

Link to Online Lesson: [“The Allegory of the Olive Trees”](#)

Class Member Reading: Jacob 5 – 7;

Jacob 5

1 Behold, my brethren, do ye not remember to have read the words of the prophet Zenos, which he spake unto the house of Israel, saying: [Zenos is an otherwise unknown prophet, so his prophecies would have had to have been on the plates of brass. The olive tree allegory is about salvation history, the way God works with different peoples in different times in order to maximize the salvation of all.](#)

Note the character of the master, the growth of the servant, and how they work together.

2 Hearken, O ye house of Israel, and hear the words of me, a prophet of the Lord.

3 For behold, thus saith the Lord, I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a **tame olive tree**, which a **man** took and nourished in his vineyard; and it grew, and waxed old, and began to **decay**. [Note this is not an olive grove, but a grape vineyard with a single olive tree.](#)

4 And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard went forth, and he saw that his olive tree began to decay; and he said: I will prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it, that perhaps it may shoot forth young and tender branches, and it perish not.

5 And it came to pass that he pruned it, and digged about it, and nourished it according to his word. [The master’s persistent tender care is so inspiring. He is deeply invested in this olive tree and is willing to work hard and long to care for it, even if immediate results do not manifest.](#)

6 And it came to pass that **after many days** it began to put forth **somewhat a little, young and tender branches**; but behold, the **main top** thereof began to perish. [Perhaps refers to the corruption of leaders, the “top” of society?](#)

7 And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard saw it, and he said

unto his **servant**: It **grieveth me that I should lose this tree**; wherefore, go and pluck the branches from a **wild olive tree**, and bring them hither unto me; and we will pluck off those main branches which are beginning to wither away, and we will cast them into the fire that they may be burned.

8 And behold, saith the Lord of the vineyard, I take away many of these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will; and it mattereth not that if it so be that the root of this tree will perish, I may **preserve the fruit thereof unto myself**; wherefore, I will take these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will. Notice the titles escalate from man to master to Lord. This would describe the scattering of Israel, in this allegory attributed to the Lord wanting to save the covenant people.

9 Take thou the branches of the **wild olive tree**, and **graft them in**, in the stead thereof; and these which I have plucked off I will cast into the fire and burn them, that they may not cumber the ground of my vineyard.

Grafting in of the Gentiles.

10 And it came to pass that the servant of the Lord of the vineyard did according to the word of the Lord of the vineyard, and grafted in the branches of the wild olive tree.

11 And the Lord of the vineyard caused that it should be **digged about**, and **pruned**, and **nourished**, saying unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree; wherefore, that perhaps I might preserve the roots thereof that they perish not, that I might preserve them unto myself, I have done this thing. Notice the layers of care.. the Lord takes steps to protect the fruit even if the roots perish, but then he works as hard as he can to save the roots!

12 Wherefore, go thy way; **watch** the tree, and **nourish** it, according to my words. The servant is learning to be like the master.

13 And these will I place in the nethermost part of my vineyard, **whithersoever I will**, it mattereth not unto thee; and I do it that I may **preserve unto myself the natural branches of the tree**; and also, that I may lay up fruit thereof against the season, unto myself; for **it grieveth me that I should lose this tree and the fruit thereof**. Note how caring and vulnerable the master is—he freely expresses his emotions

and deeply cares for the tree.

14 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard went his way, and hid the natural branches of the tame olive tree in the nethermost parts of the vineyard, some in one and some in another, **according to his will and pleasure.** The Lord is putting the branches in unexpected, even counterintuitive locations.

15 And it came to pass that **a long time passed away**, and the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the vineyard, **that we may labor** in the vineyard. Caring for others (including plants) is hard work—I appreciate how this allegory embraces that.

16 And it came to pass that the **Lord** of the vineyard, **and also the servant**, went down into the vineyard to labor. And it came to pass that the **servant said** unto his master: **Behold, look here; behold the tree.** Note how the servant is taking a more proactive role, and the Master and servant trade off showing, explaining.

