

LESSON 44
“I Speak Unto You As If Ye Were Present”
Mormon 7-9

OVERVIEW:

Mormon exhorts the latter-day descendants of Lehi to repent, believe in Christ, and be baptized. Moroni prophesies that the Book of Mormon will come forth in a day of great wickedness. Moroni exhorts people in the last days to believe in Christ.

Hugh Nibley said, "Mormon and Moroni supply the epilogue to the Book of Mormon, the son drawing freely on his father's notes and letters. The picture that these two paint of their world, which in their minds has significant resemblance to our own, is one of unrelieved gloom. The situation is unbelievably bad and, in view of the way things are going, quite without hope. The scenes of horror and violence, culminating in the sickening escalation of atrocities by Lamanites and Nephites in the 9th chapter of Mormon, need no news photographs to make their message convincing to the modern world. The Nephites, like the great heroes of tragedy-Oedipus, Macbeth, Achilles-as they approach their end, are hopelessly trapped by a desperate mentality in which the suppressed awareness of their own ungovernable hatred of others'...they have lost their love, one towards another; and they thirst after blood and revenge continually" (Moroni 9:5). Their awful guilt leaps out in their instant resentment of any criticism of themselves: "...when I speak the word of God with sharpness they tremble and anger against me (Moroni 9:4). They have reached that point of suicidal defiance which the Greeks called Ate, the point of no return, when the sinner with a sort of fatal fascination does everything that is most calculated to hasten his own removal from the scene-he is finished, and now all that remains is to get him out of the way: "O my beloved son, how can a people like this, that are without civilization...expect that God will stay his hand...?" (Moroni 9:11,14). "Nephite civilization was thus not extinguished at Cumorah. It had already ceased to exist for some time before the final house-cleaning. War had become the order of the day,' and every heart was hardened.' (Mormon 4:11), with the military requisitioning the necessities of life and leaving the non-combatants 'to faint by the way and die.' (Moroni 9:16) "O the depravity of my people! cries Mormon, and he tells us in what this depravity consists: 'They are without order and without mercy...they have become strong in their perversion; and they are alike brutal, sparing none neither young nor old,...and the suffering of our women and children upon all the face of this land doth exceed everything...thou knowest that they are without principle and past feeling...I cannot recommend them unto God lest he should smite me,' (Moroni 9:18-21). "Here then is the real calamity that befell the Nephites in all its tragic horror--and there is no mention whatever of enemy action or of anyone belonging to the wrong party: the ultimate catastrophe is not that people are struck down, but they should be found in any circumstances whatever 'without order and without mercy...without principle and past feeling.'" (Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, pp. 399-400).

SCRIPTURES:

THE BOOK OF MORMON
CHAPTER 7

Mormon invites the Lamanites of the latter days to believe in Christ, accept his gospel, and be saved—All who believe the Bible will also believe the Book of Mormon. [About A.D. 385] (Like the title page of the Book of Mormon, this chapter serves as a sort of summary statement, a comprehensive picture of what matters to the Nephite prophet-writers. So far as we can tell, this chapter would represent Mormon's final offering, his last counsel to the people of the last days, a message which is brief but all-encompassing. It distills into ten short verses what will surely prove to be timely and timeless directives, pertinent warnings for the people of the last days. DCBM, 4:237)

1 AND now, behold, I would speak somewhat unto the ^aremnant of this people (Lehites) who are spared, (Lamanites of today. Jeffrey R. Holland: “In a soliloquy of death, Mormon reached across time and space to all, especially to that ‘remnant of the house of Israel’ who would one day read his majestic record. Those of another time and place must learn what those lying before him had forgotten—that all must ‘believe in Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God,’ ... To ‘believe in Christ,’ especially when measured against such tragic but avoidable consequences, was Mormon's last plea and his only hope. It is the ultimate purpose of the entire book that would come to the latter-day world bearing his name.” (Christ and the New Covenant, p. 321-3)) if it so be that God may give unto them my words (The Book of Mormon. “In a special way, the Book of Mormon was written to the Lamanites, the descendants of Lehi, as a major tool to restore them to Christ. It seems that the righteous Nephite prophets, knowing the destruction of their own people, wrote with special feelings to the future Lamanites. Mormon in his final chapter said, ‘And now, behold, I would speak somewhat unto the remnant of this people who are spared’ (7:1); and Moroni in his last chapter said, ‘Now I, Moroni, write somewhat as seemeth me good; and I write unto my brethren, the Lamanites’ (10:1).” (Rex C. Reeve, Jr., Book of Mormon Symposium Series, 2 Nephi, edited by PR Cheesman, MS Nyman, and CD Tate, Jr., 1988, p. 2)), that they may know of the things of their fathers; yea, I speak unto you, ye remnant of the house of Israel; and these are the words which I speak:

