

LESSON 12
“Seek Ye For The Kingdom Of God”
Jacob 1-4

OVERVIEW:

Jacob magnifies his calling from the Lord to preach repentance to the people. Jacob warns against the love of riches, pride and unchastity. Jacob testifies of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. He warns the people of looking beyond the mark. Jacob condemns the unauthorized practice of plural marriage. Jacob warns against racial prejudice.

SCRIPTURES:

THE BOOK OF JACOB
THE BROTHER OF NEPHI

The words of his preaching unto his brethren. He confoundeth a man who seeketh to overthrow the doctrine of Christ. A few words concerning the history of the people of Nephi. (Note: This headnote was in the original text.)

CHAPTER 1

Jacob and Joseph seek to persuade men to believe in Christ and keep his commandments—Nephi dies—Wickedness prevails among the Nephites. [Between 544 and 421 B.C.] (Jacob is somewhere between 47 and 55 years old.)

1 FOR behold, it came to pass that *fifty and five years had passed away from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem; wherefore, Nephi gave me, Jacob, a ^acommandment concerning the ^bsmall plates, upon which these things are engraven. (The fact that Nephi passed the plates on to Jacob suggests that Nephi had no sons of his own to pass them to.)

2 And he gave me, Jacob, a commandment that I should ^awrite upon ^bthese plates a few of the things which I considered to be most precious; that I should not touch, save it were lightly, (only include a history to give a framework for the doctrine) concerning the history of this people which are called the people of Nephi.

3 For he said that the history of his people should be engraven upon his ^aother plates (the large plates which included the 116 stolen manuscript pages), and that I should ^bpreserve these plates and hand them down unto my seed (Jacob has a son, Enos), from generation to generation.

4 And if there were preaching which was ^asacred, or revelation which was great, or prophesying, that I should engraven the ^bheads (i.e. the dominant important items, a Hebrew expression) of them upon these plates, and touch upon them as much as it were possible, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of our people.

5 For because of faith and great anxiety, it truly had been made manifest unto us concerning our people, what things should ^ahappen unto them.

6 (Jacob's purpose in writing:) And we also had many revelations, and the spirit of much prophecy; wherefore, we knew of ^aChrist and his kingdom, which should come.

7 Wherefore we labored diligently among our people, that we might persuade them to ^acome unto Christ, and partake of the goodness of God, that they might enter into his ^brest, (To enter into the rest of the Lord in this life is to be possessed of the quiet but powerful assurance that the work in which we are engaged is true; that the Lord and Savior reigns; that he has restored his holy gospel through Joseph Smith in these latter days; and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is in the line of its duty, that it is led by true servants of the Lord, and that the God of heaven has appropriately empowered

his oracles in this day to represent him. It is to know the peace of spiritual certainty and thus to be immune to the taunting waves of ridicule and skepticism (Gospel Doctrine, p. 58.) lest by any means he should swear in his wrath they should not ^center in, as in the ^dprovocation in the days of temptation while the children of Israel were in the ^ewilderness. (At Sinai the children of Israel spurned the privileges of the everlasting gospel and the greater priesthood and thereby rejected the higher counsel which might have been had from the lips of Jehovah through Moses the Lawgiver. They provoked their Lord and robbed themselves of the sublime association with that holy being who was the God of the covenant fathers. DCBM, 2:4)

8 Wherefore, we would to God that we could persuade all men ^anot to rebel against God, to ^bprovoke him to anger, but that all men would believe in Christ, (To believe in Christ is more than an intellectual admission that he exists, more than recognition of his historical reality. It is to acknowledge his divine Sonship, to know by the witness of the Spirit that he is God's Almighty Son, and that salvation is to be found in and through his holy name and in no other way. DCBM, 2:4) and view his death, and suffer his ^ccross and bear the shame of the world; ("To suffer the cross of Christ is to be willing to bear the burdens of Christian discipleship, particularly of crucifying the 'old man of sin' and putting on Christ. 'if any man will come after me,' Jesus taught his meridian Twelve, 'let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. And now for a man to take up his cross, is to deny himself all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and keep my commandments.' (JST, Matthew 16:25-26; cf. Matthew 10:38; 2 Nephi 9:18; 3 Nephi 12:30.)" (McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2, p. 5) An unerring measure of our conversion to Christ and his gospel is found in that which we do. The testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy is far more than feeling and sentiment; it is a witness that impels one to righteous action. DCBM, 2:4.) wherefore, I, Jacob, take it upon me to fulfil the commandment of my brother Nephi.

9 Now Nephi began to be old, and he saw that he must soon ^adie; wherefore, he ^banointed (The anointing, a symbol of the outpouring of the Spirit, was a sacramental charge, one in which the king effectually covenanted to lead his people in righteousness. Prophets, priests, and kings – all of which were anointed – thus became messianic testimonies of the King of kings. DCBM, 2:6) a man (Since it does not state that he anointed one of his sons to be king, as previously stated, it is probable that he had no sons, but only daughters.) to be a king and a ruler over his people now, according to the reigns of the ^ckings. (The monarchy would last about 500 years.)

10 The people having loved Nephi exceedingly, he having been a great protector for them, having wielded the ^asword of Laban (The symbolism associated with the sword of Laban reaches to our day. The three witnesses of the Book of Mormon were promised that they would see the sword of Laban, as well as the gold plates, the breastplate, and the Urim and Thummim. An incident recounted by Brigham Young affirms that the protective hand of the Lord remains extended in behalf of his people and over his sacred records. President Young tells us that Oliver Cowdery accompanied Joseph Smith when the latter returned the plates to the Hill Cumorah. They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room [within the hill]. Under this table there was a pile of plates as much as two feet high, and there were altogether in this room more plates than probably many wagon loads; they were piled up in the corners and along the walls. The first time they went there the sword of Laban hung upon the wall; but when they went again it had been taken down and laid upon the table across the gold plates; it was unsheathed and on it was written these words: "This sword will never be sheathed again until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and his Christ... JD, 19:38.) in their defence, (This indicates that there may have already been some wars between the Nephites and Lamanites. This must have been recorded on the large plates of Nephi but not on the small plates.) and having labored in all his days for their welfare—

11 Wherefore, the people were desirous to retain in remembrance his name. And whoso should reign in his stead were called by the people, second Nephi, third Nephi, and so forth, according to the reigns of the kings; and thus they were called by the people, let them be of whatever name they would.