17 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard looked and beheld the tree in the which the wild olive branches had been grafted; and it had sprung forth and begun to bear fruit. And he beheld that **it was good**; and the fruit thereof was **like unto the natural fruit.** A beautiful view of the covenant people. We can be like “natural fruit”, whatever our backgrounds. We can be grafted into new relationships, families, contexts. We are not trapped by our births or origins.

18 And he said unto the servant: Behold, the **branches** of the wild tree have taken hold of the **moisture of the root** thereof, that the root thereof hath brought forth much **strength**; and because of the much strength of the root thereof the wild branches have brought forth **tame fruit.** Now, if we had not grafted in these branches, the tree thereof would have perished. And now, behold, I shall lay up much fruit, which the tree thereof hath brought forth; and the fruit thereof I shall lay up against the season, unto mine own self. Among other things this chapter speaks to the value of diversity and interconnectedness. The tree survived because of the new branches, and the new branches produced better fruit because of the strength of the roots. We have differing gifts and we need each other.

19 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Come, **let us go** to the nethermost part of the vineyard, and behold if the

natural branches of the tree have not brought forth much fruit also, that I may lay up of the fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self.

20 And it came to pass that they went forth whither the master had **hid** the natural branches of the tree, and **he said unto the servant: Behold these**; and he beheld the first that it had brought forth much fruit; and he beheld also that it was good. And he said unto the servant: Take of the fruit thereof, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self; for behold, said he, **this long time have I nourished it**, and it hath brought forth much fruit. *Much wisdom in this simple verse.*

Relationships, goals, so much in life requires us to “nourish for a long time”

21 And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: How comest thou hither to plant this tree, or this branch of the tree? For behold, it was the poorest spot in all the land of thy vineyard.

22 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto him: **Counsel me not; I knew that it was a poor spot of ground**; wherefore, I said unto thee, I have nourished it this long time, and thou beholdest that it hath brought forth much fruit. *I find profound meaning in this. Sometimes our experiences that invite us to grow the most, to learn love, to become like our Heavenly Parents... those experiences are often difficult and “poor”. And hopefully in those difficult moments of draught and deprivation we feel nourished by the Lord of the vineyard. And when it is all past, we can be surprised by how much we have grown and how sweet our fruit is. I have experienced this in powerful and poignant ways.*

23 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: **Look** hither; **behold** I have planted another branch of the tree also; and **thou knowest** that this spot of ground was poorer than the first. But, behold the tree. I have **nourished it this long time**, and it hath brought forth much fruit; therefore, gather it, and lay it up against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self.

24 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said again unto his servant: Look hither, and behold another branch also, which I have planted; behold that **I have nourished it also**, and it hath brought forth fruit. *I love this portrayal of God who nourishes trees all over the vineyard of the world.*

25 And he said unto the servant: Look hither and behold the last. Behold, this have I planted in a **good spot of ground**; and **I have nourished it** this long time, and only a part of the tree hath brought forth tame fruit, and the other part of the tree hath brought forth wild fruit; behold, **I have nourished this tree like unto the others**. So many profound insights here. This chapter addresses the “nature nurture” debate, with the nature being the soil/quality of the ground and nurture being the care by the Lord and the trees’ response to that care.

26 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Pluck off the branches that have not brought forth good fruit, and cast them into the fire.

27 But behold, the servant said unto him: Let us prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it a little longer, that perhaps it may bring forth good fruit unto thee, that thou canst lay it up against the season. Go servant!! This is one of my very favorite verses of this chapter. The servant has been obedient thus far, but has grown enough that he can challenge and engage.

28 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard and the servant of the Lord of the vineyard **did nourish all the fruit of the vineyard**. The Lord is not partial... I love it. The Lord and the servant nourish ALL the fruit. Also, the Lord and servant are working together. Powerful personal application here.

29 And it came to pass that a long time had passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: Come, **let us go down** into the vineyard, **that we may labor again** in the vineyard. For behold, the time draweth near, and the end soon cometh; wherefore, I must lay up fruit against the season, unto mine own self. The patterns and communication also make me think of the temple...