2 Know ye that ye are of the ^ahouse of Israel. (“Careful and prayerful study of the scriptures—especially the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon—will not only bring people to understand in their minds the origin and destiny of the descendants of Jacob but will also cause them to know in their hearts what it means to come to earth through a chosen lineage and what God would have them do to be a light to the world, particularly to so many who sit in spiritual darkness. The words of the Lord to ancient Israel should be received by modern Israel with sobriety and humility, but they must be received and believed if we are to realize our potential to become a holy people and a royal priesthood. Jehovah spoke millennia ago of ‘Israel, whom I have chosen’ (Isaiah 44:1) and assured the Israelites that ‘you only have I known of all the families of the earth’ (Amos 3:2; see also Isaiah 45:4). “And yet coming to this earth through a peculiar lineage involves much more than boasting of a blessing: it entails bearing a burden. ‘Once we know who we are,’ Elder Russell M. Nelson said, ‘and the royal lineage of which we are a part, our actions and directions in life will be more appropriate to our inheritance’ (“Thanks for the Covenant,” 1988-89 BYU Devotional and Fireside Speeches, p. 59).” Years ago a wise man wrote of the burdens of chosenness and of why God had selected a particular people as his own: “A man will rise and demand, ‘By what right does God choose one race or people above another?’ I like that form of the question. It is much better than asking by what right God degrades one people beneath another, although that is implied. God’s grading is always upward. If He raises up a nation, it is that other nations may be raised up through his ministry. If He exalts a great man, an apostle of liberty or science or faith, it is that He might raise a degraded people to a better condition. The divine selection is not [alone] a prize, a compliment paid to the man or the race – it is a burden imposed. To appoint a Chosen people is not a pandering to the racial vanity of a ‘superior people,’ it is a yoke bound upon the necks of those who are chosen for a special service.” In short, the Lord hath made [Israel] great for what He is going to make [Israel] do. W.J. Cameron, Is There a Chosen People? In James H. Anderson, God’s Covenant Race, p. 300-302. (McConkie, Millet, and Top, Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon, vol. 4, p. 237-8))

3 Know ye that ye must come unto repentance, or ye cannot be saved.

4 Know ye that ye must lay down your weapons of war, (In spite of our delight in defining ourselves as modern, and our tendency to think we possess a sophistication that no people in the past ever had – in spite of these things, we are, on the whole, an idolatrous people – a condition most repugnant to the Lord. We are a warlike people, easily distracted from our assignment of preparing for the coming of the Lord. When enemies rise up, we commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel – ships, planes, missiles, fortifications – and depend on them for protection and deliverance. When

threatened we become anti-enemy instead of pro-kingdom of God; we train a man in the art of war and call him a patriot, thus, in the manner of Satan's counterfeit of true patriotism, perverting the Savior's teaching... What are we to fear when the Lord is with us? Can we not take the Lord at his word and exercise a particle of faith in him? Our assignment is affirmative: to forsake the things of the world as ends in themselves; to leave off idolatry and press forward in faith; to carry the gospel to our enemies, that they might no longer be our enemies. We must leave off the worship of modern-day idols and a reliance on the arm of flesh for the Lord has said to all the world in our day, "I will not spare any that remain in Babylon." D&C 64:24. President Spencer W. Kimball, *The False Gods We Worship*, Ensign, June 1976, p. 6) and delight no more in the shedding of blood, and take them not again, (Hugh Nibley "Writing with special consideration for their own descendants, the Book of Mormon prophets are especially concerned for the future of that highly mixed people known as the Indians. In the 1820s the Indians still held most of the continent and felt themselves a match for any invader. But Mormon forewarns them that all their efforts to prevail by force of arms will be hopeless (Mormon 7:4). In the beginning Lehi prophesied that his descendants who would survive until our day should see generations of 'bloodsheds, and great visitations among them' (2 Nephi 1:12), and that God would 'bring other nations unto them, and . . . give unto them power, and . . . take away from them the lands of their possessions, and he will cause them to be scattered and smitten' (2 Nephi 1:11). Nephi foretold the same: 'The Lord God will raise up a mighty nation among the Gentiles, yea, even upon the face of this land; and by them shall our seed be scattered' (1 Nephi 22:7). This scattering and smiting was to exceed anything the Indians had experienced before 1830: it was to be carried to the point of virtual extermination." (Since Cumorah, p. 375)) save it be that God shall ^acommand you. (There will be times when God will command us to go to war. There are some things worth fighting for.)