12 And it came to pass that Nephi died.

13 Now the people which were not ^aLamanites were Nephites; nevertheless, they were called Nephites (Sam is included with Nephi), Jacobites, Josephites, ^bZoramites, Lamanites, Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites. (Notice that there are seven tribes mentioned. 7 means complete.) “In general, the terms ‘Nephites’ and ‘Lamanites’ are used with the same meaning for the first 500 years of Nephite history. The term Nephites refers to all those who followed after Nephi and to their descendants. The term Lamanites refers to those who followed after Laman and to their descendants. However, it is mentioned later in the Book of Mormon that there were no ‘ites’ of any kind during the 200-year Golden Age immediately after the appearance of the resurrected Jesus Christ. (See 4 Nephi 1:17) “After this 200-year period of righteousness, the terms ‘Lamanites’ and ‘Nephites’ are used again, but with somewhat different meanings than those used earlier in the Book of Mormon... “...In A.D. 231 ‘there arose a people who were called the Nephites, and they were true believers in Christ ... therefore the true believers in Christ, and the true worshipers of Christ ... were called Nephites. ... And it came to pass that they who rejected the gospel were called Lamanites.’ (4 Ne 1:36-38) “The terms Nephites and Lamanites for the remainder of the Book of Mormon are determined by this division, which had taken place by A.D. 231. In other words, the Lamanites of the last two hundred years of Book of Mormon history are descendants of those who revolted against the true church of Christ between about A.D. 194 and 231.” (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p.156, 296))

14 But I, Jacob, shall not hereafter distinguish ^athem by these names, but I shall ^bcall them Lamanites that seek to destroy the people of Nephi, and those who are friendly to Nephi I shall call ^cNephites, or the ^dpeople of Nephi, according to the reigns of the kings.

15 And now it came to pass that the people of Nephi, under the reign of the second king, began to grow hard in their hearts, and indulge themselves somewhat in wicked practices, such as like unto David of old desiring many ^awives and ^bconcubines, and also Solomon, his son. (Two serious problems – immorality and pride – materialistic, unspiritual. These are the sins of our generation, said Presidents Kimball and Benson.)

16 Yea, and they also began to search much ^agold and silver, and began to be lifted up somewhat in pride.

17 Wherefore I, Jacob, gave unto them these words as I taught them in the ^atemple, (See Jacob 2:2 for a description of the temple.) having first obtained mine ^berrand from the Lord. (There are those who claim authority from some secret ordinations of the past. Even now some claim special revealed authority to lead or to teach the people. Occasionally they use the names of members of the First Presidency or of the Twelve or of the Seventy and imply some special approval of what they teach. There have been too many names presented, too many sustaining votes taken, too many ordinations and settings apart performed before too many witnesses; there have been too many records kept, too many certificates prepared, and too many pictures published in too many places for any one to be deceived as to who holds proper authority. Claims of special revelation or secret authority from the Lord or from the Brethren are false on the face of them and really utter nonsense! The Lord never operated that way; these things were not done in a corner; there is light on every official call and every authorized ordination, and it has always been that way. Boyd K. Packer, CR, April, 1985, p. 43 The following are my opinions about the sustaining of the Savior prior to the Second Coming: When the Savior appears at Adam-ondi Ahman, he will go through the same thing that all who receive authority do. He will be presented and sustained by those present, by those who have held priesthood keys anciently as well as presently. He will be sustained as President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as King of the kingdom of God on earth, as Lord of lords. Then He will rightfully take his place at the head of the Kingdom to rule and reign over the entire earth through the Millennium.)

18 For I, Jacob, and my brother Joseph had been ^aconsecrated priests and ^bteachers of this people, by the hand of Nephi. (Joseph Fielding Smith : “The Nephites did not officiate under the authority of the Aaronic Priesthood. They were not descendants of Aaron, and there were no Levites among them. There

is no evidence in the Book of Mormon that they held the Aaronic Priesthood...but the Book of Mormon tells us definitely, in many places, that the priesthood which they held and under which they officiated was the Priesthood after the holy order, the order of the Son of God. This higher priesthood can officiate in every ordinance of the gospel, and Jacob and Joseph, for instance, were consecrated priests and teachers after this order.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 3, p. 86) These callings are descriptive of their labors in the Melchizedek Priesthood, rather than offices in the Aaronic Priesthood as we know them. So far as we know, there was no Aaronic Priesthood among the Nephites, until, possibly, the coming of Christ to America. Bruce R. McConkie, *Promised Messiah*, p. 412, New Witness, p. 348.)

19 And we did ^amagnify our office unto the Lord, (Here’s how to magnify your calling.) taking upon us the ^bresponsibility, answering the sins of the people upon our own heads if we did not ^cteach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their ^dblood might not come upon our garments; otherwise their blood would come upon our garments, and we would not be found spotless at the last day. (“President John Taylor said on one occasion, speaking to the brethren of the priesthood: ‘If you do not magnify your callings, God will hold you responsible for those you might have saved, had you done your duty.’ “This is a challenging statement. If I by reason of sins of commission or omission lose what I might have had in the hereafter, I myself must suffer and, doubtless, my loved ones with me. But if I fail in my assignment as a bishop, a stake president, a mission president, or one of the General Authorities of the Church—if any of us fail to teach, lead, direct, and help to save those under our direction and within our jurisdiction, then the Lord will hold us responsible if they are lost as the result of our failure.” (Hugh B. Brown, *CR*, Oct. 1962, p. 84 as taken from the BOM Institute Manual, p. 14))

* Verse 1 [544 B.C.].

CHAPTER 2

Jacob denounces the love of riches, pride, and unchastity—Men should seek riches to help their fellow men—Jacob condemns the unauthorized practice of plural marriage—The Lord delights in the chastity of women. [Between 544 and 421 B.C.]

1 THE ^awords which Jacob, the brother of Nephi, spake unto the people of Nephi, after the death of Nephi: (This is Jacob’s general conference talk.)

2 Now, my beloved brethren, I, Jacob, according to the ^aresponsibility which I am under to God, to ^bmagnify mine office with ^csoberness, (Joseph Fielding Smith: “Every man who is ordained to an office in the Melchizedek Priesthood should realize fully just what that ordination means. He receives the Priesthood with an oath and covenant that he will magnify his calling and be faithful therein. Joseph F. Smith: “Think what it means to hold keys of authority which-if exercised in wisdom and in righteousness-are bound to be respected by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost! Do you honor this Priesthood? Do you respect the office and honor the key of authority that you possess in the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is after the order of the Son of God? Will you, who hold this Priesthood, profane the name of Deity? Would you be riotous, and eat and drink with the drunken, with the unbelieving and with the profane? Would you, holding that Priesthood, forget your prayers, and fail to remember the Giver of all good? Would you, holding that Priesthood, and possessing the right and authority from God to administer in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, violate the confidence and the love of God, the hope and desire of the Father of all of us? For, in bestowing that key and blessing upon you, he desires and expects you to magnify your calling. Would you, as an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ, dishonor your wife or your children? Would you desert the mother of your children, the wife of your bosom, the gift of God to you, which is more precious than life itself? For without the woman the man is not perfect in the Lord, no more than the woman is perfect without the man.” (*Gospel Doctrine*, p. 165)) and that I might ^drid my garments of your sins, I come up

into the temple (The temple was built after the fashion of Solomon's temple. It would have been used the same way the temple at Jerusalem was used. If the temple that Nephi built was fashioned after the temple of Solomon, as Nephi says (2 Ne 5:16), then there would have been an outer court, the inner tabernacle, or holy place, and the holy of holies. This was the pattern for the tabernacle of Moses and was repeated again for the temple of Solomon. Jacob may have come into the temple on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippor. He would have taught in the outer courtyard since only the officiating priest could go inside. "A comparison of the plan of Solomon's Temple with that of the earlier Tabernacle shows that in all essentials of arrangement and proportion the two were so nearly alike as to be practically identical. True, the Tabernacle had but one enclosure, while the Temple was surrounded by courts, but the inner structure itself, the Temple proper, closely followed the earlier design." (James E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord*, p. 7) Therefore, in the temple of Solomon, like the tabernacle of Moses, there were three different areas which were representative of the three degrees of glory: outer court=telestial, holy place=terrestrial, and holy of holies=celestial. Traditionally, the people could enter the outer court but only the priests could go into the holy place. Entrance to the holy of holies was restricted to the high priest who could only enter once a year. If Jacob taught the people in the temple, it makes sense that he would have taught them in the outer room which represented the telestial kingdom. This would have been the only room big enough for a large gathering of people. If the Nephites followed the pattern of the Jews, then none of the people would have been allowed to enter the other parts of the temple unless they held the priesthood and were performing specific priesthood functions. In the days of Christ, when the Jews similarly gathered to hear the teachings of the Savior in the temple of Herod, they met in the corresponding outer courts.) this day that I might declare unto you the word of God.