30 And it came to pass that the **Lord of the vineyard and the servant** went down into the vineyard; and they came to the tree whose natural branches had been broken off, and the wild branches had been grafted in; and behold **all sorts of fruit did cumber the tree**. “cumber” is an evocative word.

31 And it came to pass that the **Lord of the vineyard did taste of the fruit, every sort** according to its number. And the Lord of the vineyard said: Behold, **this long time have we nourished this tree**, and I have

laid up unto myself against the season much fruit. Such an intimate form of judgment. Note the "we have nourished"

32 But behold, this time it hath brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good. And behold, there are all kinds of bad fruit; and it profiteth me nothing, notwithstanding all our labor; and now **it grieveth me that I should lose this tree**. In Moses 7 we have the "God Who Weeps" and in this chapter we have the "Lord Who Grieves"

33 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: **What shall we do unto the tree**, that I may preserve again good fruit thereof unto mine own self? I am so touched by this verse!! "What shall WE do?" I think God asks us this every day. What shall we do?

34 And the servant said unto his master: Behold, because thou didst graft in the branches of the wild olive tree they have nourished the roots, that they are alive and they have not perished; wherefore thou beholdest that **they are yet good**. Almost every verse is a treasure. With people who give us a hard time, relationships that are hard... are the "roots yet good"?

35 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: The **tree profiteth me nothing**, and the **roots thereof profit me nothing** so long as it shall bring forth **evil fruit**. And yet, accountability! We need to hold ourselves and others accountable for our fruit, our actions. Our "roots" may be good, but our fruit yields consequences.

36 Nevertheless, I know that **the roots are good**, and for mine own purpose I have preserved them; and because of their much strength they have hitherto brought forth, from the wild branches, good fruit.

37 But behold, the **wild branches have grown and have overrun the roots** thereof; and because that the wild branches have overcome the roots thereof it hath brought forth much evil fruit; and because that it hath brought forth so much evil fruit thou beholdest that it beginneth to perish; and it will soon become ripened, that it may be cast into the fire, except we should do something for it to preserve it. Someone could present a powerful family and relationship dynamic interpretation of this parable... the pieces are here.

38 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: **Let us go down** into the nethermost parts of the vineyard, and behold if the natural branches have also brought forth evil fruit.

39 And it came to pass that they went down into the nethermost parts of the vineyard. And it came to pass that they beheld that the fruit of the natural branches **had become corrupt** also; yea, the first and the second and also the last; and **they had all become corrupt**.

40 And the wild fruit of the last had overcome that part of the tree which brought forth good fruit, even that the branch had withered away and died.

41 And it came to pass that the **Lord of the vineyard wept**, and said unto the servant: **What could I have done more for my vineyard? I think these verses are the most touching in the allegory. So moving, raw, vulnerable.**

42 Behold, I knew that all the fruit of the vineyard, save it were these, had become corrupted. And now these which have once brought forth good fruit have also become corrupted; and now all the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing save it be to be hewn down and cast into the fire.

43 And behold this last, whose branch hath withered away, I did plant in a good spot of ground; yea, even that which was choice unto me above all other parts of the land of my vineyard.

44 And thou beheldest that I also cut down that which cumbered this spot of ground, that I might plant this tree in the stead thereof.

45 And thou beheldest that a part thereof brought forth good fruit, and a part thereof brought forth wild fruit; and because I plucked not the branches thereof and cast them into the fire, behold, they have overcome the good branch that it hath withered away. **Could be referring to the Nephites and Lamanites.**

46 And now, behold, **notwithstanding all the care which we have taken** of my vineyard, the trees thereof have become corrupted, that they bring forth no good fruit; and **these I had hoped to preserve**, to have laid up fruit thereof against the season, unto mine own self. But, behold, they have become like unto the wild olive tree, and they are of no worth but to be hewn down and cast into the fire; and **it grieveth me that I should lose them.** **Parents understand this feeling... all of us who have responsibility or connection to others do. And we can turn these verses on ourselves: are we bringing forth good fruit? Are we causing the Lord grief?**

