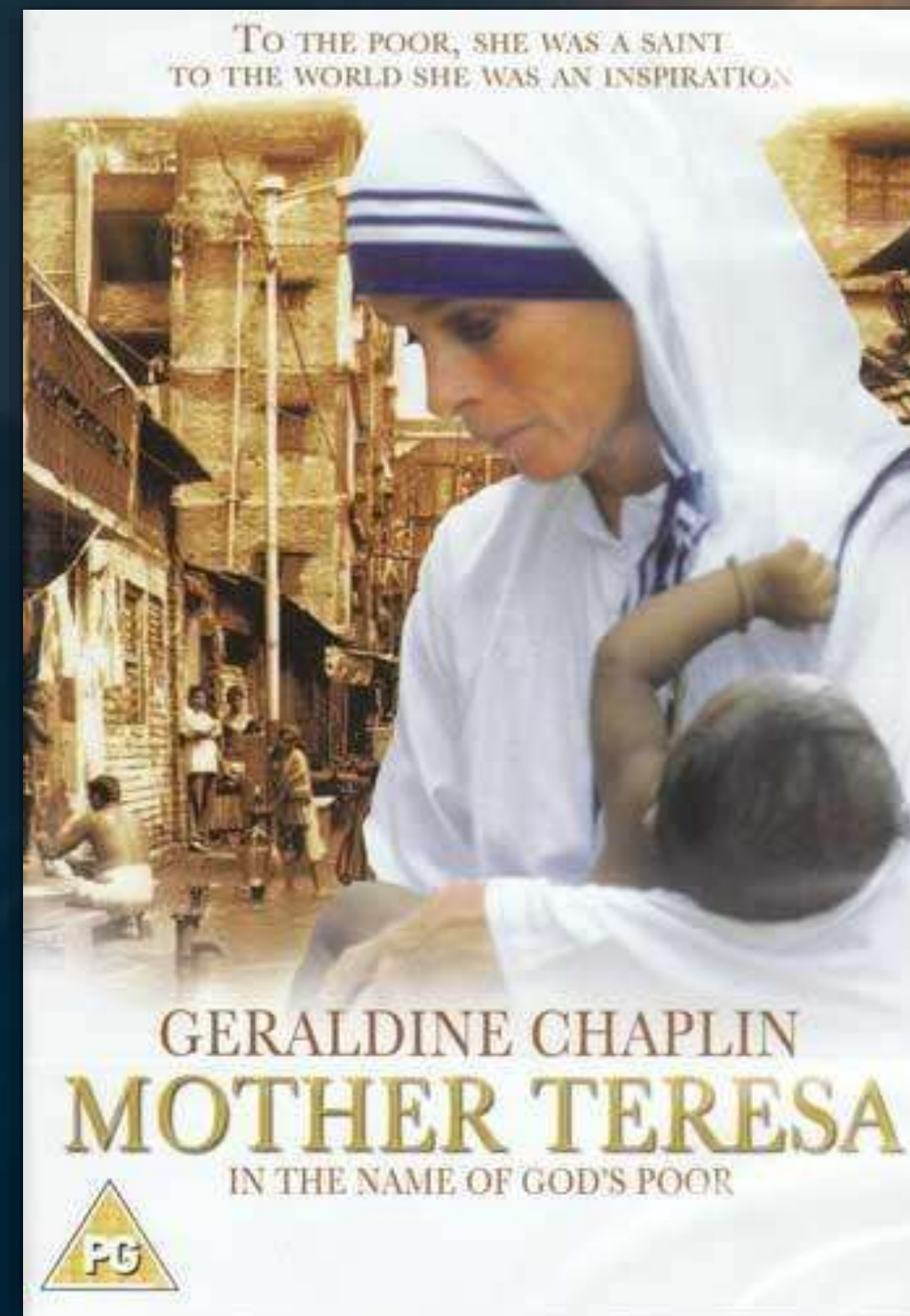
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[Mother Teresa \(2003\)](#)



[Mother Teresa: In the Name of God's Poor \(1997\)](#)

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HOW DO WE END SUFFERING IN THE WORLD?

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“ALL” ARE “CORRUPTED”

“And **my vineyard** [House of Israel in scripture] has become **corrupted every whit**; and there is **none** which doeth good save it be a **few**; and they **err** in **many** instances because of **priestcrafts**, **all** having **corrupt** minds.”

