

## Discussion 22

# A Tree Springing Up Within You

(Everlasting Life, Partaking of the Fruit of the Tree)

### Content:

- 1 Nephi 2:40-91 (RAV)/ Chapter 8 (OPV) - Lehi's Vision of the Tree of Life
- Alma 16:151-200 (RAV) / Chapter 32:27 - 33:23 (OPV) - Alma and Amulek's invitation
- 2 Sefer Moses 9:10-18, 15:6-19 - Aseneth's tree growing within

### Objectives:

- Consider a practical method for applying Kabbalah as a Mysticism

### Notes Before Reading:

I have bolded various phrases in the reading, including things that echo the kinds of language we have pondered on over this course. I ask that you RESIST the urge to debate in your mind whether or not the existence of these phrases in the Book of Mormon is somehow "proof" of the plates of brass, or of Kabbalah, or some other thing. The purpose of the highlights is NOT to make an attempt to show that Mormon scriptures are filled with kabbalistic ideas.

Instead, the purpose of the highlights is to point out that as you journeyed through this class, the terms that I have highlighted may have deeper meanings to you than they had before you started, and since these passages may already be familiar to you, the bolded words are to "remind" you that you can sink deeper into these passages and ask if the things you learned while studying this course brings new or deeper meaning to things you already know.

There is no "need" for me to convince anyone that kabbalah is "true". There is no need for anyone to have faith that it is "true" in order to decide it is meaningful. The idea behind Kabbalah is that there are words, phrases, and mental pictures that are used as symbols throughout the scriptures, and they are intended to be used to understand each other better. Kabbalah is just an organized approach to learning as much as you can about those symbols, and slowly building out the meaning you have discovered as you connect in more and more of the scriptures through pondering and seeking. There is nothing inherently "true" or "false" about the idea that symbols deliver meaning, and understanding the symbols produces greater understanding.

So again, I invite you to set aside the "need" you might have to feel like I'm trying to convince you that these passages are written by kabbalistic prophets, and instead, practice that skill of pondering for these passages you may already be familiar with, and enjoy the depth that is available to you in the scriptures.

## Reading:

Lehi's Vision of the Tree of Life	
1 Nephi	Discussion Ideas
<p>2:40 [8:1]. ¶ And it came to pass that we had gathered together all manner of seeds of every kind—both of grain of every kind and also of the seeds of fruits of every kind.</p> <p>2:41 [8:2]. And it came to pass that while my father tarried in the wilderness, he spake unto us, saying: Behold, I have dreamed a dream; or in other words, I have seen a vision.</p> <p>2:42 [8:3a]. And behold, because of the thing which I have seen, I have reason to rejoice in the Lord because of Nephi and also of Sam;</p> <p>2:42b [8:3b]. For I have reason to suppose that they, and also many of their seed, will be saved.</p> <p>2:43 [8:4]. But behold, Laman and Lemuel, I fear exceedingly because of you; for behold, methought I saw in my dream a dark and dreary wilderness.</p>	
<p>2:44 [8:5]. ¶ And it came to pass that I saw a man, and he was dressed in a white robe; and he came and stood before me.</p> <p>2:45 [8:6]. And it came to pass that he spake unto me and bade me follow him.</p> <p>2:46 [8:7]. And it came to pass that as I followed him, I beheld myself that I was in a dark and dreary waste.</p>	<p>If this man is from God, why does he lead Lehi to a dark and dreary waste?</p> <p>If this man is not of God, why would Lehi describe him as dressed in white?</p>
<p>2:47 [8:8]. And after I had traveled for the space of many hours in <b>darkness</b>, I began to pray unto the Lord that he would have <b>mercy</b> on me according to the multitude of his tender mercies.</p> <p>2:48 [8:9]. ¶ And it came to pass after I had prayed unto the Lord, I beheld a large and spacious field.</p> <p>2:49 [8:10]. And it came to pass that I beheld a <b>tree</b>, whose <b>fruit</b> was desirable to make one happy.</p>	<p>1 Nephi 3:68 [11:25a] identifies this as the “tree of life” which is a representation of the Love of God. Is this the same tree of life as what was in the Garden of Eden? If it isn’t, why would he use the same name? If it is, how are people eating, shouldn’t there be an angel with a flaming sword blocking us from doing so?</p>
<p>2:50a [8:11a]. ¶ And it came to pass that I did go forth and <b>partake of the fruit</b> thereof;</p> <p>2:50b [8:11b]. And I beheld that it was most sweet above all that I ever before tasted.</p> <p>2:51 [8:11c]. Yea, and I beheld that the fruit thereof was white, to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen.</p> <p>2:52 [8:12a]. And as I partook of the fruit thereof, it filled my <b>soul</b> with exceeding great joy;</p>	<p>Kabbalistically speaking, the fruit on this tree are things like Knowledge, wisdom, mercy, strength, beauty, eternal covenants, glory, a foundation, and participation in the kingdom. These are the fruits of the tree of life, and they are the love of God. And their light does exceed all the whiteness of anything on earth.</p>