3 And ye yourselves know that I have hitherto been diligent in the office of my calling; but I this day am weighed down with much more desire and anxiety for the ^awelfare of your souls than I have hitherto been.

4 For behold, as yet, ye have been obedient unto the word of the Lord, which I have given unto you.

5 But behold, hearken ye unto me, and know that by the help of the all-powerful Creator of heaven and earth I can tell you concerning your ^athoughts, (The gift of discernment, as well as the spirit of prophecy and revelation, is the rightful province of those on the Lord's errand. They come to see and know things not visible to the natural man; like their Master, they too can read the hearts and minds of men. DCBM, 2:11) how that ye are beginning to labor in sin, ("The sins of the people in Jacob's day were not inadvertent transgressions; they had begun to 'labor in sin' in the sense that sin had become their obsession and their preoccupation. They had begun to flirt with that spirit which characterized the wickedness of the days of Noah: 'And every man was lifted up in the imagination of the thoughts of his heart, being only evil continually' (Moses 8:22).") (McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2, p. 11)) which sin appeareth very abominable unto me, yea, and abominable unto God.

6 Yea, it grieveth my soul and causeth me to shrink with shame before the presence of my Maker, that I must testify unto you concerning the wickedness of your hearts.

7 And also it grieveth me that I must use so much ^aboldness of speech concerning you, before your wives and your children, many of whose feelings are exceedingly tender and ^bchaste and delicate (sensitive) before God, which thing is pleasing unto God;

8 And it supposeth me that they have come up hither to hear the pleasing ^aword of God, yea, the word which healeth the wounded soul.

9 Wherefore, it burdeneth my soul that I should be constrained, because of the strict commandment which I have received from God, to ^aadmonish you according to your crimes, to enlarge the wounds of those who are already wounded, instead of consoling and healing their wounds; and those who have not been wounded, instead of feasting upon the pleasing word of God have daggers placed to pierce their souls and wound their delicate minds.

10 But, notwithstanding the greatness of the task, I must do according to the strict^a commands of God, and tell you concerning your wickedness and abominations, in the presence of the pure in heart, and the broken heart, and under the glance of the^b piercing eye of the Almighty God.

11 Wherefore, I must tell you the truth according to the^a plainness of the^b word of God. For behold, as I inquired of the Lord, thus came the word unto me, saying: Jacob, get thou up into the temple on the morrow, and declare the word which I shall give thee unto this people.

12 And now behold, my brethren, this is the word which I declare unto you, that many of you have begun to search for gold, and for silver, and for all manner of precious^a ores, in the which this land, which is a^b land of promise unto you and to your seed, doth abound most plentifully.

13 And the hand of providence hath smiled upon you most pleasingly, that you have obtained many riches; and because some of you have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren ye are^a lifted up in the pride of your hearts, and wear stiff necks and high heads because of the costliness of your apparel, and persecute your brethren because ye suppose that ye are better than they. (“Among the

timeless lessons to be learned from the Book of Mormon are the perils of the prosperity cycle. It is as though a people could not learn from the mistakes of the past. Whenever any group chose to keep the commandments of God, he blessed and prospered them. At that point, instead of returning constant thanks to him who had rewarded them—instead of acknowledging in humility that all that they had was a direct blessing from the Almighty—most of the people in the Book of Mormon (Nephites and Jaredites alike) lost sight of the source of their blessings. They traded the confidence of heaven for the approbation of men. Wealth became the end in life rather than a means to the accomplishment of good. Whenever the acquisition of ‘things’ became more important than people, then it was only a matter of time before class distinctions, caste systems, and the persecution of the poor followed. ‘Wealth is a jealous master who will not be served half-heartedly and will suffer no rival—not even God.... The more important wealth is, the less important it is how one gets it.’ (Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, p. 393.)” (McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2, p. 14) Brigham Young: “There are hundreds of people in these valleys, who never owned a cow in the world, until they came here, but now they have got a few cows and sheep around them, a yoke of oxen, and a horse to ride upon, they feel to be personages of far greater importance than Jesus Christ was, when he rode into Jerusalem upon an ass's colt. They become puffed up in pride, and selfishness, and their minds become attached to the things of this world. They become covetous, which makes them idolators. Their substance engrosses so much of their attention, they forget their prayers, and forget to attend the assemblies of the Saints, for they must see to their land, or to their crops that are suffering, until by and by the grasshoppers come like a cloud, and cut away the bread from their mouth, introducing famine and distress, to stir them up in remembrance of the Lord their God.” (1853, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 267) There will come a time, however, in the history of the Saints when they will be tried with peace, prosperity, popularity and riches. Daniel H. Wells, JD 19:367.)

14 And now, my brethren, do ye suppose that God justifieth you in this thing? Behold, I say unto you, Nay. But he condemneth you, and if ye persist in these things his judgments must speedily (suddenness, not immediacy) come unto you.

15 O that he would show you that he can pierce you, and with one glance of his^a eye he can smite you to the dust! (Those who recognize their relationship to their Heavenly Father will know how to use their wealth to bless others.)

16 O that he would rid you from this iniquity and abomination. And, O that ye would listen unto the word of his commands, and let not this^a pride of your hearts destroy your souls! (The danger of pride.)

17 Think of your^a brethren like unto yourselves, and be familiar (The word familiar is from the same root as the word family; to be familiar with all is to treat all men and women as members of the family, to extend the fellowship and love and resources of the family to all who stand in need, to establish Zion— heaven on earth. DCBM, 2:16) with all and free with your^b substance, that^c they may be rich like unto you. (Help others where we can, not with a dole. Assess their problems, what are the needs, care for

immediate needs, help them to be self sufficient.)

18 But ^abefore ye seek for ^briches, seek ye for the ^ckingdom of God. (Priorities. Our first priority should be seeking for and building up the kingdom of God. Money is a medium of exchange and is of itself neutral. Our attitude toward material and spiritual things shifts wealth out of its neutral position. Two basic relationships help determine our attitude toward spiritual and material things – our relationship with God. If we turn our hearts away from God, the things of the world become our top priority. This is why Paul called covetousness idolatry. Our relationship with our fellowmen. If we lose sight of the brotherhood of men, our desire for material wealth can lead us to such sins as dishonesty, covetousness, and neglect of the poor. Institute Manual, p. 45. President David O. McKay counseled: What seek ye first? What do you cherish as the dominant, the uppermost thought in your mind? What this is will largely determine your destiny. Notwithstanding the complexity of human society, we can encompass all purposes by two great important ones. First, the world of material gain; and second, the world of happiness consisting of love and the power to do good. If it is your purpose to get worldly gain, you may obtain it. You may win in this world almost anything for which you strive. If you work for wealth, you can get it, but before you make it an end in itself, take a look at those men who have sacrificed all to the accomplishment of this purpose, at those who have desired wealth for the sake of wealth itself. Gold does not corrupt man; it is in the motive of acquiring that gold that corruption occurs. Treasures of Life, p. 174-75.)

