

## **ARMOR OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

(2 Nephi 1:1-58)

Nephi's brothers rebel against him. The Lord warns Nephi to depart into the wilderness. Lehi prophesies of a land of liberty. His seed shall be scattered and smitten if they reject the Holy One of Israel. He exhorts his sons to put on the armor of righteousness.

**V1-10** After accounting for the various things he taught to his brothers, Nephi turns his attention to Lehi's teachings to his other sons. Lehi points out what a great work the Lord has done for them (v. 1), despite their rebellions (v. 2), in giving them a land of promise for their inheritance (v. 3). While the land promised to Abraham to be possessed by his posterity is presently occupied by Gentiles (v. 4-5), Lehi has obtained lands for inheritance by covenant for his own lineage (v. 6-10).

**V11-21** Lehi has seen the same visions of what is to occur in the New World as did Nephi (see 1 Nephi 3:254). He is well aware they will probably not repent, and has seen their wars and ultimate demise at the hands of Gentiles. Regardless, being the softhearted father he is (see 1 Nephi 2:88), he attempts to entreat them one last time before he dies. It also warns against the impact an individual can have on entire populations. Laman was just one man, but he negatively influenced generations to come.

**V22-23** Lehi cites several arguments and points of evidence against the rebellious:

1. Having a knowledge of the creation of the earth and all its inhabitants, referring to the Genesis account of the Creation and origin of Israel,
2. Knowing the great and marvelous works of the Lord performed since the Creation, referring to the history of the origin of Israel,
3. Having power given to them to do all things by faith, referring to the contemporary miracles performed in their very sight,
4. Having all the commandments from the beginning, referring to the documentation of the various laws given to humans, and particularly the Law of Moses,
5. Having been brought into the land of promise, (See 1 Nephi 5:77-79).

**V27-28** The various images of waking, casting off chains, and shaking off dust are drawn from Isaiah 52:2. This chapter in Isaiah is summoning Zion up from an obscurity imposed upon her as a result of her rebellion such as Lehi is summoning his own branch of Israel to lift themselves up from the same fate.

**V29-34** "I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love". This is Lehi's plain and simple testimony of the Lord. He states flat out he has a very good relationship with the Lord, one close enough that he is confident that when he dies he will be embraced by the Lord. As such, Lehi is exhibiting his faith in the Lord as well as of the afterlife. Lehi has seen the fate of his lineage so he is well aware of the broad scope what is going to happen, hence the confession "his will be done" in v.34. But, he doesn't let this prevent himself from exhorting whatever individual he might reach to repent.

**V38-54** While Lehi made a series of general arguments against the rebellion of both his immediate sons and later generations in v. 22-23, he now addresses the present sons with detailed examples of their rebellion by citing specific cases (v. 40-49). His comments are cast in the light of his imminent death. He is clearly aware of the struggle between Laman, the oldest son, and Nephi, the spiritual son, with regard to leadership. His death will result in Laman establishing himself as patriarch. Given this power and the past resentment of Nephi's spirituality, Lehi knows the result will mean trouble. In an attempt to minimize contention, Lehi endorses Nephi as the patriarch of the family after Lehi's death (v. 50-54).

**V55-58** Lehi offers a blessing to Zoram even though he isn't his father or master (v. 55). The blessing he offers him is one that is based upon his personal righteousness and willingness to listen to Nephi (v. 56-57). As such, he and his children will be blessed, as is Nephi.