47 But what could I have done more in my vineyard? Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it? Nay, I have nourished it,

and I have digged about it, and I have pruned it, and I have dunged it; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the day long, and the end draweth nigh. And it grieveth me that I should hew down all the trees of my vineyard, and cast them into the fire that they should be burned. Who is it that has corrupted my vineyard? **The Lord is so plaintive in these verses. This makes sense to me.. God does everything possible to work toward our salvation, and yet too many fruit become corrupt.**

48 And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: Is it not the **loftiness** of thy vineyard—have not the branches thereof overcome the roots which are good? And because the branches have overcome the roots thereof, behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots, **taking strength unto themselves**. Behold, I say, is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard have become corrupted? **PRIDE and selfishness**.

49 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire, that they shall not cumber the ground of my vineyard, for **I have done all. What could I have done more** for my vineyard?

50 But, behold, the servant said unto the Lord of the vineyard: Spare it a little longer.

51 And the Lord said: Yea, I will spare it a little longer, for it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard. **Note how quickly the Lord changes, taking up the merciful suggestion as long as it is brought up. I think we should pushback against conceptions of God that are fickle and harsh and vengeful.. this allegory presents a Lord worth worshipping and working alongside.**

52 Wherefore, let us take of the branches of these which I have planted in the nethermost parts of my vineyard, and let us graft them into the tree from whence they came; and let us pluck from the tree those branches whose fruit is most bitter, and graft in the natural branches of the tree in the stead thereof.

53 And **this will I do that the tree may not perish**, that, perhaps, I may preserve unto myself the roots thereof for mine own purpose.

54 And, behold, the roots of the natural branches of the tree which I planted whithersoever I would are yet alive; wherefore, that I may preserve them also for mine own purpose, I will take of the branches of this tree, and

I will graft them in unto them. Yea, I will **graft in unto them the branches of their mother tree**, that I may preserve the roots also unto mine own self, that **when they shall be sufficiently strong** perhaps they may bring forth good fruit unto me, and I may yet have glory in the fruit of my vineyard. **Gathering of Israel.** Also, sometimes it takes a change of context and time for us to become “sufficiently strong” to bear good fruit.

55 And it came to pass that they took from the natural tree which had become wild, and grafted in unto the natural trees, which also had become wild.

56 And they also took of the natural trees which had become wild, and grafted into their mother tree.

57 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Pluck not the wild branches from the trees, **save it be those which are most bitter**; and in them ye shall graft according to that which I have said. **So merciful... the Lord cuts off only those he absolutely must.** He gives every branch as much of a chance as is possible.

58 And **we will nourish again** the trees of the vineyard, and **we will trim** up the branches thereof; and **we will pluck** from the trees those branches which are ripened, **that must perish**, and cast them into the fire. **Repetition, emphasis that the only ones to be destroyed are the ones that must be.**

59 And this I do that, perhaps, the roots thereof may take strength because of their goodness; and because of the change of the branches, **that the good may overcome the evil.** **This theology makes a great deal of sense to me.** God uses everyone together, sees large systems, and puts things in order and circumstance such that a maximum number may be saved and healthy.

60 And because that **I have preserved** the natural branches and the roots thereof, and that **I have grafted** in the natural branches again into their mother tree, and **have preserved** the roots of their mother tree, that, **perhaps**, the trees of my vineyard may bring forth again good fruit; and that I **may have joy** again in the fruit of my vineyard, and, **perhaps**, that I may rejoice exceedingly that **I have preserved** the roots and the branches of the first fruit— **This theology thrills me! Note the pattern, the repetition: the Lord is doing everything he possibly can. But the results are**

conditional, because they depend on the branches. They **may** take strength, **perhaps** he may experience joy.

61 Wherefore, **go to, and call servants, that we may labor diligently with our might** in the vineyard, that we may prepare the way, that I may bring forth again the natural fruit, which natural fruit is good and the most precious above all other fruit. *The servant is now calling other servants. I love the repetition, the frank dedication to work hard, to do everything possible, to the very end.*

62 Wherefore, **let us go to and labor with our might this last time**, for behold the end draweth nigh, and this is for the last time that I shall prune my vineyard.

