

Discussion 16

The Allegory of the Olive Tree

(The Lord of the Vineyard, and the Workers in the Vineyard)

Primary Reading:

- Zenos Chapter 11
- Acts of the Three Nephites, Chapter 14 (From the Sealed Book)

Objectives:

- Revisit the allegory of the olive tree using the commentary given in the Acts of the 3 Nephites as a way of exploring it through a new lens.
- Consider where and how it fits into Zenos's Vision of the Dispensations, and where we are chronologically in this vision as compared with the imagery of John's Revelation.
- Evaluate whether we (personally) are tame or wild olives, and what to change if we don't like our answer to this question.

A Note from the course Author/Editor:

Due to the length of the vision, and the sheer quantity of details being presented, I have placed summaries after each section of reading, just to help keep it all straight. I do this to make it easier to work with, but I do not wish to imply that my summary is what you "should" be getting, and if you disagree with my summary that I am suggesting that you are "wrong". The purpose of this course is not to tell you how to interpret the scriptures, it is merely to offer suggestions about places where you can find more information that could help you as you ponder the things the Lord has given to you.

I tailor my summary and discussion around the Acts of the 3 Nephites from the Sealed Book. This is not a "testimony" that I know it to be "true". I use it because I find it very compelling, and feel that anyone wrestling their way through this allegory should approach it with whatever thought provoking commentary is available, and judge the value of the commentary after considering it for what it is.

I personally believe that, if every member of every branch of the Restoration (speaking of "churches" stemming from the legacy of Joseph Smith) were to ponder this allegory with an open heart, and decide to personally seek the living water directly from its pure source, and seek to be a tame olive, we would become a Zion people in our hearts, and we would be one. It is my prayer that I begin to see this happen in my lifetime.

Reading:

Save the Tree, Hide the Natural Branches (1-18)		
Jacob 3 [5] / Zenos 11	A3N - Chapter 14	Discussion Ideas
<p>Zenos 11:1 [Not in Jacob]. And it came to pass that, the vision having ended, the angel of YHVH came unto me again saying: Open thy mouth and speak thee the Word of YHVH that thou shalt cry unto this nation.</p>	<p>1. And taking the book of Jacob into his hands, Jesus proceeded to say: This is why the scriptures of the ancient prophets speak by means of illustrations, so that, seeing no one notices and does not pay attention to his message. For it is necessary that this simple truth related to your feelings remain as a sacred secret, from generation to generation, so that only in the final part of the fullness of times this may come in its purity and perfection, without ever having been distorted under the precepts of men.</p> <p>2. Happy, therefore, are your eyes, for they watch, and your ears, for they hear the reading of these words of mine and unravel this great mystery that was hidden by all the times predetermined by Me and my Father, since before the foundation of the the world, to be revealed to my humble followers, only when the workers of my vineyard are ready to do the work in the field abandoned by the earliest workers, for the purpose of restoring the gifts of God proceeding from His Name among those who take upon themselves the name of his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, and receives the 'Gift of the Holy Spirit'.</p> <p>3. And thus you may recognize the true sentiments of my priesthood and my grace among the children of men as to the gifts of the evil that were created by Satan to deceive and overcome the heavenly gifts in the world of mankind.</p>	<p>Is it fair to say that this Allegory has remained more or less free of distortion from the forced explanations of apologists over time?</p>
<p>Zenos 11:2a [not in Jacob] And it came to pass that I, Zenos, opened my mouth and began to prophesy, saying:</p> <p>Jacob 3:30b [5:2 / Zenos 11:2b] Hearken O ye House of Israel, and hear the words of me, a prophet of YHVH!</p>	<p>4. Listen, therefore, to him who has the desire to understand even more this great mystery, which is revealed to you in this moment in which my words come to you in the last days. For verily I, Jesus Christ, make known to you the meaning of the parable of the good olive tree prophesied to the house of Israel, now that you can understand in its simplicity this analogy uttered by my servant Zenos with regard to good feelings from God to his children on earth.</p>	<p>This is saying that the tameness or bitterness of the fruit is a measurement of the hearts of man (not adherence to dogma or a particular doctrinal worldview)? Is this what "the churches" focus on?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:31 [5:3 / Zenos 11:3] For behold, thus saith YHVH, I will liken thee, O House of Israel, like unto a tame olive tree, ...</p>	<p>5. Behold, the olive tree symbolically represents the people of God from the beginning of times, for it grows and produces fruit even on soils with little water, and even though if cut at the foot of its trunk, it has the vitality to regenerate itself again from of its roots. And although an olive tree is</p>	<p>For each of these things that the Lord says are the impressive properties of an olive tree, do you know of times when those things have happened to Israel?</p>

	<p>immersed for many days under the waters of a flood, it tends to survive and after lowering the waters, continues to produce fruits in abundance as if nothing had suffocated its branches. Remember that it was a leaf of an olive tree that the dove brought to Noah at the end of the flood.</p> <p>6. And if it were not enough all their resistance to survive in critical and adverse situations, when grafted branches of a grafted olive tree into a good olive tree, it is able to make them into good olive trees again, so that they are replanted, as branches of good olives again.</p>	
	<p>7. For this reason, I and my Father compared the house of Israel to all those who make up the Church of the Lamb to a good and leafy olive tree, which the Lord of the vineyard planted next to water currents, for the purpose of producing fruits according to its season; and whose leaves would never wither.</p> <p>8. And now, to what shall I compare these water currents? To the good feelings derived from the Gift of God, which flows along with the other sentiments derived from the love of God among the covenant people that persists in observing my commandments.</p> <p>9. But as it is written in the dream of my servant Lehi, these waters came from a spring near the tree of life, where the people of God must arrive and delight with their fruits, provided they remain firmly grasped to the rod of iron which will lead them, according to the words of Nephi, unto the fountains of living waters; that is, to the tree of life from which it proceeds its water source, which are symbols of the love of God; yea, from this Greater Gift of which I have spoken to you, whence proceed all the good sentiments of my gospel.</p>	<p>The introduction of water currents (or a river of water) is new to this allegory, but it does go nicely along with Lehi's dream. Do you feel that the introduction of this new element is forcing a new and otherwise incompatible meaning into the original, or is it harmonious and helpful?</p>
	<p>10. Nevertheless, the roots of the good olive tree, which is the house of Israel, stretched under the slopes of the river, where its waters were already mingled with impurity, symbolically representing the sentiments created by Satan, by whose priestly wiles he cast his gifts just below the source of God's gifts, and he came to defile his leafy olive tree, so that his roots, strewn on the slope of this river of filthy waters seen by Lehi, began to absorb the impurities from the evil one, and its fruits, which are the feelings of the people who make up the house of Israel, because they were so distracted by other things, did not perceive the filth of the water that absorbed the seed in their</p>	<p>Now we see the reason that the water in Nephi's dream was filthy.</p> <p>This seems to be saying that the tree of life and the good olive tree aren't entirely identical. The tree of life is the source of the pure water, and the good olive tree can be corrupted by the filthiness of the impurities mingled into the water before it gets to the olive tree. Does that</p>

