

**LESSON 33**  
**“A Sure Foundation”**  
**Helaman 1-5**

**OVERVIEW:**

Internal strife develops among the Nephites. Thousands join the Church; some Church members are lifted up in pride. Lamanites and Nephite dissenters defeat the Nephites. Nephi and Lehi remember their father’s counsel. Miracles attend their ministry.

**SCRIPTURES:**

THE BOOK OF HELAMAN

*An account of the Nephites. Their wars and contentions, and their dissensions. And also the prophecies of many holy prophets, before the coming of Christ, according to the records of Helaman, who was the son of Helaman, and also according to the records of his sons, even down to the coming of Christ. And also many of the Lamanites are converted. An account of their conversion. An account of the righteousness of the Lamanites, and the wickedness and abominations of the Nephites, according to the record of Helaman and his sons, even down to the coming of Christ, which is called the book of Helaman.*

CHAPTER 1

*Pahoran the second becomes chief judge and is murdered by Kishkumen—Pacumeni fills the judgment-seat—Coriantumr leads the Lamanite armies, takes Zarahemla, and slays Pacumeni—Moronihah defeats the Lamanites and retakes Zarahemla, and Coriantumr is slain. [Between 52 and 51 B.C.]*

1 AND now behold, it came to pass in the \*commencement of the fortieth year (52 BC) of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi, there began to be a serious difficulty among the people of the Nephites.

2 For behold, <sup>a</sup>Pahoran had died, and gone the way of all the earth; therefore there began to be a serious contention concerning who should have the judgment-seat among the brethren, who were the sons of Pahoran.

3 Now these are their names who did contend for the judgment-seat, who did also cause the people to contend: Pahoran, Paanchi, and Pacumeni.

4 Now these are not all the sons of Pahoran (for he had many), but these are they who did contend for the judgment-seat; therefore, they did cause three <sup>a</sup>divisions among the people.

5 Nevertheless, it came to pass that Pahoran was appointed by the <sup>a</sup>voice of the people to be chief judge and a governor over the people of Nephi.

6 And it came to pass that Pacumeni, when he saw that he could not obtain the judgment-seat, he did <sup>a</sup>unite with the voice of the people.

7 But behold, Paanchi, and that part of the people that were desirous that he should be their governor, was exceedingly **wroth**; therefore, he was about to **flatter** away those people to rise up in **rebellion** against their brethren. (This sounds like our day. Paanchi must have been a liberal democrat.)

8 And it came to pass as he was about to do this, behold, he was taken, and was tried according to the <sup>a</sup>voice of the people, and condemned unto death (Paanchi is tried for a capital offense, not because he disagreed with the outcome of the election or because he sought to become the chief judge, but rather that he raised up in rebellion and sought to destroy the liberty of the people. His crime is one of sedition and treason. He is to be judged according to the laws established by Mosiah II. The exact nature of the

voice of the people that found him guilty and condemned him to death is not given in the text, but based on other uses of the phrase it is either a democratic process, such as a jury of peers, or possibly a theodemocratic council of judges, as is perhaps implied by the record of the trial of Nehor. (Alma 1:10-15) DCBM, 3:333); for he had raised up in rebellion and sought to destroy the<sup>b</sup>liberty of the people.

9 Now when those people who were desirous that he should be their governor saw that he was condemned unto death, therefore they were angry, and behold, they sent forth one<sup>a</sup>Kishkumen, even to the judgment-seat of Pahoran, and murdered Pahoran as he sat upon the judgment-seat.

10 And he was pursued by the servants of Pahoran; but behold, so speedy was the flight of Kishkumen that no man could overtake him.

11 And he went unto those that sent him, and they all entered into a covenant, yea,<sup>a</sup>swearing by their everlasting Maker, that they would tell no man that Kishkumen had murdered Pahoran. (Satan is the author of this secret combination. The same one used by Cain.)

12 Therefore, Kishkumen was not known among the people of Nephi, for he was in disguise at the time that he murdered Pahoran. And Kishkumen and his band, who had covenanted with him, did mingle themselves among the people, in a manner that they all could not be found; but as many as were found were condemned unto<sup>a</sup>death.

13 And now behold, Pacumeni was appointed, according to the<sup>a</sup>voice of the people, to be a chief judge and a governor over the people, to reign in the stead of his brother Pahoran; and it was according to his right. And all this was done in the fortieth year of the reign of the judges; and it had an end.

14 And it came to pass in the \*forty and first year (51 BC) of the reign of the judges, that the Lamanites had gathered together an innumerable army of men, and<sup>a</sup>armed them with swords, and with cimeters and with bows, and with arrows, and with head-plates, and with breastplates, and with all manner of shields of every kind.

15 And they came down again that they might pitch battle against the Nephites. And they were led by a man whose name was<sup>a</sup>Coriantumr; and he was a descendant of Zarahemla (A Mulekite); and he was a<sup>b</sup>dissenter from among the Nephites; and he was a large and a mighty man.

16 Therefore, the king of the Lamanites, whose name was Tubaloth, (He was the nephew of Amalikhiah. He was not a Lamanite by descent but by wickedness.) who was the son of<sup>a</sup>Ammoron, supposing that Coriantumr, being a mighty man, could stand against the Nephites, with his strength and also with his great<sup>b</sup>wisdom, insomuch that by sending him forth he should gain power over the Nephites—

17 Therefore he did<sup>a</sup>stir them up to anger, and he did gather together his armies, and he did appoint Coriantumr to be their leader, and did cause that they should march down to the land of Zarahemla to battle against the Nephites. (The Lamanites are going to go to the center of the Nephite nation, but in doing so will be surrounded and defeated.)

18 And it came to pass that because of so much contention and so much difficulty in the government, that they had not kept sufficient guards in the land of Zarahemla; for they had supposed that the Lamanites durst not come into the heart of their lands to attack that great city Zarahemla. (This is why Church leaders and parents always need to be vigilant in their guarding to keep evil away.)

19 But it came to pass that Coriantumr did march forth at the head of his numerous host, and came upon the inhabitants of the city, and their march was with such exceedingly great speed that there was no time for the Nephites to gather together their armies.

20 Therefore Coriantumr did cut down the watch by the entrance of the city, and did march forth with his whole army into the city, and they did slay every one who did oppose them, insomuch that they did take possession of the whole city.

21 And it came to pass that Pacumeni, who was the chief judge, did flee before Coriantumr, even to the walls of the city. And it came to pass that Coriantumr did smite him against the wall, insomuch that he died. And thus ended the days of Pacumeni.

22 And now when Coriantumr saw that he was in possession of the city of Zarahemla, and saw that the Nephites had fled before them, and were slain, and were taken, and were cast into prison, and that he

had obtained the possession of the strongest hold in all the land, his heart <sup>a</sup>took courage insomuch that he was about to go forth against all the land.

23 And now he did not tarry in the land of Zarahemla, but he did march forth with a large army, even towards the city of <sup>a</sup>Bountiful; for it was his determination to go forth and cut his way through with the sword, that he might obtain the north parts of the land.

24 And, supposing that their greatest strength was in the center of the land, therefore he did march forth, giving them no time to assemble themselves together save it were in small bodies; and in this manner they did fall upon them and cut them down to the earth.

25 But behold, this march of Coriantumr through the center of the land gave Moronihah great advantage over them, notwithstanding the greatness of the number of the Nephites who were slain.

26 For behold, Moronihah had supposed that the Lamanites durst not come into the center of the land, but that they would attack the cities round about in the borders as they had hitherto done; therefore Moronihah had caused that their strong armies should maintain those parts round about by the borders.

27 But behold, the Lamanites were not frightened according to his desire, but they had come into the center of the land, and had taken the capital city which was the city of Zarahemla, and were marching through the most capital parts of the land, slaying the people with a great slaughter, both men, women, and children, taking possession of many cities and of many strongholds.

28 But when Moronihah had discovered this, he immediately sent forth Lehi with an army round about to <sup>a</sup>head them before they should come to the land Bountiful.

29 And thus he did; and he did head them before they came to the land Bountiful, and gave unto them battle, insomuch that they began to retreat back towards the land of Zarahemla.

30 And it came to pass that Moronihah did head them in their retreat, and did give unto them battle, insomuch that it became an exceedingly bloody battle; yea, many were slain, and among the number who were slain <sup>a</sup>Coriantumr was also found.

31 And now, behold, the Lamanites could not retreat either way, neither on the north, nor on the south, nor on the east, nor on the west, for they were surrounded on every hand by the Nephites.