63 Graft in the branches; begin at the last that they may be first, and that the first may be last, and **dig about the trees**, both **old and young**, the first and the last; and the last and the first, **that all may be nourished once again for the last time**. *Again, an emphasis on universality, ALL the trees are nourished. Last first last refers to the pattern of Israel, then Gentiles, then Israel (I asked my MTC leader a question about this and kind of got shut down).*

64 Wherefore, **dig about them**, and **prune them**, and **dung them** once more, for the last time, for the end draweth nigh. And if it be so that these last grafts shall grow, and bring forth the natural fruit, then shall ye **prepare the way for them, that they may grow**. *That's why we need to go through... dung in this life. The Lord is so responsive, so strategic.*

65 And as they begin to grow ye shall clear away the branches which bring forth bitter fruit, according to the **strength of the good** and the size thereof; and **ye shall not clear away the bad thereof all at once**, lest the roots thereof should be too strong for the graft, and the graft thereof shall perish, and I lose the trees of my vineyard. *This speaks to the idea that the confusing, wrenching mixture of good and evil in the world has a purpose.*

66 For it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard; wherefore ye shall **clear away the bad according as the good shall grow**, that the root and the top may be equal in strength, until the good shall overcome the bad, and the bad be hewn down and cast into the fire, that they cumber not the ground of my vineyard; and thus will I sweep away the bad out of

my vineyard. To avoid pride, among other things. This is a VERY important principle in our lives.. the bad is cleared away as the good grows. As we fill our lives with goodness, the bad does not have room to thrive.

67 And the branches of the natural tree will I graft in again into the natural tree;

68 And the branches of the natural tree will I graft into the natural branches of the tree; and thus will **I bring them together again**, that they shall bring forth the natural fruit, and **they shall be one**.

Reconciliation, coming home. This could also be a parable of our growth in life and eternity.. we are home, then depart into far off places, are challenged, and then return home.

69 And the bad shall be cast away, yea, even out of all the land of my vineyard; for behold, only this once will I prune my vineyard.

70 And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sent his servant; and the servant went and did as the Lord had commanded him, and brought other servants; and they were few.

71 And the Lord of the vineyard said unto them: Go to, and **labor in the vineyard, with your might**. For behold, this is the **last time** that I shall nourish my vineyard; for the end is nigh at hand, and the season speedily cometh; and if ye **labor with your might** with me **ye shall have joy** in the fruit which I shall lay up unto myself against the time which will soon come. Note the urgency. "Last time" is repeated. The effort is again emphasized. And now the reward is mentioned... if we labor with the Lord we will experience joy with the Lord (in my opinion, "joy" is more complex and deep than happiness)

72 And it came to pass that **the servants did go and labor with their might**; and the **Lord of the vineyard labored also with them**; and **they did obey** the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard **in all things**. I love this portrayal of servants and Lord working together with their might.

73 And there began to be the natural fruit again in the vineyard; and the **natural branches began to grow and thrive exceedingly**; and the wild branches began to be plucked off and to be cast away; and they did **keep the root and the top thereof equal, according to the strength thereof**.

74 And thus they **labored**, with **all diligence**, according to the **commandments** of the Lord of the vineyard, even until the bad had been cast away out of the vineyard, and the Lord had preserved unto himself that the trees had become again the natural fruit; and they became **like unto one body**; and the **fruits were equal**; and the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, **which was most precious unto him from the beginning**. Happy ending of this epic chapter. Note the symbolism. The natural fruit is “one” and “equal” and together.

75 And it came to pass that when the Lord of the vineyard saw that his fruit was good, and that his vineyard was no more corrupt, he called up his servants, and said unto them: Behold, **for this last time** have we **nourished** my vineyard; and thou beholdest that **I have done according to my will**; and **I have preserved** the natural fruit, that **it is good, even like as it was in the beginning**. And **blessed art thou**; for because ye have been **diligent in laboring with me** in my vineyard, and have **kept my commandments**, and have brought unto me again the **natural fruit**, that my vineyard is no more corrupted, and the bad is cast away, behold **ye shall have joy with me** because of the fruit of my vineyard. So much richness in these verses! Note the significance of the fact that the fruit is *good*. It is good from the beginning, and the Lord’s effort restores the fruit to its natural state of goodness (but in a more complex environment). I find that portrayal hopeful.

