

1/16/20

1 Nephi 8-10

Come and Partake of the Fruit

BoM #3

GT

Vision of Lehi

Called the vision of "Tree of Life"

Lehi never identifies it as such - it is Nephi who names the tree to Laman and Lemuel who don't know its meaning

- Resources

- + BoM video series
- + Tree of Life AR app
- + Temple explanation videos

This is a vision that introduces a narrative. A narrative is a lens through which you can choose to look at the world. Another narrative:

Chessboard → all the world's a chessboard, and instead of 8x8, it has indefinite borders. Some people are kings or queens, and some people are pawns. There are groups of pawns that from time to time band together and say that chess isn't a ~~of~~ sum game or we're not playing chess or otherwise deny the facts, claiming they're all going to become queens when they get to the other side of the board, but the fact is there is no other side of the board. We all have to be out for #1 now, and get the most advantage we can.

These are the two competing narratives of the Book of Mormon.

Questions:

Transcriptions?

David Ralph Seely

"Lehi

Priesthood authority to sacrifice? Authorization to build a separate altar?

- Journal of BoM Studies

"Lehi's Altar and Sacrifice in the Wilderness"

Michael from Sandy - Lehi's Altar 3 days from Jerusalem? ^{how?}

★ Jeromy
Game of chance for getting plates

★ Chad
Nephi Killing Laban

★ Janelle

What's interesting about considering Chapter 8 w/o reading ch. 11 is there is no interpretation. Without Nephi's interp., what you see is a very typical Old Testament allegory. The tree, as Nephi discovered, is the tree of life from the garden of Eden. The other symbols fall in line pretty easily:

waste - ~~tohu~~ tohu vs vohu - empty, and pointless - not fit for habitation

river - Red Sea

tree - tree of life

mist - exile, Egypt

rod - gathering

fruit - redemption from fall, New Jerusalem

given this interpretation, the vision is the tabernacle.

Also - it's interesting that choice seems to be involved in how desirable the fruit is. Lehi sees it as the highest goal, but not so those who fall away or never come to the tree. (2 narratives)

Notice, Christ is not mentioned. Nor does he need to be. The Jews understood that it would be Jehovah who led them back from exile and the Messiah who ruled the New Creation.

This is the contrast between Nephi's vision and Lehi's. Whereas Nephi sees a concrete and Christ-centric allegory, Lehi sees an abstract, Old Testament style metaphor with multiple interpretations, very much centred around the history of the Hebrews. And this is appropriate for the two audiences. Lehi is talking to Laman, Lemuel, Zoram, and the sons of Ishmael - all Jerusalem Jews who would connect with the prospect of choosing Jehovah or facing eternal exile. Nephi is talking to his posterity, including the entire people of the BofM and the modern Saints, all of whom would have a more sophisticated understanding of Christ.

Ch. 9 - an ancient explanation for the refusal of God to allow Joseph Smith to retranslate the lost 116 pages - that refusal can be seen two ways. To Latter-day Saints, it is faith promoting. To non-believers - it seems like a very convenient excuse. Again, like with the tree of life vs. chessboard, choose your narrative.

Ch. 10

- Nephi relates Lehi's prophecies of the scattering and gathering of Israel, and the mortal ministry of the Messiah, in plain language
- v. 6 mankind in a lost and fallen state reveals clearly he will not be a military Messiah, here and in v. 11 (they will kill him)
- scattering and gathering of Lehi's seed via the allegory of the olive tree/orchard, which would later be expanded by his son Jacob
- v. 16 Lehi's family are becoming a tribe of nomads - Lehi's vision makes a lot of sense in this context

Testimony about personal revelation

- had Joseph Smith composed the Book of Mormon, wouldn't it talk more about listening to the prophet as sole authority rather than confirming a prophet's words through revelation?