Doctrine and Covenants 33:4

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HOLY CHURCH OF GOD “POLLUTED”

“And I know that ye do walk in the **pride** of your hearts; and there are none save a **few only** who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto **envying**, and **strifes**, and **malice**, and **persecutions**, and all manner of **iniquities**; and your **churches**, yea, **even every one**, have become **polluted** because of the pride of your hearts. For behold, ye do love **money**, and your **substance**, and your fine **apparel**, and the **adorning** of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted. O ye **pollutions**, ye **hypocrites**, ye **teachers**, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, **why have ye polluted the holy church of God?**”

Mormon 8:36-38

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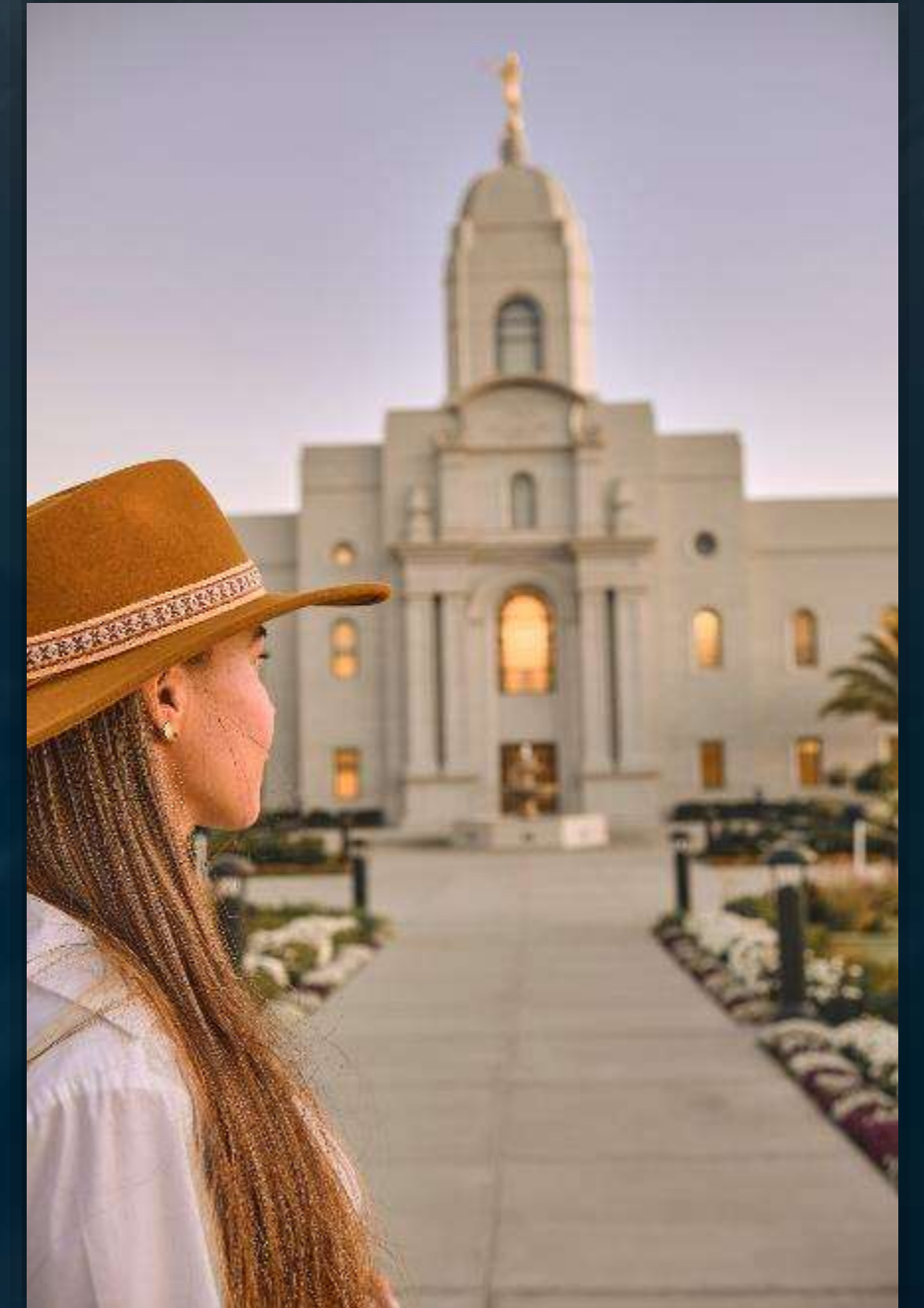


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“FROM WITHIN”

“It is from **within** the Church that the greatest hindrance comes. And so it seems, it has been. Now the question arises, will we **stick** with the **kingdom** and can we **avoid** being **deceived**?”