76 For behold, **for a long time will I lay up of the fruit** of my vineyard unto mine own self against the season, which speedily cometh; and for the last time have I **nourished** my vineyard, and **pruned** it, and **dug about it**, and **dunged** it; wherefore I will lay up unto mine own self of the fruit, for a long time, according to that which I have spoken.

77 And when the time cometh that evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard, then will I cause the **good and the bad to be gathered**; and the good will I preserve unto myself, and the bad will I cast away into its own place. And **then cometh the season and the end**; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire. Judgment Day.

Be honest. Have you ever appreciated Jacob 5 this much? Good stuff.

Jacob 6

1 And now, behold, my brethren, as I said unto you that I would prophesy, behold, this is my prophecy—that the things which this prophet Zenos spake, concerning the house of Israel, in the which he likened them unto a tame olive tree, must surely come to pass. **Nephi does this too, adding a witness to a prophecy and calling that confirmation itself a prophecy. Jacob is also going to add interpretation.**

2 And the day that he shall set his hand again the second time to recover his people, is the day, yea, even the last time, that the servants of the Lord shall go forth in his power, to nourish and prune his vineyard; and after that the end soon cometh.

3 And how blessed are they who have labored diligently in his vineyard; and how cursed are they who shall be cast out into their own place! And the world shall be burned with fire.

4 And **how merciful is our God unto us**, for he **remembereth** the house of Israel, both roots and branches; and he **stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long**; and they are a stiffnecked and a gainsaying people; but as many as will not harden their hearts shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

5 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in **words of soberness** that ye would **repent**, and come with **full purpose of heart**, and **cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you**. And while his arm of mercy is extended towards you in the light of the day, harden not your hearts. **I appreciate this relational wording. We don't just obey God, we have an intimate relationship with Them.**

6 Yea, today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for why will ye die?

7 For behold, **after ye have been nourished** by the good word of God **all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit**, that ye **must** be hewn down and cast into the fire? **Do we live up to the blessings we have been given, do good with our gifts and strengths and experiences and talents?**

8 Behold, will ye reject these words? Will ye reject the words of the prophets; and will ye reject all the words which have been spoken concerning Christ, after so many have spoken concerning him; and deny the

good word of Christ, and the power of God, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and quench the Holy Spirit, and make a mock of the great plan of redemption, which hath been laid for you? **Jacob does not mince words.**

9 Know ye not that if ye will do these things, that the power of the redemption and the resurrection, which is in Christ, will bring you to stand with shame and awful guilt before the bar of God?

10 And according to the power of justice, for justice cannot be denied, ye must go away into that lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever, which lake of fire and brimstone is endless torment.

11 O then, my beloved brethren, repent ye, and enter in at the strait gate, and continue in the way which is narrow, until ye shall obtain eternal life.

12 O be wise; what can I say more? Such a great verse.

13 Finally, I bid you farewell, until I shall meet you before the pleasing bar of God, which bar striketh the wicked with awful dread and fear. Amen.

Interesting how often this happens. Jacob *clearly* believes that he is done, and then counter to his expectations, he writes one more chapter "after some years". What was happening that caused him to think he would die?

Jacob 7

1 And now it came to pass after some years had passed away, there came a man among the people of Nephi, whose name was Sherem.

