

Come Follow Me Lesson 47
Moroni 1-6 Nov 30-Dec 6

Moroni 1

This final book in the Book of Mormon was written by Moroni after his father's death and some fifteen to thirty-five years after the battle at Cumorah.

Moroni pondered about what he could add to the records that would be of further value to those who would one day receive his writings, and especially, as he said, to his brethren, the Lamanites." The writings in the book of Moroni serve almost like an appendix to the Book of Mormon. Moroni included in it some items of practical instruction, a sermon and some epistles from his father, and his own final, powerful testimony and farewell. We do not know how he then finished his sojourn on earth, but we know from subsequent events in the earliest days of this last dispensation of the gospel that he did indeed triumph as he predicted. DCBM, 4:319.

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve wrote: "What Moroni first recorded in the book carrying his own name were vignettes—a brief catalog, if you will—of things he felt needed to be recorded before he died and the Book of Mormon saga ended. These included the words of Christ to his twelve disciples when they were commissioned to bestow the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, the prayer by which priests and teachers were ordained, the sacramental prayers, and instructions as to how those who were baptized were to be received into the 'church of Christ' and numbered among the 'people of Christ.'" (*Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* [1997], 332).

Moroni writes for the benefit of the Lamanites—The Nephites who will not deny Christ are put to death. [Between A.D. 400 and 421]

1 NOW I, Moroni, after having made an end of abridging the account of the people of Jared, I had supposed ^anot to have written more, but I have not as yet perished; and I make not myself known to the Lamanites lest they should destroy me.

2 For behold, their ^awars are exceedingly fierce among themselves; and because of their ^bhatred they ^cput to death every Nephite that will not deny the Christ.

3 And I, Moroni, will not ^adeny the Christ; wherefore, I wander whithersoever I can for the safety of mine own life. (Joseph B. Wirthlin: "I offer three suggestions that will fan the flame of personal testimony as a protection against the wolves of evil that are prowling all around us to threaten our spiritual security. "First, make sure your testimony is built upon a solid foundation of faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ. . . . "Anchored with that faith, we are ready for my second suggestion—another layer of kindling on the bonfire of testimony. It is humble, sincere repentance. Few things extinguish the fervor of the Holy Spirit in the heart of any individual more quickly than does sin. . . . "My third suggestion is that we follow the example of the Savior. He set the pattern. "In any pursuit and under any condition, we can ask ourselves what Jesus would do and then determine our own course accordingly" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1992, 47–48; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 35–36).)

4 Wherefore, I write a few more things, contrary to that which I had supposed; for I had supposed not to have written any more; but I write a few more things, that perhaps they may be of ^aworth unto my brethren, the Lamanites, (In spite of the fact that the Lamanites will kill Moroni, he has such love and compassion for them that he is determined to finish the record that will one day come unto them.) in some future day, according to the will of the Lord. (Moroni tells us that he had not previously planned to write more on the plates after completing his abridgment of the book of Ether. Perhaps as he wandered

and hid from the Lamanites who sought his destruction additional thoughts came to his mind that impressed him to add a few more items to the record. Certainly he did not view these additions as nothing more than "fillers." Recording things on the plates was not an easy or convenient thing. It required considerable effort and time. Thus we must assume that Moroni felt strongly that the things he was now to include were of special significance- particularly to his brethren the Lamanites of the last days. DCBM, 4:321 Heber C. Kimball: "Let me say to you, that many of you will see the time when you will have all the trouble, trial and persecution that you can stand, and plenty of opportunities to show that you are true to God and his work. This Church has before it many close places through which it will have to pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. . . . " . . . The time will come when no man nor woman will be able to endure on borrowed light. Each will have to be guided by the light within himself. If you do not have it, how can you stand?" (in Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball* [1945], 449–50.)