19 And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; (Without a hope in Christ, we trust in our riches and not in Christ. This statement must be viewed in a proper context. “Seek not for riches but for wisdom” the Lord explained to the Latter-day Saints, “and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold he that hath eternal life is rich.” D&C 6:7. The Lord later counseled his Saints: “If ye seek the riches which it is the will of the Father to give unto you, ye shall be the richest of all people, for ye shall have the riches of eternity; and it must needs be that the riches of the earth are mine to give; but beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old.” (D&C 38:39) Surely not all those who have received a hope in Christ, who are true and faithful to every trust, and who, further, seek for riches, will be prospered, at least according to the puny standards of this world. Latter-day Saints must never succumb to the temptation (so prevalent in a success-oriented and materialistic world) to equate financial success with personal righteousness. Too many righteous men and women, persons who have known true success in life, have lived and died in humble circumstances for us to suppose some type of causal relationship between nobility of soul and monetary affluence. DCBM, 2:18) and ye will seek them for the intent to ^ado good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, (Teach people to help themselves) and to liberate the captive (Members of the church should preach the gospel to help liberate others from spiritual captivity), and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted. (Gordon B. Hinckley: “Continuing with the words of Paul, ‘For the love of money is the root of all evil’ (1 Tim 6:10). It is the love of money and the love of those things which money can buy which destroys us. We all need money to supply our needs. But it is the love of it which hurts us, which warps our values, which leads us away from spiritual things and fosters selfishness and greed.” (Ensign, May 1997, p. 49 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 175) George F. Richards: “The Lord expects us when he blesses us with the good things of this earth to remember those who are not so fortunate. We are to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, comfort those who mourn, and minister unto those who are poor and needy, and thus become of that class to whom the Lord, when he shall come, shall say: ‘Come, ye blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’” (Conference Reports, Oct. 1939, p. 109) John Taylor: “I will promise the Latter-day Saints that if they will go into these things allowing God to dictate in the interests of Israel and the building up of his Zion on the earth, and take themselves and their individual interests out of the question, feeling they are acting for him and his kingdom, they will become the wealthiest of all people, and God will bless them and pour out wealth and intelligence and all the blessings that earth can afford.” (Journal of

Discourses, vol. 20, p. 164) The Lord thereby identifies those who are willing to give up all things – their own lives included – for the furtherance of the kingdom, as being capable of handling wisely and judiciously a share of this world’s goods. DCBM, 2:17. The worst fear I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and His people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell. This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution, and be true. But my greater fear... is that they cannot stand wealth. Brigham Young, *Life of a Pioneer*, 122-23.)

20 And now, my brethren, I have spoken unto you **concerning pride**; and those of you which have afflicted your neighbor, and persecuted him because ye were proud in your hearts, of the things which God hath given you, what say ye of it? (C.S. Lewis: Pride gets no pleasure out of having something only out of having more of it than the next man... It is the comparison that make you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition has gone, pride has gone. *Mere Christianity*, 109-10)

21 Do ye not suppose that such things are abominable unto him who created all flesh? And the one being is as precious in his sight as the other. And all flesh is of the dust; and for the selfsame end hath he created them, that they should keep his ^acommandments and glorify him forever.

22 And now I make an end of speaking unto you concerning this pride. And were it not that I must speak unto you concerning a **grosser crime (immorality)**, my heart would rejoice exceedingly because of you.

23 But the word of God burdens me because of your grosser crimes. For behold, thus saith the Lord: This people begin to wax in iniquity; they understand not the scriptures, for they seek to excuse themselves in committing ^awhoredoms, because of the things which were written concerning David, and Solomon his son.

24 Behold, David and ^aSolomon truly had many ^bwives and concubines, (Bruce R. McConkie: “In modern times a concubine is a woman who cohabits with a man without being his wife. But ‘from the beginning of creation,’ all down through the history of God's dealings with his people, including those with the house of Israel, concubines were legal wives married to their husbands in the new and everlasting covenant of marriage. (D. & C. 132:1, 37-39, 65.) Anciently they were considered to be secondary wives, that is, wives who did not have the same standing in the caste system then prevailing as did those wives who were not called concubines. There were no concubines connected with the practice of plural marriage in this dispensation, because the caste system which caused some wives to be so designated did not exist.” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 154)) **which thing was ^cabominable before me, saith the Lord.** (What is being condemned by Jacob is the way in which polygamy was practiced by David and Solomon. Of these two kings, Solomon clearly abused the practice more than his father did. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines (1 Kings 11:3). Certainly, this many partners were taken only to satisfy his sexual appetite. This is hinted at by the book of the Song of Solomon. This book talks more about the body parts of his wives and concubines than it does about any eternal principles. This is what prompted the prophet, Joseph Smith, to declare in his retranslation of the Bible that the Song of Solomon is not an inspired writing. Solomon also took wives of “strangers” or Gentiles which was expressly forbidden by the Lord. The Israelites were forbidden to intermarry with their Gentile neighbors because of their idolatrous practices. The Lord was afraid that the Israelites would turn to idolatry if they were exposed to these practices by their “strange” spouses. This is exactly what happened to Solomon. He was world renowned for wisdom but he was not smart enough to repel the idolatrous practices of his many wives. They turned his heart from the Lord and Solomon was condemned by the Lord for so doing. On the other hand, David had fewer wives and concubines. The exact number is not recorded in the Bible, but it does record at least 8 different women which were married to him (2 Sam 3:1-5 records the names of 6). It also states that he took an unnumbered group of concubines, And David took *him* more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem (2 Sam 5:13). Nevertheless, the scriptures state that this was justified before the Lord, in none of these things did he sin against me save in the case of Uriah and his wife; and, therefore he hath fallen from his exaltation (D&C 132:39).)

25 Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, (What follows through verse 33 appears to be a direct quote from the word of the Lord. DCBM, 2:21) I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a ^arighteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph. (The Lehtes were led out of Jerusalem so they wouldn't do the same things their fathers did.)

26 Wherefore, I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old.

27 Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any ^aman among you have save it be ^bone ^cwife; and concubines he shall have none; (This is the rule unless changed by God. Abraham was commanded to have more than one wife. The early Saints were commanded to have more than one wife. Is plural marriage essential for exaltation? Plural marriage is not essential to salvation or exaltation. Nephi and his people were denied the power to have more than one wife and yet then could gain every blessing in eternity that the Lord ever offered to any people. In our day, the Lord summarized by revelation the whole doctrine of exaltation and predicated it upon the marriage on one man to one woman. Bruce R. McConkie, MD, 578-79. Did the Saints practice plural marriage because there were more women than men? The most common of these conjectures is that the Church, through plural marriage, sought to provide husbands for its surplus of female members. The implied assumption in this theory, that there have been more female than male members in the Church, is not supported by existing evidence. On the contrary, there seems always to have been more males than females in the Church. John A. Widtsoe, Evidences & Reconciliations, 307-09.)