Ezra Taft Benson, “Be Not Deceived,” General Conference, October 1963

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PHILOSOPHY & PAGANISM AMONG INSTITUTE

“I attended sessions of meetings held in the assembly hall for the **Institute teachers** held in the assembly room on the fourth floor of the Church Office Building. I cannot say that I was very greatly edified. **Too much philosophy** of a **worldly** nature does not seem to **mix** well with the fundamentals of the Gospel. In my opinion many of our **teachers** employed in the Church School System have absorbed too much of the **paganism** of the world, and have accepted too readily the views of **uninspired** educators without regard for the revealed word of God.”



Joseph Fielding Smith, Diary (December 28, 1938), also The Life of Joseph Fielding Smith, pp. 211-212

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ARE WE “TRAVELING THE SAME ROAD” AS EARLY CHRISTIAN “APOSTACY”?

“What to do about it I do not know. It is a problem for the Presidency to consider. It is a very apparent fact that we have traveled **far** and **wide** in the past 20 years [since his father’s death]. What the future will bring I do not know. But if we drift **as far afield** from fundamental things in the next 20 years, **what will be left of the foundation laid by the Prophet Joseph Smith**? It is easy for one who observes to see how the **Apostacy** came about in the Primitive Church of Jesus Christ. **Are we not traveling the same road?”**



Joseph Fielding Smith, Diary (December 28, 1938), also The Life of Joseph Fielding Smith, pp. 211-212

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BLENDING FALSE THEORIES WITH SCRIPTURE

“The more I see of educated men—I mean those who are trained in the doctrines and philosophies now taught in the world, the less regard I have for them. Modern **theories** which are so **popular** today just **do not harmonize** with the Gospel as revealed to the Prophets and it would be amusing if it were not a **tragedy** to see how some of our educated **brethren** attempted to **harmonize** the theories of men with the revealed word of the Lord. Thank the Lord there is still some faith left, and some members who still cherish the word of the Lord and accept the prophets. Surely the world is ripening for **destruction** and Satan has power and dominion over his own. If any are saved surely the Lord must soon come . . .”