32 And thus had Coriantumr plunged the Lamanites into the midst of the Nephites, insomuch that they were in the power of the Nephites, and he himself was slain, and the Lamanites did <sup>a</sup>yield themselves into the hands of the Nephites.

33 And it came to pass that Moronihah took possession of the city of Zarahemla again, and caused that the Lamanites who had been taken prisoners should depart out of the land in <sup>a</sup>peace. (In contrast to the treatment of prisoners and innocent victims of war by the Lamanites, Moronihah allows the Lamanite prisoners of war to depart in peace. Those righteous military leaders who are disciples of Christ and are filled with the Spirit of the Lord treat even their enemies with kindness and compassion. Even in most difficult circumstances, such as war, the Lord expects his disciples to love your enemies... do good to them that hate you. DCBM, 3:336. The reason we've had peace since World War II, in spite of people always whipping up the Cold War and things like that, is the wisdom of two men, George Marshall and Douglas MacArthur. The one put Europe back on its feet with the Marshall Plan instead of reparations, you see. Germany got back on its feet very quickly, and now Germany and Japan are the leading economic powers because of the wisdom of George Marshall and his plan. And the conquering hero, Douglas MacArthur, played the role of a very wise man. He could have done anything he wanted; he was the conqueror. As far as the Japanese were concerned, he was it. And what he did was to give them their democratic government. He made it possible, a man like that. There's no point in making vicious reparations... There was no punishment, and there were to be no reprisals against them at all. That's the reasons we've had a fairly sane world since then for a while. Hugh Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 3:203.)

34 And thus ended the forty and first year of the reign of the judges.

\* Verse 1 [52 B.C.]; Verse 14 [51 B.C.].

## CHAPTER 2

*Helaman the second becomes chief judge—Gadianton leads the band of Kishkumen—Helaman's servant slays Kishkumen, and the Gadianton band flees into the wilderness. [50 B.C.]*

1 AND it came to pass in the \*forty and second year (50 BC) of the reign of the judges, after Moronihah had established again peace between the Nephites and the Lamanites, behold there was no one to fill the judgment-seat; therefore there began to be a contention again among the people concerning who should fill the judgment-seat.

2 And it came to pass that <sup>a</sup>Helaman, who was the son of Helaman, was appointed to fill the judgment-seat, by the <sup>b</sup>voice of the people.

3 But behold, <sup>a</sup>Kishkumen, who had murdered Pahoran, did lay wait to destroy Helaman also; and he was upheld by his band, who had entered into a covenant that no one should know his wickedness.

4 For there was one <sup>a</sup>Gadianton, who was exceedingly expert in many words, and also in his craft, to carry on the secret work of murder and of robbery; therefore he became the leader of the band of Kishkumen.

5 Therefore he did <sup>a</sup>flatter them, and also Kishkumen, that if they would place him in the judgment-seat he would grant unto those who belonged to his band that they should be placed in power and authority among the people (They tried to get public positions to work their secret combinations.); therefore Kishkumen sought to destroy Helaman.

6 And it came to pass as he went forth towards the judgment-seat to destroy Helaman, behold one of the servants of Helaman, having been out by night, and having obtained, through disguise (Hugh Nibley: "And here's one of the servants of Helaman, '...having been out by night, and having obtained, through disguise, a knowledge of those plans...' Now what was his disguise? His disguise was that of a defector, of course. He'd come over as an insider who knew all about it, and defectors are quite common. He was a mole. He was actually an undercover man; he was a double agent for Helaman. He knew all the workings, and this is why they would come to him and why Gadianton said, lead me to him. Get me an audience with the judge so I can bump him off. So this was one of the servants of Helaman; otherwise, this looks rather confusing, but it isn't when you realize the nature of his disguise. He didn't wear a mask or a false moustache or anything like that. But his disguise was his persona. He was a [pretended] defector. He'd come over; he knew all about Helaman. And he had attained 'a knowledge of those plans which had been laid by this band to destroy Helaman.' This is their regular police practice. He was put in there as an undercover man, a double agent." (Teachings From the Book of Mormon, Lecture 74, p. 204-5)), a knowledge of those plans which had been laid by this band to destroy Helaman—

7 And it came to pass that he met Kishkumen, and he gave unto him a sign; therefore Kishkumen made known unto him the object of his desire, desiring that he would conduct him to the judgment-seat that he might murder Helaman.

8 And when the servant of Helaman had known all the heart of Kishkumen, and how that it was his <sup>a</sup>object to murder, and also that it was the object of all those who belonged to his band to murder, and to rob, and to gain power, (and this was their <sup>b</sup>secret plan, and their combination) the servant of Helaman said unto Kishkumen: Let us go forth unto the judgment-seat.

9 Now this did please Kishkumen exceedingly, for he did suppose that he should accomplish his design; but behold, the servant of Helaman, as they were going forth unto the judgment-seat, did stab Kishkumen even to the heart, that he fell dead without a groan. And he ran and told Helaman all the things which he had seen, and heard, and done.

10 And it came to pass that Helaman did send forth to take this band of robbers and <sup>a</sup>secret murderers, that they might be executed according to the law.

11 But behold, when Gadianton had found that Kishkumen did not return he feared lest that he should be destroyed; therefore he caused that his band should follow him. And they took their flight out of the land, by a secret way, into the wilderness; and thus when Helaman sent forth to take them they could nowhere be found.

12 And more of this Gadianton shall be spoken hereafter. And thus ended the forty and second year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

13 (Here's Mormon's editorial comment:) And behold, in the end of this book ye shall see that this <sup>a</sup>Gadianton did prove the overthrow, yea, almost the entire destruction of the people of Nephi. (Mormon's insertion. Hugh Nibley: "At this point we are assured that, in time, Gadianton's gang would prove 'almost the entire destruction of the people of Nephi' (Helaman 2:13). If ever a story was worth heeding after that announcement, this is one to which we should pay the closest attention—a nation helpless to resist the march of crime!" (*The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, p. 552) Ezra Taft Benson: "Our nation will continue to degenerate unless we read and heed the words of the God of this land, Jesus Christ, and quit building up and upholding the secret combinations which the Book of Mormon tells us proved the downfall of both previous American civilizations." (*A Witness and a Warning*, p. 6 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 371))

14 Behold I do not mean the end of the <sup>a</sup>book of Helaman, but I mean the end of the book of Nephi, from which I have taken all the account which I have written.

\* Verse 1 [50 B.C.].

### CHAPTER 3

*Many Nephites migrate to the land northward—They build houses of cement and keep many records—Tens of thousands are converted and baptized—The word of God leads men to salvation—Nephi the son of Helaman fills the judgment seat. [Between 49 and 39 B.C.]*

1 AND now it came to pass in the \*forty and third year (49 BC) of the reign of the judges, there was no contention among the people of Nephi save it were a little pride ([Pride] is an attitude that commences with personal comparisons with others and leads to demeaning thoughts or oppressive actions directed at other sons and daughters of God. The pride of self satisfaction imposes its primary effects upon the one who is proud. His attitude blocks his own progress. In contrast, the pride of comparison is pernicious because of its tendency to the oppression of others. C. S. Lewis described the pride of comparison when he said: Pride is essentially competitive. . . . Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. . . . It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Lewis called pride "the utmost evil" and "the complete anti God state of mind," because this kind of comparison leads men to enmity and oppression and every other kind of evil. This insightful Christian saw that every person should look up to God as "immeasurably superior" to him or her. He continued: Unless you Know God as that and, therefore, know yourself as nothing in comparison you do not know God at all. As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you. (Mere Christianity [New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1960], pp. 109 11.) President Ezra Taft Benson expressed a similar thought when he said: "Pride does not look up to God and care about what is right. It looks sideways to man and argues who is right. Pride is manifest in the spirit of contention. ["Cleansing the Inner Vessel," *Ensign*, May 1986, p. 6.]; Dallin H. Oaks, *Pure in Heart*, p.96]) which was in the church, which did cause some little dissensions among the people, which affairs were settled in the ending of the forty and third year.

2 And there was no contention among the people in the forty and fourth year; neither was there much contention in the forty and fifth year.

3 And it came to pass in the \*forty and sixth (46 BC), yea, there was much contention and many dissensions; in the which there were an exceedingly great many who departed out of the land of Zarahemla, and went forth unto the land <sup>a</sup>northward to inherit the land. (There were some who didn't like the contention, so they left to the land north. According to Joseph Smith, "the land northward" refers to North America. Unlocking the Book of Mormon, 372.)