5 Know ye that ye must come to the ^aknowledge of your fathers, and repent of all your sins and iniquities, and ^bbelieve in Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God, and that he was slain by the Jews, and by the power of the Father he hath risen again, whereby he hath gained the ^cvictory over the grave; and also in him is the sting of death swallowed up. ("In its overall structure, the Book of Mormon begins and ends with concern for the Lamanites receiving the gospel. Reiterating the main points from the title page, Nephi says that through the Book of Mormon the Lamanites shall know they are of Israel and through it 'they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ' (2 Nephi 30:5; see 30:1-6). Then toward the end, Mormon says much the same thing: 'Know ye that ye are of the house of Israel. . . . Know ye that ye must come to the knowledge of your fathers, and repent of all your sins and iniquities, and believe in Jesus Christ' (Mormon 7:2, 5). At the physical center of the book is the narrative of the conversion of the Lamanites. This central part begins with the decree of the king of the Lamanites that Ammon and his brethren should be free to preach the word of God throughout all the land, and ends with gratitude by these great missionaries for the thousands of Lamanite souls 'brought to behold the marvelous light of God' (Alma 26:3). The narrative high point of the book is the ministry of the resurrected Savior. While discoursing to both the Lamanites and Nephites before him, Jesus as well speaks to their descendants, saying that the Book of Mormon 'shall come forth of the Father, from [the Gentiles] unto you' (3 Nephi 21:3). He confirms the prophecies of Isaiah that in the last days the children of Lehi will be gathered both physically and spiritually. 'Then is the fulfilling,' he says, 'of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel' (3 Nephi 20:12).") (Richard D. Rust, *FARMS: Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, vol. 2, 1990, p. 16))

6 And he bringeth to pass the ^aresurrection of the dead, whereby man must be raised to stand before his ^bjudgment-seat.

7 And he hath brought to pass the ^aredemption of the ^bworld, whereby he that is found ^cguiltless before him at the judgment day hath it given unto him to ^ddwell in the presence of God in his kingdom, to sing ceaseless praises with the ^echoirs above, unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost, which are ^fone God, in a state of ^ghappiness which hath no end.

8 Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the ^agospel of Christ, which

shall be set before you, not only in this record (the Book of Mormon) but also in the record which shall come unto the Gentiles ^bfrom the Jews, (the Bible) which record shall come from the Gentiles ^cunto you. 9 For behold, ^athis is ^bwritten for the intent that ye may ^cbelieve that (the Bible); and if ^dye believe that (the Bible) ye will believe this (the Book of Mormon) also; and if ye believe this ye will know concerning your fathers, and also the marvelous works which were wrought by the power of God among them. (Bruce R. McConkie: "From these passages we reach certain clear conclusions relative to believing in Christ and in his holy word. Among them are these: A belief in Christ and a belief in the Book of Mormon go together; they are locked in each other's arms; they cannot be separated. Like Ezekiel's two sticks, they are one in the hands of the Father. Those who believe in Christ also believe the Book of Mormon because it contains the words of Christ. Those who believe the words of Christ, as given by his disciples and as recorded in Book of Mormon, believe in Christ. And those who do not believe these words do not believe in him. The Book of Mormon bears witness of Christ and of the Bible; it is written to persuade men to believe in their Lord and in his ancient word. Those who believe the Book of Mormon believe the Bible, and those who believe the Bible believe the Book of Mormon." (The Millennial Messiah, p. 177) Brigham Young: "No man can say that this book (laying his hand on the Bible) is true...and at the same time say, that the Book of Mormon is untrue...There is not that person on the face of the earth who has had the privilege of learning the gospel of Jesus Christ from these two books, that can say that one is true, and the other is false. No Latter-day Saint, no man or woman, can say the Book of Mormon is true, and at the same time say that the Bible is untrue. If one be true, both are." (Journal of Discourses, 1:38))

10 And ye will also know that ye are a ^aremnant of the seed of Jacob; therefore ye are numbered among the people of the first covenant; (Presumably Mormon is here speaking of the chosen people, the elect, those who have been true to the gospel covenant and are thus entitled to the supernal blessings associated therewith. They are to become joint heirs, coinheritors with Jesus Christ to all that the Father has; that is to say, they receive the blessings reserved for the Firstborn and thus qualify for membership in the Church of the Firstborn. DCBM, 4:241) and if it so be that ye believe in Christ, and are baptized, first ^bwith water, then with fire and with the Holy Ghost, following the ^cexample of our Savior, according to that which he hath commanded us, it shall be well with you in the day of judgment. Amen.