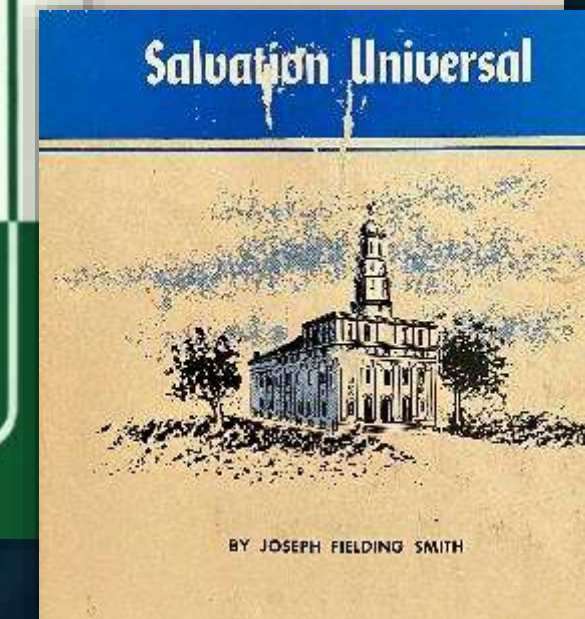
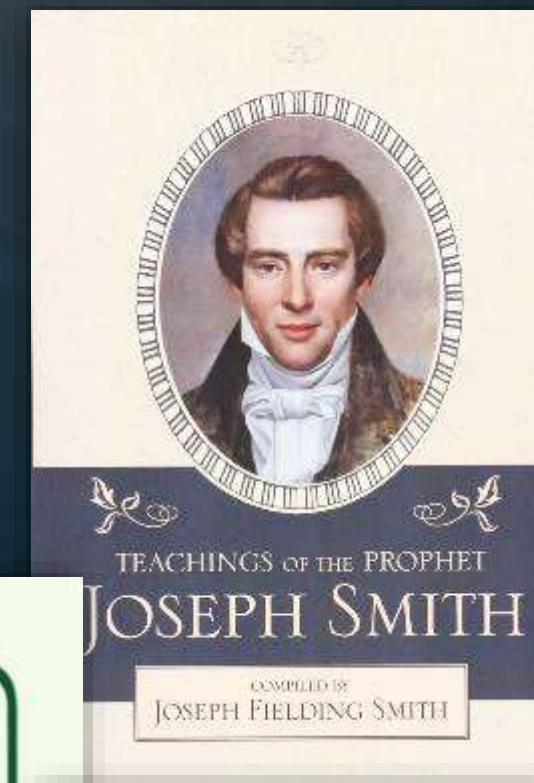
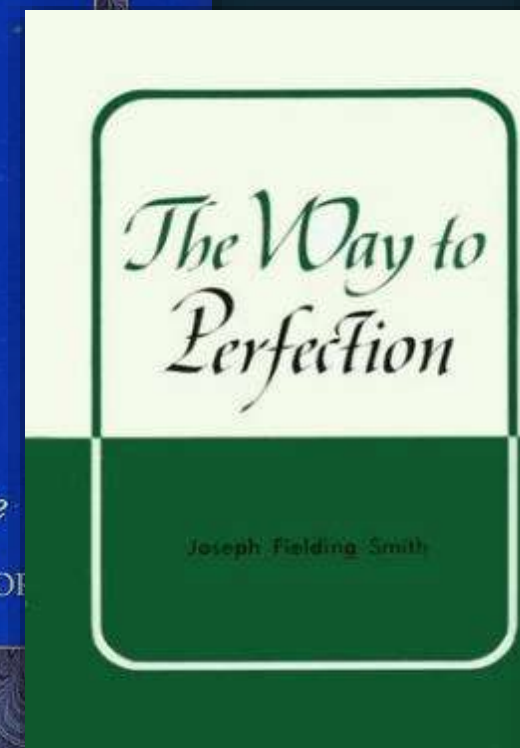
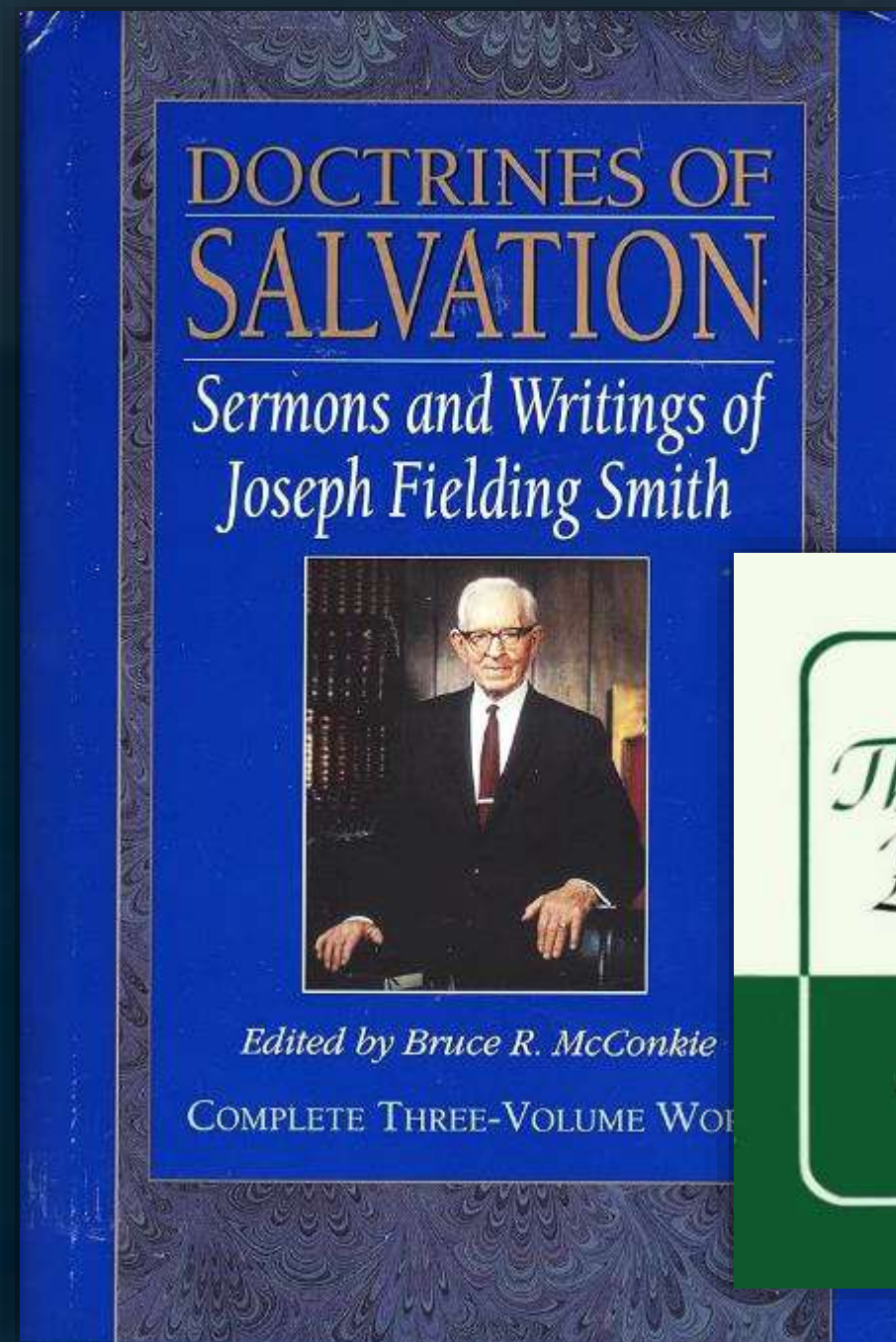
Joseph Fielding Smith, Diary (December 28, 1938), also The Life of Joseph Fielding Smith, pp. 211-212