4 And they did travel to an exceedingly great distance, insomuch that they came to <sup>a</sup>large bodies of water (There were lots of lakes in Mexico.) and many rivers. (Hugh Nibley: "...the great northern migration [was] a massive drift of population, Nephite and Lamanite alike (Helaman 6:6), to lands far to the north. In the same year in which Hagoth sent off his first great ship to the north (Alma 63:5-6), a company of 'five thousand and four hundred men, with their wives and their children, departed out of the land of Zarahemla into the land which was northward' (Alma 63:4). This was but the beginning of a continuing trend of large-scale migration into the north countries. Because of troubles and dissension a really great movement took place a few years later when 'an exceedingly great many . . . went forth unto the land northward to inherit the land. And they did travel to an exceedingly great distance, insomuch that they came to large bodies of water and many rivers' (Helaman 3:3-4). This is obviously not to be confused with the northern land of lakes from which Moroni barred access to the people of Morianton in a relatively small-scale military action (Alma 50:25-35). When distance is described as 'exceedingly great' by a people to whom long marches and strenuous campaigns in the wilderness were the established rule, we can be sure that it was at least the equivalent of the migrations of some of our Indian tribes in modern times, which sometimes ran to thousands of miles. Once the Book of Mormon people break out of the land of Zarahemla, there is no telling how far they go: since they have all the time in the world we have no right to limit their wanderings and settlements by our own standards of foot-travel." (An Approach To The Book of Mormon, p. 409))

5 Yea, and even they did spread forth into all parts of the land, into whatever parts it had not been rendered desolate and without timber, because of the many inhabitants who had before inherited the land. (Brother Nibley believes that there may have been others on the American continent besides the Jaredites and Nephites.)

6 And now no part of the land was desolate, save it were for timber; but because of the greatness of the <sup>a</sup>destruction of the people who had before inhabited the land it was called <sup>b</sup>desolate.

7 And there being but little timber upon the face of the land, nevertheless the people who went forth became exceedingly <sup>a</sup>expert in the working of cement; therefore they did build houses of cement, in the which they did dwell. (While this is not significant doctrinally, it does give an additional external evidence of the truthfulness of the book, since Joseph Smith could not have been aware, as a result of his own intellect and learning, of this important item that has since been substantiated by modern scientific findings. DCBM, 3:339. "The Book of Mormon dates this significant technological advance to the year 46 B.C. Recent research shows that cement was in fact extensively used in Mesoamerica beginning largely at this time. One of the most notable uses of cement is in the temple complex at Teotihuacan, north of present-day Mexico City. According to David S. Hyman, the structural use of cement appears suddenly in the archaeological record. Its earliest sample 'is a fully developed product.' The cement floor slabs at this site 'were remarkably high in structural quality.' Although exposed to the elements for nearly two thousand years, they still 'exceed many present-day building code requirements.' After its discovery, cement was used at many sites in the Valley of Mexico and in the Maya regions of southern Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras. It was used in the construction of buildings at such sites as Cerro de Texcotzingo, Tula, Palenque, Tikal, Copan, Uxmal, and Chichen Itza...Mesoamerican cement was almost exclusively lime cement. The limestone was purified on a 'cylindrical pile of timber, which requires a vast amount of labor to cut and considerable skill to construct in such a way that combustion of the stone and wood is complete and a minimum of impurities remains in the product.' The fact that

very little carbon is found in this cement ‘attests to the ability of these ancient peoples.’ John Sorenson further noted the expert sophistication in the use of cement at El Tajin, east of Mexico City, after Book of Mormon times. Cement roofs covered areas of seventy-five square meters! ‘Sometimes the builders filled a room with stones and mud, smoothed the surface on top to receive the concrete, then removed the interior fill when the [slab] on top had dried.’ The presence of expert cement technology in pre-Hispanic Mesoamerica is a remarkable archaeological fact, inviting much further research. Cement seems to take on significant roles in Mesoamerican architecture close to the time when the Book of Mormon says this development occurred.” (John W. Welch, *Reexploring The Book of Mormon*, p. 213))

8 And it came to pass that they did multiply and spread, and did go forth from the land southward to the land northward, and did spread insomuch that they began to cover the face of the whole earth, from the sea south to the sea north, from the sea <sup>a</sup>west to the sea east. (It tells us here, there was a sea to the north and to the south, as well as to the east and the west. And of course that can only be found in one region. That’s Central America. Hugh Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, 3:208. B. H. Roberts: “Here it will be proper to dispel what I regard as a misapprehension of the extent of Nephite occupancy of the north continent, at this period of Nephite history. From the fact that in the foregoing quotation it is said that the Nephites removing from Zarahemla traveled ‘to an exceeding great distance, insomuch that they came to large bodies of water, and many rivers,’ some have supposed that the Nephites at this time extended their colonization movements as far north as the great lakes in the eastern part of North American and from the fact that it is also said that ‘they began to cover the face of the whole earth, from the sea south, to the sea north, from the sea west, to the sea east,’ it has been supposed that these expressions meant to convey the idea that the Nephites at this time had extended their settlements over both continents; and that ‘from the sea south to the sea north’ meant from the sea at the southern extremity of South America (south of Cape Horn), to the Arctic Ocean, north of North America. There is no evidence, however, in the Book of Mormon that warrants such a conclusion as to the extent of Nephite occupancy of the western hemisphere in 46 B.C. Allowance for hyperbole must be made in the expression, ‘They began to cover the face of the whole earth,’ since the facts set forth in the whole history of the Nephites in the Book of Mormon are against the reasonableness of such an expression if taken literally.” (*New Witnesses for God*, p. 229))

9 And the people who were in the land northward did dwell in <sup>a</sup>tents, and in houses of cement, and they did suffer whatsoever tree should spring up upon the face of the land that it should grow up (**conservationists**), that in time they might have timber to build their houses, yea, their cities, and their temples, and their <sup>b</sup>synagogues, and their sanctuaries, and all manner of their buildings.

10 And it came to pass as timber was exceedingly scarce in the land northward, they did send forth much by the way of <sup>a</sup>shipping.

11 And thus they did enable the people in the land northward that they might build many cities, both of wood and of cement.

12 And it came to pass that there were many of the <sup>a</sup>people of Ammon, who were Lamanites by birth, did also go forth into this land.

13 And now there are many <sup>a</sup>records kept of the proceedings of this people, by many of this people, which are particular and very large, concerning them.

14 But behold, a <sup>a</sup>hundredth part of the proceedings of this people, yea, the account of the Lamanites and of the Nephites, and their wars, and contentions, and dissensions, and their preaching, and their prophecies, and their shipping and their building of ships, and their building of <sup>b</sup>temples, and of synagogues and their <sup>c</sup>sanctuaries, and their righteousness, and their wickedness, and their murders, and their robbings, and their plundering, and all manner of abominations and whoredoms, cannot be contained in this work.

15 But behold, there are many books and many <sup>a</sup>records of every kind, and they have been kept chiefly (**but not entirely**) by the Nephites. (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))

16 And they have been <sup>a</sup>handed down from one generation to another by the Nephites, even until they have fallen into transgression and have been murdered, plundered, and hunted, and driven forth, and slain, and <sup>b</sup>scattered upon the face of the earth, and mixed with the Lamanites until they are <sup>c</sup>no more called the Nephites, becoming wicked, and wild, and ferocious, yea, even becoming Lamanites. (They were so mixed that today you can't say that an Indian is a Lamanite.)

17 And now I return again to mine account; therefore, what I have spoken had passed after there had been great contentions, and disturbances, and wars, and dissensions, among the people of Nephi.

18 The forty and sixth year of the reign of the judges ended;

19 And it came to pass that there was still great contention in the land, yea, even in the \*forty and seventh year (45 BC), and also in the forty and eighth year.

20 Nevertheless <sup>a</sup>Helaman did fill the judgment-seat with justice and equity; yea, he did observe to keep the statutes, and the judgments, and the commandments of God; and he did do that which was right in the sight of God continually; and he did walk after the ways of his father, insomuch that he did prosper in the land.

