

Awaken Your Branches

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April 1, 2026

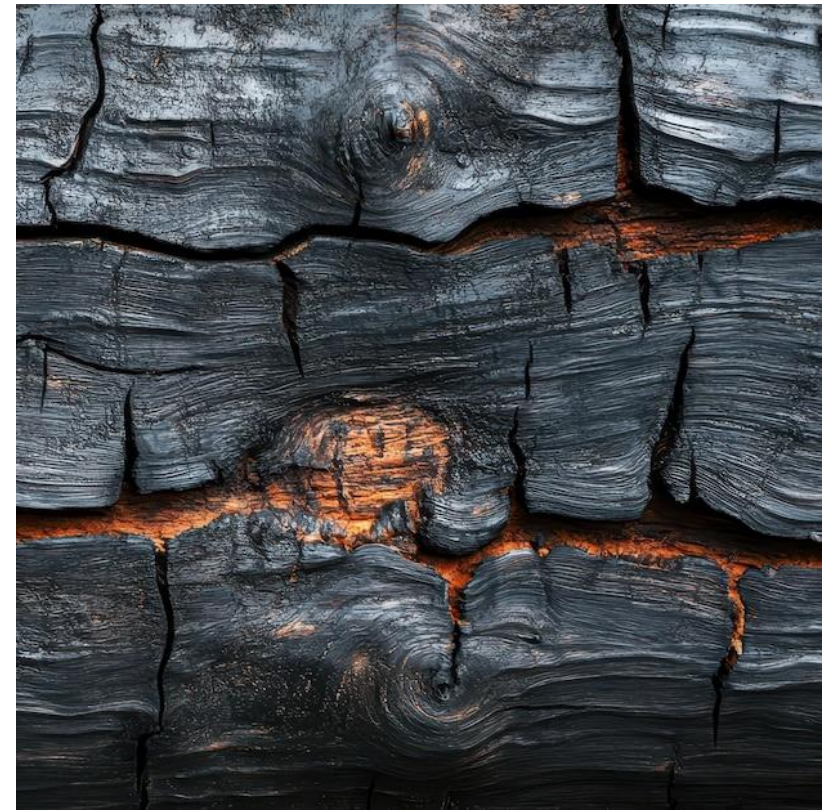


Nehemiah 2:17 Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire; come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.

Our day: Ye see the distress that we are in, how *Christ's church* lieth waste, and [*]; come, and let us build up the *people of Your Church*, that we be no more a reproach.

* Insert your biggest concerns

- people are tired of the disputes,
- the youth are wondering away, and
- we don't see the power of the Holy Spirit
- Some question if God is real
- Etc.



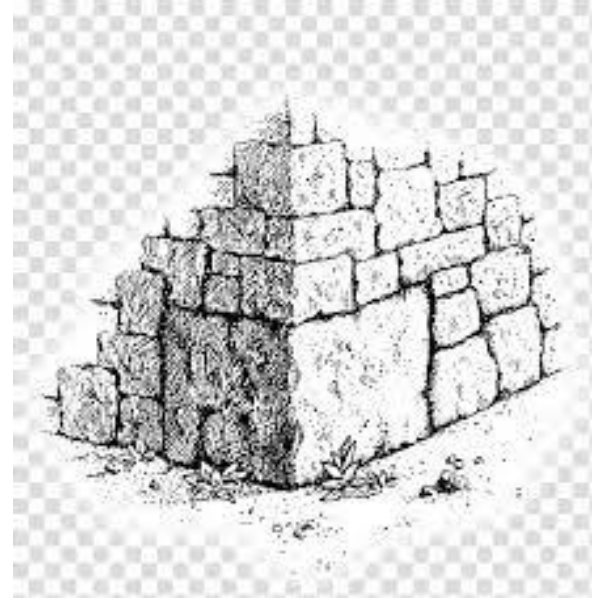
Roadmap

- Jesus
- Challenges
- God's presence



Focus on Jesus

- Build up the walls of Jerusalem (from Neh 2:17)
- Jesus is the chief cornerstone