28 For I, the Lord God, delight in the ^achastity of women. And ^bwhoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts. ("You husbands and wives who have taken on solemn obligations of chastity in the holy temples of the Lord and who violate those sacred vows by illicit sexual relations with others, you not only commit the vile and loathsome sin of adultery, but you break the oath you yourselves made with the Lord Himself before you went to the altar for your sealing. You become subject to the penalties which the Lord has prescribed for those who breach their covenants with Him." (Heber J. Grant, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., David O. McKay, Oct. 1942, as taken from Daniel Ludlow's, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p.117) The irrevocable standard of the Lord and his Church is and has been forever the same: total and complete chastity before marriage and unconditional fidelity after marriage. DCBM, 2:21)

29 Wherefore, this people shall keep my commandments, saith the Lord of Hosts, or ^acursed be the land for their sakes.

30 For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up ^aseed unto me, (This was the reason the Lord commanded plural marriage.) I will command my people; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things.

31 For behold, I, the Lord, have seen the sorrow, and heard the mourning of the daughters of my people in the land of Jerusalem, yea, and in all the lands of my people, because of the wickedness and ^aabominations of their ^bhusbands. (We were led into the Rocky Mountains to get away from these evil influences, but they are creeping back through literature and TV into our homes.)

32 And I will not suffer, saith the Lord of Hosts, that the cries of the fair daughters of this people, which I have led out of the land of Jerusalem, shall come up unto me against the men of my people, saith the Lord of Hosts.

33 For they shall not lead away captive the daughters of my people because of their tenderness, save I shall visit them with a sore curse, even unto destruction; for they shall not commit ^awhoredoms, like unto them of old, saith the Lord of Hosts.

34 And now behold, my brethren, ye know that these commandments were given to our ^afather, Lehi; wherefore, ye have known them before; and ye have come unto great condemnation; for ye have done these things which ye ought not to have done.

35 Behold, ye have done ^agreater iniquities than the Lamanites, our brethren. Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives, and lost the confidence of your children, (Destruction of the family.) because of your bad examples before them; and the sobbings of their hearts ascend up to God against you. And

because of the ^bstrictness of the word of God, which cometh down against you, many hearts died, pierced with deep wounds. (Jeffrey R. Holland: “In the sermon on chastity, it is particularly revealing that Jacob is so sensitive to the women in his audience. Whether or not that was a result of having seen his mother in anguish over the wickedness of her eldest sons we cannot know, but it is interesting that in his unflinching declaration against sexual transgression Jacob quotes a communication from heaven as follows: [Jacob 2:31-33,35] ...That is a poetic, profound, ‘piercing’ indictment, and we have the feeling here that Jacob understood then what we unfortunately understand now—that it is usually (but not always) the woman who suffers most in the tragedy of unchastity and that usually (but not always) it is the transgressing man who causes the ‘sobblings of the [women’s] hearts to ascend up to God.’” (Heroes from the Book of Mormon, pp. 41-2))

CHAPTER 3

The pure in heart receive the pleasing word of God—Lamanite righteousness exceeds that of Nephites—Jacob warns against fornication, lasciviousness, and every sin. [Between 544 and 421 B.C.]

1 BUT behold, I, Jacob, would speak unto you that are pure in heart. Look unto God with firmness of mind, (To look to God with firmness of mind is to be constant and undeterred in one’s progress toward that life which is like God’s; it is to have undimmed vision of the plans and purposes of the Almighty; to enjoy peace and confidence in the Master as the tempests rage on all sides. To look to God with firmness of mind is to be, as Nephi said, steadfast in Christ, to pursue an undeviating course. DCBM, 2:24) and ^apray unto him with exceeding faith, and he will ^bconsole you in your ^cafflictions, (Pray for protection in your moral conduct) and he will plead your cause, (D&C 45: 3 Listen to him who is the ^aadvocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him— 4 Saying: Father, behold the ^asufferings and ^bdeath of him who did no ^csin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed, the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be ^dglorified; 5 Wherefore, Father, spare these my ^abrethren that ^bbelieve on my name, that they may come unto me and have ^ceverlasting life.) and send down ^djustice upon those who seek your destruction.

2 O all ye that are pure in heart, lift up your heads and receive the pleasing word of God, and feast upon his ^alove; for ye may, if your ^bminds are ^cfirm, forever.

3 But, wo, wo, unto you that are not pure in heart, that are filthy this day before God; for except ye repent the land is ^acursed for your sakes; and the Lamanites, which are not ^bfilthy like unto you, nevertheless they are ^ccursed with a sore cursing, shall scourge you even unto destruction.

4 And the time speedily cometh, that except ye repent they shall possess the land of your inheritance, and the Lord God will ^alead away the righteous out from among you.

5 Behold, the Lamanites your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness and the cursing which hath come upon their skins, are more righteous than you; for they have not ^aforgotten the commandment of the Lord, which was given unto our father—that they should have save it were ^bone wife, and ^cconcubines they should have none, and there should not be ^dwhoredoms committed among them.

6 And now, this commandment they observe to keep; wherefore, because of this observance, in keeping this commandment, the Lord God will not destroy them, but will be ^amerciful unto them; and one day they shall ^bbecome a blessed people. (Helaman 15: 11 Yea, even if they should dwindle in unbelief the Lord shall ^aprolong their days, until the time shall come which hath been spoken of by our fathers, and also by the prophet ^bZenos, and many other prophets, concerning the ^crestoration of our brethren, the Lamanites, again to the knowledge of the truth— 12 Yea, I say unto you, that in the latter times the ^apromises of the Lord have been extended to our brethren, the Lamanites; and notwithstanding the many afflictions which they shall have, and notwithstanding they shall be ^bdriven to and fro upon the face of the earth, and be hunted, and shall be smitten and scattered abroad, having no place for ^crefuge, the Lord shall be ^dmerciful unto them.)

7 Behold, their ^ahusbands ^blove their ^cwives, and their wives love their husbands; and their husbands and their wives love their children; and their ^dunbelief and their hatred towards you is because of the iniquity of their fathers; wherefore, how much better are you than they, in the sight of your great Creator?

8 O my brethren, I fear that unless ye shall repent of your sins that their skins will be ^awhiter than yours, when ye shall be brought with them before the throne of God. (Most of the Lamanites did not sin against light, as did their Nephite kinsmen. The Nephites simply knew better, and the Lord would inflict a punishment upon them far more readily than upon those whose sins and disbelief resulted from ignorant tradition. DCBM, 2:28)

9 Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, which is the word of God, that ye ^arevile no more against them because of the darkness of their skins; neither shall ye revile against them (To revile is to despise, to regard as vile, or to physically or verbally abuse, all of which are alien to the Spirit of God. DCBM, 2:28) because of their filthiness; but ye shall remember your own filthiness, and remember that ^btheir filthiness came because of their fathers.

10 Wherefore, ye shall remember your ^achildren, how that ye have grieved their hearts because of the ^bexample that ye have set before them; and also, remember that ye may, because of your filthiness, bring your children unto destruction, and their sins be heaped upon your heads at the last day.