21 And it came to pass that he had two sons. He gave unto the eldest the name of <sup>a</sup>Nephi, and unto the youngest, the name of <sup>b</sup>Lehi. And they began to grow up unto the Lord. (This growth to the Lord is a process. Spiritual maturity. Dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple: And that they may grow up in thee, and receive a fulness of the Holy Ghost, and be organized according to thy laws, and be prepared to obtain every needful thing;)

22 And it came to pass that the wars and contentions began to cease, in a small degree, among the people of the Nephites, in the latter end of the forty and eighth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

23 And it came to pass in the \*forty and ninth year (43 BC) of the reign of the judges, there was continual peace established in the land, all save it were the <sup>a</sup>secret combinations which <sup>b</sup>Gadianton the robber had established in the more settled parts of the land, which at that time were not known unto those who were at the head of government; therefore they were not destroyed out of the land.

24 And it came to pass that in this same year there was exceedingly great prosperity (growth) in the church, (The context of this prosperity makes it clearly spiritual in nature and linked to the blessings of the Church membership resulting from faithfulness. It is important that we not think of prosperity only in terms of material gain. DCBM, 3:342.) insomuch that there were thousands who did <sup>a</sup>join themselves unto the church and were baptized unto repentance. (Don't be proud that the church is growing so fast.)

25 And so great was the prosperity of the church, and so many the blessings which were poured out upon the people, that even the high priests and the teachers were themselves astonished beyond measure. (Hugh Nibley: "Even the high priests and the teachers were themselves astonished beyond measure' at this great progress. We're astonished at the progress of the church today. There's no real reason for it that you can explain, except that it's the work of the Lord. It's happening in the strangest places where you'd never expect it, very strange places." (Teachings From The Book of Mormon, Lecture 74, p. 212) This statement mirrors similar statements of modern Church leaders concerning the current astonishing growth of the Church. Perhaps this period of time is just the Nephite fulfillment of the Lord's revelation



to Habakkuk – one that may have multiple fulfillments, not only in ancient Israel but also among the Nephites, the modern Church, and in years yet to come – wherein God said: “I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you.” Habakkuk 1:5. DCBM, 3:342.)

26 And it came to pass that the work of the Lord did prosper unto the baptizing and uniting to the church of God, many souls, yea, even tens of thousands.

27 Thus we may see (Mormon has told the story, now he tells us what it means.) that the Lord is merciful unto all who will, in the sincerity of their hearts, call upon his holy name.

28 Yea, thus we see that the <sup>a</sup>gate of heaven is open unto <sup>b</sup>all, even to those who will believe on the name of Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God.

29 Yea, we see that whosoever will may lay hold upon the <sup>a</sup>word of God, which is <sup>b</sup>quick and powerful, which shall <sup>c</sup>divide asunder all the cunning and the snares and the wiles of the devil, and lead the man of Christ in a strait and <sup>d</sup>narrow course across that everlasting <sup>e</sup>gulf of misery which is prepared to engulf the wicked—

30 And land their souls, yea, their immortal souls, at the <sup>a</sup>right hand of God in the kingdom of heaven, to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and with Jacob, and with all our holy fathers, to go no more out.

(See, that’s solid security, to sit down and never have to go out again. This is very vivid imagery here. This is what atonement is. Home at last. At-one-ment. To be one, united with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Hugh Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 3:213)

31 And in this year there was continual rejoicing in the land of Zarahemla, and in all the regions round about, even in all the land which was possessed by the Nephites.

32 And it came to pass that there was peace and exceedingly great joy in the remainder of the forty and ninth year; yea, and also there was continual peace and great joy in the fiftieth year of the reign of the judges.

33 And in the \*fifty and first year (41 BC) of the reign of the judges there was peace also, save it were the pride which began to enter into the church—not into the church of God, but into the hearts of the people who <sup>a</sup>professed to belong to the church of God— (Hugh Nibley: “...there are two churches. There are the people who profess it, and the people who really are. They all profess to belong to the church of God, but how do you distinguish? Well, as Paul says, our security rests in this. God knows his own. Only he knows the ones who are true Latter-day Saints and those who aren't. We have no means of knowing. You'd be surprised what rascals there are among us and what good people there are among us too. But you never suspect.” Patriarch Hoagland from southern California was an inspired patriarch my mother knew very well. He went with one the brethren to a conference in southern Utah to excommunicate a member who had acquired the disfavor of the community. He smoked and he drank and he swore some, so they didn't want him in their society. They were going to excommunicate him. The night before the conference Brother Hoagland had a vision. It wasn't a dream. He said he found himself in a timeless world. He found himself in a conference in the other world, and there was great excitement. There was a great throng of people there, and he noticed presidents of the Church in the throng and former apostles. There was an air of great expectancy, and he wondered what are the people so excited about? They said, well, the Savior is going to drop in on us today. The Lord is going to be here. And wow, he was so excited! Under great tension they all stood up, and there were two chairs on the stand. The Lord came in, and with him should come to sit on the other chair except the bum they were going to cut off from the Church? He was the one who sat down by the Savior, side by side. Well, that was a lesson to him. He immediately started to look into things. It seems that this man who had broken the Word of Wisdom had always been kind to the poor; he shared everything he had with them. If there was a widow who needed help, he would do everything to help her, etc. but he was doing it quietly, and he was always helping. If they needed extra work on the farm, he'd go out and work from them. That's the sort of man he was, but he swore. People have been known to swear in Dixie. And he smoked. People have been known to smoke in Dixie, too. But that wasn't what counted. (*Teachings From The Book of Mormon*, Lecture 75, p. 215))

34 And they were lifted up in <sup>a</sup>pride, even to the persecution of many of their brethren. (Pride and persecution of others are sins in and of themselves, but Mormon describes the pride-resultant persecution as a great evil because it was Saint-against-Saint persecution. It was coming from those who knew the gospel and had been enlightened and prospered by it. Their knowledge increased their accountability and made their pride-induced persecution of their fellow Church members an even greater evil that would produce a great condemnation. DCBM, 3:343) Now this was a great evil, which did cause the more humble part of the people to suffer great persecutions, and to wade through much affliction.

35 Nevertheless they (the more humble members of the Church) did <sup>a</sup>fast and <sup>b</sup>pray oft, and did wax (grow) stronger and stronger in their <sup>c</sup>humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the <sup>d</sup>purifying and the <sup>e</sup>sanctification of their hearts, (It looks like the opposition sanctified them. Yielding our hearts to God, sanctifies us.) which sanctification cometh because of their <sup>f</sup>yielding their hearts unto God. (Henry B. Eyring: “Yield your heart unto God. Ask him what it is he would have you do. Know that he will have prepared a way for you to do it, even under great difficulties. Ask him how he would have you share what you have with others, and you will feel his love. He lives and he loves you. He wants you to come home again.” *To Draw Closer To God*, p. 89) Ezra Taft Benson: “[those] who turn their lives over to God will find out that he can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace” (see “Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations,” *New Era*, May 1975, 20). Neal A. Maxwell: “Giving place in our souls and in our schedules, making room for God’s words and work (Alma 32:27; see also 1 Nephi 21:20), requires intellectual submissiveness. It requires us to be responsive to all entreaties from the Lord, rather than being dependent upon thunderbolts to move us, or upon being commanded in all things (D&C 58:26-28). Submission requires sufficient dedication and perspiration to ‘try the experiment’ of His gospel’s goodness (Alma 34:4), to begin to follow Him in earnest.” (*Not My Will, But Thine*, p. 13))

36 And it came to pass that the fifty and second year ended in peace also, save it were the exceedingly great pride which had gotten into the hearts of the people; and it was because of their exceedingly great <sup>a</sup>riches and their prosperity in the land; and it did grow upon them from day to day.

37 And it came to pass in the \*fifty and third year (39 BC) of the reign of the judges, <sup>a</sup>Helaman died, and his eldest son <sup>b</sup>Nephi began to reign in his stead. And it came to pass that he did fill the judgment-seat with justice and equity; yea, he did keep the commandments of God, and did walk in the ways of his father.

\* Verse 1 [49 B.C.]; Verse 3 [46 B.C.]; Verse 19 [45 B.C.]; Verse 23 [43 B.C.]; Verse 33 [41 B.C.]; Verse 37 [39 B.C.].

## CHAPTER 4

*Nephite dissenters and the Lamanites join forces and take the land of Zarahemla—The Nephites’ defeats come because of their wickedness—The Church dwindles and the people become weak like the Lamanites. [Between 38 and 30 B.C.]*

1 AND it came to pass in the \*fifty and fourth year (38 BC) there were many dissensions in the church, and there was also a <sup>a</sup>contention among the people, insomuch that there was much bloodshed. (This is the turning point in the story. The only thing that will change them will be the coming of Christ in a few years.)