Eph 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

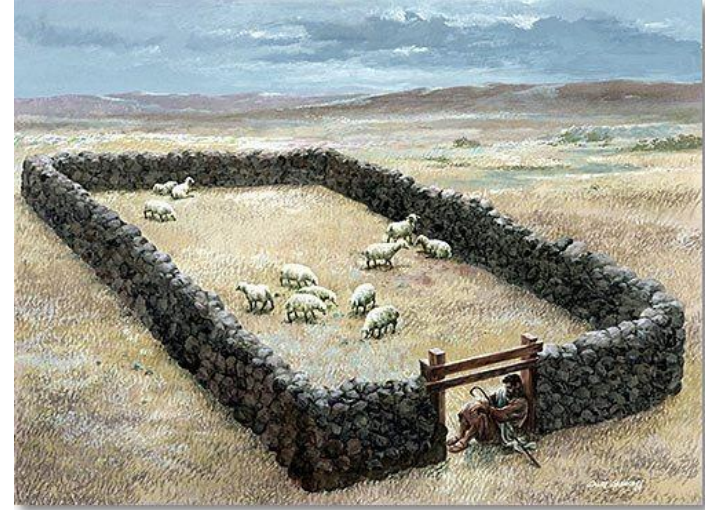
20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone;

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord;

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Focus on Jesus

- Build up the walls of Jerusalem (from Neh 2:17)
- Jesus is the door to the sheepfold



Jn 10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheepfold.

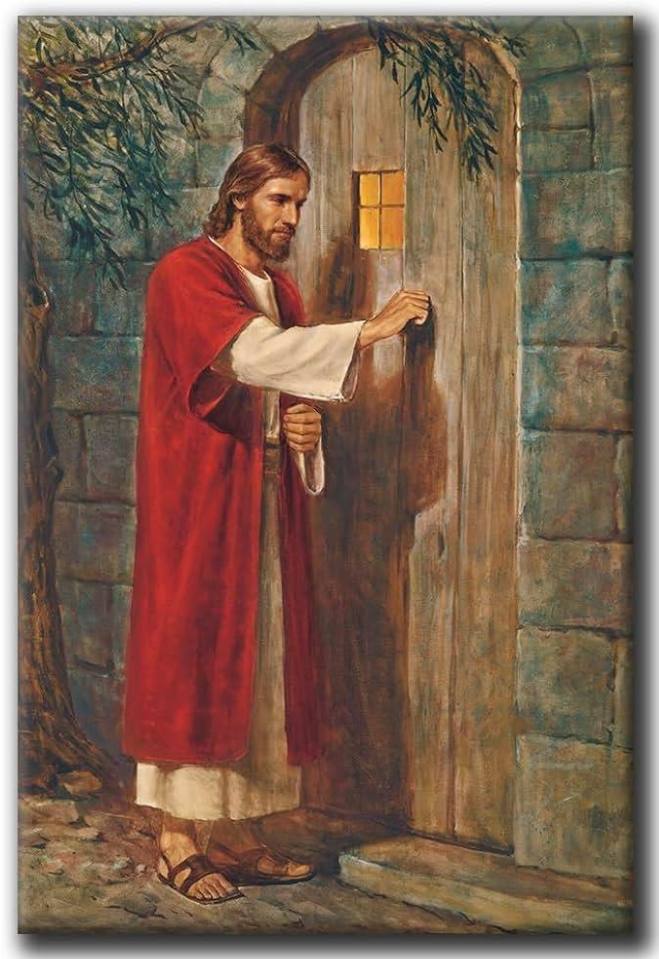
8 All that ever came before me who testified not of me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Focus on Jesus

- Our branches desperately need Jesus
- No matter our experiences or testimonies we can never tire of times with the Lord
- Moments with God change everything
 - Our perspectives are better
 - Relationships are mended
 - Clarity of vision



Focus on Jesus

Focus
On
Christ
United
Saints

- From Jack Hagensen
- When we focus on Christ, we become more united



Case Study on Strengthening a Branch: Alma 11

22 And Alma and Amulek went forth preaching repentance to the people in their temples, and in their sanctuaries, and also in their synagogues, which were built after the manner of the Jews.

23 And as many as would hear their words, unto them they did impart the word of God, without any respect of persons, continually.

24 And thus did Alma and Amulek go forth, and also many more who had been chosen for the work, to preach the word throughout all the land.

25 And the establishment of the church became general throughout the land, in all the region round about, among all the people of the Nephites.