	<p>hearts, as being the depths of hell, to involve them in the senses, and thus the good olive tree grew and grew in its field, that is, among the nations of the world.</p>	<p>interpretation seem reasonable to you? Do you feel that is harmonious with Zenos's original allegory?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:31 [5:3 / Zenos 11:3] For behold, thus saith YHVH, 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.</p>	<p>11. The original olive tree, therefore, had grown old in its customs and traditions, and even though the streams of dirty water were mixed with clean waters, that is to say, feelings of all kinds, coming from both sides, its roots were fed in such a way that its dirt appears in the fruits and also in its trunk, just above the earth, which prefigures the human heart; and thus, the sap of its essence was lost, because of these precepts of the enemy, as being a plague infesting its inner structure.</p>	
<p>Jacob 3:32 [5:4 / Zenos 11:4] 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 sayeth: 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:33 [5:5 / Zenos 11:5] And it came to pass that he pruned it, and digged about it, and nourished it, according to his word.</p>	<p>12. But behold, the Lord of the vineyard saw that his olive tree was beginning to wither, and so he [pruned] all his wild branches, yea, the people who affected the people of Israel with their feelings contaminated by the filth of Satan and his grumbling infecting all the nation of Israel in the days of Moses.</p> <p>13. When then they were in the wilderness of their afflictions, and God took from the midst of his people the wild branches, thus pruning his good olive tree and digging about so that the good water, coming from its clear spring, descended to its roots again, so as to make their fruits pure and desirable for themselves, and began to care for them in the hope of sprouting new and tender branches so that they produce good fruit in the next season, that is, new people in the next generation, and so it was, according to [their] words.</p>	<p>This is saying that the pruning event in these verses is referring to the 40 years of being in the wilderness with Moses, as the old generation died off.</p> <p>That seems to imply that the new and tender branches spoken of here are the tribes of Israel as they enter the land of Cainan and take over.</p> <p>Does that interpretation seem reasonable to you? Do you feel that is harmonious with Zenos's original allegory?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:34 [5:6 / Zenos 11:6] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:35 [5:7a / Zenos 11:7a] And it came to pass that the master of the vineyard saw it, and he sayeth unto his servant: It grieveth me that I should lose this tree;</p>	<p>14. And after much time had passed, small and new branches began to sprout, who were the lesser prophets that arose between the nation of Israel and those who listened to his words and the law of Moses.</p> <p>15. But, behold, his feelings were still tender, while the canopy of the olive, which foreshadowed the nation's leaders in their entirety, was dying, in the sense that none of the priests were pure enough to the Lord of the vineyard, languishing the highest part of the good olive tree. Then the owner of the vineyard said to his servant that it is painful to think that this dedicated generation of new branches, which is still tender, while the canopy of my olive tree perishes and will not have strength in itself to keep my fruits in the good olive tree that I took care of so much, all these</p>	

	days.	
<p>Jacob 3:36 [5:7b / Zenos 11:7b-8] Wherefore, go and pluck the branches from a wild olive tree, and bring them hither unto me;</p> <p>Jacob 3:36b [5:7b / Zenos 11:8] 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.</p>	<p>16. It happened then that the Babylonians came, like branches of a wild olive tree to be grafted among the nation of Israel, for how much the main branches that were beginning to dry up were destroyed by the fire</p>	<p>This is saying that these verses are referring to the time when Israel and Judah were conquered (600-800 BCE), and that this was necessary because the “structure” of Israel / Judah as a nation was not allowing the prophets to do their job to keep them on the path.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:37 [5:8a / Zenos 11:9] 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;</p> <p>Jacob 3:38 [5:8b / Zenos 11:10a] 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;</p> <p>Jacob 3:39 [5:8c / Zenos 11:10b] wherefore, I will take these young and tender branches, and I will graft them whithersoever I will.</p> <p>Jacob 3:40 [5:9a / Zenos 11:11a] Take thou the branches of the wild olive tree, and graft them in, in the stead thereof;</p> <p>Jacob 3:41 [5:9b / Zenos 11:11b] 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.</p>	<p>when the King of Babylon took captive many of the new and tender branches in order to graft them, according to the words of the Lord of the vineyard; "and I will graft them whithersoever I will;" for though the nation of Babylon will perish, as it were prophesied, the owner of the vineyard should preserve its fruit from the mixture of races that would occur between the Jews and the Gentiles. Therefore they were captives of this nation to fulfill the purpose of the Lord of the vineyard, to take from among the nations of the earth some new and tender branches of the house of Jacob, and to graft them where it should be.</p>	<p>It is further saying that these “tender young branches” were Daniel (and friends) who were taken out of Israel and Judah, but were allowed to continue to be “jewish”.</p> <p>And that the land of Israel was then populated by “wild” Babylonians, which actually “cleaned out” the structure of the tree itself.</p> <p>This is implying that the problem with Israel was the priestly or kingly structure (or both) which needed to be broken down so the nation itself could recover. Do you agree with that interpretation? Is it harmonious with the original allegory?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:42 [5:10 / Zenos 11:12] And it came to pass that the servant of the Lord of the vineyard, having done according to the word of the Lord of the vineyard, and grafted in the branches of the wild olive tree.</p> <p>Jacob 3:43 [5:11a / Zenos 11:13] 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;</p>		

Jacob 3:44 [5:11b / Zenos 11:14]

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;

Jacob 3:45 [5:12 / Zenos 11:15]

Wherefore, go thy way; watch the tree, and nourish it, according to my words.

Jacob 3:46 [5:13a / Zenos 11:16]

And these will I place in the **nethermost part of my vineyard**, whithersoever I will, it mattereth not unto thee;

Jacob 3:47 [5:13b / Zenos 11:17]

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.

Jacob 3:48 [5:14 / Zenos 11:18]

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.**

17. And it came to pass in the days of those kings that Daniel, the Servant of the Lord, became master of the magicians-astrologers from the east, and came to teach his princes and noble confederates and vassals, among whom were many Jews, which have passed their knowledge for your children, spreading from generation to generation their knowledge of astrology even among the many synagogues that were erected in the land of the East, when then the Lord of the vineyard went to hide the natural branches of the good olive tree in the **nethermost parts of the vineyard**, some in one part, others in another, spreading these apprentices of the wisdom of Daniel the prophet **according to his pleasure and will.**

Summary of vs. 1-18:

- The trees are “nations” or people groups. The Vineyard is the whole earth, some trees are wild (like Babylon - Zen 11:7) and one particular tree (Israel - Zen 11:3) has a history of producing nice tame fruit.
- The fruit produced by the trees are Good/Evil that grows in the hearts of the people on each tree (A3N 14:4).
- The “success” of a tree or a branch of a tree is measured entirely by how likely it is to produce tame fruit.
- The Tree of Life (from Lehi’s dream) is planted near the vineyard, and it is the source of water for the vineyard (A3N 14:9).
- The River of Water (also from Lehi’s dream) is polluted near its source by the “Priestly Wiles” of the Adversary (A3N 14:10) and, Just as Nephi saw in his dream, the river of water was filthy.
- The filthiness of the water can pollute the olives on the trees, or even entire branches, or trees. In Zen 11:3, that is the situation for Israel.
- Their old customs and traditions (A3N 14:11) that were planted there by the adversary were poisoning the tree, and something had to be done to fix it, or it would be lost.
- Zen 11:4-5 is about the time of Moses. The digging and pruning and nourishing for tender young branches was the 40 years in the wilderness, where the dead wood was discarded from the tree, and it was given new life. (this interpretation is based on A3N 14:12-13)
- Zen 11:6-7 are about the time when Israel/Judah were conquered. The problem at that time (according to A3N 14:15) was that the structure of the tree (the priesthood) was corrupt and the whole tree languished.
- In Zenos 11:10-11, the Lord is more interested in the fruit than the tree. If the branches are not producing good fruit, he’s willing to throw them out.
- In A3N 14:16 we read that Zenos 11:7-18 is the Babylonian occupation of Jerusalem. The wild branches (Babylon, Persia, Assyria) were intermingled with the people in Jerusalem, and the Israelites (like Daniel) were taken into Babylon, and from there sent all over the place. Lehi’s group also left as part of this “planting in the nethermost parts of the vineyard.”
- At this point in the allegory, we are after the fall of Jerusalem, but before the coming of Christ.

Good Fruit Throughout the Vineyard (19-32)

Zenos 11	A3N - Chapter 14	Discussion Ideas
<p>Jacob 3:49 [5:15 / Zenos 11:19] And it came to pass that that after much time had passed, the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor in the vineyard.</p> <p>Jacob 3:50 [5:16a / Zenos 11:20] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard, and also the servant, went down into the vineyard to labor.</p>	<p>18. And it came to pass that a long time went by, and the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant, come, let us go to the vineyard to work on it. And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard, and also the servant, went down into the vineyard to work. It was when the words of Isaiah, both recited and researched in the East, were fulfilled through teaching propagated by Belteshazzar in the wisdom schools of Babylon, where they studied the scriptures with all peoples in relation to the “future descendant”; and up until even among the instructed rabbis of the Hebrew people in their respective synagogues, in the distant lands of Israel.</p>	<p>So this next phase is a long time AFTER the fall of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.</p> <p>This “long time” appears to be centuries, not millenia, because it appears to be the time of Christ.</p> <p>This is saying that Daniel was the one who taught the “wise men” the principles of astronomy so they could recognize the birth of the messiah.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:51 [5:16b / Zenos 11:21] And it came to pass that the servant sayeth unto his master: Behold, look here; behold the tree.</p> <p>Jacob 3:52 [5:17a / Zenos 11:22] 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 sprang forth, and began to bear fruit.</p> <p>Jacob 3:53 [5:17b / Zenos 11:23] And he beheld that it was good; and the fruit thereof was like unto the natural fruit.</p> <p>Jacob 3:54 [5:18a / Zenos 11:24] And he sayeth unto the servant: Behold, the branches of the wild tree hath taken hold of the moisture of the root thereof, that the root thereof hath brought forth much strength;</p> <p>Jacob 3:55 [5:18b / Zenos 11:25] And because of the much strength of the root thereof, the wild branches hath</p>	<p>19. Which had been grafted into the wild olive tree, and for this reason, they learned to map the heavens, so that they could identify that star that had been foretold by the prophets that does not belong to the starry skies, for how much its manifestation in the night sky would foreshadow the birth of the 'promised descendant' among men on earth.</p> <p>20. These, then, were the natural branches of the good olive tree in a foreign land, and so did those branches of the olive tree that were brought and grafted into the good olive tree; all have borne fruit in their respective station, and have mingled together.</p>	<p>This is saying that the star of Bethlehem was NOT a “normal” star or predictable part of the night sky.</p> <p>These verses appear to be saying that the Babylonians who occupied Israel were ultimately good fruit. Which (if I’m reading it right) was true in spite of the fact that they were not YHVH-ists. Does that seem to be true, even in the original allegory? God is collecting good fruit regardless of the doctrinal / dogmatic world views of the people whose hearts are clean and sweet?</p>

brought forth tame fruit.