Moroni 2

Jesus gave the Nephite apostles power to confer the gift of the Holy Ghost. [Between A.D. 400 and 421]

1 THE words of Christ, which he spake unto his ^adisciples, (Apostles) (Elder Joseph Fielding Smith added: "While in every instance the Nephite twelve are spoken of as disciples, the fact remains that they had been endowed with divine authority to be special witnesses for Christ among their own people. Therefore, they were virtually apostles to the Nephite race, although their jurisdiction was, as revealed to Nephi, eventually to be subject to the authority and jurisdiction of Peter and the twelve chosen in Palestine." Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 1:122. Joseph Smith: This book [the Book of Mormon] also tells us that our Savior made His appearance upon this continent after His resurrection; that He planted the Gospel here in all its fulness, and richness, and power, and blessing; that they had Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, and Evangelists; the same order, the same priesthood, the same ordinances, gifts, powers, and blessings, as were enjoyed on the eastern continent. (Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 Vols. 4:538)) the twelve whom he had chosen, as he laid his hands upon them—

2 And he called them by name, saying: Ye shall ^acall on the Father in my name, in mighty prayer; and after ye have done this ye shall have ^bpower that to him upon whom ye shall lay your ^chands, ^dye shall give the Holy Ghost; and in my name shall ye give it, for thus do mine apostles.

3 Now Christ spake these words unto them at the time of his first appearing; and the multitude heard it not, but the disciples heard it; and on as many as they ^alaid their hands, fell the Holy Ghost. (When he spoke to his disciples, Christ probably taught them the words to the prayers and the method of ordaining people to the priesthood. Moroni has included those instructions in these chapters, the appendix to the Book of Mormon. God is the same yesterday today, and forever. Whenever there has been priesthood, keys, and servants of the Lord authorized to proclaim the everlasting gospel and administer in its ordinances, there also has been the Church- the earthly kingdom of God. Perhaps Moroni, in writing to his latter-day readers, is showing that the foundational principles upon which the Nephite Church was built are the same today and in all generations. These verses also testify that the Nephite Church organized by the Savior himself operated under the power and authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood. It is by this higher priesthood that the gift of the Holy Ghost can be conferred upon people who have entered the Church through proper baptism. In discussing the practices and principles that governed the Nephite Church, there is probably good reason why Moroni first records the disciples being empowered to confer the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost and its accompanying gifts are imperative to the operation of the priesthood and the work of the Church. "We believe in the gift of the Holy Ghost being enjoyed now, as much as it was in the Apostles' days," the Prophet Joseph declared. "We believe that it [the gift of the Holy Ghost] is necessary to make and to organize the Priesthood, that no man can be

called to fill any office in the ministry without it; we also believe in prophecy, in tongues, in visions, and in revelations, in gifts, and in healings; and that these things cannot be enjoyed without the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Teachings, p. 243.) DCBM, 4:323)

Moroni 3

Elders ordain priests and teachers by the laying on of hands. [Between A.D. 400 and 421]

1 THE manner which the disciples, who were called the ^aelders of the church, ^bordained ^cpriests and teachers— (See the end of the lesson for instructions on how ordinances are performed in our day.)

2 After they had prayed unto the Father in the name of Christ, they ^alaid their hands upon them, and said:

3 In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you to be a priest, (or, if he be a ^ateacher) I ordain you to be a teacher, to preach repentance and ^bremission of sins through Jesus Christ, by the endurance of faith on his name to the end. Amen.

