

Christmas in Zarahemla

Written by Mary Ashworth & Tamara Fackrell

Narrator: From the dawn of Creation, mankind looked forward to the central event of the Holy Scriptures—the coming of the promised Messiah—the KING OF KINGS. The dispensations of Adam and Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Moses all kept and treasured this most precious message. A Redeemer would come to save the world from sin and error.

The children of the covenant, those descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, made their way to Egypt in the time of famine, to find their brother Joseph in a position of power. There they flourished, and then became enslaved. At last the 400-year sojourn in Egypt came to an end with the mighty Proclamation of Moses, “Let my people go.” The Red Sea parted for these children of the covenant and they gave thanks for their escape. Arriving in the Promised Land, they built a Temple to the Most High God. For a thousand years they kept alive the treasured Word. The Law of Moses was their constant reminder of the coming of the Redeemer.

Voice of Sariah: The prophet Isaiah Spoke: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. “(Isaiah 9:6)

Choir: O Little Town of Bethlehem

Narrator: The beautiful Temple of Solomon was destroyed by the invading Babylonians in 587 B.C. The prophet Lehi, warned by an angel, had taken his wife Sarah and their family into the wilderness scarcely ten years before the fall of Jerusalem. Crossing the ocean to the New World, Lehi established a colony in the wilderness. He gathered his children and their families together and admonished them:

Voice of Lehi: “How merciful the Lord had been in warning us that we should flee out of the land of Jerusalem. For, behold I have seen a vision, in which I know that Jerusalem is destroyed; and had we remained in Jerusalem we should also have perished. But, said he, notwithstanding our afflictions, we have obtained a land of promise, a land which is choice above all other lands; a land which the

Lord God hath covenanted with me should be a land for the inheritance of my seed. Yea, the Lord hath covenanted this land unto me, and to my children forever, and also all those who should be led out of other countries by the hand of the Lord...it shall be a land of liberty unto them; (2 Nephi 1:2-5. 7)

Narrator: Again, the covenant people built a temple...and did construct it after the manner of the temple of Solomon save it were not built of so many precious things; for they were not to be found upon the land, wherefore, it could not be built like unto Solomon's temple. But the manner of the construction was like unto the temple of Solomon; and the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine. (2 Ne 5: 16)

A division of the people came when some hardened their hearts against the Lord and they became like unto flint, an idle people, full of mischief and subtlety – these were the Lamanites, ever to war against the righteous Nephites (2 Ne 5: 21-28)

Narrator: Generations passed away and the Nephites faithfully kept a record of their people. When four hundred years had passed after leaving Jerusalem, an account was given by the record keeper Amalaki concerning Mosiah.. he who was made King over the Land of Zarahemla.

Amalaki: Behold, I am Amaleki, Behold, I will speak unto you somewhat concerning Mosiah, who was made king over the land of Zarahemla; for behold, he being warned of the Lord that he should flee out of the land of Nephi, and as many as would hearken unto the voice of the Lord should also depart out of the land with him, into the wilderness—... and they were led by the power of the Lord's arm, through the wilderness until they came down into the land which is called the land of Zarahemla. These descendant of King Zedekiah through his son Mulek were brought by the hand of the Lord across the great waters into that land. Their language had become corrupted for they brought no records with them; and they denied the being of their Creator; Mosiah then caused that they should be taught in the language of Mosiah. And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla, and of Mosiah, did unite together; and Mosiah was appointed to be their king. I, Amaleki, have lived to see his death and Benjamin his son reign in his stead. King Benjamin was followed by his son Mosiah II, as ruler over all the land of Zarahemla. There was much bloodshed between the Nephites and Lamanites in the days of the kings. (Omni 1:12-19)

Narrator: Now as Mosiah II reigned in Zarahemla, in the land south, the land of Nephi, the Nephite King Noah ruled in wickedness, for he did not walk in the ways

of his father and kept not the commandments of God. He placed his heart on riches which he obtained by the taxation of his people (Mosiah 11:1-12). The prophet Abinadi began to prophesy among them that all must repent and acknowledge God who redeems men from their lost and fallen state.

Voice of Alma: I am Alma, one among the priests of Noah, being also a descendant of Nephi. And I was a young man and I believed the words which Abinadi had spoken; therefore, I began to plead with the King that he would not be angry with Abinadi but suffer that he might depart in peace. This caused me to be cast out from among the priests of the court and I was hunted that they might take away my life. All those who were believers were protected by the Lord and we escaped to the Waters of Mormon and later journeyed by night to Zarahemla. And it came to pass that king Mosiah granted unto Alma that he might establish churches throughout all the land of Zarahemla. (Mosiah 25:19)

Narrator: The sons of Mosiah and Alma believed not the words of the Lord and desired to lead the hearts of men astray but being visited by an angel they suffered great remorse and vowed to spend the remainder of their lives serving the Lord. They became mighty missionaries, converting many Lamanites. After the passing of two generations the Nephites had become a vain and proud people and had forgotten the Lord. It was Samuel the Lamanite who stirred up the Nephites to a remembrance of the coming of the Savior. (Helaman 13:4)

Samuel: And it came to pass that the Nephites of Zarahemla would not suffer that I, Samuel should enter into the city; therefore, I went and got upon the wall thereof and stretched forth my hand and cried with a loud voice; Wo unto this great city of Zarahemla...Behold I give unto you a sign; for five years more cometh and behold then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name. This I will give unto you as a sign, there shall be great lights in heaven insomuch that in the night before he cometh there shall be no darkness...a day and a night and a day shall be as if it were one day...and a new star shall arise; such as one as ye have never beheld; Prepare ye the way of the Lord...that ye might know of the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, Creator of all things.

Choir: Samuel Tells of Baby Jesus

Narrator: The time of waiting passed and there was a day set apart by the unbelievers, that all those who believed in those traditions should be put to

death except the sign should come to pass, which had been given by Samuel the prophet. Nephi bowed himself down upon the earth, and cried mightily to his God in behalf of his people; and behold, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying: (3 Nephi 1)

Voice of the Lord “Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to show unto the world that I will fulfil all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets. And a new star did appear according to the word. (3 Nephi 1)

Choir: Star Bright

Narrator: That same star was seen by shepherds keeping watch over their flocks on the Judean hillsides. The angels sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” (Luke 2:13-14)

Choir: Angels We Have Heard on High

Choir: The First Noel

Narrator: And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:1-7)

Choir: Away in a Manger

Voice of Wise Men: And behold three wise men came from the east to Jerusalem saying, “Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him” Herod the king replied, “In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet.” The kings departed and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their

treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.
(Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11)

Choir: We Three Kings

Narrator: And so, the Savior of the World has come! The first Christmas night was one of the greatest days accomplished on the earth. Christ learned precept upon precept. He walked with the fishermen, he ate with the beggars, and he healed the sick. Christ showed us the way. Christ suffered at Gethsemane and hung on the cross, so that we may be able to live with Him again and receive Eternal Life. Christ shall return in all glory and all power ushered in by his righteous saints. At this Christmas time, may we honor him, revere him, and strive evermore to be like him.

Choir: Joy to the World