2 And it came to pass that he began to preach among the people, and to declare unto them that there should be no Christ. And he preached many things which were **flattering** unto the people; and this he did that he might overthrow the doctrine of Christ. **Sherem seems like a very two dimensional character. What would motivate him to teach there is no Christ?**

3 And he labored diligently that he might lead away the hearts of the people, insomuch that he did lead away many hearts; and he knowing that I, Jacob, had faith in Christ who should come, he sought much opportunity that he might come unto me. **Makes me think of some Facebook arguments.**

I still think about a funny experience I had when someone tagged me and asked "Jared, can you shed any light on this? (It had to do with "living the whole Bible to be a true Christian") and I answered "not constructively"

4 And he was **learned**, that he had a **perfect knowledge of the language of the people**; wherefore, he could use **much flattery**, and **much power of speech**, according to the power of the devil. Now this is interesting. The devil is portrayed as a powerful persuader, debater, rhetorical master. It is vital that we distinguish substance from delivery.

5 And he had hope to shake me from the faith, notwithstanding the many revelations and the many things which I had seen concerning these things; for I truly had seen angels, and they had ministered unto me. And also, I had heard the voice of the Lord speaking unto me in very word, from time to time; wherefore, I could not be shaken.

6 And it came to pass that he came unto me, and on this wise did he speak unto me, saying: Brother Jacob, I have sought much opportunity that I might speak unto you; for I have heard and also know that thou goest about much, preaching that which ye call the gospel, or the doctrine of Christ.

7 And ye have led away much of this people that they pervert the right way of God, and keep not the law of Moses which is the right way; and convert the law of Moses into the worship of a being which ye say shall come many hundred years hence. And now behold, I, Sherem, declare unto you that this is blasphemy; for no man knoweth of such things; for he cannot tell of things to come. And after this manner did Sherem contend against me. Ok, so he had a more traditional Jewish approach to the Law.

8 But behold, the **Lord God poured in his Spirit into my soul**, insomuch that I did confound him in all his words. Speaking or writing or creating by inspiration is such an amazing experience. Makes me think of a favorite quote of mine: "I stand there suddenly drawing and very soon there is a sliding away of the time span between thinking and drawing and I feel the warm sensation of self-transparency as the charcoal and the pen move across the paper."

-The Gift of Asher Lev

9 And I said unto him: Deniest thou the Christ who shall come? And he said: If there should be a Christ, I would not deny him; but I know that there is no Christ, neither has been, nor ever will be. [Sherem is good with words... he sounds reasonable.](#)

10 And I said unto him: Believest thou the scriptures? And he said, Yea.

11 And I said unto him: Then ye do not understand them; for they truly testify of Christ. Behold, I say unto you that none of the prophets have written, nor prophesied, save they have spoken concerning this Christ.

12 And this is not all—it has been made manifest unto me, for I have heard and seen; and it also has been made manifest unto me by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, I know if there should be no atonement made all mankind must be lost.

13 And it came to pass that he said unto me: Show me a sign by this power of the Holy Ghost, in the which ye know so much.

14 And I said unto him: What am I that I should tempt God to show unto thee a sign in the thing which thou knowest to be true? Yet thou wilt deny it, because thou art of the devil. Nevertheless, not my will be done; but if God shall smite thee, let that be a sign unto thee that he has power, both in heaven and in earth; and also, that Christ shall come. And thy will, O Lord, be done, and not mine. [Is Jacob kind of a bully here? Why does he ask for that particular sign? Are his actions really worthy of death?](#)

15 And it came to pass that when I, Jacob, had spoken these words, the power of the Lord came upon him, insomuch that he fell to the earth. And it came to pass that he was nourished for the space of many days.

16 And it came to pass that he said unto the people: Gather together on the morrow, for I shall die; wherefore, I desire to speak unto the people before I shall die.

17 And it came to pass that on the morrow the multitude were gathered together; and he spake plainly unto them and denied the things which he

had taught them, and confessed the Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost, and the ministering of angels.

18 And he spake plainly unto them, that he had been deceived by the power of the devil. And he spake of hell, and of eternity, and of eternal punishment.

19 And he said: I fear lest I have committed the unpardonable sin, for I have lied unto God; for I denied the Christ, and said that I believed the scriptures; and they truly testify of him. And because I have thus lied unto God I greatly fear lest my case shall be awful; but I confess unto God. **Wow. Evidently Sherem is fully accountable.**

20 And it came to pass that when he had said these words he could say no more, and he gave up the ghost.

21 And when the multitude had witnessed that he spake these things as he was about to give up the ghost, they were astonished exceedingly; insomuch that the power of God came down upon them, and they were overcome that they fell to the earth.