4 And after this manner did they ^aordain priests and teachers (In earlier Nephite times priests and teachers were called and ordained to service in the kingdom. These priests and teachers were not officers in the Aaronic Priesthood as we know it today. They were priests and teachers in the general sense that they were Melchizedek Priesthood servants who ministered to the people and taught the gospel (see 2 Nephi 5:26 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did ^aconsecrate Jacob and Joseph, that they should be ^bpriests and ^cteachers over the land of my people.; Jacob 1:18; For I, Jacob, and my brother Joseph had been ^aconsecrated priests and ^bteachers of this people, by the hand of Nephi. Mosiah 18:18 And it came to pass that Alma, having ^aauthority from God, ^bordained priests; even one priest to every fifty of their number did he ordain to preach unto them, and to ^cteach them concerning the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. It is not explicit in Moroni's account whether he is referring to "priests and teachers" in a generic way, meaning those who would minister under the Melchizedek Priesthood, or to the literal offices of priest and teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood. President Joseph Fielding Smith explained: "There were no Levites who accompanied Lehi to the Western Hemisphere. Under these conditions the Nephites officiated by virtue of the Melchizedek Priesthood from the days of Lehi to the days of the appearance of our Savior among them. It is true that Nephi 'consecrated Jacob and Joseph' that they should be priests and teachers over the land of the Nephites, but the fact that the plural terms priests and teachers were used indicates that this was not a reference to the definite office in the priesthood in either case, but it was a general assignment to teach, direct, and admonish the people. Otherwise the terms priest and teacher would have been given, in the singular When the Savior came to the Nephites, he established the Church in its fulness among them, and he informed them that former things had passed away, for they were all fulfilled in him. He gave the Nephites all the authority of the priesthood which we exercise today. Therefore we are justified in the belief that not only was the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood conferred, but also the Aaronic, just as we have it in the Church today; and this Aaronic Priesthood remained with them from this time until, through wickedness, all priesthood ceased. We may be assured that in the days of Moroni the Nephites did ordain teachers and priests in the Aaronic Priesthood; but before the visit of the Savior they officiated in the Melchizedek Priesthood." (Answers to Gospel Questions 1:124, 126.) DCBM, 4:323-24), according to the ^bgifts and callings of God unto men; and they ordained them by the ^cpower of the Holy Ghost, which was in them. (The Nephite disciples, who were ordained by Jesus (3 Nephi 12:1 ^aAND it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words unto Nephi, and to those who had been called, (now the number of them who had been called, and received power and authority to ^bbaptize, was ^ctwelve) and behold, he stretched forth his hand unto the multitude, and cried unto them, saying: ^dBlessed are ye if ye shall give heed unto the words of these twelve whom I have ^cchosen from among you to minister unto you, and to be your servants; and unto them I have given power that they may baptize you with water; and after that ye are

baptized with water, behold, I will baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost; therefore blessed are ye if ye shall believe in me and be baptized, after that ye have seen me and know that I am.), called others to priesthood service in the Church. This priesthood practice parallels that which was revealed by the Lord to Joseph Smith in this dispensation (D&C 20:38-56: 38 *The ^aduty of the elders, priests, teachers, deacons, and members of the church of Christ—An ^bapostle is an ^celder, and it is his calling to ^dbaptize; 39 And to ^aordain other elders, priests, teachers, and deacons; 40 And to administer ^abread and wine—the ^bemblems of the flesh and blood of Christ— 41 And to ^aconfirm those who are baptized into the church, by the laying on of ^bhands for the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, according to the scriptures; 42 And to teach, expound, exhort, baptize, and watch over the church; 43 And to confirm the church by the laying on of the hands, and the giving of the Holy Ghost; 44 And to take the ^alead of all meetings. 45 The elders are to ^aconduct the ^bmeetings as they are ^cled by the Holy Ghost, according to the commandments and revelations of God. 46 The ^apriest's duty is to preach, ^bteach, expound, exhort, and baptize, and administer the sacrament, 47 And visit the house of each member, and exhort them to ^apray ^bvocally and in secret and attend to all ^cfamily duties. 48 And he may also ^aordain other priests, teachers, and deacons. 49 And he is to take the ^alead of meetings when there is no elder present; 50 But when there is an elder present, he is only to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize, 51 And visit the house of each member, exhorting them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties. 52 In all these duties the priest is to ^aassist the elder if occasion requires. 53 The ^ateacher's duty is to ^bwatch over the ^cchurch always, and be with and strengthen them; 54 And see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither ^ahardness with each other, neither lying, ^bbackbiting, nor ^cevil ^dspeaking; 55 And see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members do their duty. 56 And he is to take the lead of meetings in the absence of the elder or priest—). The Book of Mormon thereby stands not only as another witness of Christ but also as another witness of the "true and living Church" of Christ. DCBM, 4:323)*