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JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH'S LEGACY



Read many of Joseph Fielding Smith's books for free at www.JosephSmithFoundation.org/

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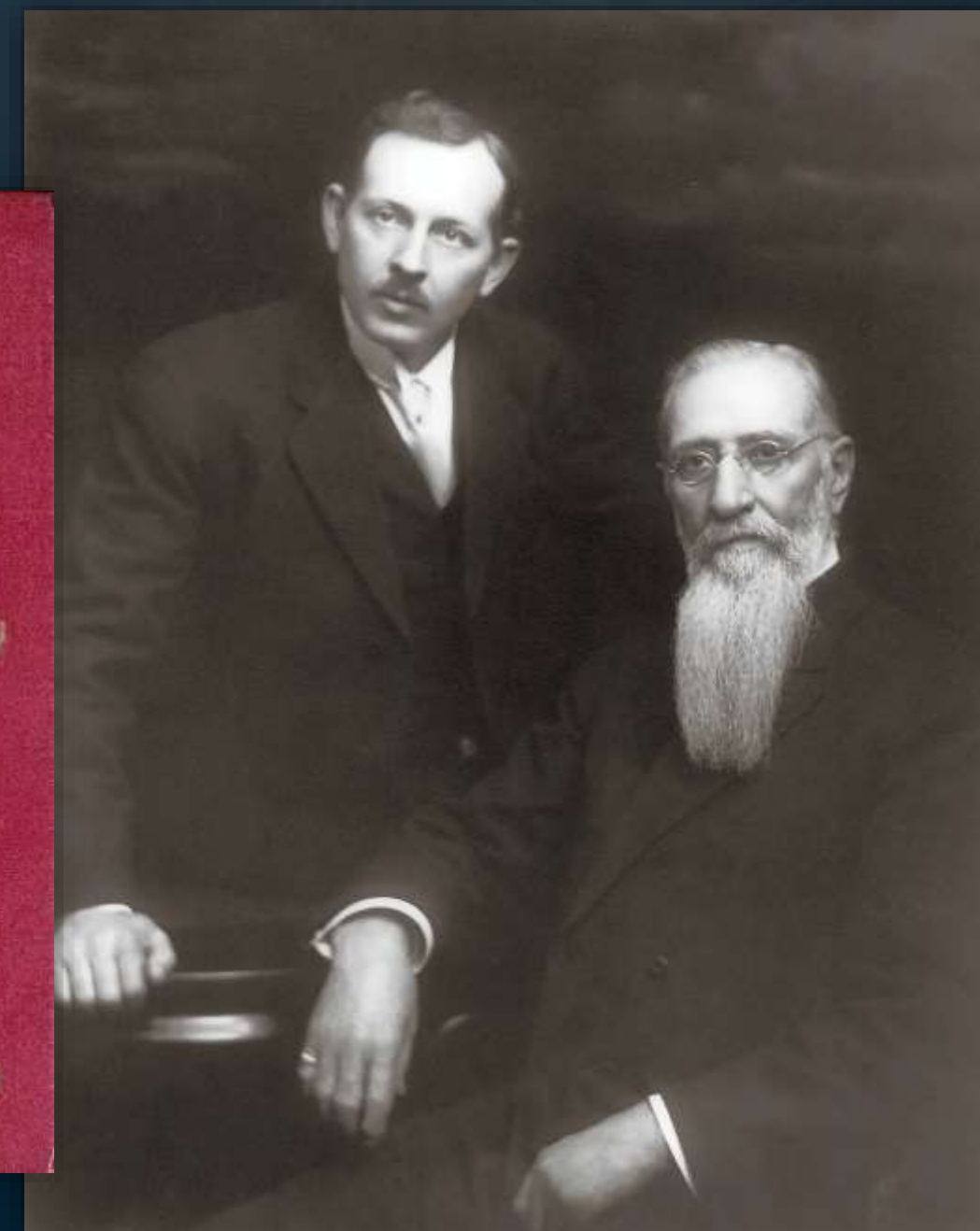
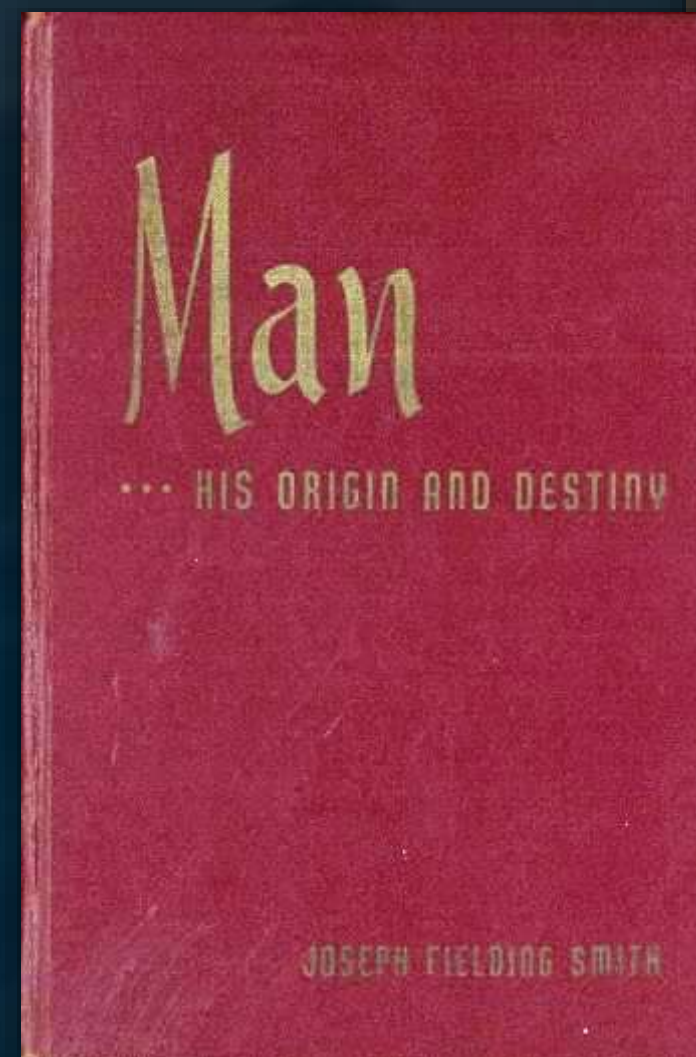
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PRESIDENT EZRA TAFT BENSON DEFENDS JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

