

Lesson 45: “Never Has Man Believed in Me As Thou Hast” ([Ether 1 – 4](#); [6:1-12](#))

**Purpose:** To help us understand from the example of the brother of Jared how faith can enable us to enter the presence of the Lord.

Gospel Art: [The Brother of Jared Sees the Finger of the Lord](#) (62478; or GAPKit 318)

### 1. The Lord grants the requests of the brother of Jared. ([Ether 1](#))

“The Book of Ether contains Moroni’s abridgment of Ether’s record.” (*Lesson Manual*)

• Ether 1:34 -40 “Cry unto the Lord, that he will not confound us that we may not understand our words.”

What is the difference between “crying unto the Lord” and merely saying prayers?

What can we do to make our prayers more effective? (See Alma 34:17-28.)

†1. President Spencer W. Kimball      †2. Ted L. Gibbons

“Each time the brother of Jared prayed, the Lord “had compassion” on him and his people (Ether 1:35, 37, 40).” (*LM*)

How have you felt the Lord’s compassion in response to your prayers?

• Ether 1:41-43 “And thus I will do unto thee because this long time ye have cried unto me.”

What can we learn from this example about the power of prayer?

### 2. The Jaredites begin their journey to the promised land. ([Ether 2](#))

• Ether 2:4-8 God “ had sworn ... that whoso should possess this land ... should serve him, ... or ... be swept off”

• Ether 2:9-12 We “can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise; and ...”

• Ether 2:13-14 At “Moriancumer ... the Lord came again unto the brother of Jared ... and chastened him”.

Why do you think the Lord is so serious about Mahonri’s neglect about prayer?

†3. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

• Ether 2:15-20 The “brother of Jared repented of the evil which he had done, and did call upon the name of the Lord”.

• Ether 2:23-25 The “Lord said ... What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels? ...”

Why do you think the Lord might have asked Mahonri this question?

How do you think the challenge to light the barges helped the brother of Jared to grow?

How can challenges in our lives help us?      †4. Elder John R. Dickson      †5. President Harold B. Lee

### 3. The brother of Jared sees Jesus Christ. ([Ether 3](#))

• Ether 3:1-5 Identify words spoken by Mahonri that show his humility and faith.      †6. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

• Ether 3:6-9 “Because of thy faith thou hast seen that I shall take upon me flesh and blood”.

Why do you think the Lord asks Mahonri questions when He already knows the answer? (See v.7, 9, 11)

† President Harold B. Lee

• Ether 3:11-16 “Yea, Lord, I know that ... thou art a God of truth and canst not lie.”      †7. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

From these passages what is necessary for us to be in the Lord’s presence eternally?

### 4. Moroni seals up the writings of the brother of Jared. ([Ether 4](#))

• Ether 4:3-7 “I have written upon these plates the very things which the brother of Jared saw”.

• Ether 4:8-12 “But he that believeth these things ... him will I visit with the manifestations of my Spirit”.

In what ways does the Holy Ghost help you know that the Lord’s words are true?

• Ether 4:13-19 “repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and believe in my gospel, and be baptized”.

### 5. The Jaredites travel to the promised land. ([Ether 6:1-12](#))

• Ether 6:3 “The Lord caused stones to shine in darkness, to give light unto men, women, and children”

What “lights” has the Lord provided for us as we journey through life?

• Ether 6:4 “They ... set forth ... commending themselves unto the Lord”. How can we show this same trust?

• Ether 6:8-9 “And they did sing praises unto the Lord”. What are some ways we can praise the Lord?

• Ether 6:12 “And when they had set their feet upon the shores of the promised land they bowed themselves down”.

How can we emulate their example today?

([Book of Mormon Manual – LDS Institute](#) (Religion 121-122). (You can download a free PDF manual.)