Moroni 4

How the elders and priests administer the sacramental bread. [Between A.D. 400 and 421] (During the resurrected Savior's ministry among the Nephites he introduced to them the ordinance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and taught them the significance of it (see 3 Nephi 18 and the corresponding commentary). In these chapters Moroni is illuminating this doctrine and ordinance, not by further doctrinal teaching of the symbolism or its significance but rather by demonstrating that it was a formal ordinance that was practiced in the Nephite Church. Moroni gives us the exact words of the prescribed prayer that must be offered as a part of this essential ordinance because the sacrament is not merely a ritual of remembrance but is in very deed a solemn covenant. The specific words and phrases of the sacramental prayer are a critical part of that covenant. Perhaps Moroni realized that in his father's abridgment the doctrine of the sacrament was taught and discussed but the words of the covenantal prayers had not been included; and that they should be in order that the latter-day reader of the Book of Mormon would better understand the significant covenants and blessings associated with the sacrament. DCBM, 4: 325)

PREACH MY GOSPEL: BAPTISM, OUR FIRST COVENANT: CHRIST'S EXAMPLE: 2 Nephi 31:4-18; Matthew 3:13-17. THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT: Mosiah 5:8-10; Mosiah 18:8-10; D&C 20:37. QUALIFICATIONS FOR BAPTISM: 2 Nephi 9:23; Mosiah 18:8-10; Alma 7:14-15; 3 Nephi 11:23-27; Moroni 6:1-4; D&C 20:37; Acts 2:37-39. THE LORD INSTITUTES THE SACRAMENT: 3 Nephi 18:1-18; Luke 22:15-20. PROMISED BLESSINGS OF BAPTISM: Mosiah 4:11-12, 26; Moroni 8:25-26; John 3:5; Romans 6:4. THE SACRAMENTAL PRAYERS: Moroni 4 and 5; D&C 20:75-79. PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENT: D&C 27:2; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29. NECESSITY FOR AUTHORITY: D&C 22; Hebrews 5:4. 1 THE ^amanner of

their ^belders and ^cpriests administering the flesh and blood of Christ unto the church; and they administered it ^daccording to the commandments of Christ; wherefore we know the manner to be true; and the elder or priest did minister it—

2 And they did kneel down with the ^achurch, and pray to the Father in the name of Christ, saying:

3 O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and ^asanctify this ^bbread to the souls of all those who partake of it; that they may eat in ^cremembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness (It is clear from the Book of Mormon usage of the verb "to witness" as it relates to baptism (see Mosiah 18:10: Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being ^abaptized in the ^bname of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a ^ccovenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?) and the sacrament (see 3 Nephi 18:11 And this shall ye always do to those who repent and are baptized in my name; and ye shall do it in ^aremembrance of my ^bblood, which I have shed for you, that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.) that it means to enter into a solemn covenant. Another way this phrase could read is "and covenant with thee." Only when we understand that as we "witness" we are covenanting with the Father to do certain things does the ordinance of the sacrament truly become a renewal of our previous covenants taken at baptism. DCBM, 4:325) unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the ^dname of thy Son (The name of Christ comes upon us not merely for the asking but only as we exercise faith in him, keep his commandments, and partake of the ordinances of salvation. When we covenant to take the name of Christ we are in fact covenanting with the Lord that we will so live our lives that we can be spiritually "born of him" and "become his sons and his daughters" (see Mosiah 5:7-12 Mosiah 15:11-12; Mosiah 27:25; D&C 34:2-3; D&C 39:4). Those who have thus been born again become members of the family of Christ and thus take upon them the family name- they become Christians in the true sense of that word and are obligated by covenant to live by the rules and regulations of the royal family, to live a life befitting the new and sacred name they have taken. "Family members bear the family name," wrote Elder Bruce R. McConkie. "By it they are known and called and identified; it sets them apart from all those of a different lineage and ancestry. Adopted children take upon themselves the name of their newfound parents and become in all respects as though they had been born in the family. And so it is that the children of Christ, those who are born again, those who are spiritually begotten by their new Father, take upon themselves the name of Christ. By it they are known; in it they are called; it identifies and sets them apart from all others. They are now family members, Christians in the real and true sense of the word. "Do they themselves become Christs? Not in the sense that they are called upon to atone for the sins of others and make immortality and eternal life available for themselves or their fellowmen on this or any world. But they do carry his name and are obligated to bear it in decency and dignity.'" (Promised Messiah, p. 363.) DCBM, 4:326), and always remember him When we covenant to "always remember him" we are not only committing ourselves to reflect and ponder upon the mission and teachings of the Lord but also are binding ourselves to follow the teachings of the Master and to seek diligently to walk in his footsteps, to live our lives and to treat our fellowman as we remember the Savior to have done. Elder Dallin H. Oaks has declared that if we are to remember Jesus we must also follow him. He cited several specific ways by which we demonstrate our remembrance of the Savior: "He calls us to take time from our daily activities to follow him and serve our fellowman. Even the greatest among us should be the servant of all. Those who always remember him will straightway assume and faithfully fulfill the responsibilities to which they are called by his servants If we always remember our Savior, we will forgive and forget grievances against those who have wronged us As we always remember him, we should strive to assure that we and our family members and, indeed, all the sons and daughters of God everywhere follow our Savior into the waters of baptism. This reminds each of us of our duties to proclaim the gospel, perfect the Saints, and redeem the dead We should always remember how the Savior taught us to love and do good to one another. Loving and serving one another can solve so many problems!"