CHAPTER 8

The Lamanites seek out and destroy the Nephites—The Book of Mormon shall come forth by the power of God—Woes pronounced upon those who breathe out wrath and strife against the work of the Lord—The Nephite record shall come forth in a day of wickedness, degeneracy, and apostasy. [Between A.D. 400 and 421]

1 **BEHOLD I,** ^aMoroni, do finish the ^brecord of my father, (Moroni continues the abridgment of the large plates of Nephi which his father, Mormon, had written. In addition, Moroni will contribute his own abridgment of the twenty-four gold plates, the Jaredite record (the book of Ether), and will add some of his own teachings and counsel (the book of Moroni). DCBM, 4:242) Mormon. Behold, I have but few things to write, which things I have been commanded by my father. (Jeffrey R. Holland: "Following this dismaying decline of Nephite civilization documented by his father, Moroni picked up the recorder's task, but he did not write to any living audience. Rather, he directed his final testimony—in fact, three final testimonies—to those who would receive the record in the last days...Moroni's experience was painful, for he observed in life, in history, and in vision the pollution and destruction of three glorious civilizations—his own Nephite world, the Jaredite nation, and our latter-day dispensation." (Christ And The New Covenant, p. 323))

2 And now it came to pass that after the ^agreat and tremendous battle at Cumorah, behold, the Nephites who had escaped into the country southward were hunted by the ^bLamanites, until they were all

destroyed. (Not all the Nephites were killed at Cumorah. There were four groups which survived, at least temporarily: 1) the twenty-four survivors of the battle, 2) the group who had tried a southward escape (Mormon 6:15), 3) those who had deserted to the Lamanites (Mormon 6:15), and 4) the robbers which may have been of mixed Nephite, Lamanite lineage. Of these four groups, Moroni is apparently the only survivor of the first group. He tells us that the members of the second group were eventually hunted until they were killed. But the third and fourth groups were never completely exterminated. The Nephite deserters and Gadianton members are the only ones who survived. Still, the Nephites, as a nation and as a people, had been destroyed. The fact that there was considerable mixing of Nephite blood and Lamanite blood is significant because of prophecies which describe the descendants of Nephi in the latter-days. Nephi was told, God will not suffer that the Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed, which are among thy brethren (1 Ne 13:30). Through modern revelation, we know that some of the blood of Nephi, Joseph, Jacob, and Zoram was preserved among the Lamanites. Nevertheless, my work shall go forth...even so shall the knowledge of a Savior come unto my people—And to the Nephites, and the Jacobites, and the Josephites, and the Zoramites, through the testimony of their fathers (DC 3:16-17). Bryan Richards, GospelDoctrine.Com.)

3 And my father also was killed by them, and I even ^aremain ^balone to write the sad tale of the destruction of my people. But behold, they are gone, and I fulfil the commandment of my father. And whether they will slay me, I know not.

4 Therefore I will write and ^ahide up the records in the earth; and whither I go it mattereth not.

5 Behold, my father hath made ^athis record, and he hath written the intent thereof. And behold, I would write it also if I had room upon the ^bplates, but I have not; and ore I have none, for I am alone. My father hath been slain in battle, and all my kinsfolk, and I have not friends nor whither to go; and ^chow long the Lord will suffer that I may live I know not. (At least 21 more years)

6 Behold, ^a*four hundred years have passed away since the coming of our Lord and Savior. (“Of striking interest is Moroni’s statement that four hundred years had passed away since the coming of the Savior, making the date 400 of our era. It seems incredible that the holder of the keys of the stick of Ephraim (see D&C 27:5) never wrote a line on the plates of the Book of Mormon entrusted to him until sixteen years after the last great battle at Cumorah, but such seems to be the fact. Questions crowd us. What did Moroni do in the meantime? Where did he go? How did he live? How did he avoid his enemies? What did he do with the records his father left him? The answers to these and many other questions must be left to the imagination; the record is silent.” (Sidney B. Sperry, Book of Mormon Compendium, chap. 2) According to Brigham Young, Moroni dedicated the land for the Manti Temple.)