2 And the rebellious part were slain and driven out of the land, and they did go unto the king of the Lamanites.

3 And it came to pass that they did endeavor to stir up the Lamanites to <sup>a</sup>war against the Nephites; but

behold, the Lamanites were <sup>b</sup>exceedingly afraid, insomuch that they would not hearken to the words of those dissenters.

4 But it came to pass in the fifty and sixth year of the reign of the judges, there were <sup>a</sup>dissenters who went up from the Nephites unto the Lamanites; and they succeeded with those others in <sup>b</sup>stirring them up to anger against the Nephites; and they were all that year preparing for war.

5 And in the \*fifty and seventh year (35 BC) they did come down against the Nephites to battle, and they did commence the work of death; yea, insomuch that in the fifty and eighth year of the reign of the judges they succeeded in obtaining <sup>a</sup>possession of the land of Zarahemla; yea, and also all the lands, even unto the land which was near the land Bountiful.

6 And the Nephites and the armies of Moronihah were driven even into the land of Bountiful; (It seems that the land Bountiful is the place that doesn't get destroyed among the Nephites. I wonder if it is because there was a temple there that it seems to be protected from the Lamanites.)

7 And there they did fortify against the Lamanites, from the west sea, even unto the east; it being a <sup>a</sup>day's journey for a Nephite, on the line which they had fortified and stationed their armies to defend their north country.

8 And thus those <sup>a</sup>dissenters of the Nephites, with the help of a numerous army of the Lamanites, had obtained all the possession of the Nephites which was in the land southward. And all this was done in the fifty and eighth and ninth years of the reign of the judges.

9 And it came to pass in the sixtieth year of the reign of the judges, Moronihah did succeed with his armies in obtaining many parts of the land; yea, they regained many cities which had fallen into the hands of the Lamanites.

10 And it came to pass in the \*sixty and first year (31 BC) of the reign of the judges they succeeded in regaining even the half of all their possessions.

11 Now this great loss of the Nephites, and the great slaughter which was among them, <sup>a</sup>would not have happened had it not been for their <sup>b</sup>wickedness and their abomination which was among them; (Hugh Nibley: "Critics like O'Dea have told the world that the Book of Mormon is a rather naive tale, a typical 'Western,' in which the 'good guys' fight the 'bad guys.' Nothing could be further from the truth. At every confrontation of the Nephites and Lamanites in war, the Book of Mormon is at pains to point out that the conflict is to be attributed to the wickedness of both parties. Indeed, the greatest battle before the final debacle was fought not between the Nephites and Lamanites but between Nephite armies (3 Nephi 4:11). 'They shall have no power over thy seed,' the Lord promised Nephi, 'except they shall rebel against me also' (1 Nephi 2:23). The 'also' is important--it means that whenever the Nephites and Lamanites fight it is because both have rebelled against God. It is never a case of 'good guys versus bad guys.') yea, and it was among those also who professed to belong to the church of God. (Harold B. Lee: "There are many who profess to be religious and speak of themselves as Christians, and, according to one such, 'as accepting the scriptures only as sources of inspiration and moral truth', and then ask in their smugness: 'Do the revelations of God give us a handrail to the kingdom of God, as the Lord's messenger told Lehi, or merely a compass?' Unfortunately, some are among us who claim to be Church members but are somewhat like the scoffers in Lehi's vision—standing aloof and seemingly inclined to hold in derision the faithful who choose to accept Church authorities as God's special witnesses of the gospel and His agents in directing the affairs of the Church. There are those in the Church who speak of themselves as liberals who, as one of our former presidents has said, 'read by the lamp of their own conceit.' (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 373.) One time I asked one of our Church educational leaders how he would define a liberal in the Church. He answered in one sentence: 'A liberal in the Church is merely one who does not have a testimony.' The late Dr. John A. Widstoe, of the Council of the Twelve, an eminent educator, made a statement relative to this word *liberal* as it applied to those in the Church. This is what he said: 'The self called liberal [in the Church] is usually one who has broken with the fundamental principles or guiding philosophy of the group to which he belongs... He claims membership in an organization but does not believe in its basic concepts; and sets out to reform it by

changing its foundations... It is folly to speak of a liberal religion, if that religion claims that it rests upon changing truth. It is well to beware of people who go about proclaiming that they are or their churches are liberal. The probabilities are that the structure of their faith is built on sand and will not withstand the storms of truth. (Evidences and Reconciliations, Improvement Era 44:409) (*Stand Ye In Holy Places*, p. 352-53))

12 And it was because of the <sup>a</sup>pride of their hearts, (“For the most part, the Church today finds itself in much the same circumstances as those in the beginning of the book of Helaman. It is wealthy and growing rapidly. Are we in danger? The Book of Mormon suggests that the only real danger to the Church itself is not an outward foe but rather a more powerful and far more devastating enemy within—pride. It grows in the hearts of those who profess to be Saints. It is little wonder that President Benson has warned us against pride. Will we heed the warning or become as the Nephites of old?” (Richard D. Draper, *FARMS: Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2, Fall-1994, p. 32) because of their exceeding <sup>b</sup>riches, yea, it was because of their oppression to the <sup>c</sup>poor, withholding their food from the hungry, withholding their clothing from the naked, and smiting their humble brethren upon the cheek, making a <sup>d</sup>mock of that which was sacred, (Joseph Fielding Smith: “Do not be deceived; the Father will not be mocked, nor will he permit us to trample his holy ordinances under our feet at will, simply because of some trifling dissatisfaction. There will have to be many adjustments and our plans, if they are not in harmony with the law the Lord has given, will not stand in and after the resurrection. Some of us may find that we have deprived ourselves of these eternal blessings because of our petty and evil actions. Let us beware how we hold the covenants of the Lord, lest we be judged and, being found guilty, lose the whole.” (*The Way To Perfection*, p. 259) Gordon B. Hinckley: “The Church has a host of critics and an army of enemies. They mock that which is sacred. They demean and belittle that which has come from God. They pander to the desires of others who evidently enjoy seeing that which is sacred made to look funny. I cannot think of anything less in harmony with the spirit of Christ than this kind of activity. We are pained by the desecration of that which to us is holy. But we need not fear. This cause is greater than any man. It will outlast all its enemies. We need only go forward, without fear, by the power of faith. Said the Lord in an early season of this work: ‘Therefore, fear not, little flock; do good; let earth and hell combine against you, for if ye are built upon my rock, they cannot prevail. . . . Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not. Behold the wounds which pierced my side, and also the prints of the nails in my hands and feet; be faithful, keep my commandments, and ye shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.’ (D&C 6:34, 36-37.)” (*Faith, The Essence of True Religion*, p. 16)) **denying the spirit of prophecy and of revelation,** (Speaking of the proud, President Benson illustrated some of these [forms]: “We pit our will against God’s. When we direct our pride toward God, it is done in the spirit of ‘my will and not thine be done.’... The proud cannot accept the authority of God giving direction to their lives (see Helaman 12:6). They pit their perceptions of truth against God’s great knowledge, their abilities versus God’s priesthood power, their accomplishments against His mighty works. . . . The proud wish God would agree with them. They aren’t interested in changing their opinions to agree with God’s.” (CR, April 1989, p. 4.) McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 3, p. 347)) **murdering, plundering, lying, stealing, committing adultery, rising up in great contentions, and deserting away into the land of Nephi, among the Lamanites—**