Case Study on Strengthening a Branch: Alma 11

26 And there was no inequality among them, for the Lord did pour out his Spirit on all the face of the land, to prepare the minds of the children of men, or to prepare their hearts to receive the word which should be taught among them at the time of his coming,

27 That they might not be hardened against the word, that they might not be unbelieving, and go on to destruction,

28 But that they might receive the word with joy, and as a branch be grafted into the true vine, that they might enter into the rest of the Lord their God.



Case Study on Strengthening a Branch: Alma 11

29 Now those priests who did go forth among the people, did preach against all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and malice, and revilings, and stealing, robbing, plundering, murdering, committing adultery, and all manner of lasciviousness, crying that these things ought not so to be;

30 Holding forth things which must shortly come; yea, holding forth the coming of the Son of God, his sufferings and death, and also the resurrection of the dead.

31 And many of the people did inquire concerning the place where the Son of God should come; and they were taught that he would appear unto them after his resurrection; and this the people did with joy and gladness.



Case Study on Strengthening a Branch: Alma 11

32 And now after the church having been established throughout all the land, having got the victory over the devil, and the word of God being preached in its purity in all the land; and the Lord pouring out his blessings upon the people;

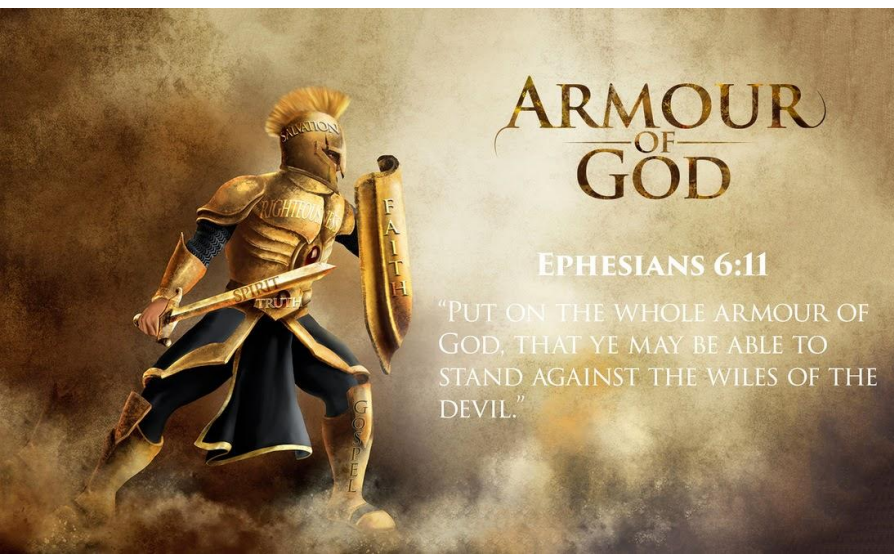
33 Thus ended the fourteenth year of the reign of the Judges, over the people of Nephi.



Spiritual Warfare

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.



Challenges are everywhere

- We tend to want everything to be easy, everyone to get along, and our churches to form in a popular mega church.
- Real life is full of challenges, disagreements, and effort
- Approach every challenge with the Holy Spirit.

Heb 12: 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?



Challenges are everywhere

- Every success in Scripture seems coupled with challenges:
 - Creation was followed by the fall
 - Zion was wonderful but all its neighbors raged against it
 - The Israelites observed mighty miracles being led out of Egypt, but they complained in the wilderness.
 - The church in Alma the Older's day became captives to the Lamenites
 - Nephi's brothers tried to kill him
 - The Nephite golden era had grandchildren wander into the ways of sin
 - The early Christian church suffered persecution and had to contend with heresy
 - In Joseph Smith Jr.'s day there was a lot of internal fighting, scandals, and persecution.

Challenges are everywhere

- We must allow ourselves to be refined:

Psa 66:10 For thou, O God, hast proved us; thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

Mal 3:3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in



Challenges are everywhere

- We need to be chastened:

Sec 92:1a Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you, whom I love; and whom I love I also chasten, that their sins may be forgiven; for with the chastisement I prepare a way for their deliverance, in all things, out of temptation; and I have loved you:

1b Wherefore, ye must needs be chastened and stand rebuked before my face, for ye have sinned against me a very grievous sin, in that ye have not considered the great commandment in all things, that I have given unto you, concerning the building of mine house,



Face Challenges with Love

- The test of true believers is love for one another

Jn 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you. That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.