(Ensign, May 1988, pp. 30-31). DCBM, 4:326-327), and keep his commandments which he hath given them, that they may always have his ^eSpirit to be with them. (One's faithfulness to the covenants made in baptism and renewed with worthy partaking of the sacrament binds the Lord to his part of the covenant agreement. He has promised that we may have the influence of the Holy Ghost as a constant companion. There are many significant spiritual fruits that come to us as the Lord fulfills this promise to us. The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier, and as a result we are forgiven of our sins and cleansed by the Holy Spirit through worthy partaking of the sacrament. "If we have done wrong; if there is a feeling in our souls that we would like to be forgiven," Elder Melvin J. Ballard declared, "then the method to obtain forgiveness is not through rebaptism; it is not to make confession to man; but it is to repent of our sins, to go to those against whom we have sinned or transgressed and obtain their forgiveness, and then repair to the sacrament table where, if we have sincerely repented and put ourselves in proper condition, we shall be forgiven, and spiritual healing will come to our souls. It will really enter into our being." (Improvement Era, October 1919, pp. 1026-27.) In addition to the cleansing from sin and the spiritual healing that comes by the Holy Ghost, having the Spirit with us yields other great blessings. If we are true to our covenants, the Spirit helps us to speak with power (see D&C 88:137), brings things to our remembrance (see John 14:26), gives us peace and joy (see Galatians 5:22), teaches and testifies of eternal truths (see John 14:26; Moroni 10:5), opens up revelations to our minds (see Alma 5:46), shows us all things that we should do (see 2 Nephi 32:5), strengthens body, mind and spirit (see Romans 8:26), comforts us in times of sorrow (see Acts 9:31), unfolds to us the mysteries of the kingdom (see 1 Nephi 10:19), and brings us many other spiritual blessings. Mortal minds cannot fully comprehend and words cannot fully explain what great things can come to us if we partake worthily of the sacrament and merit the Lord's promise to have his Spirit with us always. DCBM, 4:327) Amen.

Moroni 5

The mode of administering the sacramental wine is set forth. [Between A.D. 400 and 421]

1 THE ^amanner of administering the wine—Behold, they took the cup, and said:

2 O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee, in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this ^awine to the souls of all those who drink of it, that they may do it in ^bremembrance of the ^cblood of thy Son, which was shed for them; that they may witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they do always remember him, that they may have his ^dSpirit to be with them. Amen.