<p>2:53 [8:12b]. Wherefore, I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also; for I knew that it was desirable above all other fruit.</p> <p>2:54a [8:13a]. And as I cast my eyes round about, that perhaps I might discover my family also, I beheld a <b>river of water</b>;</p> <p>2:54b [8:13b]. And it ran along, and it was <b>near the tree</b> of which I was partaking the fruit.</p> <p>2:55 [8:14a]. And I looked to behold from whence it came; and I saw the head thereof a little way off;</p> <p>2:56 [8:14b]. And at the head thereof I beheld your mother Sariah, and Sam, and Nephi; and they stood as if they knew not whither they should go.</p>	
<p>2:57 [8:15]. ¶ And it came to pass that I beckoned unto them; and I also did say unto them with a loud voice that they should come unto me and partake of the fruit, which was desirable above all other fruit.</p>	
<p>2:58 [8:16]. ¶ And it came to pass that they did come unto me and partake of the fruit also.</p> <p>2:59 [8:17a]. And it came to pass that I was desirous that Laman and Lemuel should come and partake of the fruit also;</p> <p>2:60 [8:17b]. Wherefore, I cast mine eyes towards the head of the river, that perhaps I might see them.</p>	
<p>2:61 [8:18]. ¶ And it came to pass that I saw them, but they would not come unto me and partake of the fruit.</p> <p>2:62 [8:19]. And I beheld a rod of iron; and it extended along the bank of the river and led to the tree by which I stood.</p>	
<p>2:63 [8:20a]. And I also beheld a <b>straight and narrow path</b> which came along by the rod of iron, even to the tree by which I stood;</p> <p>2:64 [8:20b]. And it also led by the head of the <b>fountain</b> unto a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world;</p> <p>2:65 [8:21]. And I saw numberless concourses of people, many of whom were pressing forward, that they might obtain the path which led unto the tree by which I stood.</p>	<p>The straight and narrow path is the ladder that jacob saw that connects the earth to the heavens, it leads to the fruit.</p> <p>The field is the world, and all of her inhabitants. Adam and Eve, seeking Eden and the tree of life.</p>
<p>2:66 [8:22]. ¶ And it came to pass that they did come forth and commence in <b>the path which led to the tree</b>.</p> <p>2:67 [8:23]. And it came to pass that there arose a mist of darkness, yea, even an exceeding great mist of darkness, insomuch that they who had commenced in the path did lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost.</p>	