11 O my brethren, hearken unto my words; ^aarouse the faculties of your souls; (Give heed to the inner voice, the light of Christ, and attend to the proddings of conscience. It is to become aware of one's sinful state, acknowledge one's guilt, repent, and call upon God for deliverance, to prepare for the greater light of the Holy Ghost. To arouse the faculties of one's soul is to listen to and obey the soul's yearnings for the things of the Spirit. Gospel Doctrine, p. 67-68. New Witness, p. 260) ^bshake yourselves that ye may ^cawake from the slumber of death; and loose yourselves from the pains of ^dhell that ye may not become ^eangels to the devil, to be cast into that lake of fire and brimstone which is the second ^fdeath. (Spiritual death ceases for those spirits who come up out of hell [in the spirit world] to receive an inheritance in the telestial world. Although those in the telestial world do not receive the fullness of reward, they do receive of the Holy Spirit through the ministration of the terrestrial, and consequently they are in the presence of the Lord (in this sense) and are no longer spiritually dead. (D&C 76:81-99) Pending the day when they come forth in the second resurrection they are spiritually dead; they have their part in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (D&C 63: 17-18), but when they come out of hell, spiritual death ceases for them... Thus, eventually, all are redeemed from spiritual death except those who are destined to be sons of perdition. Mormon Doctrine, p. 758. Revelation 20:12-15; D&C 76:37 DCBM, 2:30-31.)

12 And now I, Jacob, spake many more things unto the people of Nephi, ^awarning them against ^bfornication and ^clasciviousness, and every kind of sin, telling them the awful consequences of them.

13 And a hundredth part (Knowing that only a small portion of the doings and teachings of the Nephites is found in our present Book of Mormon; knowing that Nephi and Mormon and Moroni saw our day and understood clearly the nature of our challenges; and knowing that these prophet-editors were inspired in their selection of those matters which would do the most to settle doctrinal disputes and lead men and women to Christ – knowing all these things, we ought to read the Book of Mormon with reverence and awe, for ours is the assurance that we have been given that which is appropriate and needful for our time and season. And as the Nephite-Jaredite prophets were true to the divine direction given them in the preparation of the Book of Mormon, even so the Savior declared in regard to the choice seer of the latter days: He has translated the book, even that part which I have commanded him, and as your Lord and your God liveth, it is true. D&C 17:6 DCBM, 2:31) ^aof the proceedings of this people, which now began to be numerous, cannot be written upon ^bthese plates; but many of their proceedings are written upon the ^clarger plates, and their wars, and their contentions, and the reigns of their kings. (Brigham Young tells the story: “Oliver Cowdery went with the Prophet Joseph when he deposited these plates... When Joseph got the plates, the angel instructed him to carry them back to the hill Cumorah, which he did. Oliver says that when Joseph and Oliver went there, the hill opened, and they walked into a cave, in

which there was a large and spacious room. He says he did not think, at the time, whether they had the light of the sun or artificial light; but that it was just as light as day. They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room. Under this table there was a pile of plates as much as two feet high, and there were altogether in this room more plates than probably many wagon loads; they were piled up in the corners and along the walls. The first time they went there the sword of Laban hung upon the wall; but when they went again it had been taken down and laid upon the table across the gold plates; it was unsheathed, and on it was written these words: ‘This sword will never be sheathed again until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our God and his Christ.’” (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 19, p. 40))

14 ^aThese plates are called the plates of Jacob (small plates of Nephi), and they were ^bmade by the hand of Nephi. And I make an end of speaking these words.

CHAPTER 4

All the prophets worshipped the Father in the name of Christ—Abraham’s offering of Isaac was in similitude of God and his Only Begotten—Men should reconcile themselves to God through the atonement—The Jews shall reject the foundation stone. [Between 544 and 421 B.C.]

1 NOW behold, it came to pass that I, Jacob, having ministered much unto my people in word, (and I cannot write but a ^alittle of my words, because of the ^bdifficulty of engraving our words upon plates) and we know that the things which we write upon plates must remain; (Because it was so difficult to engrave upon the plates, the writers and editors made sure that every word was exactly the right word and every story and principle and doctrine would be for our benefit.)

2 But whatsoever things we write upon anything save it be upon ^aplates must perish and vanish away; but we can write a few words upon plates, which will give our children, and also our beloved brethren, a small degree of knowledge concerning us, or concerning their fathers—

3 Now in this thing we do rejoice; and we labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates, hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive them with thankful hearts, and look upon them that they may learn with joy and not with sorrow, neither with contempt, concerning their first ^aparents. (This could be Adam and Eve, but probably not. This refers to any parents who precede us. Our parents want us to be better than they were.)

4 For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we ^aknew of Christ, and we had a hope of his ^bglory many hundred years before his coming; and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy ^cprophets which were before us. (The preeminent duty of a prophet is to bear witness of Jesus Christ, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. Teachings, p. 119, 160)

5 Behold, they believed in Christ and ^aworshipped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his ^bname. And for this intent we ^ckeep the ^dlaw of Moses, (Since they kept the Law of Moses, this is why it is probable that this day that Jacob speaks in the temple is the Day of Atonement) it ^epointing our souls to him (“The law of Moses was the type, Jesus the antitype; he was that toward which all creation looked and waited. The law was the symbol, Jesus the ultimate reality toward which it pointed. The law was the means, Jesus the end. These simple but pertinent verities are all but lost in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament. Only through the clarifying and illuminating lenses of the Book of Mormon do we come to know that the law was anything more than a schoolmaster or teaching device. The law of Moses-including the intricate system of animal sacrifices-was the prophecy; Jesus was the grand fulfillment of the prophecy. “‘Behold,’ Nephi stated, ‘my soul delighteth in proving unto my people the truth of the coming of Christ; for, for this end hath the law of Moses been given; and all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world, unto man, are the typifying of him’ (2 Nephi 11:4). After having explained the need for ‘the great and last sacrifice’ of the Son of God, Amulek said, ‘this is the whole meaning of the law [of Moses], every whit pointing to that great

and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal' (Alma 34:14)." (McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2, p. 34)); and for this cause it is sanctified (Sanctification is a result of single-minded obedience, a blessing known only to those who have made their whole souls as an offering unto him. Omni 1:26, DCBM, 2:34) unto us for righteousness, (Just as our conformity to gospel standards, while dwelling as lowly mortals apart from our Maker, prepares us to return to his presence with an inheritance of immortal glory, so the Mosaic standards prepared the chosen of Israel to believe and obey that gospel by conformity to which eternal life is won. Promised Messiah, p. 416. To gain the celestial kingdom, the Lord says: Ye must be sanctified through the law which I have given unto you, even the law of Christ, which law is the fullness of the gospel. The revealed word specifies that those who obtain [celestial glory] must be able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom. In other words, salvation in the celestial kingdom will come to all who are able to live the full law of Christ, even though they did not have opportunity so to do in the course of a mortal probation. Thus, all those who kept the law of Moses, who lived the law of the preparatory gospel to the full, thus establishing that they were able to live the Lord's law, will in due course gain a celestial inheritance. Mortal Messiah, 1:74, DCBM, 2:34-35) even as it was accounted unto Abraham in the wilderness to be obedient unto the commands of God in offering up his son Isaac, which is a ^fsimilitude of God and his ^gOnly Begotten Son. (The Old Testament tells us what happened, but the Book of Mormon tells us why. Even though the law of Moses was a lesser law, a preparatory gospel, the Nephites – knowing full well of the law and its purpose – thought not to sit in judgment upon it or their God; they obeyed and it was accounted unto them for righteousness. DCBM, 2:35)

6 Wherefore, we search the prophets, (the books of the Old Testament) and we have many revelations (current) and the spirit of ^aprophecy; and having all these ^bwitnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can ^ccommand in the ^dname of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea. (A record will probably come forth telling of these miracles where trees obey or mountains move or waves are controlled.)

