**Outline of 3 NEPHI 11-18**

**From: John** W. Welch in *The Sermon at the Temple and Sermon on the Mount: An Latter-day Approach*

1. Thrice repeated announcement from Above (3 N 11:3-5)

2. Opening the Ears and Eyes (3N 11:58)

3. Delegation of Duty by the Father to the Son (3 N 11:7; 18:35)

4. Coming down in White Robes (3N 19:25)

5. Silence (3N 11:8; 17:25)

6. Identification by Marks on the Hand (3N 11:8-10, 14)

7. Falling down (3N11:12)

8. Personally touching the Wounds (3N 11:14,15)

9. Hosanna Shout and Falling down a Second Time (3N 11:17)

10. Ordination to the Priesthood (3N 11:21-22; 18:37) *// Mt 4:18-22; 10:2; Mk 3:3-15; Lk 6:12-13*

11. Baptism Explained (3N 11:23-28; 19:10-13) //

12. Assuring the Absence of Evil (3N 11:28-30)

13. Witnesses Invoked (3N 11:35-36)

14. Teaching the Gospel (3N 11:35, 37-38, 40-41)

15. Commending His Disciples unto the People (3N 12:1-2)

16. Blessings Promised (3N 12:3-12) // *Mt 5:3-12*

17. People invited to become the Salt of the Earth-salt used in OT sacrifices as sign of the covenant (3N12:13; 18:32-33)*// Mt5:13*

18. Letting their be Light (3N 12:14,16) *// Matt 5:14-16*

19. First Set of Laws Explained (3N 12:17-18)*// Mt 5:17-18*

20. Obedience and Sacrifice (3N 12:19-20; 9:19)*// Mt 5:19-20*

21. Prohibition against Anger, Ill-Speaking, and Ridicule of the Brethren (3N 12:21-22)

22. Reconciliation Necessary before Proceeding Further (3N 12:23-24)

23. Chastity (3N 12:27-30)

24. Marriage of Covenanters are not to be Dissolved Except for fornication (3N 12:31-32)

25. Oaths to be Sworn by Saying “yes” or “no” (3N 12:33-37)

26. Love of Enemies (3N 12:38-45)

27. Transition to a Higher Order (3N 12:48)

28. Giving to the Poor (3N 13:1-4)

29 The Order of Prayer (3N 13:5-7, 9-13)

30. Fasting, Washing, Anointing (3N13:4,6, 9-10, 17-18)

31. A Requirement to Lead a Life of Consecration and Singleness of Heart (3N 13:19-22, 24)

32. Care Promised for the Twelve Disciples (3N 18)

33. Clothing or endowing the Disciples (3N13:25, 29-31)

34. Preparing for the Judgment (3N 14:1-5)

35. Secrecy Required (3N14:6, 12:13)

36. Threefold Petition (3N 14:7-8, 21)

37. Seeking a Gift from the Father (3N 14:9-10; 18:1-4)

38. Entering Through a Narrow Opening (3N 13-14)

39. Bearing the Fruit of the Tree of Life (3N 14:17)

40. Entering into the Presence of the Lord (3N 14:22-23; 15:1)

41. Lecture on the Portion of God’s Covenant with Israel yet to be Fulfilled (3N15:3-8,10-16:20)

42. Admonition to Ponder (3N 17:1)

43. Healing the Sick (3N 17:5-10)

44. The Parents and the Children (3N 17:11-17, 23-24)

45. The covenant Memorialized and a New Name Given (3N 18:7, 10, 14)

46. Continued Worthiness Required (3N 18:15-23, 29-33)

47. Conferring the Power to Give the Holy Ghost (3N 18:36-37)

48. From Sermon to Ceremony (3N18:1-14)

**COVENANT MAKING 12:13-16**

12:13 **SALT** was a sign or symbol of the covenant (Lev 2:13; Num 18:19; **D&C 101:39)**. Also salt, like fire, was a purifier and used with every Temple sacrifice. In the JST Matt 5, this command is given to Jesus’ disciples only.

5:14-16 **LIGHT** must first be kindled through the Spirit. Before we can shine, we need a testimony. GET A LIGHT so that it will shine so brightly it cannot be hidden. We see light in disciples eyes. In the ancient world light came from either the sun, moon, stars, or fire. Temple sacrifices used fire to purifier them, which is also the Spirit’s role.

Jesus’ combination of the topics of salt and light together point to the idea of making ourselves “sacrifices to God” (SS, 241). Sacrifice and sanctification come from the same roots. In Latin, sacrifice meant to make sacred. Jesus next explained a changed in sacrifice—not from blood anymore, but from the heart. Our heart is required.

Another theme affiliated with “light” is the creation. Just like in the creation, the Lord again used opposites: light and darkness, heaven and earth. **“I**nstead of the old imperative, ‘Let there be light’ (Genesis 1:3), Jesus now issues the new injunction, ‘Let your light so shine before this people, that they may see your good works’ (3 Nephi 12:16). Just as the Creator looked at the creation and pronounced his works to be good, Jesus now invites each disciple to become a creator of ‘good works,’ that when they are seen, men may glorify God. With this, Jesus is forming a new heaven and new earth, a new creative act and new creation” (J. Welch, *Sermon,* 47).

**FIRST SET OF LAWS EXPLAINED: OBEDIENCE AND** SACRIFICE **12:17-19**

12:17 I don’t know about all the Nephites, but most Jews thought the Laws of Moses brought salvation. Jesus attacked that falsehood. The Messiah, not “the law” was the source of Salvation. He fulfilled the old law, so a new law and covenant were necessary. The new, higher law is not about the outward actions, but the inward state of one’s heart. The medium for this change is the Spirit. The Holy Ghost is essential to being born again. The gift of the Holy Ghost was going to be available generally again. Jesus compared the old and new laws from vs. 21-48.