22 Now, this thing was pleasing unto me, Jacob, for I had requested it of my Father who was in heaven; for he had heard my cry and answered my prayer. **Which thing? Sherem to die?**

23 And it came to pass that **peace and the love of God was restored again** among the people; and they searched the scriptures, and hearkened no more to the words of this wicked man.

24 And it came to pass that **many means were devised to reclaim and restore the Lamanites to the knowledge of the truth**; but it all was vain, for they delighted in wars and bloodshed, and they had an eternal hatred against us, their brethren. And they sought by the power of their arms to destroy us continually. **Good application of the Olive Tree allegory.**

25 Wherefore, the people of Nephi did fortify against them with their arms, and with all their might, trusting in the God and rock of their salvation; wherefore, they became as yet, conquerors of their enemies.

26 And it came to pass that I, Jacob, began to be old; and the record of this people being kept on the other plates of Nephi, wherefore, I conclude this record, declaring that I have written according to the best of my knowledge, by saying that the time passed away with us, and also **our lives passed away like as it were unto us a dream**, we being a **lonesome** and a **solemn** people, wanderers, cast out from Jerusalem, **born in tribulation**, in a **wilderness**, and hated of our brethren, which caused wars and contentions; wherefore, **we did mourn out our days**. *Wow. Jacob was a pessimist/realist, a sensitive soul. The same experiences impact each of us differently; Jacob was deeply affected by the trials he went through.*

27 And I, Jacob, saw that I must soon go down to my grave; wherefore, I said unto my son Enos: Take these plates. And I told him the things which my brother Nephi had commanded me, and he promised obedience unto the commands. And I make an end of my writing upon these plates, which writing has been small; and to the reader I bid farewell, hoping that many of my brethren may read my words. Brethren, adieu. *Jacob to his death seems to have felt a sense of inadequacy compared to Nephi.*

Additional Reading: [1 Nephi 10:12–14](#); [22:3–5](#); Bible Dictionary, “[Olive Tree](#),” 739–40.

1 Ne 10:12-14

12 Yea, even my father spake much concerning the Gentiles, and also concerning the house of Israel, that they should be compared like unto an olive tree, whose branches should be broken off and should be scattered

upon all the face of the earth.

13 Wherefore, he said it must needs be that we should be led with one accord into the land of promise, unto the fulfilling of the word of the Lord, that we should be scattered upon all the face of the earth.

14 And after the house of Israel should be scattered they should be gathered together again; or, in fine, after the Gentiles had received the fulness of the Gospel, the natural branches of the olive tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in, or come to the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer.

1 Ne. 22:3-5

3 Wherefore, the things of which I have read are things pertaining to things both temporal and spiritual; for it appears that the house of Israel, sooner or later, will be scattered upon all the face of the earth, and also among all nations.

4 And behold, there are many who are already lost from the knowledge of those who are at Jerusalem. Yea, the more part of all the tribes have been led away; and they are scattered to and fro upon the isles of the sea; and whither they are none of us knoweth, save that we know that they have been led away.

5 And since they have been led away, these things have been prophesied concerning them, and also concerning all those who shall hereafter be scattered and be confounded, because of the Holy One of Israel; for against him will they harden their hearts; wherefore, they shall be scattered among all nations and shall be hated of all men.

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Bible Dictionary: Olive Tree

Olive tree

The well-known *Olea europea*. It is extensively cultivated in Palestine for the sake of the oil. The olive requires being grafted; hence Paul’s allusion to the Gentiles ([Rom. 11:17–24](#)); but what he describes is the reverse of the ordinary gardening operation and is therefore spoken of as “contrary to nature” ([verse 24](#)). Using the olive tree in an allegorical sense to illustrate Israel and the Gentiles is also done by Zenos, as quoted by [Jacob 5](#). Isaiah uses the illustration of a grape vine for the same purpose ([Isa. 5:1–7](#)).

Scripture Chain: [N/A](#)