Moroni 6

Repentant persons are baptized and fellowshipped—Church members who repent are forgiven—Meetings are conducted by the power of the Holy Ghost. [Between A.D. 400 and 421]

PREACH MY GOSPEL: SEARCH THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES AND MAKE A LIST OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND COVENANT OF BAPTISM. DISCUSS HOW TO TEACH THOSE REQUIREMENTS TO OTHERS. 2 Nephi 31:13; Alma 7:14-16; Moroni 6:1-4; Mosiah 18:8-10; 3 Nephi 11:21-41; D&C 20:37 PREACH MY GOSPEL: BAPTISM, OUR FIRST COVENANT: CHRIST'S EXAMPLE: 2 Nephi 31:4-18; Matthew 3:13-17. THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT: Mosiah 5:8-10; Mosiah 18:8-10; D&C 20:37. QUALIFICATIONS FOR BAPTISM: 2 Nephi 9:23; Mosiah 18:8-10; Alma 7:14-15; 3 Nephi 11:23-27; Moroni 6:1-4; D&C 20:37; Acts 2:37-39. THE LORD INSTITUTES THE SACRAMENT: 3 Nephi 18:1-18; Luke 22:15-20. PROMISED BLESSINGS OF BAPTISM: Mosiah 4:11-12, 26; Moroni 8:25-26; John 3:5; Romans 6:4. THE SACRAMENTAL PRAYERS: Moroni 4 and 5; D&C 20:75-79. PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENT: D&C 27:2; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29. NECESSITY FOR AUTHORITY: D&C 22;

Hebrews 5:4. 1 AND now I speak concerning baptism. Behold, elders, priests, and teachers were baptized; and they were not baptized save they brought forth ^afruit meet that they were ^bworthy of it. (The "fruit" of faith and repentance includes not only a willingness to be baptized but also a life that demonstrates that desire and reflects a love for the Savior and for his teachings. Thus an interview is an essential part of preparation for baptism. Repentance and sincere commitment to gospel principles are the indicators of spiritual readiness for the covenant of baptism (see Matthew 3:8; Alma 13:10-13). DCBM, 4:328-29)

2 Neither did they receive any unto baptism save they came forth with a ^abroken ^bheart and a contrite spirit, ("To have a broken heart and contrite spirit," wrote Elder Bruce R. McConkie, "is to be broken down with deep sorrow for sin, to be humbly and thoroughly penitent, to have attained sincere and purposeful repentance" (Mormon Doctrine, p. 161). This kind of humility is not just sorrow for sin but is also an attitude of gratitude for the Savior's sacrifice and a recognition of one's total and complete dependence upon his merits and mercy. DCBM, 4: 329) and witnessed unto the church that they truly repented of all their sins.

3 And none were received unto baptism save they ^atook upon them the name of Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end. (Moroni's description of the qualifications for baptism into the Nephite Church of Christ shows virtually the same conditions as those listed by the Lord through revelation in this dispensation (compare D&C 20:37). Worthiness to be admitted into the kingdom of God on earth is not open to negotiation. These conditions are prescribed by the Lord and are the same from one dispensation to another. DCBM, 4:328)

