



Five lessons for  
us from Easter  
in the Book of  
Mormon





# A Different Perspective on Easter

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Church Magazines

I have often imagined seeing the empty tomb with Peter and John or meeting the resurrected Lord with Mary in the garden. I wonder how it would have changed me.

Recently, I realized that there are also a number of life-changing lessons from those who were in the New World during that first Easter. From the destruction to the voice heard in darkness, here are the five lessons that have affected me most—so far.

## 1. Christ Is the Light of the World

The first lesson is simple but has been so meaningful to me in dark times. The Savior's birth was marked in the New World by a day, a night, and a day without darkness. It symbolized the coming of the Light of the World (see 3 Nephi 1:15). So it seems equally significant that when Jesus died, a suffocating darkness filled the land. No light could be lit. Nothing could be seen. (See 3 Nephi 8:19–23.)

There was not light in the Nephites' world while the Light of the World was in the tomb.

There have been times in my life when I have felt suffocating darkness, whether from sin or discouragement. I am grateful to have experienced for myself that “it is not possible for [us] to sink lower than the infinite light of Christ's Atonement shines.”<sup>1</sup>



## 2. I've Been Given a Chance to Prepare

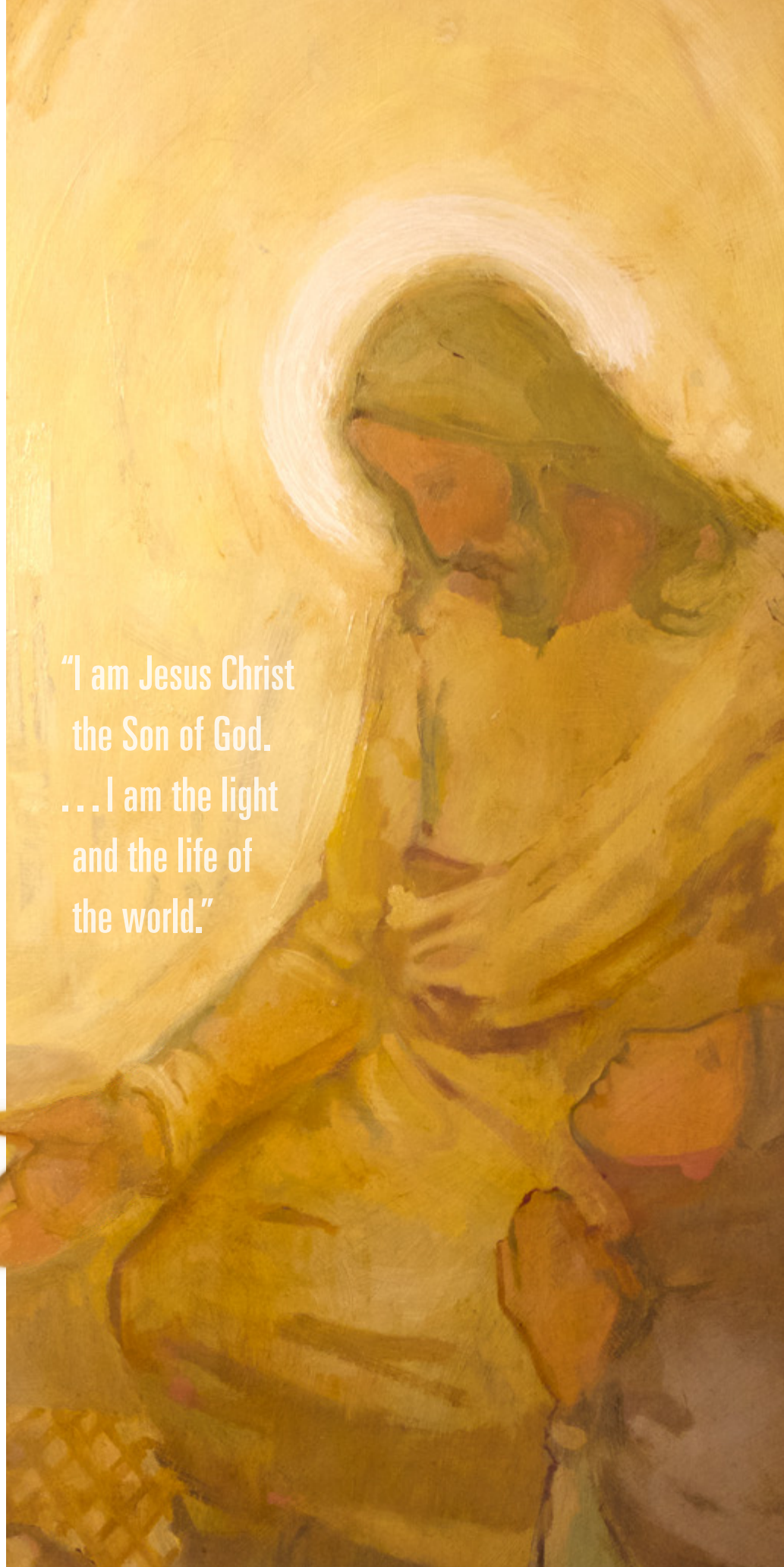
I find it fascinating that thanks to living prophets, the Nephites knew with a great deal of detail that the darkness was coming (see Helaman 14:20–27). Many people looked for it, waited for it, even argued about it (see 3 Nephi 8:3–4). But were they prepared for the destruction that accompanied the Savior's death? Were they ready when He came to them?