13 And because of this their great wickedness, and their <sup>a</sup>boastings in their own strength, they were left in their own strength (“Mormon, the true prophet-historian that he is, herein gives one of the most important keys to understanding the history of the covenant people. When they are faithful and obedient, even the mightiest empires of the world cannot succeed in overthrowing them. The chariots of Pharaoh were caught in the returning waters of the Red Sea, and the seemingly weak and defenseless Israelites journeyed into the Sinai without further molestation. (See Exodus 14) Several hundred years later, the mighty armies of Assyria encamped around Jerusalem. To that point, no city or nation had successfully resisted the power of Assyria. But in response to the pleadings of Isaiah, the king and the people turned to the Lord. The next morning 185,000 Assyrian soldiers lay dead, smitten during the night by some

mysterious plague sent by the Lord. Sennacherib, the mighty king of Assyria, retreated without shooting an arrow against the city. (See 2 Kings 19:32-37) But let the people turn from the Lord, let them fall into apostasy and wickedness, and the source of their strength and power withdraws. Often we say that the Lord punishes his people for their wickedness. In a way this is true, but often the Lord does not have to intervene directly and send punishments upon his people. The enemies of Israel are ever ready and eager to move against the people of the Lord when they lose their real source of power, and they are 'left in their own strength.' (Hel 4:13) Whenever 'the Lord did cease to preserve them by his miraculous and matchless power' (v. 25), they became easy prey to those who were their enemies." (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 1981, p. 356)); therefore they did not prosper, but were afflicted and smitten, and driven before the Lamanites, until they had lost possession of almost all their lands. (The great slaughter of the Nephites could have been averted had they remained faithful. It is significant that Mormon identifies specific things that comprised the wickedness and abominations of the Nephite Church members. This itemization is doctrinally important not merely as a historical account but also as a warning to the latter-day Church. (1) Pride of their hearts because of their exceeding riches; (2) Oppression of the poor; (3) Making a mock of that which is sacred; (4) Denying the spirit of prophecy and revelation; (5) Murdering, plundering, lying, stealing, committing adultery; (6) Rising up in great contentions; (7) Boastings in their own strength. One of the most common of all sins among worldly people is relying on and then boasting in the arm of flesh. This is a most serious evil. It is a sin born of pride, a sin that creates a frame of mind which keeps men from turning to the Lord and accepting his saving grace. When a man knowingly or unknowingly engages in self-exultation because of his riches, his political power, his worldly learning, his physical prowess, his business ability, or even his works of righteousness, he is not in tune with the Spirit of the Lord...The many admonitions in the scriptures to avoid boasting send the message that we should realize the source of all our blessings. Everything is given by God. All talent, creativity, ability, insight, and strength comes from him. In our own strength we can do nothing... When we seek the praise of man more than the praise of God, it will become easy to fall. Marvin J. Ashton, CR, April 1990, p. 84-85 DCBM, 3:346-48)

14 But behold, Moronihah did <sup>a</sup>preach many things unto the people because of their iniquity, and also <sup>b</sup>Nephi and Lehi, who were the sons of Helaman, did preach many things unto the people, yea, and did prophesy many things unto them concerning their iniquities, and what should come unto them if they did not repent of their sins.

15 And it came to pass that they did repent, and inasmuch as they did repent they did begin to prosper.

16 For when Moronihah saw that they did repent he did venture to <sup>a</sup>lead them forth from place to place, and from city to city, even until they had regained the one-half of their property and the one-half of all their lands.

17 And thus ended the sixty and first year of the reign of the judges.

18 And it came to pass in the \*sixty and second year (30 BC) of the reign of the judges, that Moronihah could obtain no more possessions over the Lamanites.

19 Therefore they did abandon their design to obtain the remainder of their lands, for so numerous were the Lamanites that it became impossible for the Nephites to obtain more power over them; therefore Moronihah did employ all his armies in maintaining those parts which he had taken.

20 And it came to pass, because of the greatness of the number of the Lamanites the Nephites were in great fear, lest they should be overpowered, and trodden down, and slain, and destroyed.

21 Yea, they began to remember the <sup>a</sup>prophecies of Alma, and also the <sup>b</sup>words of Mosiah; and they saw that they had been a <sup>c</sup>stiffnecked people, and that they had set at <sup>d</sup>naught the commandments of God;

22 And that they had altered and trampled under their feet the <sup>a</sup>laws of Mosiah, or that which the Lord commanded him to give unto the people; and they saw that their laws had become corrupted, and that they had become a wicked people, insomuch that they were wicked even like unto the Lamanites.

23 And because of their iniquity the church had begun to <sup>a</sup>dwindle; and they began to disbelieve in the spirit of prophecy and in the spirit of revelation; and the judgments of God did stare them in the face.

(Because of the secret combinations.)

24 And they saw that they had become <sup>a</sup>weak, like unto their brethren, the Lamanites, and that the Spirit of the Lord did no more preserve them; yea, it had withdrawn from them because the Spirit of the Lord doth not <sup>b</sup>dwell in <sup>c</sup>unholy <sup>d</sup>temples—

25 Therefore the Lord did cease to preserve them by his miraculous and matchless power, for they had fallen into a state of <sup>a</sup>unbelief and awful wickedness; and they saw that the Lamanites were exceedingly more numerous than they, and except they should <sup>b</sup>cleave unto the Lord their God they must unavoidably perish.

26 For behold, they saw that the strength of the Lamanites was as great as their strength, even man for man. And thus had they fallen into this great transgression; yea, thus had they become <sup>a</sup>weak, because of their transgression, in the space of <sup>b</sup>not many years.

\* Verse 1 [38 B.C.]; Verse 5 [35 B.C.]; Verse 10 [31 B.C.]; Verse 18 [30 B.C.].

## CHAPTER 5

*Nephi and Lehi devote themselves to preaching—Their names invite them to pattern their lives after their forebears—Christ redeems those who repent—Nephi and Lehi make many converts and are imprisoned, and fire encircles them—A cloud of darkness overshadows three hundred people—The earth shakes and a voice commands men to repent—Nephi and Lehi converse with angels, and the multitude are encircled by fire. [About 30 B.C.]*

1 AND it came to pass that in this \*same year (30 BC), behold, <sup>a</sup>Nephi <sup>b</sup>delivered up the judgment-seat to a man whose name was <sup>c</sup>Cezoram.

2 For as their laws and their governments were established by the <sup>a</sup>voice of the people, and they who <sup>b</sup>chose evil were <sup>c</sup>more numerous than they who chose good (“In other words, in a democracy or a republic when the majority of the people desire wickedness and become more numerous than they who choose righteousness, the people can no longer be governed by law or by justice. This principle applies to our own form of constitutional government. We who live in the United States tend to feel that we would always be protected by the Constitution. However, some experienced political scientists and jurists have said that if the day ever comes that the majority favor that which is morally wrong, we as a people would not be safe—even with the Constitution... John Adams often expressed his conviction that a nation's liberty is ultimately dependent upon the morality of the people. President Adams is quoted as saying: ‘[The Constitution] was made only, for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other’ (Nelson 101).” (*Book of Mormon Symposium Series*, Helaman 3 – 3 Nephi 8, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, p. 73) Joseph B. Wirthlin: “If television viewing choices serve as a valid measure of our society, they who choose evil surely are more numerous than they who choose good.” (*Finding Peace in Our Lives*, p. 218)), therefore they were <sup>d</sup>ripening for destruction, for the laws had become corrupted.

3 Yea, and this was not all; they were <sup>a</sup>stiffnecked people, insomuch that they could not be governed by the law nor justice, save it were to their destruction.

4 And it came to pass that Nephi had become weary because of their iniquity; and he yielded up the judgment-seat, and took it upon him to preach the word of God all the remainder of his days, and his brother Lehi also, all the remainder of his days;

5 For they remembered the words which their <sup>a</sup>father Helaman spake unto them. And these are the words which he spake: (The theme is Remember.)

6 Behold, my sons, I desire that ye should remember to keep the commandments of God; and I would that ye should declare unto the people these words. Behold, I have given unto you the names of our first <sup>a</sup>parents who came out of the land of Jerusalem; and this I have done that when you remember (Spencer W. Kimball: “When you look in the dictionary for the most important word, do you know what it is? It

could be 'remember.' Because all of you have made covenants-you know what to do and you know how to do it-Our greatest need is to remember. That is why everyone goes to sacrament meeting every Sabbath day-to take the sacrament and listen to the priests pray that they . . . may always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them. . . . Nobody should ever forget to go to sacrament meeting. 'Remember' is the word. 'Remember' is the program." (*Book of Mormon Symposium Series*, Helaman 3 – 3 Nephi 8, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, p. 243)) your names ye may remember them; and when ye remember them ye may remember their works; and when ye remember their works ye may know how that it is said, and also written, that they were <sup>b</sup>good.

7 Therefore, my sons, I would that ye should do that which is good, that it may be said of you, and also written, even as it has been said and written of them.

8 And now my sons, behold I have somewhat more to desire of you, which desire is, that ye may not do these things that ye may boast, but that ye may do these things to lay up for yourselves a <sup>a</sup>treasure in heaven (Orson Hyde: "Whenever I see the hungry and feed him, the naked and clothe him, the sick and distressed and administer to their wants I feel that I am laying up treasure in heaven. When I am educating my children and embellishing their minds and fitting them for usefulness, I am laying up treasures in heaven. I would ask that little boy, who is well educated and well trained, 'What thief can enter in and steal the knowledge you have got?' It is beyond the power of the thief to steal, it is out of his reach, that treasure is laid up in heaven, for where is there a place more sacred than the hearts of the rising generation which beat with purity, and with love to their parents, and with love to God and his kingdom? What better place can you find in which to deposit treasures than that? But all our obligations are not pointing to one source or quarter, there are many ways in which we can lay up treasures in heaven by doing good here on the earth." (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 17, p. 11)), yea, which is eternal, and which fadeth not away; yea, that ye may have that <sup>b</sup>precious gift of eternal life, which we have reason to suppose hath been given to our fathers.

