

FOREWORD

Growing up, no matter how motivated I was to read the Book of Mormon, I always lost steam in the Isaiah chapters. While on my mission, I was always worried that investigators would give up reading the Book of Mormon early on because the Isaiah chapters were too boring or too hard to understand. Now, after a lot of individual study I have found the Isaiah chapters in the second book of Nephi to be some of my favorites. I did this project because I want others to view the Isaiah chapters as a highlight of the Book of Mormon reading experience, not a hindrance.

Each page of this project coincides with an Isaiah chapter from 2 Nephi (specifically chapters 12-24). The poems are easy to understand yet contain a major theme or takeaway from the corresponding Isaiah chapter. This way, the reader can first read the poem, wrap their mind around the themes and imagery, and then read the chapter while noticing and learning things that they wouldn't have otherwise.

2 Nephi 12

LET US HIKE UP THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD

To stand on the top of a mountain
And look at the valley below
A breathtaking, grand, new perspective
Up there, something brand new to know

But such precious views don't come cheaply
There's always a price to be paid
To come to the Lord's Holy Mountain
Some sort of hike must be made

While straight is the path to the summit,
And armed with a compass and guides
Some parts are steep...and cause us to weep
And cause us to shorten our strides

But we can be sure that the master
Is with us and treads ever near
And the lessons we learn on the journey
Alone makes it worth every tear

2 Nephi 13

UNMISTAKABLE EVIDENCE

Footprints can be covered
And fingerprints wiped clean
But a guilty countenance
no matter what, is seen

2 Nephi 14

WE WILL EAT OUR OWN BREAD

We don't want a wedding feast
Nor fancy royal clothes
Just let us come to you, Oh Lord,
And take away our woes!

This is how we should repent
No thoughts of wedding bread
No cares about what others think
Nor rumors to be spread

When we let go of vanity
And onto Him take hold
From the storm he refuge gives
And gifts us back ten fold

2 Nephi 15

SINCERELY, YOUR (FORMER) MASTER GARDENER

Excerpt from a note left to the young prince that has recently decided that he would like to "take the affairs of the vineyard into his own hands from here on out."

Do you think that magically
Your vineyard has soft soil
That no one ever had to plow?
No one ever had to toil?

And what about the outer hedge
Whose walls protect your land
Or the tower built within
And my men who keep it manned?

You think it's all so easy
And you can do it on your own
But when you've had it with your briar patch,
I guess you know my phone.

2 Nephi 16

THE LIVE COAL

I feel unworthy standing here
Inside this holy court
For when it comes to godliness
I know I'm six wings short

Smoke fills the room, wo unto me
His voice right through me rips
And I'm reminded of my sins
And of my unclean lips

At lightning speed to me is flown
A charcoal still white hot
I open wide, partake of it
What sweet release is brought!

His voice, now soft, calls out and asks
"Who will my servant be?"
My lips, no longer dirty, shout
Lord here I am, send me!

2 Nephi 17

KING AHAZ

I pity Judah's king, Ahaz
I know of what he speaks
Against the howling winds, the heart
often shutters, often creaks

Take heed, Ahaz! Be not afraid
Of winds nor firebrand.
Against the Lord, all vexes fail
They simply cannot stand.

2 Nephi 18

THE RIVER

A raging river—black, churning, thick
A flooding country—sacked, burning, sick

A drowning woman screams, screeches, flails
An aging prophet dreams, teaches, fails

They fear the river—broad, flowing, sweeping
But not its master—God, knowing, weeping

2 Nephi 19

SHOULDERS

What broad shoulders he must have
The mighty prince of peace
Upon them lies the government
And its infinite increase

But also on the shoulders
Of the humble god was layed
A cross of wood and roman stripes
And worlds of sins unpaid

Although adorned with many things,
there's always vacancy
up on the shepherd's shoulders
for him to carry me

2 Nephi 20

THE ROD

I'm familiar with the rod
That's so often used by god
To smite the sinners who have wandered off his path
In the form of guilt and pain
Or a foreign leader's reign
Those who leave the lord are bound to feel his wrath

But there is hope for heaven's people—
Hypocrites and rebels may they be
If we humbly trust in him
Him who payed for all our sins
From the yoke of bondage he will set us free

2 Nephi 21

MIRACLES

I've never seen a wolf
Who refused to eat a lamb
Or a cow who's ever lied down with a bear
I've never seen a lion
Eat an ox's bale of hay
Or a child play in a viper's lair

But there are many miracles I've witnessed
Like the coming home of outcasts faraway
And as the ensign is held higher
And further spreads the gospel's fire
The leopard and the kid will have their day

2 Nephi 22

WHEN HE COMES

Do I really have to wait
For that unknown distant day
When I can lift my voice and cry out with a shout
That the savior is my song
And my strength who does no wrong
And in his arm I'll never have a doubt

On the chance I'm not around
To join in triumphant sound
That the Holy One of Israel has arrived
I will take my bucket now
Draw as deep as rope allows
And whistle to myself with soul revived

2 Nephi 23

WELCOME TO FABULOUS BABYLON

Babylon was much more cool
Before it caught on fire

Now the things that made it fun
Just fuel the flames up higher

The girls there now are truly smokin'
And the hearts of men shall melt

Once last years hottest city,
Its heat can now be felt

2 Nephi 24

BURDEN UNTO BABYLON

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave
ye wicked babylon
your staff is broke, your pools are dry
and all your riches gone.

Your fields are no longer plowed and worked
by those you once oppressed
for they have put their trust in me
the one who gave them rest.