“It is also apparent to **all** who **have** the **Spirit** of God in them that Joseph Fielding Smith’s writings will **stand the test of time.**”



Ezra Taft Benson, "God's Hand in Our Nation's History," March 28, 1977, BYU Devotional

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BOOK OF MORMON APOSTATES TODAY

“The type of **apostates** in the Book of Mormon is **similar** to the type we have **today**. God, with his infinite foreknowledge, so **molded** the Book of Mormon that we might see the **error** and know how to **combat** false **educational, political, religious, and philosophical** concepts of our time.”



Ezra Taft Benson, "The Book of Mormon is the Word of God," General Conference, April 1975

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FALSE CHRIST = CONCEPT OR PHILOSOPHY

“The promise of false Christs who will **deceive**, if it were possible, even the very **elect**, who will lead astray those who have made eternal covenant with the Lord, is a far more **subtle** and insidious evil. A false Christ is **not a person** It is any **concept** or **philosophy**”



Bruce R. McConkie, The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man, pp. 47-48

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“HOMES ARE NOT AS STRONG”

“... we have **not** been **using** the **Book of Mormon** as we should. Our **homes** are **not** as **strong** unless we are using it to bring our children to Christ. Our **families** may be **corrupted** by worldly trends and teachings unless we know how to **use** the book to expose and combat the falsehoods in **socialism**, organic **evolution**, **rationalism**, **humanism**, etc.”



Ezra Taft Benson, The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, pp. 60-61