Jacob 3:56 [5:18c / Zenos 11:26]
Now if we had not grafted in these branches, the tree thereof would have perished.

Jacob 3:57 [5:18d / Zenos 11:27]
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.

Jacob 3:58a [5:19 / Zenos 11:28a]
And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto the servant: Come,

Jacob 3:58b [5:19 / Zenos 11:28b]
Let us go to the nethermost part of the vineyard, and behold if the natural branches of the tree hath not brought forth much fruit also, that I may lay up of the fruit thereof, against the season, unto mine own self.

Jacob 3:59 [5:20a / Zenos 11:29]
And it came to pass that they went forth whither the master of the vineyard had hid the natural branches of the tree, and he sayeth unto the servant: Behold these.

Jacob 3:60 [5:20b / Zenos 11:30]
And he beheld the first, that it had brought forth much fruit; and he beheld also, that it was good.

Jacob 3:61 [5:20c / Zenos 11:31]
And he sayeth unto the servant: Take of the fruit thereof, and lay it up, against the season, that I may preserve it unto mine own self,

Jacob 3:62 [5:20d / Zenos 11:32]
For behold, this long time have I nourished it, and it

21. And after a long time, a child is born in the land of Jerusalem, as prophesied by the ancient prophets, in the city of Bethlehem; and the people that walked in darkness saw a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, yea, in the land of the east, the light of the morning shone upon them, proclaiming the coming of him that would be called by the name of Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

22. And guided by this light was that the astrologers of the orient took the way to the land of Israel, where the throne of David is set as it prophesied, in search of the land of Naphtali, in the way of the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

23. Then the fruits of the branches that came out of the wild olive tree, and were attentive to the signs of every season, whose branches were scattered throughout the region of the east, and the Lord of the vineyard saw that they were good branches; and its fruits, that is, the sentiments of the Jews born in the East and educated in the synagogues of that region, according to the teachings of the prophets, were similar to the fruits of the Jews of the land of Israel, that is, the natural feelings.

24. For this reason they were easy to mix among their brethren in the land of their ancestors, for they absorbed the moisture of its root, so that its root produced much strength; and because of the great strength of the root the grafted branches produced good fruits, so that they could be grafted again into the good olive tree, that is, that could mix without being aware of the difference between one and the other.

The "Ang Aklatan" book claims to be the record of one such group planted in the east (the area including the modern day Philippines). It includes a story of a man sent to offer Gold to the messiah at his birth.

Are there other Israelite groups who live in "the east" that we have records from?

This allegory spills a considerable amount of ink planting multiple branches of Israel throughout the East, why is that?

Why would they search for the land of Naphtali?

<p>hath brought forth much fruit.</p>		
<p>Jacob 3:63a [5:21a / Zenos 11:33a] And it came to pass that the servant sayeth unto his master: How comest thou hither to plant this tree, or this branch of the tree?</p> <p>Jacob 3:63b [5:21b / Zenos 11:33b] For behold, it was the poorest spot in all the land of thy vineyard.</p> <p>Jacob 3:64 [5:22 / Zenos 11:34] And the Lord of the vineyard sayeth 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.</p>	<p>25. And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master: How art thou come to plant here this tree, or this branch of the tree? For behold, the East was the lowest and unproductive part of all the land of your vineyard. And the Lord of the vineyard said unto him: Give me no counsel. I knew it was an unproductive piece of land; so I told you that I have treated this first tree all this time; and you see that it produced many fruits; gather them, therefore, and keep them for the proper season, that I may bring them unto me.</p>	<p>What “spot” do you suppose this is referring to? A difficult area to live in that was producing a delightful people (“East” of Israel)?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:65a [5:23a / Zenos 11:35a] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant: Look hither:</p> <p>Jacob 3:65b [5:23b / Zenos 11:35b] behold, I have planted another branch of the tree also; and thou knowest that this spot of ground was poorer than the first,</p> <p>Jacob 3:66 [5:23c / Zenos 11:36] 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.</p>	<p>26. And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant, Look here; see that I have also planted another branch, yea, a second branch [of] the tree [in] this unproductive land of the east; and you know that this piece of land was more unproductive than the first. But look at the tree. Behold, I have dealt with her all this time, and she bore many fruits; gather them also, and keep them for a due season, that I may preserve them for myself.</p>	<p>Or this, spot, east of Israel, that's also a difficult land but was producing a delightful people a couple of thousand years ago?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:67 [5:24 / Zenos 11:37] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sayeth 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</p>	<p>27. And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard spake again unto his servant, Look here, and see another branch which I have planted; yea, a third of the orient, and, behold, I have dealt with him also and brought forth good fruit, and of these three branches I will bring those who will serve me.</p>	<p>Or this third spot which is specifically said to be in “the Orient”, but that would have had a delightful branch of Israel leading up to the time of Christ?</p>

<p>brought forth fruit.</p>		
	<p>28. And from these three productive branches, coming from the unproductive land from which the Lord of the vineyard mentioned to his servant, came Jews from the schools that map the stars, in order to accompany the development of this boy who was born in Bethlehem, in the land of Jerusalem.</p> <p>29. Being the first of these three, Bunai, noble Rabbi over the synagogues of Greece, which caused him to be accepted into the sect of the Pharisees in Jerusalem, where he had established his residence from my birth until the days of my resurrection, and among the natural Jews of the good olive tree he mixed with the name of Nicodemus. The second known as Joseph; Jewish born in Rome and appointed magistrate in the land of Judea; with powers derived from a judge over the city of Arimathea, which was situated three hours northwest of Jerusalem, where he was a member of the Sanhedrin, but my particular disciple. The third, noble merchant of the region of Antioch, he preferred to stay away from the leaven of the Pharisees in Bethany under the name Lazarus.</p> <p>30. These were the three branches from the wild olive tree planted in the lowlands of the orient; and were great friends from the beginning to the end of my journey on the Earth of their ancestors.</p>	<p>While this does sound an awful lot like it is saying the three foreign hebrews are supposed to be the “three” wise men, it doesn’t actually say they brought gifts. Only that they were important foreigners who were grafted back into the natural tree from the “orient” / east.</p> <p>On what map are Rome, and Greece and Antioch “east” of Jerusalem?</p> <p>This is saying that, at this point in the Allegory, we are talking about the time of Christ in Jerusalem.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:68a [5:25a / Zenos 11:38a] And he sayeth unto the servant: Look hither, and behold the last;</p> <p>Jacob 3:68b [5:25b / Zenos 11:38b] yea, 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:</p> <p>Jacob 3:68c [5:25c / Zenos 11:38c] behold, I have nourished this tree like unto the others.</p>	<p>31. And the Lord of the vineyard said to the servant, Look here and see the last, behold, it refers to the descendants of Lehi, the branches of the original olive tree planted in the land of his inheritance. Behold, I have planted them on a piece of fertile land; yea, in this land overseas, and I took care of it all this time, and only a part of the tree bore good fruit; but the other part of the tree produced bitter fruit; and it happened that a long time passed since I planted them and the branches did not produce good fruit. And the Lord of the vineyard saith unto his servant: come, let us go down, and let us return to work in this vineyard. For behold, the time draweth nigh, and the end shall come soon; therefore, I must save fruit for myself, for the next season.</p>	<p>This is saying that the last branch, the one planted on the good spot of ground, was Lehi’s group.</p> <p>Are we to understand that the tame and wild fruit from this tree are in reference to the Nephites and Lamanites?</p> <p>And are we still in reference to the time of Christ? (neither the allegory nor the commentary imply that time has passed since the last verses)</p>
<p>Jacob 3:69 [5:26 / Zenos 11:39] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto the servant: Pluck off the branches that have not brought forth good fruit, and</p>	<p>32a. It so happened after the third day after I was resurrected in Jerusalem, that I came to be among my other sheep of whom I have spoken, that these I would also have to visit, which are a branch of the house of Israel planted in a fertile land.</p>	<p>Is this in reference to the destruction in the Americas at the time of the Crucifixion?</p> <p>Is this in reference to the</p>