<p>2:68 [8:24a]. ¶ And it came to pass that I beheld others pressing forward, and they came forth and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron;</p> <p>2:69 [8:24b]. And they did press forward through the mist of darkness, clinging to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree.</p> <p>2:70 [8:25]. And after they had partaken of the fruit of the tree, they did cast their eyes about as if they were ashamed.</p>	
<p>2:71 [8:26a]. And I also cast my eyes round about and beheld on the other side of the river of water a great and spacious building;</p> <p>2:72 [8:26b]. And it stood as it were in the <b>air</b>, high <b>above</b> the <b>earth</b>.</p> <p>2:73 [8:27a]. And it was filled with people, both old and young, both <b>male and female</b>;</p> <p>2:74 [8:27b]. And their manner of dress was exceeding fine;</p> <p>2:75 [8:27c]. And they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who had come at and were partaking of the fruit.</p> <p>2:76a [8:28a]. And after they had tasted of the fruit, they were ashamed because of those that were scoffing at them;</p> <p>2:76b [8:28b]. And they fell away into <b>forbidden paths</b> and were lost.</p>	<p>This building could be many things, but from 1st Moses, we can connect it to the Tower of Babel, Who's inhabitants were so sure of their tower that they didn't even feel they needed teshuvah.</p>
<p>2:77 [8:29]. ¶ And now, I, Nephi, do not speak all the words of my father.</p> <p>2:78a [8:30a]. But, to be short in writing, behold, he saw other multitudes pressing forward; and they came and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron;</p> <p>2:78b [8:30b]. And they did press their way forward, continually holding fast to the rod of iron until they came forth, and fell down, and partook of the fruit of the tree.</p> <p>2:79 [8:31]. And he also saw other multitudes feeling their way towards that great and spacious building.</p>	
<p>2:80 [8:32a]. ¶ And it came to pass that many were drowned in the depths of the fountain;</p> <p>2:81 [8:32b]. And many were lost from his view, wandering in strange roads.</p> <p>2:82 [8:33a]. And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building.</p>	<p>The 12 righteous promise YHVH that they will not move to the right or to the left, but will stay firmly on the path. This is what is required to avoid wandering in strange roads.</p>

<p>2:83 [8:33b]. And after they did enter into that building, they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also; but we heeded them not.</p> <p>2:84 [8:34]. These are the words of my father: For as many as heeded them, had fallen away.</p> <p>2:85 [8:35]. And Laman and Lemuel <b>partook not of the fruit</b>, said my father.</p>	
<p>2:86 [8:36a]. ¶ And it came to pass after my father had spoken all the words of his dream or vision, which were many, he said unto us, because of these things which he saw in a vision, he exceedingly feared for Laman and Lemuel;</p> <p>2:87 [8:36b]. Yea, he feared lest they should be cast off from <b>the presence of the Lord</b>.</p> <p>2:88 [8:37a]. And he did exhort them then, with all the feeling of a tender parent, that they would hearken to his words, that perhaps the Lord would be <b>merciful</b> to them and not cast them off;</p> <p>2:89 [8:37b]. Yea, my father did preach unto them.</p>	
<p>2:90 [8:38a]. ¶ And after he had preached unto them and also prophesied unto them of many things, he bade them to keep the commandments of the Lord;</p> <p>2:91 [8:38b]. And he did cease speaking unto them.</p>	