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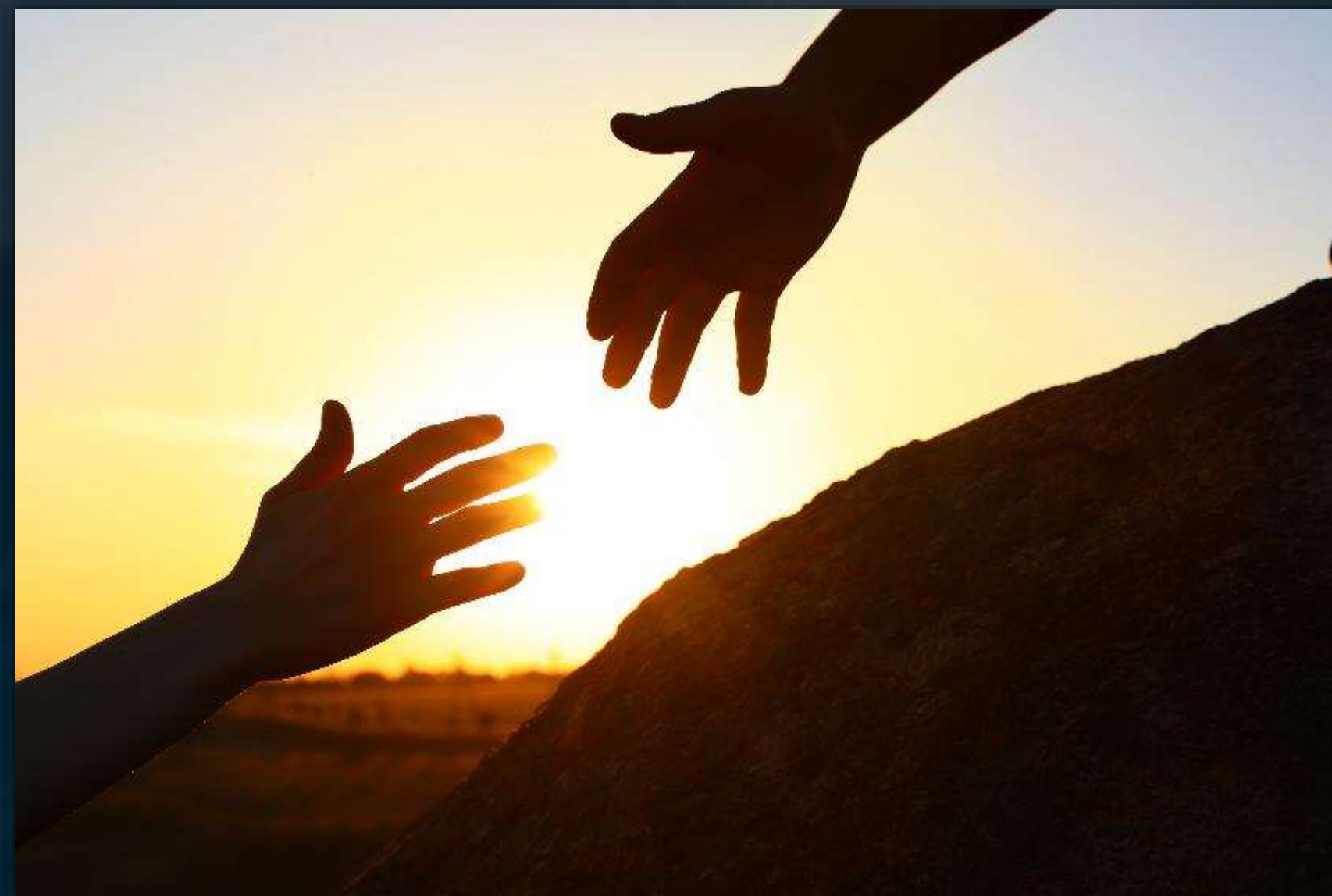
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“MARVELOUS WORK” TO “RECOVER MY PEOPLE”

“... I shall proceed to do a **marvelous work** among them, that I may **remember my covenants** which I have made unto the children of men, that I may set my hand again the second time to **recover my people**, which are of the house of Israel;”

2 Nephi 29:1

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COVENANT PEOPLE = REPENTANT PEOPLE

“And now behold, my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you; for I, Nephi, would not suffer that ye should suppose that ye are more righteous than the Gentiles shall be. For behold, **except** ye shall **keep** the **commandments** of God ye shall all **likewise perish** . . . For behold, I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will **repent are** the **covenant** people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be **cast off**; for the Lord covenanteth with **none** save it be with them that **repent** and **believe** in his Son, who is the Holy One of Israel.

“. . . And the **gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them**; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the **knowledge** of their **fathers**, and also to the knowledge of **Jesus Christ**, which was had among their fathers.

“And then shall they **rejoice**; for they shall know that it is a **blessing** unto them from the hand of God; and **their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes**; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a pure and a delightsome people.”

2 Nephi 30:1-6

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THE TIME IS NOW!

“The time is long **overdue** for a massive **flooding** of the earth with the Book of Mormon for the many reasons which the Lord has given. In this age of the **electronic media** and the **mass distribution** of the **printed** word, God will hold us **accountable** if we do not **now** move the Book of Mormon in a monumental way.

“We have the Book of Mormon, we have the members, we have the missionaries, we have the resources, and the world has the need. **The time is now!**”

*Ezra Taft Benson, “Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon,”
October 1988*

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“FEW MEN . . . HAVE CAUGHT THE VISION”

“My beloved brothers and sisters, we **hardly fathom** the **power** of the Book of Mormon, nor the divine role it **must** play, nor the extent to which it must be moved.