<p>cast them into the fire.</p> <p>Jacob 3:70 [5:27 / Zenos 11:40] But behold, the servant sayeth 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:71 [5:28 / Zenos 11:41] 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.</p>		<p>visiting of Christ to the Americas, and the other sheep immediately following his resurrection?</p>
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Summary of vs. 19-32:

- This section appears to be about the time of Christ. It explains how the Magi knew to come looking for the Lord after seeing astronomical signs.
- The visiting of the various branches seems to be about Jesus visiting all of his sheep after his resurrection.
- The Good plot of land is where Lehi's group was planted. And it was having issues, so ... the destruction that we read about in 3rd Nephi took place (Zen 11:38-39).

Bad Fruit Everywhere!! (42-61)

Zenos 11	A3N - Chapter 14	Discussion Ideas
<p>Jacob 3:72 [5:29a / Zenos 11:42] And it came to pass that a much time had passed away, and the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant: Come, let us go down into the vineyard, that we may labor again in the vineyard;</p> <p>Jacob 3:73 [5:29b / Zenos 11:43] For behold, the time draweth near, and the end soon cometh, wherefore, I must lay up fruit, against the season, unto mine own self.</p> <p>Jacob 3:74a [5:30a / Zenos 11:44a] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard, and the servant, went down into the vineyard;</p> <p>Jacob 3:74b [5:30b / Zenos 11:44b] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:75 [5:31a / Zenos 11:45] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard did taste of the fruit, every sort according to its number.</p> <p>Jacob 3:76 [5:31b / Zenos 11:46] And the Lord of the vineyard saith: Behold, this long time have we nourished this tree, and I have laid up unto myself against the season, much fruit.</p> <p>Jacob 3:77 [5:32a / Zenos 11:47] But behold, this time it hath brought forth much fruit, and there is none of it which is good.</p> <p>Jacob 3:78 [5:32b / Zenos 11:48] 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.</p>	<p>32b. But behold, I say to you, that although they live a period of total harmony for a short time, with the noble sentiments coming from the Most Great Gift from the Spirit of God; behold, in the course of his future days the natural tree, that is, the Jews into whom the branches wild, which are the Gentiles that were grafted, will be overburdened with every kind of fruit, both of Jew and Gentile, and this will occur both in the land of your ancestors, as well as in this land of your inheritance, for how much, many shall come from other lands, even many Jews, from various tribes of Israel, and also from Ephraim. But, behold, there shall be many Gentiles coming from afar, from places overseas, and it shall be seen that none of their fruit shall be good unto me in this period of time.</p> <p>33. It is therefore at this time that the prophecies concerning the days of that predicted darkness are fulfilled, which will cover the earth, when the sun will set on the prophets, and the light of men will become darkness and there will be no one to tell you how much longer this will last, by what form is that church that was foretold to Nephi, son of Lehi, that would be the most abominable of all the churches, whose founder is the devil, and who, for the praise of the world, will destroy the saints of God and also enslave them in that land that separates the seed of Lehi, through the many waters.</p>	<p>This seems to be saying "let's fast forward to the last days."</p> <p>Is this saying that for the 1800 or so years from the last visit, there were lots of times when the fruit in both the Lehite branch AND the "old world" branch of the tree, the Lord was gathering a decent harvest? Is this true despite the LDS perspective that the authority of those trees was no longer in place, and they couldn't possibly be harvested as acceptable fruit, since the branches they were growing on were in apostasy?</p> <p>Is this saying that at the time of Joseph Smith, there were no branches producing any good fruit? Does it follow that the "apostasy" at the time of Joseph Smith was more about what kind of fruit was growing, and less about the "authority" of the branches they were growing on? In both the original and the commentary the Lord of the Vineyard is only interested in the tameness of the fruit, and the branches are NOT his focus, other than to destroy the ones that are no longer producing any tame fruit. Do you have thoughts on this?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:79 [5:33 / Zenos 11:49]</p>	<p>34. And the Lord of the vineyard said unto the</p>	<p>What do they mean when</p>

<p>And the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto the servant: What shall we do unto the tree, that I may preserve again good fruit thereof unto mine own self?</p> <p>Jacob 3:80 [5:34 / Zenos 11:50] And the servant sayeth 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.</p>	<p>servant, What shall we do for this tree, that it may again store its good fruit for me? And the servant said to his master, "Look, because you have grafted branches of the wild olive tree, that is, the Gentiles in the natural olive tree, through Christ, then they nourished the roots, so that they are alive and not dead; see, therefore, that they are still good".</p>	<p>they speak of the "roots" of the tree being good? What about the existing trees was still good and strong and capable of sustaining the production of good fruit? And what do they mean when they say the "branches" are not good? What's the difference between roots and branches?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:81 [5:35 / Zenos 11:51] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant: The tree profiteth me nothing, and the roots thereof profiteth me nothing, so long as it shall bring forth evil fruit.</p> <p>Jacob 3:82 [5:36 / Zenos 11:52] 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.</p>	<p>35. But, behold, the Lord of the vineyard said unto his servant: It is of no use to me the tree and its roots if they bear evil fruit. Nevertheless, knowing that their roots are good I will preserve them for a future purpose; and because of their great strength they have produced good fruits of the grafted branches,...</p>	<p>In what way did the good strong roots produce good fruit from wild branches?</p> <p>And, in what way have the wild branches started producing evil fruit?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:83 [5:37a / Zenos 11:53] But behold, the wild branches have grown, and have overran the roots thereof; and because that the wild branches have overcome the roots thereof, it hath brought forth much evil fruit;</p> <p>Jacob 3:84 [5:37b / Zenos 11:54] And because that it hath brought forth so much evil fruit, thou beholdest that it begineth 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.</p>	<p>... and henceforth the grafted branches will grow and overcome the roots of the tree; and because the branches are grafted will grow and overcome the roots, then it will produce many evil fruits and be thrown into the fire, unless we do something to preserve it.</p>	
<p>Jacob 3:85 [5:38 / Zenos 11:55] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sayeth unto his servant: Let us go down into the nethermost parts of the vineyard and see if the natural branches have also brought forth evil fruit.</p> <p>Jacob 3:86 [5:39a / Zenos 11:56] And it came to pass that they went down into the nethermost parts of the</p>	<p>36. And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard saith unto his servant: Let us go down into the lower parts of the vineyard, to see whether the natural branches also produced forth evil fruit. And it came to pass that they saw that the fruits of the natural branches were corrupted also because of that abominable church; yea, the first and the second, and also the last; and all the churches that had tried to bring forth good fruit had been corrupted. But, behold, the Lord of the</p>	<p>V36-37 appears to be saying that the pilgrims and others who came to the Americas were actively producing good fruit for a time, and that the Lord was happy with them. But, that time had passed when we reached the time of preceding the Restoration when nothing was producing good fruit.</p>