9 O remember, remember, my sons, the <sup>a</sup>words which king Benjamin spake unto his people; yea, remember that there is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the <sup>b</sup>atonement blood of Jesus Christ, who shall come; yea, remember that he cometh to <sup>c</sup>redeem the <sup>d</sup>world.

10 And remember also the words which Amulek spake unto Zeezrom, <sup>a</sup>in the city of Ammonihah; for he said unto him that the Lord surely should come to redeem his people, but that he should not come to redeem them in their sins, but to redeem them from their sins.

11 And he hath power given unto him from the Father to redeem them from their sins because of repentance; therefore he hath <sup>a</sup>sent his angels to declare the tidings of the conditions of repentance, which bringeth unto the power of the Redeemer, unto the salvation of their souls.

12 And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the <sup>a</sup>rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your <sup>b</sup>foundation; (Every person builds a house of faith. We do so knowingly or unknowingly. And every builder soon learns that a good building with bad foundations is worse than useless; it is dangerous. As one Christian writer has observed, 'If the stability of buildings depends largely on their foundations, so does the stability of human lives. The search for personal security is a primal instinct, but many fail to find it today. Old familiar landmarks [will be] obliterated. Moral absolutes which were once thought to be eternal are being abandoned' (Stott 22). Thus our house of faith can be no more secure than the foundation upon which it is built. Foolish men build upon the shifting sands of ethics and the marshlands of human philosophies and doctrines. The wise build upon the rock of revelation, heeding carefully the living oracles, lest they be 'brought under condemnation ... and stumble and fall when the storms descend, and the winds blow, and the rains descend, and beat upon their house' (D&C 90:5). All that we do as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints must be built upon a foundation of faith and testimony and conversion. When external supports fail us, then our hearts must be riveted upon the things of the Spirit, those internal realities which provide the meaning, the perspective, and the sustenance for all else that matters in life. ...Surely the supreme

challenge of this life for those of us who aspire to Christian discipleship is to build our lives on Christ, to erect our house of faith, a divine domicile in which he and his Spirit would be pleased to dwell. There is safety from Satan and his minions only in Christ. There is security only in his word and through his infinite and eternal power. How, then, do we build on Christ? In a day when the winds are blowing and [the waves are] beating upon our ship, how do we navigate our course safely into the peaceful harbor? What must we do to have our Savior pilot us through life's tempestuous seas? Amidst the babble of voices-enticing voices which threaten to lead us into forbidden paths or which beckon us to labor in secondary causes-how do the Saints of the Most High know the Way, live the Truth, and gain that Life which is abundant? The revelations and the prophets offer us some simple yet far-reaching suggestions: (the author goes on to describe four steps: 1) Treasure up his word, 2) Teach his doctrine, 3) Sustain his servants, and 4) Trust in and rely upon the Lord.)” (Robert L. Millet, *Book of Mormon Symposium Series*, Helaman 3 – 3 Nephi 8, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, pp. 26-8) Richard G. Scott: “Anchor your life in Jesus Christ, your Redeemer. Make your Eternal Father and his Beloved Son the most important priority in your life—more important than life itself, more important than a beloved companion or children or anyone on earth. Make their will your central desire. Then all that you need for happiness will come to you.” (Ensign, May 1993, pp. 32-4 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 377)) that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds (and he will send them forth), yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty <sup>c</sup>storm shall beat upon you, (When God sends angels, Satan sends his angels.) it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall. (Every person builds a house of faith. If it is built upon false philosophies, it will fall. If built upon Christ’s philosophies, it will last.)

13 And it came to pass that these were the words which Helaman <sup>a</sup>taught to his sons; yea, he did teach them many things which are not written, and also many things which are written.

14 And they did remember his words; and therefore they went forth, keeping the commandments of God, to teach the word of God among all the people of Nephi, beginning at the city Bountiful;

15 And from thenceforth to the city of Gid; and from the city of Gid to the city of Mulek;

16 And even from one city to another, until they had gone forth <sup>a</sup>among all the people of Nephi who were in the land southward; and from thence into the land of Zarahemla, among the Lamanites.

17 And it came to pass that they did <sup>a</sup>preach with great <sup>b</sup>power, insomuch that they did confound many of those <sup>c</sup>dissenters who had gone over from the Nephites, insomuch that they came forth and did confess their sins and were baptized unto repentance, and immediately returned to the Nephites to endeavor to repair unto them the wrongs which they had done.

18 And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi did preach unto the Lamanites with such great power and authority, for they had power and authority given unto them that they might <sup>a</sup>speak, and they also had what they should speak given unto them—

19 Therefore they did speak unto the great astonishment of the Lamanites, to the convincing them, insomuch that there were eight thousand of the Lamanites who were in the land of Zarahemla and round about <sup>a</sup>baptized unto repentance, and were convinced of the <sup>b</sup>wickedness of the <sup>c</sup>traditions of their fathers.

20 And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi did proceed from thence to go to the <sup>a</sup>land of Nephi.

21 And it came to pass that they were taken by an army of the Lamanites and cast into <sup>a</sup>prison; yea, even in that same prison in which Ammon and his brethren were cast by the servants of Limhi.

22 And after they had been cast into prison many days without food, behold, they went forth into the prison to take them that they might slay them.

23 And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi were encircled about <sup>a</sup>as if by <sup>b</sup>fire, even insomuch that they durst not lay their hands upon them for fear lest they should be burned. Nevertheless, Nephi and Lehi were not burned; and they were as standing in the midst of fire and were not burned.



24 And when they saw that they were encircled about with a <sup>a</sup>pillar of fire, and that it burned them not, their hearts did take courage.

25 For they saw that the Lamanites durst not lay their hands upon them; neither durst they come near unto them, but stood as if they were struck dumb with amazement.

26 And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi did stand forth and began to speak unto them, saying: <sup>a</sup>Fear not, for behold, it is God that has shown unto you this marvelous thing, in the which is shown unto you that ye cannot lay your hands on us to slay us.

27 And behold, when they had said these words, the earth shook exceedingly, and the walls of the prison did shake as if they were about to tumble to the earth; but behold, they did not fall. And behold, they that were in the prison were Lamanites and Nephites who were dissenters.

28 And it came to pass that they were overshadowed with a cloud of <sup>a</sup>darkness, and an awful solemn fear came upon them.

29 And it came to pass that there came a <sup>a</sup>voice as if it were above the cloud of darkness, saying: Repent ye, repent ye, and seek no more to destroy my <sup>b</sup>servants whom I have sent unto you to declare good tidings.

30 And it came to pass when they heard this <sup>a</sup>voice, and beheld that it was not a voice of thunder, neither was it a voice of a great tumultuous noise, but behold, it was a <sup>b</sup>still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper, and it did pierce even to the very soul— (Dallin H. Oaks: Each of us should be careful that the current flood of information does not occupy our time so completely that we cannot focus on and hear and heed the still, small voice that is available to guide each of us with our own challenges today. Ensign, May 2001, 83)

31 And notwithstanding the mildness of the voice, behold the earth shook exceedingly, and the walls of the prison trembled again, as if it were about to tumble to the earth; and behold the cloud of darkness, which had overshadowed them, did not disperse—

32 And behold the voice came again, saying: <sup>a</sup>Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; and seek no more to destroy my servants. And it came to pass that the earth shook again, and the walls trembled.

33 And also again the third time the voice came, and did speak unto them marvelous words which <sup>a</sup>cannot be uttered by man (Hugh Nibley: "...so great and marvelous were the words which he prayed that they cannot be written, neither can they be uttered by man.' Well, the question arises, how can you tell me something about them and the words he said? Can you give me an idea? The multitude did hear and bear record, and somebody comes and says, 'Well he said marvelous things. Did you understand it?' 'Yes, we understood it with our hearts.' 'Well, tell me what he said. Can you give me an idea?' And then he says, 'No, I can't.' 'Can't you give me some idea?' 'No.' I walk into a room where there are a lot of quantum physicists, highest bracket, having a conference. I listen to them for a while and then go out. Somebody says, 'Well, Mr. Nibley, can you tell me what they said in there?' I say, 'Heavens, I can't tell you. I can't even dream what they talking about; it was way out [there].' There are plenty of things you can hear and not report or understand or anything else. Yet at the time you could have been enormously impressed." (*Teachings From the Book of Mormon*, Lecture 75, p. 358-9)); and the walls did tremble again, and the earth shook as if it were about to divide asunder.