Next Week: Lesson 46: By Faith All Things Are Fulfilled;      Ether 12 – 13      † •

†1. **President Spencer W. Kimball:** “Do you get answers to your prayers? If not, perhaps you did not pay the price. Do you offer a few trite words and worn-out phrases, or do you talk intimately to the Lord? Do you pray occasionally when you should be praying regularly, often, constantly? Do you offer pennies to pay heavy debts when you should give dollars to erase that obligation?”

“When you pray, do you just speak, or do you also listen? Your Savior said, ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.’ (Rev. 3:20.)

“Should we ever fail to get an answer to our prayers, we must look into our lives for a reason” (“[Prayer](#),” *New Era*, Mar. 1978, 17).

†2. **Ted L. Gibbons:** “I wrote a book on prayer several years ago. As I wrote, I reflected on the people in the scriptures that seemed to pray with unusual success. As I noted the names and experiences of several inspired men, I became aware that the Brother of Jared was a remarkable and unique example of a man who knew how to pray and how to get answers. As I thought about him and on the responses of the Lord to his petitions, I began to wonder just how many times prayer was mentioned in his story and in the book of Ether.

“I opened my scriptural infobase, specified Ether, and typed in *pray with an asterisk* in order to have a look at all the related words. I was astonished to discover that a form of the word *pray* appears exactly one time in the entire book of Ether, and it is used by Moroni in an editorial comment in Ether 12:36. No other occurrence of any form of the word appears anywhere else in the book. My first suspicion was that this might be the result of the editor, Moroni, and his inclination to use other words, since I knew that a lot of what I would call “praying” was going on in Ether. So I checked Mormon 8 and 9 and the Book of Moroni, the other writings of Moroni. In Mormon 8 and 9, some form of the word *pray* appears 4 times. In Moroni, I found it 13 times.

“And so I took a careful look at the early chapters of Ether. I found that the brother of Jared *cried* unto the Lord, and *inquired* of the Lord, and *called* upon the Lord. But he never “prayed.”

“What that means I am not sure, except that it suggests to me that this man who got so many spectacular answers wasn’t just *saying prayers*. He was *communicating*. He was *conversing*.”

“It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the Character of God, and to know that we may converse with him as one man converses with another ...” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, Section Six, 1843-44, p. 345)

The brother of Jared knew how to converse. (Ted L. Gibbons, [Book of Mormon Lesson #45](#))

†3. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** “It is difficult to imagine what a three-hour rebuke from the Lord might be like, but the brother of Jared endured it. With immediate repentance and prayer, this prophet again sought guidance for the journey they had been assigned and those who were to pursue it. God accepted his repentance and lovingly gave further direction for their crucial mission” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 15).

†4. **Elder John R. Dickson:** “Brethren, I want you to know that having one arm for nearly thirty years has been one of the greatest blessings of my life...”

“Our challenges may be physical, spiritual, economic, or emotional, but if we will treat them as opportunities and stepping-stones in our progress, rather than barriers and stumbling blocks, our lives and growth will be wonderful. I have learned that between challenges it is very restful but that any real growth that I have ever enjoyed has always come with a challenge.” (“[Nobody Said That It Would Be Easy](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 45)

†5. **President Harold B. Lee:** “ ‘Well, have you any good ideas? What would you suggest that we should do in order to have light?’ ...

“Then the Lord went away and left him alone. It was as though the Lord were saying to him, ‘Look, I gave you a mind to think with, and I gave you agency to use it. Now you do all you can to help yourself with this problem; and then, after you’ve done all you can, I’ll step in to help you.’” (*Stand Ye in Holy Places* [1974], 243-44).

†6. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** “ ‘Behold, O Lord, thou canst do this.’ Perhaps there is no more powerful, single line of faith spoken by man in scripture. It is almost as if he is encouraging God, emboldening him, reassuring him. Not ‘Behold, O Lord, I am sure that thou canst do this.’ Not ‘Behold, O Lord, thou hast done many greater things than this.’ However uncertain the prophet is about his own ability, he has *no* uncertainty about God’s power. There is nothing here but a single, clear, bold, and assertive declaration with no hint or element of vacillation. It is encouragement to Him who needs no encouragement but who surely must have been touched by it. ‘Behold, O Lord, thou canst do this’ “ (“‘Rending the Veil of Unbelief,’” in *Nurturing Faith through the Book of Mormon: The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium* [1995], 12).