Love

- Ask yourself if your actions and words are coming from love of God and fellow man
- If it isn't in love it isn't of God

1Jn 4:8 He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins.



Love

- Our relationship with God is most important
- When I stop loving, I feel farther from God



Paint the Millennium!

Marilyn Middleton
September 26, 2025

On June 22, 2023, when I first awoke, I was given the words "Paint the Millennium." That was it. No explanation or instruction as to how I might do this. I pondered it for a few days and came up with nothing. I felt I was supposed to do it, but how, what? I put it on the back burner but thought about it from time to time. Sometime in early August 2025 I woke with the answer as to how I was to Paint the Millennium. Others may do it differently, which is fine.

Envisioned by Marilyn Middleton
Created by LuShaun Curtis

And the Lord called His people Zion



We need God's presence

- When our relationship with God is right, everything else falls into place
 - We are more loving
 - We see eye to eye
 - We are able to meet one another's needs
 - We share about the hope within us



Rejoice with them that do rejoice,
and weep with them that weep.

- Romans 12:15

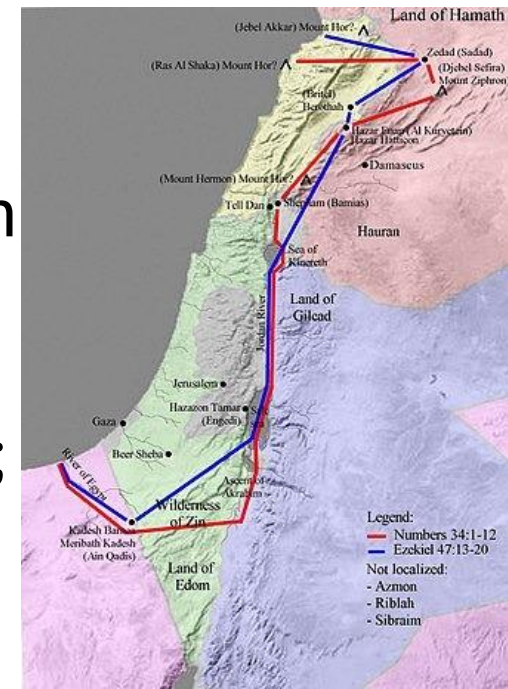
Exodus 33 God's Presence

Ex 33:1 And the Lord said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto a land flowing with milk and honey, the land which I swear unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it;

2 And I will send an Angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite;

3 Unto a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people; lest I consume thee in the way.

4 And when the people heard these evil tidings, they mourned; and no man did put on him his ornaments.



Exodus 33 God's Presence

Ex 33:5 For the Lord had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye are a stiff-necked people; I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee; therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.

Ex 33:6 And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by the mount Horeb.

Ex 33:7 And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp.

Exodus 33 God's Presence

Ex 33:8 And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, that all the people rose up, and stood every man at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle.

Ex 33:9 And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses.

Ex 33:10 And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door; and all the people rose up and worshiped, every man in his tent door.

Ex 33:11 And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp; but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

Exodus 33 God's Presence

Ex 33:12 And Moses said unto the Lord, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people; and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.

Ex 33:13 Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight; and consider that this nation is thy people.

Ex 33:14 And he said, *My presence shall go with thee*, and I will give thee rest.

Ex 33:15 And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.

Ex 33:16 For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be

Exodus 33 God's Presence

Ex 33:17 And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

Ex 33:18 And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory.

Ex 33:19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.



Exodus 33 God's Presence

Ex 33:20 And he said unto Moses, Thou canst not see my face at this time, lest mine anger be kindled against thee also, and I destroy thee, and thy people; for there shall no man among them see me at this time, and live, for they are exceeding sinful. And no sinful man hath at any time, neither shall there be any sinful man at any time, that shall see my face and live.

Ex 33:21 And the Lord said, Behold, thou shalt stand upon a rock, and I will prepare a place by me for thee.

Ex 33:22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of a rock, and cover thee with my hand while I pass by.

Ex 33:23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen, as at other times; for I am angry with my people Israel.