34 And it came to pass that the Lamanites could not flee because of the cloud of darkness which did overshadow them; yea, and also they were immovable because of the fear which did come upon them.

35 Now there was one among them who was a Nephite by birth, who had once belonged to the church of God but had dissented from them.

36 And it came to pass that he turned him about, and behold, he saw through the cloud of darkness the faces of Nephi and Lehi; and behold, they did <sup>a</sup>shine exceedingly, even as the faces of angels. And he beheld that they did lift their eyes to heaven; and they were in the attitude as if talking or lifting their voices to some being whom they beheld. (Bruce R. McConkie: "Transfiguration is a special change in appearance and nature which is wrought upon a person or thing by the power of God. This divine

transformation is from a lower to a higher state; it results in a more exalted, impressive, and glorious condition... By the power of the Holy Ghost many prophets have been transfigured so as to stand in the presence of God and view the visions of eternity. Speaking of such an occasion in his life, Moses recorded: 'Now mine own eyes have beheld God; but not my natural, but my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld; for I should have withered and died in his presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him.' (Moses 1:11; D. & C. 67:11.) On another occasion, when Moses came down off the mount, having communed with the Lord for 10 days and nights, 'the skin of his face shone,' so that he had to 'put a vail on his face' as he talked with the children of Israel. (Ex. 34:29-35.) Similarly, when the Three Nephites 'were caught up into heaven, and saw and heard unspeakable things,' they were transfigured. 'Whether they were in the body or out of the body, they could not tell; for it did seem unto them like a transfiguration of them, that they were changed from this body of flesh into an immortal state, that they could behold the things of God.' (3 Ne. 28:13-17.) Paul had a similar experience (2 Cor. 12:1-4), as also did Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. (D. & C. 76; *Teachings*, p. 107.)" (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 803))

37 And it came to pass that this man did cry unto the multitude, that they might turn and look. And behold, there was power given unto them that they did turn and look; and they did behold the faces of Nephi and Lehi.

38 And they said unto the man: Behold, what do all these things mean, and who is it with whom these men do converse?

39 Now the man's name was Aminadab. And Aminadab said unto them: They do converse with the angels of God.

40 And it came to pass that the Lamanites said unto him: <sup>a</sup>What shall we do, that this cloud of darkness may be removed from overshadowing us? (This is the same question we each must ask to dispel the darkness around us.)

41 And Aminadab said unto them: You must <sup>a</sup>repent, and cry unto the voice, even until ye shall have <sup>b</sup>faith in Christ, (Faith is a gift of God. In what manner does He impart this gift to the mind by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit independent of any other means? Does He bestow it unsought for and irrespective of the preparation of the mind? Does he confer it independent of the agency of man? To say that man obtains this gift without preparing himself, or without the exercise of any agency, is to deprive him of all responsibility in regard to whether he has faith or not. Orson Pratt, *The True Faith*, p. 8) who was taught unto you by Alma, and <sup>c</sup>Amulek, and Zeezrom ("The Book of Mormon does not expressly give the identity of the people who are in the prison at the time of the miraculous manifestation mentioned in Helaman 5. However, a clue as to who these people were is given by Aminadab when he said unto them, 'You must repent, and cry unto the voice, even until ye shall have faith in Christ, who was taught unto you by Alma, and Amulek, and Zeezrom.' (Helaman 5:41.) The only time Alma and Amulek and Zeezrom were on a missionary trip together was to the apostate Zoramites who were then living in the land of Antionum. (See Alma 31:1-8.) The Zoramites later fled from this area and joined with the Lamanites in the greater land of Nephi, and from this statement by Aminadab we learn they have now occupied the land of Lehi-Nephi, which had just been deserted by Limhi and his people. Again, the Book of Mormon proves to be a very complex book but also a wonderfully consistent one." (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p. 241)); and when ye shall do this, the cloud of darkness shall be removed from overshadowing you.

42 And it came to pass that they all did begin to cry unto the voice of him who had shaken the earth; yea, they did cry even until the cloud of darkness was dispersed. (Jeffrey R. Holland: "'Ye shall have faith in Christ, . . . and when ye shall do this, the cloud of darkness shall be removed from overshadowing you.' (Helaman 5:40-41.) This brightness of hope and unspeakable joy in God's power and comfort comes, even in everyday matters for me, only as I prayerfully exert my right to his Spirit. If in my heart I go to God the moment I feel even the slightest intimation of fear (or darkness or worry) instead of waiting to let it accumulate, if I speak to God even as my most trusted friend, my wisest

counselor, and stay there in my heart or on my knees talking to him long enough, I can always see a ray of light at the edge of those dark shadows. Most often I can then leave his presence with my heart singing. This does not mean that my troubles have dissolved—they probably haven't—but I somehow have the power to see above and around and through those clouds of darkness with greater calm and peacefulness. I know that he will, with time, help me to dissipate them completely. Out of sorrow and despair we are, through the comforting, protecting grace of God, lifted out of our weakness to the very summit of spiritual, peaceful transcendence that, without the 'Father of all comfort' could only be dreamed about from afar." (*On Earth As It Is In Heaven*, p. 40) )

43 And it came to pass that when they cast their eyes about, and saw that the cloud of darkness was dispersed from overshadowing them, behold, they saw that they were <sup>a</sup>encircled about, yea every soul, by a pillar of fire.

44 And <sup>a</sup>Nephi and <sup>b</sup>Lehi were in the midst of them; yea, they were encircled about; yea, they were as if in the midst of a flaming fire, yet it did harm them not, neither did it take hold upon the walls of the prison; and they were filled with that <sup>c</sup>joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.

45 And behold, the <sup>a</sup>Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven, and did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire, and they could <sup>b</sup>speak forth marvelous words.

46 And it came to pass that there came a voice unto them, yea, a pleasant voice, as if it were a whisper, saying:

47 <sup>a</sup>Peace, peace be unto you, because of your faith in my Well Beloved, who was from the foundation of the world.

48 And now, when they heard this they cast up their eyes as if to behold from whence the voice came; and behold, they saw the <sup>a</sup>heavens open; and angels came down out of heaven and ministered unto them.

(There never has been a gospel dispensation without the ministering of angels. A people who cannot claim the ministering of angels cannot claim an everlasting gospel... Without the ministering of angels and other forms of revelation, our theology would be like a body without a spirit. Robert. L. Millet and Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Life Beyond*, p. 71. Joseph Smith explained that there are no angels who minister to this earth but those who do belong or have belonged to it. Thus President Joseph F. Smith observed: When messengers are sent to minister to the inhabitants of this earth, they are not strangers, but from the ranks of our kindred, friends, and fellow-beings and fellow-servants. The ancient prophets who died were those who came to visit their fellow creatures upon the earth. They came to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; it was such beings – holy beings if you please – who waited upon the Savior and administered to him on the Mount... In like manner our fathers and mothers, brothers, sisters and friends who have passed away from this earth, having been faithful, and worthy to enjoy these rights and privileges, may have a mission given them to visit their relatives and friends upon the earth again, bringing from the divine Presence messages of love, of warning, or reproof and instruction, to those whom they had learned to love in the flesh. *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 435-37, DCBM, 3:360)

49 And there were about three hundred souls who saw and heard these things; and they were bidden to go forth and marvel not, neither should they doubt. (These 300 people became the bulwark of the converted Lamanites to whom Samuel would preach. *Unlocking the Book of Mormon*, 380.)

50 And it came to pass that they did go forth, and did minister unto the people, declaring throughout all the regions round about all the things which they had heard and seen, insomuch that the more part of the Lamanites were <sup>a</sup>convinced of them, because of the greatness of the evidences which they had received.

51 And as many as were <sup>a</sup>convinced did lay down their weapons of war, and also their hatred and the tradition of their fathers.

52 And it came to pass that they did <sup>a</sup>yield up unto the Nephites the lands of their possession. (The preaching of the word had a more powerful effect upon the people, even more than the sword or anything else.)

\* Verse 1 [30 B.C.].