PREACH MY GOSPEL: ENDURE TO THE END: 2 Nephi 31:20-21; Moroni 6:4; D&C 20:37; Articles of Faith 1:3; John 14:15, 21; Ephesians 4:11-14; Philippians 2:12. 4 And after they had been received unto baptism, and were wrought upon and ^acleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost, (**Confirmed and received the gift of the Holy Ghost**) they were numbered among the people of the ^bchurch of Christ; and their ^cnames were taken, that they might be remembered (This perhaps has reference to the Nephite Church's equivalent of our modern-day membership record system. Keeping a record of the members of the Church was not done for the sake of reporting statistics or "boasting" in numbers but rather so that each member could be identified and remembered. The purpose is the same today. Members are remembered in that priesthood leaders are kept aware of all those in their units in order that, through priesthood quorums and auxiliaries and through effective home teaching, the Saints can be spiritually ministered to and encouraged to live the gospel to be mindful of the need for prayer, and to more faithfully rely upon the merciful arm of the Savior. We do not know exactly what procedures and/or programs were employed by the Nephite Church to meet these objectives, but we can clearly see that the responsibilities of fellowshiping and nurturing one another, of being our "brother's keeper," is an age-old requirement of all of the Lord's Saints. (Compare D&C 20:42, 46-55). DCBM, 4:329) and nourished by the good word of God, (President Gordon B. Hinckley: every new convert needs three things: 1. A friend in the Church to whom he can constantly turn, who will walk beside him, who will answer his questions, who will understand his problems. 2. An assignment. Activity is the genius of this Church. It is the process by which we grow. Faith and love for the Lord are like the muscle of my arm. If I use them, they grow stronger. If I put them in a sling, they become weaker. Every convert deserves a responsibility. The bishop may feel that he is not qualified for responsibility. Take a chance on him. Think of the risk the Lord took when He called you. Of course the new convert will not know everything. He likely will make some mistakes. So what? We all make mistakes. The important thing is the growth that will come of activity. As a part of this process of giving responsibility, it is proper and very important that the new convert, if he be a man, is ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood. Then before too many months, he may be ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood. He will have the fellowship of the elders quorum. He will become one of a vast body of priesthood throughout the world, men of integrity and faith who love the Lord and seek to move forward His work. 3. Every convert must be "nourished by the good word of God" (**Moro. 6:4**). It is imperative that he or she become affiliated

with a priesthood quorum or the Relief Society, the Young Women, the Young Men, the Sunday School, or the Primary. He or she must be encouraged to come to sacrament meeting to partake of the sacrament, to renew the covenants made at the time of baptism. I am convinced that we will lose but very, very few of those who come into the Church if we take better care of them. Ensign, May 1999, 108-109.) to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually ^dwatchful unto prayer, ^erelying alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith. (God the Father is the author of the plan of salvation. Jesus, by divine investiture of authority and as the chief proponent of the Father's plan, is also often referred to as the author of our faith. In some translations of the Bible this term author is translated as captain. Our Savior is indeed the captain of our salvation and the prime mover of our faith and the source of all righteousness. Another word for author is father. Jesus is truly the father or author of the salvation of all who come unto him and are "born again" and thus become his children. Christ is the finisher of our faith in that, through our faith in him, he perfects our faith and perfects us. Through his grace we are saved or, in other words, spiritually finished as to immortality and eternal life. It is upon Christ and his infinite atonement that we should focus our hearts, minds, and strength. He is indeed the light at the "end of the tunnel" — it is he that the scriptures command us to consider as "the end of your salvation" (D&C 46:7). DCBM, 4:330)

PREACH MY GOSPEL: OBSERVE THE LAW OF THE FAST: Omni 1:6; Alma 5:45-46; Alma 6:6; Alma 17:2-3; Moroni 6:5; D&C 59:12-16; D&C 88:76; Matthew 6:1-4, 16-18; Isaiah 58:6-11. CARING FOR THE POOR: Mosiah 4:16-27; Mosiah 18:8-10; Alma 4:12-13; Matthew 25:34-46; James 1:27; Isaiah 58:3-12.

5 And the ^achurch did meet together ^boft, (The value of Church meetings is not in their frequency but rather in that coming together often in the spirit of fasting and prayer helps feed the spirit and keep one close to gospel principles. Just as it is unhealthy and physically dangerous to neglect one's health and nutrition, so is it spiritually life-threatening to go without the spiritual nutrition that comes from meeting together, serving one another, and being taught. Partaking of the sacrament weekly is also an imperative ingredient in a spiritual "balanced diet." President Anthon H. Lund declared: "unless the Saints attend their meetings it will be hard for them to keep alive in the Gospel" (CR, October 1907, p. 9) DCBM, 4:330) to ^cfast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls.