<p>vineyard.</p> <p>Jacob 3:87 [5:39b / Zenos 11:57] 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:</p>	<p>vineyard then said to his servant, this is the fulfillment of the vision of Nephi concerning that man whom he saw that was separated from the seed of his brethren by the many waters; and I saw that the Spirit of God came down and inspired the man; and as the man went through the many waters, he came to the seed of his brethren which was in the land of the promise, just as he saw the Spirit of God inspire other Gentiles, which are branches of the wild olive tree, and therefore remnant of the house of Israel; and they went forth out of the captivity, and crossed over the many waters, and received the good land by inheritance, for they humbled themselves before the Lord; and the power of the Lord was with them.</p>	<p>This way of looking at it really undermines the narrative that the apostasy happened 1500+ years ago, and that God's primary concern when harvesting in his vineyard as he separates the tame from the wild fruit is which pieces of fruit received which ordinances through what keys and by what authority.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:88 [5:40 / Zenos 11:58] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:89 [5:41 / Zenos 11:59] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard wept, and sayeth unto the servant: What could I have done more for my vineyard?</p>	<p>37. But these last grafted branches, that is, Gentiles brought to this land overseas, will also surmount the seed of Lehi and his brethren and the branch of the seed of his brethren will dry up and die; and the Lord will cry for his loss,...</p>	<p>So, is this saying that the branch that withered away were the remaining Lehites? And that the Europeans that came over snuffed out a good branch (the remaining Lehites were not altogether in apostasy)? If so, that agrees with the claims made in the Nemenhah records.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:90 [5:42a / Zenos 11:60a] Behold, I knew that all the fruit of the vineyard, save it were these, had become corrupted,</p> <p>Jacob 3:91 [5:42b / Zenos 11:60b] and now, these which have once brought forth good fruit, have also become corrupted;</p> <p>Jacob 3:92 [5:42c / Zenos 11:61] And now, all the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing, save it be to be hewn down and cast into the fire!</p>	<p>... because all the fruit of his vineyard will perish except these; but now are also corrupted, and all the trees of his vineyard are of no avail except to be cut down and cast into the fire.</p>	<p>Which branch was not corrupted that he is speaking of here? After reading it several times, I've concluded that it is saying the pilgrims and others who fled to the America's to avoid religious persecution.</p> <p>And now, we have come to the time of Joseph Smith?</p>

Summary of vs. 42-61:

- This passage (from Zenos 42-61) speaks of the time leading up to the Restoration, where every branch was corrupted.
- In A3N 14:36-37 the narration rewinds a little bit to explain that the early American immigrants were wild branches that were grafted into Lehi's tree, and for a time (Zen 11:60) they were the only branch producing good fruit. But, they also (at this point) had gone wild, and the entire vineyard was producing only bitter fruit.

The State of the Restoration, Today (62-74)

Zenos 11	A3N - Chapter 14	Discussion Ideas
<p>Jacob 3:93 [5:43 / Zenos 11:62] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:94 [5:44 / Zenos 11:63] 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.</p>	<p>38. But, behold, the Lord of the vineyard cut off the trees that obstructed this piece of land, and planted another tree in his place, fulfilling the promise which Joseph the son of Jacob had obtained from God the Father, when he told him that he would raise from his loins a "fair branch" to the house of Israel; and being righteous, though he is Gentile, will be counted as being part of the natural olive tree; for he will be truly a descendant of Joseph; not the Messiah, but that "graft" of which Lehi prophesied, which is to come in the fullness of the Gentiles in the last days, when your descendants have degenerated, fallen into unbelief, yea, for the space of many years and for many generations after the Messiah manifests himself in person to the children of men, then the fulness of my gospel shall come to the Gentiles; and of the Gentiles, to the remnant of your descendants.</p> <p>39. Yea, to bring the Gentiles out of the darkness, which shall be upon the earth in those days; nevertheless, this graft will be a seer who will guide my people again to the path of light.</p>	<p>V38 of the commentary seems to be saying that these verses are about Joseph Smith becoming a wild branch grafted into the Lehi tree. Do you agree with that interpretation?</p> <p>Is the idea of Joseph Smith's restoration being grafted into Lehi's tree about location? Or is there more to it than that? If so, what?</p> <p>Is this a reference to the Joseph Smith branch replacing natural Lehitese? Or is it that the Joseph Smith branch is replacing those other "wild" branches that were already added to Lehi's tree (the pilgrims)?</p> <p>In V63 of Zen 11, you will notice that he is speaking of this in the past tense. From the perspective of the allegory, the restoration happened between v 61 and 62.</p> <p>—</p> <p>John Pratt made an interesting observation of the use of the word "beheldest" where he says that the use of the past tense here is saying that the servant beheld or was watching when the master cut down and replaced that tree. He makes a compelling case that that means it was NOT the Jaredite tree replaced by Lehi's, because the servant wasn't present when that was done.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:95 [5:45a / Zenos 11:64] And thou beheldest that a part thereof, brought forth good fruit; and a part thereof, brought forth wild fruit.</p>	<p>40. And the Lord of the vineyard saw that a part of this planted tree in the last days, produced good and bad fruit, that is, good and bad feelings in the people who make up</p>	<p>Verse 40 of the commentary injects a significant detail that is not in the original allegory. And upon this detail hinges</p>

<p>Jacob 3:96 [5:45b / Zenos 11:65] And because that I plucked not the branches thereof, and cast them into the fire, behold, they have overcome the good branch, that it hath withered away.</p>	<p>the branches of his vineyard; in such a way that the brave branch produced bad fruits that surpassed the good branch. </p>	<p>the entire “outcome” of the interpretation. Without the additional detail, the yellow and green highlighted verses from the allegory appear to be a reference to Nephites and Lamanites, But with it, it appears to be about “warring” branches of the restoration AFTER Joseph Smith is grafted into Lehi’s tree.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:97 [5:46a / Zenos 11:66] And now behold, notwithstanding all the care which we have taken of my vineyard, the trees thereof hath become corrupted, that they bring forth no good fruit:</p> <p>Jacob 3:98 [5:46b / Zenos 11:67] And these I had hope to preserve, to have laid up fruit thereof, against the season, unto mine own self.</p>	<p>... And now, after all the care we have taken with the vineyard, its grafts have become corrupted, so that none of them bring forth good fruit; and these I hoped to keep in order to get its fruits for me, for the season to come.</p>	<p>These verses seem to be lamenting the state of the Restoration.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:99 [5:46c / Zenos 11:68] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:100 [5:47a / Zenos 11:69a] But what could I have done more in my vineyard?</p> <p>Jacob 3:101 [5:47b / Zenos 11:69b] Have I slackened mine hand, that I have not nourished it?</p>	<p>41. But, behold, “they” became like the wild olive tree, and they are of no use except to be cut down and cast into the fire; but I feel sorry to lose them just like the rest of my vineyard. — What else could, however, I have done in my vineyard?</p>	<p>When he says we are “like unto the wild olive tree” this is rather directly implying that there is no difference in the hearts of the children of the restoration than there is of all of the churches that exist and did exist before the restoration, and that our hearts are as wild or bitter as everyone else’s. Is that a fair judgment of the situation as it stands today?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:102 [5:47c / Zenos 11:70] Nay; I have nourished it, and I have digged 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:103 [5:47d / Zenos 11:71] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:104 [5:47e / Zenos 11:72] Who is it that hath corrupted my vineyard?</p>	<p>... I have nourished them, and I have digged about them, and I have pruned, and I have fertilized its roots; and I have stretched forth mine hand almost all the days long; but behold, the end draweth nigh, and therefore I feel I have to cut down all the trees of my vineyard, and cast them into the fire, that they may be burned. Who is it that has corrupted my vineyard?</p>	

<p>Jacob 3:105 [5:48a / Zenos 11:73a] And it came to pass that the servant sayeth unto his master: Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard?</p> <p>Jacob 3:106 [5:48b / Zenos 11:73b] Hath not the branches thereof overcame the roots, which are good?</p> <p>Jacob 3:107 [5:48c / Zenos 11:73c-74a] And because that the branches have overcame the roots thereof? For behold, they grew faster than the strength of the roots thereof, taking strength unto themselves;</p> <p>Jacob 3:108 [5:48d / Zenos 11:74b] behold, I say, is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard hath become corrupted?</p>		<p>This seems to be in judgment of the various branches of the restored church of Jesus Christ who consider their own branch to be greater than what they were intended, and they have overcome their original roots. Is that a fair judgment of the situation as it stands today?</p>
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Summary of vs. 62-74:

- This is saying that the Joseph Smith / Restoration branch that the Lord added to the Lehi tree was producing both good and bad fruit, for a time (Zen 11:64).
- But, Zen 11:65 says that at some point (perhaps today) the tree stops producing good fruit.
- In 11:68, he says that we (the restoration) are no different from the other branches that he was not getting good fruit from when he grafted the Restoration into the Lehi tree.
- Zenos 11:73 blames the “loftiness” of the branches “taking strength unto themselves”, which have now overcome the roots. To me, this is saying that the individual branches are so proud of their “keys” and “priesthood” that they have overplayed their hand, and are acting, not according to what they were planted to be (their roots), but instead have become their own thing. Relishing in the vanity of their own “chosen-ness”. And pride is a bitter fruit.