7 Nevertheless, the Lord God showeth us our ^aweakness that we may know that it is by his ^bgrace, and his great condescensions unto the children of men, that we have power to do these things.

8 Behold, great and marvelous are the ^aworks of the Lord. (God's work and glory is to transform a meager mortal into a glorious celestial being. DCBM, 2:39) How ^bunsearchable are the depths of the ^cmysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man ^dknoweth of his ^eways save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the ^frevelations of God. (Neal A. Maxwell: "The perspective-yielding truths of the Restoration did not come by research, debate, or discussion, nor by communiques from councils. Direct, divine revelation was required, and precisely for the reasons Jacob gave: 'Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God.' (Jacob 4:8.) We cannot determine by using radio telescopes, for instance, that there is a plan of salvation operating in the universe, helpful as radio telescopes are for astrophysical purposes. Salvational truths are obtainable only by revelation. The faith-yielding truths flowing from the 'miraculous miracle' have come in rich abundance, in 'good measure,' like a harvest basket whose contents are 'pressed down, and shaken together, and running over' (Luke 6:38). In fact, as Elder Jeffrey R. Holland has pointed out, more books or pages of scripture have come to us through Joseph Smith than from any other prophet—more even than from Moses, Luke, Paul, and Mormon combined! (Letter to author from Jeffrey R. Holland, February 18, 1986.) "Many more scriptural writings will yet come to us, including those of Enoch (see D&C 107:57), all of the writings of the Apostle John (see Ether 4:16), the records of the lost tribes of Israel (see 2 Nephi 29:13), and the approximately two-thirds of the Book of Mormon plates that were sealed: 'And the day cometh that the words of the book which were sealed shall be read upon the house tops; and they shall be read by the power of Christ; and all things shall be revealed unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, and which ever will

be even unto the end of the earth' (2 Nephi 27:11). Today we carry convenient quadruple combinations of the scriptures, but one day, since more scriptures are coming, we may need to pull little red wagons brimful with books." (A *Wonderful Flood of Light*, p. 17-8))

9 For behold, by the power of his ^aword ^bman came upon the face of the earth, which earth was ^ccreated by the power of his word (Jacob refers to the plates of brass.). Wherefore, if God being able to speak and the world was, and to speak and man was created, O then, why not able to command the ^dearth, or the workmanship of his hands upon the face of it, according to his will and pleasure?

10 Wherefore, brethren, seek not to ^acounsel the Lord, but to take counsel from his hand. (Boyd K. Packer: "Some among us would rather criticize the Lord and His church than concentrate on the problems. That is a symptom of impenitence. Follow the Brethren.... If you don't understand a problem or a position of the Church, restrain your tongue. Check the mote in your own eye before you criticize.... There is nothing in your lives that will destroy you if you will follow the Brethren. Enough evil doesn't exist in the world, even if it were brought together and focused on you, to destroy you except you consent to it." (Lucille C. Tate, *Boyd K. Packer: A Watchman on the Tower*, p. 158) Harold B. Lee: "Mark well those who speak evil of the Lord's anointed, for they speak from impure hearts. Only the 'pure in heart' see the 'God' or the divine in man and accept our leaders and accept them as prophets of the Living God...I want to bear you my testimony that the experience I have had has taught me that those who criticize the leaders of this Church are showing signs of a spiritual sickness which, unless curbed, will bring about eventually spiritual death. I want to bear my testimony as well that those who in public seek by their criticism to belittle our leaders or bring them into disrepute, will bring upon themselves more hurt than upon those whom they seek thus to malign. I have watched over the years, and I have read of the history of many of those who fell away from this Church, and I want to bear testimony that no apostate who ever left this Church ever prospered as an influence in his community thereafter. (In Conference Report, October 1947, p. 67.)" (Brent L. Top, Larry E. Dahl, and Walter D. Bowen, *Follow the Living Prophets*, p. 167-8) Neal A. Maxwell: "Church members will live in this wheat-and-tares situation until the Millennium. Some real tares even masquerade as wheat, including the few eager individuals who lecture the rest of us about Church doctrines in which they no longer believe. They criticize the use of Church resources to which they no longer contribute. They condescendingly seek to counsel the Brethren whom they no longer sustain. Confrontive, except of themselves of course, they leave the Church but they cannot leave the Church alone. (Ensign, May 1996, p. 68.)" (Cory Maxwell, *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*, p. 68)) For behold, ye yourselves know that he counseleth in ^bwisdom, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works.

11 Wherefore, beloved brethren, be ^areconciled unto him through the ^batonement (reconciliation, restoration to favor. You are called to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – to return. You must have been with him before if he buys you back again, after the Fall. Hugh Nibley, TBM, 1:391) of Christ, his ^cOnly Begotten Son, and ye may obtain a ^dresurrection, (a glorious resurrection, entitling you to exaltation in the celestial kingdom) according to the ^epower of the resurrection which is in Christ, and be presented as the ^ffirst-fruits of Christ unto God, (This phrase appears to mean that the first fruits of Christ is a description of those souls who have been consecrated and dedicated to his service and who thereby qualify for the highest resurrection and a place in the celestial world. DCBM, 2:42) having faith, and obtained a good hope of glory in him before he manifesteth himself in the flesh.

12 And now, beloved, marvel not that I tell you these things; for why not ^aspeak of the atonement of Christ, and attain to a perfect knowledge of him, as to attain to the knowledge of a resurrection and the world to come?

13 Behold, my brethren, he that prophesieth, let him prophesy to the understanding of men; for the ^aSpirit speaketh the ^btruth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really ^care, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us ^dplainly, for the salvation of our souls. But behold, we are not witnesses alone in these things; for God also ^espake them unto prophets of old.