6 And they did ^ameet together oft to partake of bread and wine, in ^bremembrance of the Lord Jesus. ("No man goes away from this Church and becomes an apostate in a week, nor in a month," observed Elder Melvin J. Ballard. "It is a slow process. The one thing that would make for the safety of every man and woman would be to appear at the sacrament table every Sabbath day. We would not get very far away in one week- not so far away that, by the process of self-investigation, we could not rectify the wrongs we may have done. If we should refrain from partaking of the sacrament, condemned by ourselves as unworthy to receive these emblems, we could not endure long, and we would soon, I am sure, have the spirit of repentance. The road to the sacrament table is the path of safety for the Latter-day Saints." (Improvement Era, October 1919, p. 1028.) DCBM, 4:330-31)

7 And they were strict to observe that there should be ^ano iniquity among them; and whoso was found to commit iniquity, and ^bthree witnesses of the church did condemn them before the ^celders, and if they repented not, and ^dconfessed not, their names were ^eblotted out, and they were not ^fnumbered among the people of Christ.

8 But ^aas oft as they repented and sought forgiveness, with real ^bintent, they were ^cforgiven. (Church discipline too is an important element of the perfection-of-the-saints mission of the Church. Rooting out iniquity from the institutional Church has always been one of the responsibilities of the 'elders' in all dispensations, but there is a more important blessing to the individual that comes from such discipline. The Nephites, like the modern Church, sought not only to preserve the spiritual integrity of the institution but also to help each member repent and walk uprightly before the Lord (see D&C 20:80; D&C 42:80-83; D&C 102:12-23). Those who misunderstand the mission of the Church and the indispensable role of discipline in fulfilling that mission may view excommunication,

disfellowshipment, or other formal disciplinary measures as unfairly punitive and humiliating. On the contrary, Elder Theodore M. Burton noted that "the most loving action the Church can take at times is to disfellowship or excommunicate a person" ("To Forgive Is Divine," Ensign, May 1983, p. 70). When deemed necessary through inspiration these repentance remedies can help the sinner fully realize the seriousness of his transgression. If a serious offense is treated too lightly it is more likely to be repeated. Such Church actions can ensure that the necessary price for repentance is paid. They also serve to mercifully protect the errant person from the full weight and responsibility of his covenants, which if left in full force would bring condemnation upon him in his yet unforgiven state. Through Church discipline a wrongdoer can demonstrate to the Lord, to the Church, and to others a sincere desire to repent and be forgiven, whatever the cost. This period of discipline is an opportunity to be retained as a disciple of him who made our repentance possible. If such discipline does not yield repentance, reformation, and forgiveness for the sinner, such discipline still protects the sanctity and purity of the Church. To do otherwise is an offense to God, for he declared: "And him that repenteth not of his sins, and confesseth them not, ye shall bring before the church, and do with him as the scripture saith unto you, either by commandment or by revelation. And this ye shall do that God may be glorified- not because ye forgive not, having not compassion, but that ye may be justified in the eyes of the law, that ye may not offend him who is your lawgiver." (D&C 64:12-13.) DCBM, 4:331)

9 And their meetings were ^aconducted by the church after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the ^bpower of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach, or to exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done. (Today, just as in the Nephite Church, our meetings should be filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. To ensure this, leaders should prayerfully seek the guidance of the Lord in planning meetings, in selecting speakers and the topics to be addressed, and in the choosing of the sacred hymns of praise. Meetings should be conducted in a reverential manner that will be conducive to the spirit of true worship. This scriptural injunction to see that meetings are conducted "after the manner of the workings of the Spirit" is not reserved or directed solely to presiding officers. Speakers and teachers should likewise prayerfully seek inspiration that their part will be "led by the Spirit." Congregation members, too, have a sacred obligation to spiritually prepare for meetings and attend them in the proper frame of mind so as to be touched by the power of the Holy Ghost. When all members of the Church recognize him who is the Head and seek to commune with him through reverent worship at Church meetings, then the Spirit of the Lord can be poured out upon the Saints. In these circumstances they "understand one another, and . . . are edified and rejoice together" (see D&C 50:17-22). DCBM, 4:322)