<b>Alma and Amulek's invitation</b>	
Alma	Discussion Ideas
<p>16:151a [32:27a]. But behold, if ye will awake, and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith,</p> <p>16:151b [32:27b]. Yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words.</p> <p>16:152 [32:28a]. Now we will compare the Word unto a <b>seed</b>.</p> <p>16:153 [32:28b]. Now if ye give place that a seed may be <b>planted in your heart</b>, behold, if it be a true seed, or a good seed, if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the Spirit of the Lord, behold, it will begin to <b>swell within</b> your breasts;</p> <p>16:154a [32:28c]. And when you feel these swelling motions, ye will begin to say within yourselves: It must needs be that this is a good seed, or that the Word is good, for it beginneth to enlarge my <b>soul</b>; yea, it beginneth to <b>enlighten my understanding</b>;</p> <p>16:154b [32:28d]. Yea, and it beginneth to be delicious to me.</p>	<p>The seed planted in the heart is the soul preparing to be born of the body and spirit.</p>
<p>16:155 [32:29]. Now behold, would not this increase your faith? I say unto you: Yea;</p> <p>16:155 [32:29]. Nevertheless, it hath not grown up to a perfect <b>knowledge</b>.</p> <p>16:156 [32:30a]. But behold, as the seed swelleth, and sprouteth, and beginneth to <b>grow</b>, then ye must needs say that the seed is good; for behold, it swelleth, and sprouteth, and beginneth to <b>grow</b>.</p> <p>16:157 [32:30]. And now, behold, will not this strengthen your faith? Yea, it will strengthen your faith, for ye will say: I know that this is a good seed, for behold, it sprouteth and beginneth to grow.</p> <p>16:158a [32:31]. And now, behold, are ye sure that this is a good seed? I say unto you: Yea; for every seed bringeth forth unto <b>its own likeness</b>; therefore, if a seed groweth, it is good; but if it groweth not, behold, it is not good; therefore, it is cast away.</p>	
<p>16:158b [32:32]. Therefore, if a seed groweth, it is good; but if it groweth not, behold, it is not good; therefore, it is cast away.</p> <p>16:159 [32:33]. And now, behold, because ye have tried the experiment and planted the seed, and it swelleth, and sprouteth, and beginneth to grow, ye must needs know that the seed is good.</p> <p>16:160 [32:34a]. And now, behold, is your knowledge perfect? Yea, your knowledge is perfect in that thing, and your faith is dormant;</p>	<p>The end-game for this tree is that it eventually brings you to understanding.</p>

<p>16:161 [32:34b]. And this because you know; for ye know that the Word hath swelled your souls, and ye also know that it hath sprouted up, that your <b>understanding</b> doth begin to be <b>enlightened</b>, and your mind doth begin to expand.</p> <p>16:162 [32:35a]. O, then, <b>is not this real?</b> I say unto you: Yea, because it is <b>light</b>; and whatsoever is light is good because it is <b>discernible</b>; therefore, ye must know that it is good.</p>	
<p>16:163a [32:35b]. And now, behold, after ye have tasted this light, is your knowledge perfect?</p> <p>16:163b [32:36]. Behold, I say unto you: Nay; neither must ye lay aside your faith; for ye have only exercised your faith to plant the seed, that ye might try the experiment to know if the seed was good.</p> <p>16:164 [32:37A]. And behold, as the <b>tree</b> beginneth to grow, ye will say: Let us nourish it with great care, that it may get root, that it may grow up and bring forth <b>fruit</b> unto us.</p> <p>16:165 [32:37B]. And now, behold, if ye nourish it with much care, it will get root, and grow up, and bring forth fruit.</p>	<p>As it begins to bring the expected fruits, we know it is a true seed / tree of life.</p>
<p>16:166 [32:38]. But if ye neglect the tree and take no thought for its nourishment, behold, it will not get any root; and when the heat of the sun cometh and scorcheth it, because it hath no root, it withers away; and ye pluck it up and cast it out.</p> <p>16:167 [32:39a]. Now this is not because the seed was not good; neither is it because the fruit thereof would not be desirable.</p> <p>16:168 [32:39b]. But it is <b>because your ground is barren and ye will not nourish the tree; therefore, ye cannot have the fruit thereof.</b></p> <p>16:169 [32:40]. And thus it is if ye will not nourish the Word, looking forward with an eye of faith to the fruit thereof, ye can never pluck of the fruit of <b>the tree of life.</b></p>	
<p>16:170a [32:41a]. But if ye will nourish the Word, yea, nourish the tree as it beginneth to grow, by your faith with great diligence and with patience, looking forward to the fruit thereof, it shall take root;</p> <p>16:170b [32:41b]. And behold, it shall be a <b>tree springing up unto everlasting life;</b></p> <p>16:171a [32:42a]. And because of your diligence, and your faith, and your patience with the Word, in <b>nourishing</b> it, that it may take <b>root</b> in you,</p> <p>16:171b [32:42b]. Behold, by and by ye shall pluck the fruit thereof, which is most precious, which is sweet above all that is sweet, and which is white above all that is white, yea, and pure above all that is pure.</p> <p>16:172 [32:42c]. And ye shall feast upon this fruit, <b>even until ye are filled, that ye hunger not; neither shall ye thirst.</b></p>	<p>The fruit of the tree of life is eternal life.</p>

16:173 [32:43]. Then, my brethren, ye shall reap the rewards of your faith, and your diligence, and patience, and long-suffering, waiting for the **tree to bring forth fruit** unto you.