14 But behold, the Jews were a ^astiffnecked people; and they ^bdespised the words of ^cplainness, (Those who preach by the power of the Holy Ghost use the scriptures as their basic source of knowledge and doctrine. They begin with what the Lord has before revealed to other inspired men. But it is the practice of the Lord to give added knowledge to those upon whose hearts the true meaning and intents of the scriptures have been impressed. Many great doctrinal revelations come to those who preach from the scriptures. When they are in tune with the Infinite, the Lord lets them know, first, the full and complete meaning of the scriptures they are expounding, and then he oftentimes expands their views so that new truths flood in upon them, and they learn added things that those who do not follow such a course can never know. Promised Messiah, p. 515-16. We reduce the realm of the unknown not by wandering in it but rather by feasting on and expanding our knowledge of that which God has already revealed. DCBM, 2:44) and ^dkilled the prophets, and sought for things that they could not understand. Wherefore, because of their ^eblindness, which ^fblindness came by looking beyond the ^gmark, (Joseph Fielding McConkie explains the phenomenon of looking beyond the mark which was prevalent among the Jewish intellectuals: “So rigid did the literal and ceremonial become that righteousness was overshadowed by legalism and salvation became the reward for outward conformity. Pharisaism and scholasticism ruled supreme. God himself was said to spend three hours a day in the study of law. ‘All liberty of thought was abrogated; all Gentile learning was forbidden; no communion was allowed with the human intellect outside the Pharisaic pale. Within the circle of Rabbinism the Jew was ‘the galley-slave of the most rigid orthodoxy.’ The yoke of the Romans was not so exacting as that of the Rabbis, which dominated over a man’s whole existence and intruded itself into the most trivial actions of life. The weak were tortured by the knowledge that they could not so much as wash their hands or eat a meal without running the risk of deadly offences. The ‘ordination’ of the Rabbis made them oracles for every subject and every action, from the cleaning of the teeth to the last prayer in which the dying commended their souls to God.’ (Farrar, Frederic W. History of Interpretation. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Co., 1961., pp. 60-61.) ‘The hedge was made; its construction was regarded as the main function of Rabbinism; it excluded all light from without and all egress from within; but it was so carefully cultivated that the shrine itself was totally disregarded. The Oral Law was first exalted as a necessary supplement to the Written Law; then substituted in the place of it; and finally identified with the inferences of the Rabbis.’ (Farrar, Frederic W. History of Interpretation. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House Co., 1961., p. 62.)” (Joseph Fielding McConkie, *Gospel Symbolism*, pp. 217-8) Neal A. Maxwell: “Jacob speaks of ancient Judah as having rejected the words of its prophets... Intellectual embroidery seems to have been preferred to the whole clothing of the gospel—the frills to the fabric. In fact, one can even surmise that complexity was preferred over plainness by some because in conceptual complexity there might somehow be escape, or excuse, for noncompliance and for failure. In any event, this incredible blindness which led to the rejection of those truths spoken by prophets and which prevented the recognition of Jesus for who he was, according to Jacob, came ‘by looking beyond the mark.’ Those who look beyond plainness, beyond the prophets, beyond Christ, and beyond his simple teachings waited in vain then, as they will wait in vain now. For only the gospel of Jesus Christ teaches us of things as they *really* are and as they *really* will be. There is more realism in the revelations than in reams of secular research, for secularism is congenitally shortsighted. Without revelation and its absolute anchors, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would also follow the fads of the day, as some churches have done; but as Samuel Callan warned, the church that weds itself to the culture of the day will ‘be a widow within each succeeding age.’ This is but one of the marks of the ‘true and living’ Church: it is spared the fruits of faddism” (“On Being a Light,” address delivered at the Salt Lake institute of Religion, 2 Jan. 1974, p. 1 as taken from the 1981 Book of Mormon Institute Manual, p. 131) Hugh Nibley contrasts the Jews interest in difficult scripture with the lack of interest prevalent among the Latter-day Saints. This scathing commentary is too insightful to be left out of this discussion. Hugh Nibley: “Yet Joseph Smith commends their (the Jews’) intellectual efforts as a corrective to the Latter-day Saints, who lean too far in the other direction, giving their young people and old awards for zeal alone, zeal without knowledge--

for sitting in endless meetings, for dedicated conformity and unlimited capacity for suffering boredom. We think it more commendable to get up at five a.m. to write a bad book than to get up at nine o'clock to write a good one--that is pure zeal that tends to breed a race of insufferable, self-righteous prigs and barren minds. One has only to consider the present outpouring of 'inspirational' books in the Church that bring little new in the way of knowledge: truisms and platitudes, kitsch, and clichés have become our everyday diet. The Prophet would never settle for that. 'I advise all to go on to perfection, and search deeper and deeper into the mysteries of Godliness. . . . It has always been my province to dig up hidden mysteries--new things--for my hearers.' It actually happens at the BYU, and that not rarely, that students come to a teacher, usually at the beginning of a term, with the sincere request that he refrain from teaching them anything new. They have no desire, they explain, to hear what they do not know already! I cannot imagine that happening at any other school, but maybe it does. Unless we go on to other new things, we are stifling our powers." (*Approaching Zion*, p. 75)) they must needs fall; for God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they^h cannot understand, because they desired it. And because they desired it God hath done it, that they mayⁱ stumble.

15 And now I, Jacob, am led on by the Spirit unto prophesying; for I perceive by the workings of the Spirit which is in me, that by the^a stumbling of the^b Jews they will^c reject the^d stone (Jesus Christ) upon which they might build and have safe foundation. (Tradition holds that at the time of the construction of the second temple, the builder rejected and discarded a chief cornerstone by mistake. (Psalm 118:22, Isaiah 8:14-15, JST Matthew 21:47-56) DCBM, 2:45)

16 But behold, according to the scriptures, this^a stone shall become the great, and the last, and the only sure^b foundation, upon which the Jews can build.

17 And now, my beloved, how is it possible that these, after having rejected the sure foundation, can^a ever build upon it, that it may become the head of their corner? (Chapters 5-7 answers this question with the allegory of the olive tree and the explanation.)

18 Behold, my beloved brethren, I will unfold this mystery unto you; (See chapter 5-7) if I do not, by any means, get shaken from my firmness in the Spirit, and stumble because of my over anxiety for you. (It is not work that kills men; it is worry. Work in healthy; you can hardly put more upon a man than he can bear. Worry is rust upon the blade... Fear secretes acids; but live and trust are sweet juices. Henry Ward Beecher, quoted in *You and Your Marriage*, Hugh B. Brown, 175. We are indoctrinated that somehow we should always be instantly emotionally comfortable. When that is not so, some become anxious – and all too frequently seek relief from counseling, from analysis, and even from medication. It was meant to be that life would be a challenge. To suffer some anxiety, some depression, some disappointment, even some failure is normal. Teach our members that if they have a good, miserable day once in a while, or several in a row, to stand steady and face them. Things will straighten out. Boyd K. Packer, CR, April 1978, 139-40. Harriet Lerner, PhD: When we're too anxious we won't be able to gather new information, think clearly about the problem, explore out options, give calm and clear feedback to others, and find creative solutions that consider the needs of all. And fear can run amok, flooding our system with adrenaline and hijacking our neo-cortex – the thinking part of the brain. Usually, anxiety is a mean trickster. It signals you to pay attention, but it also turns your brain to oatmeal, narrows and rigidifies your focus, and obscures the real issues from view. Anxiety tricks you out of the "now" as you obsessively replay and regret and past and worry about the future. It tricks you into losing sight of your competence and your capacity for love, creativity, and joy... Anxiety interferes with self-regard and self-respect... It can dig a big negative groove in your brain and make it impossible for you to hang on to a positive thought for more than five seconds. It can affect your body in ways that can feel crippling... When you're anxious, doom-and-gloom fantasies tend to permeate your day, and reach a fever pitch when you're lying in bed. Your anxious mind... will hook on to some dire, worst-case scenario... these thoughts grip you in a way that accomplishes nothing except to make you feel miserable and powerless. *Fear and Other Uninvited Guests*, p. 54-58)