†7. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** “The brother of Jared may not have had great belief in himself, but his belief in God was unprecedented. In that there is hope for us all. His faith was without doubt or limit.... Once and for all it was declared that ordinary people with ordinary challenges could rend the veil of unbelief and enter the realms of eternity” (*Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 29).

#### **Recommended Reading:**

President Spencer W. Kimball, (“[Prayer](#),” *New Era*, Mar. 1978, 17.

Elder John B. Dickson, (“[Nobody Said That It Would Be Easy](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 45.

Visit [www.stephenmbird.com/library/gospel-doctrine](http://www.stephenmbird.com/library/gospel-doctrine) †

## Further Enrichment Resources:

### Ether 2:1. “the name of the valley was Nimrod”

**Josephus:** “He [Nimrod] persuaded them not to ascribe [their prosperity] to God, as if it was through his means they were happy ... He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers! Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God; and they built a tower.” (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, chap. IV, v. 2-3)

### Ether 2:9. “whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off”

**J. Reuben Clark, Jr.:** “This is a Christian nation. Before the Revolution it was so in accord with law; since the Revolution it has remained so in fact. We, the people of the United States, guarantee full religious freedom to all within our jurisdiction, whether they be non-Christian or Pagan. But the nation itself is a Christian nation. Our standards and principles are Christian. Other creeds we protect, that all may be free. These facts must never be lost sight of. (Conference Report, Oct. 1939, 10)

### Ether 2:13-14. “The Lord came again unto the brother of Jared ... and chastened him”

**Ted L. Gibbons:** “I am intrigued by the chastening that the Lord gave the brother of Jared on the seashore, “because he remembered not to call upon the name of the Lord.” (Ether 2:15) The context of the chastening seems to imply that the Jaredites have not pursued their journey to the promised land as they had been commanded. They have been in tents on the seashore for four years (see Ether 2:13) Could it be that the Brother of Jared has stopped seeking direction? That he was content to sit on the beach and enjoy the warm breezes and the good fishing and abundant feed for the livestock? In the absence of great problems did he stop saying great prayers? This is a trap in which the best of us can get caught.

“Next, resolve to really pray and not just say prayers. There is a big difference here. Learn to pour out the real in-depth feelings of your heart to your Heavenly Father, rather than merely saying the same trite words and phrases that you have become accustomed to using. Remember President Brigham Young’s counsel that if we don’t feel like praying, that is the time to pray until we do feel like it” (see *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1941, p. 44; cited by Joe J. Christensen, “Resolutions,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1994, 66). (Ted L. Gibbons, [Book of Mormon Lesson #45](#))

### Ether 2:23. “What will ye that I should do ...?”

**Ted L. Gibbons:** “The Lord solved two of the problems...

“But something different happened with the question about darkness:

“ ‘And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels? For behold, ye cannot have windows, for they will be dashed in pieces; neither shall ye take fire with you, for ye shall not go by the light of fire” (Ether 2:23).

“The message seems to be this one: *Why don’t you work on this one yourself and get back to me.* It is interesting to notice what the brother of Jared does not do. He does not run out on the beach, grab sixteen stones and ask the Lord to touch them. Instead he goes to Mount Shelem (a very high mountain—see Ether 3:1), finds the proper kind of rock, and molts from it sixteen small white and clear stones. But he does not yet ask for the help of the Lord. Next he climbs with his rocks to the top of this exceedingly high mountain (still Ether 3:1). Then, having done all he can do, he presents himself and his stones before the Lord and asks for him to touch them (Ether 3:2-4). (Ted L. Gibbons, [Book of Mormon Lesson #45](#))