16:174a [33:1a]. ¶ Now after Alma had spoken these words, they sent forth unto him desiring to know whether they should believe in one God,

16:174b [33:1b]. That they might obtain this fruit of which he had spoken, or how they should plant the seed, or the Word of which he had spoken, which he said must be **planted in their hearts**, or in what manner they should begin to exercise their faith.

16:175 [33:2a]. And Alma said unto them: Behold, ye have said that ye could not worship your God because ye are cast out of your synagogues.

16:176 [33:2b]. But behold, I say unto you: If ye suppose that ye cannot worship God, ye do greatly err, and ye ought to search the scriptures; if ye suppose that they have taught you this, ye do not understand them.

16:177 [33:3]. Do ye remember to have read what Zenos, the prophet of old, has said concerning prayer or worship?

16:178a [33:4a]. For he said: Thou art merciful, O God, for thou hast heard **my prayer, even when I was in the wilderness;**

16:178b [33:4b]. Yea, thou wast **merciful** when I prayed concerning those who were mine enemies, and thou didst turn them to me.

16:179 [33:5]. Yea, O God, and thou wast merciful unto me when I did cry unto thee in my field; when I did cry unto thee in my prayer, and thou didst hear me.

16:180 [33:6]. And again, O God, when I did turn to my house, thou didst hear me in my prayer;

16:181a [33:7]. And when I did turn unto my closet, O Lord, and prayed unto thee, thou didst hear me.

16:181b [33:8]. Yea, thou art merciful unto thy children when they cry unto thee to be heard of thee and not of men, and thou wilt hear them.

16:182a [33:9]. Yea, O God, thou hast been merciful unto me and heard my cries in the midst of thy congregations;

16:182b [33:10a]. Yea, and thou hast also heard me when I have been cast out and have been despised by mine enemies;

16:183a [33:10b]. Yea, thou didst hear my cries and wast angry with mine enemies, and thou didst visit them in thine anger with speedy destruction; and thou didst hear me because of mine afflictions and my sincerity.

16:183b [33:11a]. And thou didst hear me because of mine afflictions and my sincerity;



16:184a [33:11b]. **And it is because of thy Son that thou hast been thus merciful unto me.**

16:184b [33:11c]. Therefore, I will cry unto thee in all mine afflictions; for in thee is my joy, for thou hast turned thy judgments away from me because of thy Son.

16:185 [33:12]. ¶ And now, Alma said unto them: **Do ye believe those scriptures which have been written by them of old?**

16:186 [33:13]. Behold, if ye do, ye must believe what Zenos said; for behold, he said: Thou hast turned away thy judgments because of thy Son.

16:187a [33:14a]. Now, behold, my brethren, I would ask, if ye have read the scriptures?

16:187b [33:14b]. If ye have, how can ye disbelieve on the Son of God?

16:188a [33:15]. For it is not written that Zenos alone spake of these things, but Zenock also spake of these things;

16:188b [33:16]. For behold, he said: Thou art angry, O Lord, with this people because they will not understand of thy mercies which thou hast bestowed upon them because of thy Son.

16:189 [33:17]. And now, my brethren, ye see that a second prophet of old has testified of the Son of God; and because the people would not understand his words, they stoned him to death.

16:190 [33:18]. But behold, this is not all; these are not the only ones who have spoken concerning the Son of God.

16:191 [33:19]. Behold, he was spoken of by Moses; yea, and behold, a type was raised up in the wilderness, that whosoever would look upon it might live. And many did look and live.

16:192 [33:20a]. But few understood the meaning of those things, and this because of the hardness of their hearts.