“**Few** men on earth,’ said Elder Bruce R. McConkie, ‘either in or out of the Church, have **caught the vision** of what the Book of Mormon is all about. Few are they among men who know the part it has **played** and **will yet play** in preparing the way for the coming of Him of whom it is a new witness. . . . The Book of Mormon shall so affect men that the **whole earth** and **all** its **peoples** will have been **influenced** and **governed** by it.’ . . .

“Now, my good Saints, we have a great work to perform in a **very short time**. We **must flood** the **earth** with the Book of Mormon—and get **out** from under God’s **condemnation** for having treated it lightly. (See D&C 84:54–58.)”

Ezra Taft Benson, “Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon,” October 1988

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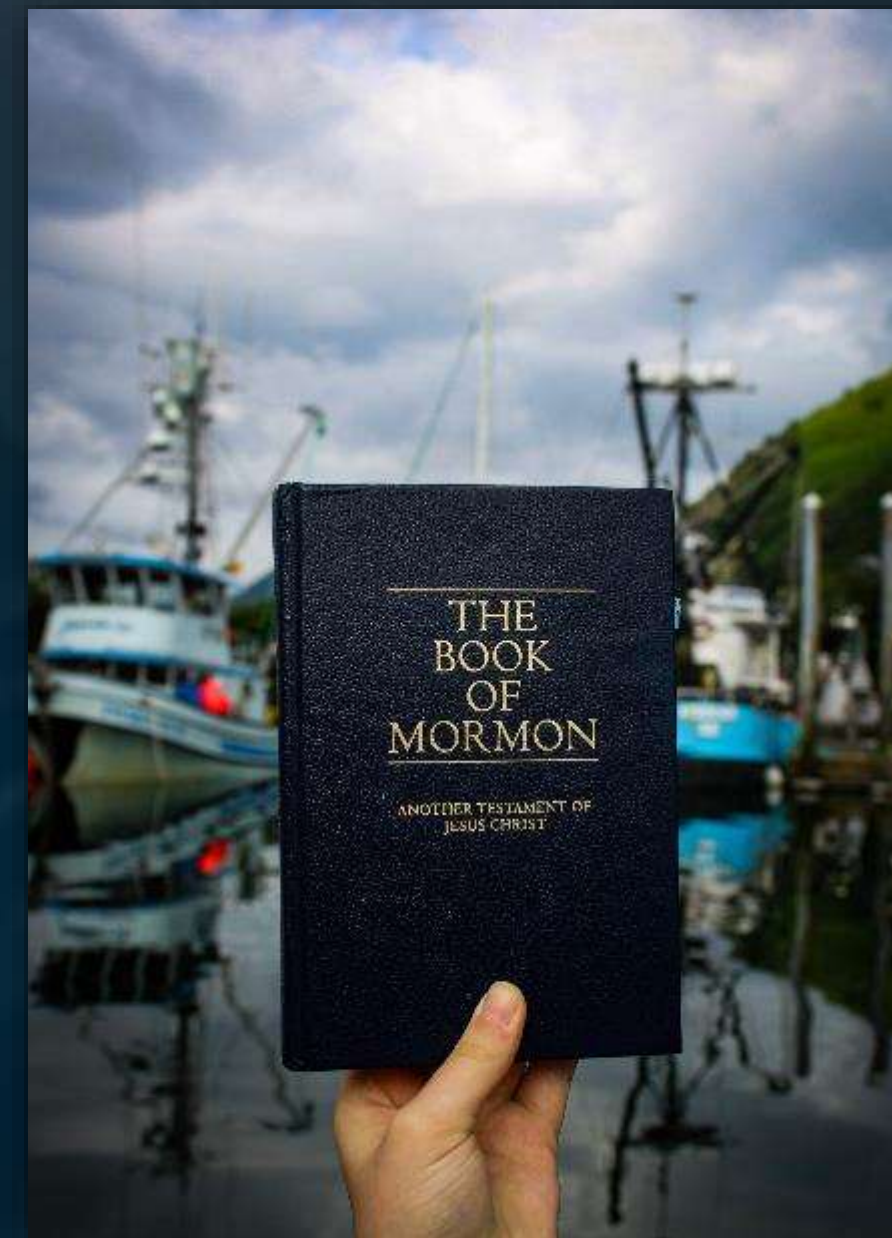
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GOD DECLARES ALL MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE TO MOVE BOOK OF MORMON FORWARD

“... I do not know fully **why God** has **preserved** my **life** to this age, but I do know this: That for the present hour **He has revealed** to me the **absolute need for us to move the Book of Mormon forward** now in a marvelous manner. You **must help** with this burden and with this blessing which He has placed on the **whole Church**, even **all** the children of Zion.”



Ezra Taft Benson, "Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon," October 1988

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