More importantly, are we? Thanks to His prophets, we know He will come a second time. We have likewise been given a great deal of detail about the events that will lead up to that day. There will be earthquakes, tempests, and the waves of the sea heaving themselves beyond their bounds prior to His Second Coming (see Doctrine and Covenants 88:89–90).

But while the world debates its end, we have been given the opportunity to prepare. Are we taking it? (For more ideas on how to prepare, read on.)

## 3. I Shouldn't Be Afraid of Repentance

How can I prepare for that great and terrible day? Book of Mormon prophets took great care to include that lesson for us. After the destruction had ended and the earth had calmed, the people in darkness heard a voice: "Wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants



"I am Jesus Christ  
the Son of God.  
... I am the light  
and the life of  
the world."

of the whole earth except they shall repent” (3 Nephi 9:2).

Jesus invited them, just as He invites us, to repent and be healed: “O all ye that are spared, . . . will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?” He offers mercy to each of us one last time: “If ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive” (3 Nephi 9:13–14).

His Easter victory is a chance for us to change. He promises He will receive anyone who will repent and come unto Him. The promise of eternal life is within reach of each of us who will take advantage of the “never-ending privilege”<sup>2</sup> of repentance.

#### 4. How I Feel about His Prophets Is Important

The more I studied the Easter story in the Book of Mormon, the more the power of this lesson surprised me. After the destruction in the New World, in which many cities were destroyed by flood, fire, and earthquake, the voice of the Savior was heard describing the judgments that had fallen upon the land. Six times He made the connection between how the people treated His prophets and whether or not they were spared. Killing the Lord’s prophets was the primary reason listed for the destruction of more than a dozen cities. (See 3 Nephi 9:5–13.) The record goes on to say that the survivors were spared because they had not cast out and killed God’s prophets (see 3 Nephi 10:12–13).

Clearly there is a lesson here for us about how the Savior feels about His prophets and apostles. But if we go back a little farther in the Book of Mormon, we begin to grasp the importance of this lesson for us. Nephi, the first record keeper of the Book of Mormon, prophesied that the day of the Savior’s death would be “great and terrible . . . unto the wicked, for they shall . . . perish because they cast out the prophets, and the saints, and stone them, and slay them” (2 Nephi 26:3).

How did Nephi know? And what does it have to do with our day? In his vision of the tree of life, Nephi saw that “the great and spacious building was the pride of the world; and it fell, and the fall thereof was exceedingly great.” And then

the angel of the Lord told him, “Thus shall be the destruction of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, that shall fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (1 Nephi 11:36).

The Lord has warned us. In the last days, our decision to follow those He has called to lead His Church—when so many others reject them—will become a protection to us. What is our attitude toward the Apostles of the Lamb?

#### 5. Jesus Saves

During the three days of darkness, the voice revealed to the people who He was, saying, “I am Jesus Christ the Son of God.” Then, to those who had been saved from death but who still sat in darkness, He said, “I am the light and the life of the world,” and to those who needed to begin again after nearly meeting their end, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end” (3 Nephi 9:15, 18).

He had saved them from physical death, but He was offering them salvation from so much more. With His awful atoning sacrifice just hours behind Him and His glorious Resurrection mere hours away, the Savior shared this essential message of Easter:

“Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.

“Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved” (3 Nephi 9:21–22). ■

#### NOTES

1. Jeffrey R. Holland, “The Laborers in the Vineyard,” *Ensign*, May 2012, 33.
2. Russell M. Nelson, “The Savior’s Four Gifts of Joy,” *New Era*, Dec. 2019, 4.