Re-grafting Lots of Branches (75-90)

Zenos 11	A3N - Chapter 14	Discussion Ideas
<p>Jacob 3:109a [5:49a / Zenos 11:75] And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sayeth 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;</p> <p>Jacob 3:109b [5:49b / Zenos 11:76] For I have done all, yea and what more could I have done more for my vineyard?</p> <p>Jacob 3:110 [5:50 / Zenos 11:77] But behold, the servant saith unto the Lord of the vineyard: Spare it a little longer.</p> <p>Jacob 3:111 [5:51 / Zenos 11:78a] And the Lord saith: Yea, I will spare it a little longer; for it grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard;</p>	<p>42. And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Let us go, 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 I could. What could I have done more for my vineyard? — But behold, the servant said unto the Lord of the vineyard, Spare it a little longer. 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.</p>	
<p>Jacob 3:112 [5:52a / Zenos 11:78b-79a] 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,</p> <p>Jacob 3:113 [5:52b / Zenos 11:79b] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:114 [5:53 / Zenos 11:80] 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.</p>	<p>43. Let us therefore take the branches of these which I have planted in the low parts of my vineyard, and graft them on the tree from which they proceeded, that is, in the original graft; and pluck from the tree the branches that give the most bitter fruits and graft in its place the natural branches, coming from the original tree, so that the tree does not die, but preserve for me your roots, to comply with my purpose.</p>	<p>Are these in reference to re-gathering the lost tribes of Israel? Or is it something else, if so, what could it be talking about?</p> <p>When the lost tribes are restored to the original tree, is that the Lehi tree (Mormonism) or will they be grafted into another of the trees in the Lord's Vineyard? Is there a reason other than our own lofty opinion of our own branches to assume that the Lord intends to gather Israel "into" Mormonism rather than the original mother tree (either of Judaism or Christianity)?</p> <p>I don't pose this question to belittle the opinions of those who feel it must be Mormonism in order to be the true tree, I pose the question because if you expect something that is not actually what the Lord has planned, you won't see it unfold because you will refuse to see it for what it is when it happens.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:115 [5:54a / Zenos 11:81]</p>	<p>44. And, behold, the roots of the</p>	<p>What are the "roots" of each of</p>

<p>And behold, the roots of the natural branches of the tree which I planted whithersoever I would, are yet alive;</p> <p>Jacob 3:116 [5:54b / Zenos 11:82] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:117a [5:54c / Zenos 11:83a] Yea, I will graft in unto them the branches of their mother tree (Shekinah), that I may preserve the roots also unto mine own self,</p> <p>Jacob 3:117b [5:54d / Zenos 11:83b] that when they shall be sufficiently strong, that perhaps they may bring forth good fruit unto me, and I may yet have glory in the fruit of my vineyard.</p>	<p>natural branches of the tree, which I planted where I pleased, are still alive; scattered throughout all the land of my vineyard, that I may preserve them also for a purpose of mine. I will therefore take its branches and graft them again into the original tree. Yea, I will graft upon them the branches of the original tree, that I also may preserve the roots unto myself, that when they are strong enough they may bring forth good fruits for me, and I may have glory in the fruit of my vineyard.</p>	<p>the trees in the vineyard, and what does it mean that, even today, there are roots of the original tree that are still viable?</p> <p>Which tree is this tree? And what does it mean that parts of it will be grafted to those other roots throughout the vineyard?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:118 [5:55 / Zenos 11:84a] 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;</p> <p>Jacob 3:119 [5:56 / Zenos 11:84b] and they also took of the natural trees which had become wild and grafted into their mother tree (Shekinah).</p> <p>Jacob 3:120 [5:57 / Zenos 11:85] And the Lord of the vineyard sayeth 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.</p>	<p>45. And it came to pass that they took of the natural tree, which had become wild, and grafted in the natural trees, which also had become wild. And they also took from the natural trees, which had become wild, and grafted in their original tree, that is, though they were many wild branches, all shared in common the sap of the original tree, so that the Lord of the vineyard said to the servant; do not pluck the branches out of the trees, except those that are very bitter; and you shall graft in them as I say.</p> <p>46. And the Lord of the vineyard then said to his servant not to pluck out these wild branches, which were scattered throughout all the vineyard.</p>	<p>This is not describing one big gathering into one tree. This is describing a remix. A large exchange, including only minimal pruning of the worst parts, but mostly just massive circulation between trees. Is that how you read these verses?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:121 [5:58 / Zenos 11:86] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:122 [5:59 / Zenos 11:87] 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;</p>	<p>... Thus, He said, we will "take care again" of these trees, to fulfill that which was written by Nephi concerning the Lord of the vineyard, when He shall stretch forth his hand a second time, to recover his people, which is of the house of Israel, for the purpose of "swapping the branches," that is, grafting the natural branches in their original tree, so that the Lord of the vineyard came to rejoice for having preserved the roots and also the branches of the first fruit.</p>	<p>What do you expect the "swapping of branches" should look like?</p> <p>In what way would such a swapping encourage growth and a "reboot" in the original roots?</p>

<p>Jacob 3:123a [5:60a / Zenos 11:88-89a] 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 (Shekinah),</p> <p>Jacob 3:123b [5:60b / Zenos 11:89b] that perhaps the trees of my vineyard may bring forth again good fruit;</p> <p>Jacob 3:124a [5:60a / Zenos 11:89c] and that I may have joy again in the fruit of my vineyard;</p> <p>Jacob 3:124b [5:60b / Zenos 11:90] And perhaps that I may rejoice exceedingly, that I have preserved the roots and the branches of the first fruit;</p>		
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Summary of vs. 75-90:

- 11:78-79 is saying that there are several places where the Lord planted roots from the original tree, the main tree (Jerusalem), a few out in the east (or the nethermost parts of the vineyard), and also Lehi's tree, which has become mostly Joseph Smith's branch.
- 11:85-88 is saying that the Lord intends to mix it all up. Pull entire branches from all of the trees, and graft them into other trees. Play musical chairs with the branches and the roots. Destroying only the worst of the wild branches as they go. And because of the strength of the branches, the roots of those original trees will wake up and revive all of the trees.
- A3N 14:46 introduces a concept for this "mix it up" period of time. It says that this is "when He shall stretch forth his hand a **second time** to recover his people." At first, the reference to a "second time" seems completely out in left field, because Jacob 3 (or 5) doesn't ever say "second time". However, the next chapter, Jacob 4 (or 6), Jacob DOES mention the "second time", and he is quoting Zenos, who also mentions the second time. The reference doesn't appear in these verses in Zenos (85-88), but I don't see any other place that Zenos could have been referring to when he does mention the second time.
- "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. And in 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." - Jacob 4:2-3 [6:1-2], Zenos 11:118

Labor This Last Time (91-104)

Zenos 11	A3N - Chapter 14	Discussion Ideas
<p>Jacob 3:125 [5:61 / Zenos 11:91] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:126 [5:62 / Zenos 11:92] 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.</p>	<p>47. And the Lord of the vineyard saith unto his servant: Go, therefore, send angels again to the land, and call servants, that we may labor diligently with all force in my vineyard, that we may prepare the way by which I may obtain again the natural fruit of the vineyard, a fruit that it will be good and more precious than any other fruit, and so let us work this last time, with all the commitment you need to rescue my vineyard, for the end is near; and it will be the last time that I will prune the trees of my vineyard.</p>	<p>Who are these laborers? Do you see them anywhere? Where there be many?</p> <p>Will some of those laborers be the angels? Are we seeing that today?</p>
<p>Jacob 3:127a [5:63a / Zenos 11:93a] Therefore graft in the branches: begin at the last, that they may be first, and that the first may be last,</p> <p>Jacob 3:127b [5:63b / Zenos 11:93b] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:128 [5:64a / Zenos 11:94a] Wherefore, dig about them, and prune them, and dung them once more, for the last time, for the end draweth nigh,</p> <p>Jacob 3:129 [5:64b / Zenos 11:94b] and if it so be that these last grafts shall grow, and bring forth the natural fruit, then shall ye prepare the way for them, that they may grow;</p>	<p>48. And the branches shall be planted again; beginning with the last, that they may be the first, and that the former be the last; and dig around the trees, both old and new, the first and the last; and the last and the first, so that 'all come back' to be treated for the last time. So dig around them and prune them and fertilize them again, for the last time, because the end is near. And if these last grafts develop and produce the natural fruit, then I will prepare the way for them, so that they may grow and remain united in me, the Lord of the vineyard.</p>	<p>Which branch was last? Which branch was first?</p> <p>What all do you think he means by "trees"? Are these dispensation umbrellas? Or scattered israel branches? Or what?</p> <p>Notice how it says that "if it so be" that they grow.... Then great. But for each of the branches and/or trees he leaves open the "if". It does not appear that all of his eggs are in a single basket.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:130 [5:65a / Zenos 11:95] 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;</p> <p>Jacob 3:131 [5:65b / Zenos 11:96a] 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,</p> <p>Jacob 3:132a [5:66a / Zenos 11:96b] for it grieveth me that I should lose the</p>	<p>49. And as they begin to grow, you will take away the branches that bear fruit, that is, bitter feelings, according to the strength and size of the good; and you shall not take away the wicked all at once, lest the roots become too strong for the graft, and your graft die, and I lose the trees of my vineyard again; therefore, you will remove the evil feelings as the good ones grow, so that the root and the tree tops have the same strength, until the good feelings overpower the bad and the bad are cut and thrown into the fire; and so I will consume the wicked out of my vineyard forever.</p>	<p>What do you think he means when he says "clear away the branches which bring forth bitter fruit". Do you think he's talking about destroying or disposing of entire branches of so called "believers" who believe they belong to "the true church" or is he talking about something else? If its something else, what is it?</p> <p>Notice how this is not being done all at once. Its a "process" that unfolds over</p>