16:193 [33:20b]. But there were many who were so hardened that they would not look; therefore, they perished.

16:194 [33:20c]. Now the reason they would not look was because they did not believe that it would heal them.

16:195a [33:21a]. O my brethren, if ye could be **healed by merely casting about your eyes**, that ye might be healed, would ye not behold quickly?

16:195b [33:21b]. Or would ye rather harden your hearts in unbelief and be slothful, that ye would not cast about your eyes, that ye might perish?

16:196a [33:22a]. If so, wo shall come upon you;

16:196b [33:22b]. But if not so, then **cast about your eyes and begin to believe in the Son of God**, that he will come to redeem his people, and that he shall suffer and die to atone for their sins;

16:197 [33:22c]. And that he shall rise again from the dead, which shall bring to pass the resurrection, that all men shall stand before him to be judged at the last and judgment day according to their works.

16:198 [33:23a]. And now, my brethren, I desire that ye shall plant this Word in your hearts; and as it beginneth to swell, even so nourish it by your faith.

16:199 [33:23b]. And behold, **it will become a tree, springing up in you unto everlasting life.**

16:200 [33:23c]. And then may God grant unto you that your burdens may be light, through the joy of his Son. **And even all this can ye do, if ye will.** Amen.

This next passage is from 2nd Moses, I'm including it here because it tells the story of Joseph's wife Aseneth, who allows the Tree of Life to grow with her like what Alma and Amulek describe above.

<b>Aseneth's Tree Growing Within</b>	
2 Moses	Discussion Ideas
<p>9:10. ¶ And Aseneth lifted up her voice in petition to YHVH, saying: YHVH, El Elyon who didst <b>create all things</b>, and didst call them <b>from darkness into light</b>, and <b>from error into truth</b>, and <b>from death into life</b>;</p> <p>9:11. Yea, El Elyon that created the <b>heavens</b> above, and the <b>earth</b> we stand upon, and the <b>waters</b> of the deep; O YHVH, hear my supplication:</p> <p>9:12. Yea, unto thee, YHVH, I present my supplication, for thou, O YHVH, didst stretch forth thy hands over me, even as a Father that loves his children in their pity and ignorance,</p> <p>9:13. And <b>thou hast grown as a tree within me</b>, for the sake of thy <b>Wisdom</b>, and because of this have I abandoned the elohim of my fathers and destroyed their likeness;</p> <p>9:14. For thou, O YHVH, hath delivered me from their hands, and rescued me from that serpent that sought to rip at me, cast me into the abyss, into the deepest depths of the Nile:</p> <p>9:15. But I have been swallowed up in <b>the arms of my Mother</b>, and thou, O YHVH hath me when the father and mother of my flesh didst deny me;</p> <p>9:16. For I have left behind their elohim for Thee, and I have no other hope save in Thee, O YHVH;</p>	