12:18 Unlike Matthew 5, in this verse, the Lord tells them the law was already fulfilled.

12:19 This is not in in the Sermon on the Mt either. Jesus explains the new form of sacrifice—a broken heart. The word *contrite* is Latin and means: “to grind down to powder.” So our hearts should be broken and ground down to dust to be a new disciple. Our will must be broken to receive the will of the Father in our hearts. If we live the first three beatitudes and are poor in spirit, mournful, and meek we’ll be contrite (see “prayer” in the Bible Dictionary).

12:20 Unlike Matthew 5, Jesus now teaches openly**,** “therefore come unto me and be ye saved.” We must keep His commandments to enter into “the kingdom of heaven.”

PROHIBITION AGAINST ANGER, ILL-SPEAKING, RIDICULE OF THE BRETHERN

5:21-22 Jesus begins with the most heinous sin of the Decalogue, Ex 20:13, against murder. Then He adds a higher level of living that. The outward deed of murder is now the inner feeling of anger. (Note 3 Nephi takes out “without a cause”). Anger, contempt and condemnation must be sacrificed before one comes to the Lord’s alter. The penalty under the Law of Moses was physical death, now the penalty is spiritual death. Along with anger, we are not to look down on others, thinking of them as “fools / *Raca*.”

RECONSILIATION NEEDED BEFORE PROCEEDING

5:23-26 Before we think about praying, the Lord asks us to first be reconciled with all offending parties. Reconciliation becomes part of sacrificing our pride; it is healing. It also helps us understand why sometimes we don’t receive answers from God. We should quickly resolve ill feelings. Jesus’ counsel applies to our sacrament participation too.

CHASTITY

12:27-30 The second most damning commandment from the Decalogue is adultery. The higher law of chastity is again the condition of the heart, “Suffer none of these things to enter into your heart” (also see D&C 63:16). This is especially difficult in a world filled with pornography on nearly every street, phone, or computer. It is a serious matter though, as the Lord taught a matter of heaven or hell. To “take up your cross” means the cross of self-denial or sacrifice, to follow Jesus in the cause of righteousness.

MARRIAGE OF COVENTERS ARE NOT DISOLVED EXCEPT FOR FORNICATION

12:31 Deut 24:1 outlined the law of divorce, but now the Lord gives a high law. We are not living this higher law now, as those divorced can still enter the temple and be sealed to another.

12:32 “Fornication / *porneia*” included *all* sexual sins. The sanctity of marriage is extremely important to the Lord—as it sets the stage for His spirit children coming to earth to gain a body.

OATHES SWORM BY SAYING YES OR NO

12:33-37 Even making oaths must be sacrificed for speaking truth. The old law already taught not to swear by God in Ex 20:16 and Lev 19:12. Numb 30:2 also spoke of keeping one’s vows. This is a call of honesty without legalese!

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LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

12:38-39 The old law, an “eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot” (Ex 21:24), stems from the principle, “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” These lower laws are more a elementary form of God’s plan. In a state of wickedness, these laws are a good start to for a civilized nation—but when a Zion people are gathered, we need to live Jesus’ law and learn to love everyone. The hardest people to love are those who abuse and despitefully use us (see Isaiah 66:1).

12:40 Jesus references Ex 20: 26, “If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down.” This practice must have developed into law suits. We are living in a society plagued with law suits. Not to offend any good attorneys, our legal system tends to encourage revenge.

12:41-42The Lord asks us to develop generosity and hearts full of service, not a rigid exact fairness.

12:43-44 The law of Moses included revengeful statements like Deut 30:7, but the OT also emphasized loving your enemies (Lev 19:18; Ex 23:4; Prvb 25:21; Deut 14:1). The hardest people to love are our enemies. The Lord teaches us how to do that—pray about it. Ask God to take away your pain and frustration, pray for those who hurt you.

12:45 Jesus’ definition of children of God is not all spirit children—but rather those that learn to love. We become the children of God when we do what He does (even allowing our “sunshine” to shine on the just and unjust).

5:46-47 All these ideas are unique to 3 Nephi account, because the Lord successfully fulfilled His mission. When something is fulfilled, it means “to render full, complete, consummate; to render perfect; to perform, execute; of sayings, promises, prophecies, to bring to pass, ratify, accomplish; etc.” Christianity fulfilled the Law of Moses. (And to some degree, the restoration also fulfilled Christianity.)

12:48 Here is another change we find in the BoM, “even as I.” Post resurrection, Jesus is also perfect. With this commandment Jesus had several things in mind. Perfect /*teleios* also means: complete, finished, consummate human integrity and virtue, adult, etc. It involves the idea of becoming like God. Joseph Smith taught these ultimate realities can be represented ceremoniously thorough the Temple ordinances that where we are “instructed more perfectly” (*History of the Church*, 2:312). In the “second” Gospel of Mark, or “secret” Gospel of Mark, it reads, “for the use of those who were being perfected.” The copy was read “only to those who are being initiated into the great mysteries” (from Clement’s writings around 200 AD). The scriptures mentioned many people were “perfect” or who had perfect attributes in the scriptures: Seth, Adam (D&C 107:43), Noah (Gen 6:9), Abraham (Gen 17:1), Job (1:1), Moroni (Alma 48:11), Nephihah (50:37). To understand what kind of perfection the Lord is inviting us to, we should see mankind’s mistakes as divided into two kinds: errors of judgment and errors of intent. Jesus commanded us to be perfect in the intent of our hearts, which perfection we have power over through agency and Christ’s power. Lord also taught in 1831, “ye are not able to abide the presence of God now, neither the ministering of angels; wherefore, continue in patience until ye are perfected” (D&C 67:13). It is then that we can live with God.