<p>trees of my vineyard;</p> <p>Jacob 3:132b [5:66b / Zenos 11:97] 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;</p>		<p>time. He's not going through in wrath, slashing and burning everything undesirable in his whole vineyard (at least not at this point), he is thoughtfully shuffling things, hoping to get the very most good out of what he as to work with.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:132c [5:66c / Zenos 11:98a] And thus will I sweep away the bad out of my vineyard,</p> <p>Jacob 3:133a [5:67 / Zenos 11:98b] and the branches of the natural tree, will I graft in again, into the natural tree;</p> <p>Jacob 3:133b [5:68a / Zenos 11:98c] and the branches of the natural tree, will I graft into the natural branches of the tree;</p> <p>Jacob 3:134 [5:68b / Zenos 11:99] And thus will I bring them together again, that they shall bring forth the natural fruit: and they shall be one.</p> <p>Jacob 3:135 [5:69 / Zenos 11:100] 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.</p>	<p>50. And the branches of the natural tree I will graft in the natural branches of the tree; and I will gather them again, that they may bring forth the natural fruit; and they shall be one in me again, the Lord of the vineyard; for how much, the wicked shall be thrown out, even out of all the land of my vineyard; and burned, for behold, only this time will more I prune my vineyard.</p>	<p>It's interesting that they become one again, even though he shuffles them among multiple sister trees. But that he never says that they become only one.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:136 [5:70 / Zenos 11:101] 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.</p>	<p>51. And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard sent his servant; and the servant did as the Lord commanded him, and brought other servants; and were few.</p>	<p>I personally believe that the servant who was sent to gather other servants was Raphael to kick off this second wave of restoration.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:137 [5:71a / Zenos 11:102a] And the Lord of the vineyard saith unto them: Go to, and labor in the vineyard, with your might;</p> <p>Jacob 3:138 [5:71b / Zenos 11:102b-103a] 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;</p> <p>Jacob 3:139 [5:71c / Zenos 11:103b] and if ye labor with your mights with me, ye shall have joy in the fruit which I shall lay up unto myself, against the time which will soon come.</p>	<p>52. And the Lord of the vineyard said to them, Go and work in the vineyard with all your might, for behold, this is the last time that I have dealt with my vineyard; because the end is near and is rapidly approaching; and if you work busy with Me, then I will have joy in the fruit that I will keep for myself, in the time that will soon come when these fruits will be essential to keep you united in the last days, that ye may work hard in my vineyard for the last time; and I, the Lord of the vineyard, will also work with you; if you obey my commandments in all things.</p>	<p>Does this say that those who are laboring in the vineyard from this point on will be laboring side by side with the Lord of the Vineyard? If so, what does that mean?</p>

Jacob 3:140 [5:72 / Zenos 11:104]

And it came to pass that the servants did go to it, 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.

Summary of vs. 91-104:

- V95 says that as they go about grafting between trees, they will discard the worst of the branches.
- V96 reiterates the idea that we are talking about multiple trees, not one big tree.
- V99 reiterates that even though they are multiple trees, they are one (they are united in their purpose, not judgemental, not seeking to place themselves above one another).
- V101 sounds like all of this is accomplished with only a few laborers.
- A3n 14:47 says that angels will be actively involved in this phase of the work.
- V104 says that the Lord himself will be part of the labor in this phase of the work.

Good Fruit Again (105-119)

Zenos 11	A3N - Chapter 14	Discussion Ideas
<p>Jacob 3:141 [5:73a / Zenos 11:105a] And there began to be the natural fruit again in the vineyard, and the natural branches began to grow and thrive exceedingly,</p> <p>Jacob 3:142 [5:73b / Zenos 11:105b-106a] 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.</p> <p>Jacob 3:143 [5:74a / Zenos 11:107] 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;</p>	<p>53. And thus, the vineyard will return to produce the natural fruit; and the natural branches will begin to grow and develop greatly; and the wild branches will begin to be plucked and thrown away in order to preserve the equality of strength between the root and the tree canopy. And so these chosen servants will work with all diligence, according to the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard, until the wicked are thrown out of the vineyard, and the Lord has preserved for himself the righteous trees, the plantation of Jehovah.</p>	<p>This seems to be saying that there aren't going to be just a handful of people who gather and hope for zion. This is saying that this effort will "Thrive Exceedingly".</p>
<p>Jacob 3:144a [5:74b / Zenos 11:108a] And they became like unto one body; and the fruit were equal;</p> <p>Jacob 3:144b [5:74c / Zenos 11:108b] and the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, which was most precious unto him from the beginning.</p>	<p>54. These, will become again in the natural fruit, whose roots will be firmly established next to the source of clean water; and they have become as one body, whose fruits will be equal; and the Lord of the vineyard will preserve for himself the natural fruit of this tree, that is, the 'chosen seed' in relation to his vineyard in the last days, which will be very precious to him from the beginning of the fullness of time.</p>	<p>Again, it doesn't say "one body" it says like unto one. This seems to imply that there are multiple legitimate trees that are producing tame fruit that the Lord is happily harvesting from.</p>
<p>Jacob 3:145 [5:75a / Zenos 11:109-110a] 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 calleth up his servants and sayeth unto them: Behold, for this last time have we nourished my vineyard; And thou beholdest that I have done according to my will;</p> <p>Jacob 3:146 [5:75b / Zenos 11:110b] and I have preserved the natural fruit, that it is good, even like as it was in the beginning; and blessed art thou.</p> <p>Jacob 3:147a [5:75c / Zenos 11:112] For because that ye have been diligent in laboring with me in my vineyard, and</p>	<p>55. 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 his servants, and said unto them: Behold, for the last time we have tended my vineyard, and see that I have done according to my will; and I have kept the natural fruit, which is good, even as it was in the beginning. And blessed are ye because ye were diligent in working with me in my vineyard for the last time, and because ye kept my commandments, and you brought again the natural fruit unto Me, the Lord.</p>	<p>This appears to be saying that the entire vineyard (the whole world, not just the favorite tree) is not corrupt. Is this saying that this period of time is talking about the millennium? And that the final "burning" of the vineyard (coming up in a few verses) is after the millennium, and not in preparation for the millennium?</p>