<p>9:17. Therefore, YHVH, renew my flesh, give me power by thy <b>breath</b>, that I should raise these, my sons, unto thee, O YHVH;</p> <p>9:18. That they too might <b>eat of the bread of life</b>, and <b>drink the cup of thy blessing</b>, which thou hast prepared for thine elect.</p>	
<p>....</p>	
<p>15:6. ¶ And Joseph and Asenath did bow; but the angel of YHVH said: Arise and <b>lift up thy eyes; behold the handiwork of YHVH!</b></p> <p>15:7. And the eyes of Joseph and Asenath were opened unto the vision of YHVH, and they did see many great and marvelous things.</p> <p>15:8. And Joseph said: What is the meaning of this? It is great to behold and marvelous in my eyes!</p>	
<p>15:9. ¶ And the angel of YHVH said unto them: These are lands upon which thy seed shall dwell;</p> <p>15:10. For the land upon which thou dwelleth, and the land which the famine is upon is but one part of the creation that is the earth.</p> <p>15:11. And behold, ye see that there are <b>lands</b> without number, <b>stars</b> without number, and <b>worlds</b> without number;</p> <p>15:12. And this is the work and <b>glory</b> of Ha'Elohim: To grant unto the very children of Elohim all that which was theirs <b>from the beginning</b>; yea, even all that YHVH Elohim doth possess.</p>	
<p>15:13. ¶ And Asenath spoke, saying: How great and mighty is YHVH, for YHVH is <b>all knowledge</b>, and <b>all wisdom</b> and <b>all mercy</b>, and <b>all strength</b>; for I should never have known that this should be.</p> <p>15:14. And Joseph and Asenath fell down and worshiped YHVH.</p>	
<p>15:15. ¶ And the angel of YHVH spoke again, saying: Joseph and Asenath, if ye art faithful to YHVH all the days of thy life, and should <b>walk in circumcision</b> before <b>My Face</b>, ye shall be lifted up, even to the <b>throne</b> of Ha'Elohim, and made master workers of <b>all wisdom</b>, yea, even in the <b>hidden wisdom of YHVH</b>.</p> <p>15:16. And together ye shall inherit the <b>glory</b> of YHVH, even all thy seed that shall remain faithful;</p> <p>15:17. And in this ye shall find great joy, for YHVH delights to give his children the works of His hands.</p> <p>15:18. And sitting upon the throne of Ha'Elohim, ye shall be the very sons and daughters of Elohim, even as thy fathers and mothers, Abraham and Sarah, and Isaac and Rebekah;</p> <p>15:19. And YHVH Elohim shall be thy Father, forever and ever, for YHVH casts the proud to the dust and exalts the humble.</p>	

*Engage:*

## Engage the Spirit through Contemplation

I have one question that I invite you to ponder. I recommend that you consider the meaning of the word “true” and what makes a passage of scripture “true”.

The plates of brass have several passages that seem to suggest that we are intended to see metaphorical or allegorical meaning in the things they are writing. To the Kabbalist, all of these stories can be used as we reflect upon the journey of the soul back to the garden to partake of the fruit of the tree of life. How important is it that the fruit of the tree of life be “literal”, like ... we are literally going to the literal garden of Eden and eating literal fruit from the literal tree that the literal Adam and literal Eve were denied? IF some or all of that depiction of the journey of the soul is not intended to be literal, does it make it less “true”?

Now, consider further: If the story of Noah (or any other story really) is intended by the author of the plates of brass to be used by us allegorically, and it is intended to be instructive about how we can use the floods of mercy to wash away all of the fallen carnal things that inhabit our creation, leaving only the righteous parts of our inner soul, the rest being destroyed by the flood ... IF the intended understanding of this allegory is the completeness of the resulting cleanliness of your inner creation, then, EVEN IF the original author actually had reason to believe that Noah’s literal food was a local flood and actually only caused catastrophic destruction to a small percentage of the earth’s total population at that time, but that set of details didn’t explain the journey of the soul in the way he intended for us to understand the allegory ... then would it be more “true” if it were historically accurate, or would it be more true if it was more allegorically meaningful? And, if applying the allegory to our soul would be more valuable for us if we understood the “adapted” details of the stories so we had a more clear picture of what was being taught ... if historical accuracy was compromised in the process, would that make the scriptures less “true”?

I don't ask that as a way of suggesting that you NOT believe the historical reliability of the scriptures. Not at all. I merely wish to point out that the most valuable way to understand the scriptures is allegorically, because no other way of interpreting the stories has the power to change our lives today in a meaningful way. So I invite you to NOT invest yourself into wasting time arguing with yourself or with others over whether or not the stories themselves must be “true” in order to be “true” and instead invest your contemplation energies in asking what makes them meaningful and effective, and how they can be applied to you personally. I invite you to ponder on the meaning of truth, and what is more valuable, true information, or true ideas.

## Engage the Group through Discussion

When you meet together as a group I encourage you to reflect on **the entire course** and not just this week’s reading:

- Are “the mysteries of God” on the plates of brass?
- Is pondering those mysteries bringing you closer to God, or further away?
- Are you a “Mormon Kabbalist”?