

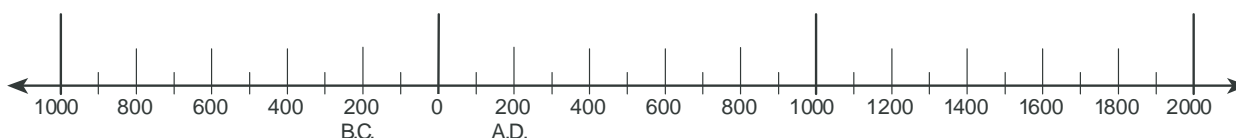
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Next Weeks Lesson: Lesson 5 "Hearken to the Truth, and Give Heed unto It" ([1 Nephi 16-22](#))

Today's Lesson: Lesson 4 "The Things Which I Saw While I Was Carried Away in the Spirit" ([1 Nephi 12-14](#))

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____



Place the following events on the time line:

- A. The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ (A.D. 33)
- B. The Great Apostasy (approximately A.D. 100 through A.D. 1800)
- C. The final battle between the Lamanites and the Nephites (about A.D. 385)
- D. The discovery of the Americas by Christopher Columbus (A.D. 1492)
- E. The Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ (A.D. 1820-present)

Nephi saw these events and others in his vision of the future.

1. Nephi sees the future of his descendants and his brothers' descendants. ([1 Nephi 12](#))

In [1 Nephi 12](#), Nephi describes his vision of the future of his seed (his descendants) and the seed of his brothers. Note: some symbols in the vision of the tree of life (the mist of darkness, the great and spacious building, and the river of filthy water) foreshadowed the downfall of Nephi's seed.

- A. How did Nephi describe the conditions on the earth that would precede the Savior's visit to America? (See [1 Nephi 12:1-6](#).) How were these conditions similar to the conditions that will precede the Savior's Second Coming? (See [Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:27-37](#).) How did Nephi describe the conditions that would follow the Savior's visit? (See [1 Nephi 12:11-12](#); see also the fulfillment of this prophecy, which is recorded in [4 Nephi 1:2-4](#).) What brought about this righteousness and peace? (See [4 Nephi 1:15](#).)

B. Nephi saw that after nearly four generations of righteousness, his seed and the seed of his brethren would again begin battling each other ([1 Nephi 12:12-15](#)). What did Nephi see happening to his descendants in these battles? (See [1 Nephi 12:19-20](#).) Why were Nephi's descendants overpowered and destroyed? (See [1 Nephi 12:19](#).) How can pride and the temptations of the devil lead to destruction?

2. Nephi sees the formation of the great and abominable church, the colonization of the Americas, the Apostasy, and the Restoration of the gospel. ([1 Nephi 13](#))

A. [1 Nephi 13](#) is a record of Nephi's vision of the following:

- (1) The formation of the great and abominable church.
- (2) The discovery and colonization of the Americas.
- (3) The Apostasy and the loss of many plain and precious parts of the Bible.
- (4) The coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration of the gospel.

The formation of the great and abominable church

B. What did Nephi see formed "among the nations of the Gentiles"? (See [1 Nephi 13:4-5](#).) Who is the founder of the great and abominable church? (See [1 Nephi 13:6](#).)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said, "The titles *church of the devil* and *great and abominable church* are used to identify all churches or organizations of whatever name or nature—whether political, philosophical, educational, economic, social, fraternal, civic, or religious—which are designed to take men on a course that leads away from God and his laws and thus from salvation in the kingdom of God" (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. [1966], 137-38).

The great and abominable church is a symbol of apostasy in all its forms. It is a representation of all false doctrine, false worship, and irreligious attitudes. It does not represent any specific church in the world today.

C. What are some of the characteristics of the "great and abominable church"? (See [1 Nephi 13:5-9](#). Answers may include that it weakens faith, desires worldly riches and sins, and seeks the praise of the world.) What symbol from the vision of the tree of life corresponds to the great and abominable church? (Compare [1 Nephi 13:5-9](#) with [1 Nephi 11:35-36](#).)

D. What evidence do you see of the great and abominable church working to destroy the Saints today? How can we ensure that we are not deceived by people or organizations that lead people away from God and His laws?

The discovery and colonization of the Americas

- E. The Gentiles who “went forth ... upon the many waters” are understood to be Christopher Columbus and other early explorers and settlers of the Americas ([1 Nephi 13:12-13](#)). What enabled these explorers and settlers to be successful in their endeavors? (See [1 Nephi 13:14-19](#).)
- F. What role did these early explorers and settlers play in the Restoration of the gospel? (They prepared the way for the founding of the United States of America. The Constitution of the United States established freedoms regarding religion that were necessary for the Book of Mormon to be brought forth and the gospel to be restored. See [D&C 101:77-80](#).)

The Apostasy and the loss of many plain and precious parts of the Bible

- G. What was the book Nephi saw the Gentiles carrying? (See [1 Nephi 13:20-23](#). The Bible.) What did the great and abominable church do to this book? (See [1 Nephi 13:24-26](#).) Why? (See [1 Nephi 13:27](#).)
- H. What consequences have resulted from the loss of “many plain and precious things” from the Bible? (See [1 Nephi 13:29](#).)

The coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the Restoration of the gospel

- I. The Lord knew that the great and abominable church would try to destroy the word of God in the Bible. How did He ensure that His words would be preserved to come forth in the latter days? (See [1 Nephi 13:35-36](#).) What is this record that was kept by Nephi’s seed? (The Book of Mormon.)
 - J. What are the purposes of the Book of Mormon? (See [1 Nephi 13:40-41](#); see also [Mormon 7:8-9](#); [D&C 20:8-12](#).) How have you seen these purposes fulfilled?
 - K. What are some doctrines that are difficult to understand in the Bible but plain and precious in the Book of Mormon? (For example, [Alma 11:42-45](#), which teaches plain and precious truths about the Atonement and resurrection, or [3 Nephi 11:21-26](#) and [Moroni 8:11-12](#), which teach plain and precious truths about baptism.) How has the Book of Mormon helped make the Bible more understandable to you or increased your testimony of the Bible?
- 3. Nephi sees the blessings promised to the faithful; he also sees the destruction of the great and abominable church. ([1 Nephi 14](#))**

Half of you search [1 Nephi 14:1-7](#) to find the blessings promised to the Gentiles (non-Israelites) if they remain faithful to the Lord. The rest of you read the same verses to find the cursings promised to the Gentiles if they harden their hearts and turn away from the Lord.

- A. What must we do to soften our hearts so that we can receive these blessings?
- B. In what sense are there only two forces in the world today? (See [1 Nephi 14:10](#); [2 Nephi 10:16](#).)
- C. What will eventually happen to the great and abominable church? (See [1 Nephi 14:3-4](#), [1 Nephi 14:15-17](#); [1 Nephi 22:23](#).)
- D. Nephi saw that even though the members of the Lord's Church in the last days would be comparatively few, they would be able to overcome the persecution of the great and abominable church. What did Nephi see the Saints of God armed with? (See [1 Nephi 14:14](#).) How can we be "armed with righteousness and with the power of God"?

Nephi's vision provides an overview of much that has occurred and will yet occur in the history of the earth. It also shows us that we must choose between only two options: following Jesus Christ or working against Him and thus following Satan. The blessings promised in [1 Nephi 14](#) are available to all of us if we choose to follow Jesus Christ.