<p>have kept my commandments, and hath brought unto me again the natural fruit, that my vineyard is no more corrupted, and the bad is cast away,</p>		
<p>Jacob 3:147b [5:75d / Zenos 11:112] And behold, ye shall have joy with me, because of the fruit of my vineyard;</p> <p>Jacob 3:148 [5:76a / Zenos 11:113a] 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;</p> <p>Jacob 3:149 [5:76b / Zenos 11:113b] and for the last time have I nourished my vineyard, and pruned it, and dug about it, and dunged it;</p> <p>Jacob 3:150 [5:76c / Zenos 11:114] Wherefore I will lay up unto mine own self of the fruit, for a long time, according to that which I have spoken.</p> <p>Jacob 3:151 [5:77a / Zenos 11:115] 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;</p> <p>Jacob 3:152 [5:77b / Zenos 11:116] And the good will I preserve unto myself; and the bad will I cast away into its own place;</p> <p>Jacob 3:153 [5:77c / Zenos 11:117] And then cometh the season and the end; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire.</p>	<p>56. Behold, my workers shall rejoice with me because of the fruit of my vineyard in the last days. Behold, therefore, when the time cometh when bad fruit shall appear again in my vineyard, that I will separate the good fruit of bad fruit; the good fruit, I will keep for myself, but the bad ones I will throw in their own place. And then comes the time and the end; and I will cause my vineyard to be burned with fire.</p>	<p>Is this passage talking about the final judgement after the millennial reign of the resurrected Lord? Or does it seem like different moment to you? If so, what?</p>
<p>Jacob 4:3 [6:2 / Zenos 11:118] And in the day that YHVH shall set his hand again the second time to recover his people, is the day, yea, even the last time, that the qaddish (holy ones or saints) of YHVH shall go forth in his power, to nourish and prune his vineyard; and after that, the end soon cometh.</p> <p>Jacob 4:4 [6:3a / Zenos 11:119a] And how blessed are they who have labored diligently in His vineyard; and how cursed are they which shall be cast out into their own place,</p> <p>Jacob 4:5 [6:3b / Zenos 11:119b]</p>	<p>57. And now, making use of some of the words of Jacob, verily, verily, I say unto you, The things that the prophet Zenos said concerning the house of Israel, comparing it to a good olive tree, surely shall come to pass. And on the day when I the Lord shall again stretch out my hand a second time to recover my people, it will be the day, yea, the last time that the servants of the Lord will, with their power, take care of His vineyard and will prune it; and after that, soon the end will come.</p>	<p>Notice, the transition here in the book of mormon, we get a new chapter (regardless of what chapter/verse layout you follow, there is a chapter change here). And Jacob's voice changes from what sounds like a quote of the original prophecy, to becoming Jacob's testimony about it ... but we can see in the book of Zenos, that Zenos ends the prophecy with the same testimony that Jacob gave. And its in this testimony</p>

<p>and the world shall be burned with fire.</p>		<p>that we get the “Second Time” wording that was important earlier.</p>
	<p>58. Behold, will you reject these words preserved by my own hand for a wise future purpose? Will you reject the words of the prophets and all the words spoken by me, Jesus Christ, in this record? Will you deny the power of God and the gift of the Holy Spirit given to thee by the laying on of hands of those who have authority to do so?</p> <p>59. Behold, in so doing, you will erase forever the flame of the Holy Spirit who dwells in your heart, and with this attitude you will mock the grand plan of redemption that has been established for you since the foundation of the world. — Know ye not that if ye will do these things, that the power of the redemption and the resurrection, which is in me, Jesus Christ, will bring you with shame and terrible guilt at the judgment seat of God on the last day?</p> <p>60. O, my beloved sons, repent ye and enter in at the strait gate, and continue in the way which is narrow, until ye shall obtain eternal life, until I shall meet you before the pleasing bar of God, which bar striketh the wicked with awful dread and fear. Amen.</p>	<p>What do you think He means when he asks “will you reject these words”? What would it mean to “accept” them? What would it mean to “reject” them?</p> <p>Does accepting them require you to be grafted into any specific branch of the Olive tree?</p> <p>What does he mean when he asks if you will deny the Holy Spirit? Does he mean to not accept an answer about the truth of these things? Or is it just as bad to not ask in order to avoid getting an answer you are uncomfortable with?</p> <p>If the Holy Spirit confirms the truth of these things, what’s the next step? Is there any need to “change branches”? Does it ever imply anywhere that that is what he hopes we will do? What is the invitation here?</p>

Summary of vs. 105-119:

- After the great re-grafting of the branches ... a “second time”, comes the millennium, and after that, the burning of the vineyard.
- V108 reiterates the idea that the one-ness of the trees is a Zion type of one-ness, where they are equal, and don’t consider themselves better or more important than each other.

Discussion:

If there are potentially multiple sets of “roots” that the Lord might be grafting branches into in hopes to revive his vineyard, what are some examples of trees that could be part of the graft-swap?

This brings up an interesting question that must be pondered upon. If the deciding factor in the “salvation” of an individual piece of fruit that grows in the Lord’s vineyard is the tame or bitterness found in that person’s heart, and the branch that produced the fruit is irrelevant (other than having an influence on how well the fruit is likely to grow), then any tree/branch is “good enough” for our potential salvation. If this is indeed the case, then what is the purpose of Priesthood, and “Keys”? Does that make priesthood pointless? Or does it just mean that its purpose is not what many believe it is? If “keys” are not what makes a church “God’s one and only true church”, then what is the significance of Priesthood and why does God extend it to mankind? And, what are we supposed to be doing with it?

If there is no “need” to convert people into members of a specific church organization, then does that mean there’s no such thing as missionary work? What then are the laborers in the Lord’s vineyard doing for that final effort?

What does the Lord expect from each of us in order to be tame olives? Is the difference between sweet and bitter grapes, and tame and wild olives the same as the difference between tame and wild horses? Is that difference something other than having a broken heart and contrite spirit? Why must a horse be “broken” to be useful? And is a “broken” heart the same?

How does this allegory “fit” into the vision of dispensations? Are there events described in this allegory that are in harmony with the descriptions of the dispensations they are tied to? Does this narrative reinforce that narrative? And when considered with John’s Revelation, does it unfold parts of that?

Things to Ponder about the Acts of the 3 Nephites Commentary:

What is the purpose of this Allegory? A3N 14:1 says that it was “necessary” that its meaning “remain as a secret” so that “only in the final part of the fulness of times” it could be understood “without ever having been distorted under the precepts of men.” Would you say that this has indeed happened? And, now that it has been opened up, and it is more understandable, ... what does that do for us? What does it accomplish that wouldn’t otherwise happen? Why was it “necessary” to preserve it by hiding it all in plain sight?

In A3N 14:2 says that the field was “abandoned by the earliest workers”. Is this in reference to the restoration? Has the restoration abandoned the work they were asked to do in Joseph’s day? When did that happen? What work were we supposed to do that was abandoned? When was it abandoned?

In A3N 14:5-6, the Lord gives a decent amount of commentary about Olive trees. Commentary that isn’t really needed if his only purpose was to update our understanding of the meaning of this allegory. So, why do you suppose he goes off on a tangent about how wonderful olive trees are?

In A3N 14:7-10, the Lord introduces the Tree of Life as the source of the waters for the olive trees in the vineyard. This detail is not really needed if his only purpose was to update our understanding of the meaning of this allegory. Why do you suppose he takes a few verses to tie Lehi's dream and Nephi's interpretation of that dream into this allegory?

In A3N 14:11, it says that the Israel tree gets old and decays when it incorporates into its traditions all of the lies and other garbage that is planted by the evil one, and stops refreshing itself with the living water flowing from the Tree of Life. Does this same pattern apply to all of the times when the tree starts producing bad fruit (in the allegory)? Does it apply to the tree today?

In A3N 14:21-30, the Lord goes on a Bizarre tangent where he connects "the east" with places that are West of Jerusalem, like Rome and Greece, and ties people like Nicodemus to the Magi (although he doesn't say that Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and Lazarus are the Magi who brought gifts to the Christ child, it sure feels that way). What is the purpose of this tangent in the commentary? It answers no real existing questions, it plays no part in explaining the allegory itself. It seems completely out of place. What do you suppose its purpose is?

Things to Ponder about the Ways this Allegory "Changes" due to recent revelations:

Traditional "Mormon" interpretation of this allegory has taken the final phase of work in the vineyard as being the work started by Joseph Smith. Anyone who noticed Jacob referring to the "Second Time" would have easily associated that with the "latter days" and the first time would have been the church in former days. The idea that there will be a second wave of restoration is newly added by the commentary, however it doesn't stretch the Allegory beyond what it originally said. This appears to be a perfectly reasonable interpretation, and the decision about how accurate this "change" is, is something to prayerfully consider, because logic doesn't "prefer" either interpretation, but they can't both be true.

Traditional "Mormon" interpretation would also say that at the end when the branches are being swapped around in order to revive all of the root systems these were gathering them into the restored church (whatever branch of the restoration they were) and that any mention of multiple trees must have been stakes or missions or other remote parts of that one restoration tree. But, the Allegory doesn't really say that in any way. The Lord of the Vineyard seems perfectly happy to have many trees and allow each of them to be whatever they chose to be. Which of these two paradigms do you think is intended, and why?