7 And behold, the Lamanites have hunted my people, the Nephites, down from city to city and from place to place, even until they are no more; and great has been their ^afall; yea, great and marvelous is the destruction of my people, the Nephites.

8 And behold, it is the hand of the Lord which hath done it. And behold also, the Lamanites are at ^awar one with another; and the whole face of this land is one continual round of murder and bloodshed; and no one knoweth the end of the war.

9 And now, behold, I say no more concerning them, for there are none save it be the Lamanites and ^arobbers that do exist upon the face of the land.

10 And there are none that do know the true God save it be the ^adisciples of Jesus, (This refers to the Three Nephites, but he may also be saying that because of the wickedness and apostasy of the people, when there were vacancies in the quorum of the Twelve, replacements were not made.) who did tarry in the land until the wickedness of the people was so great that the Lord would not suffer them to ^bremain with the people; and whether they be upon the face of the land no man knoweth.

11 But behold, my ^afather and I have seen ^bthem, (the 3 Nephites) and they have ministered unto us.

12 And whoso receiveth ^athis record, and shall not condemn it because of the imperfections which are in it, the same shall know of ^bgreater things than these. (Joseph Fielding Smith: “I would like to call your attention to one thing in the Book of Mormon. The Lord has promised us greater knowledge, greater

understanding than we find in the Book of Mormon, when we are prepared to receive it. When the brother of Jared went upon the mount to have the Lord touch stones to give them light to light their way across the great ocean, the Lord revealed to him the history of this world from the beginning of it to the end. We do not have it. ...Now the Lord has placed us on probation as members of the Church. He has given us the Book of Mormon, which is the lesser part, to build up our faith through our obedience to the counsels which it contains, and when we ourselves, members of the Church, are willing to keep the commandments as they have been given to us and show our faith as the Nephites did for a short period of time, then the Lord is ready to bring forth the other record and give it to us, but we are not ready now to receive it. Why? Because we have not lived up to the requirements in this probationary state in the reading of the record which had been given to us and in following its counsels.” (Conference Report, Oct. 1961, pp. 19-20) Orson Pratt: “He that receives this record, and shall not condemn it because of imperfections that are in it, the same shall know of greater things than these. That is, they shall know of greater things than what are contained in the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon contains some wonderful things...Great things, historically, are revealed in this book...concerning prophecies that are yet to take place, and that have already taken place... It does not mean those who should read this record and not perform the things that are contained therein; the promise is not extended to them. ‘Whoso receiveth this record’ ...No man or woman that fails to comply with these things that I have named (faith, repentance, baptism, laying on of hands)--believes and receives the record; they may pretend to believe the record, they may say it appears to be a very good record, and it speaks as if it might be true; but unless they do receive it, by obeying its ordinances, and its institutions, and complying with the principles of the Gospel, they would not be entitled to the promise recorded in the words of my text, ‘They shall know of greater things than these.’ (Journal of Discourses, 20:69)) Behold, I am Moroni; and were it possible, I would make all things known unto you. (Matthias F. Cowley: “Those persons who would esteem literary imperfections an evidence against the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon must belong to one of two classes--they are either not honest at heart and are seeking opportunity to evade the responsibility of knowing the truth, or they are shallow-minded, and to the world of sound reason, good judgment, and practical ability prefer the shadow compared with the substance. He ‘that will do the will of the Father shall know of the doctrine (cf. Jn 7:17)’ is the promise of our Savior; and the promises in the Book of Mormon that those who will not condemn the things of God because of human imperfections, but shall receive greater knowledge, are plain enough to condemn the world if they reject them, as much as the teachings of the Jewish record shall condemn mankind if they will not hearken.” (Cowley’s Talks on Doctrine, p. 185))

13 Behold, I make an end of speaking concerning this people. I am the son of Mormon, and my father was a ^adescendant of Nephi.

14 And I am the same who ^ahideth up this record unto the Lord; the plates thereof are of no worth, because of the commandment of the Lord. For he truly saith that no one shall have them ^bto get gain; (“...when Joseph Smith went to the hill to obtain the plates, he was beset by conflicting emotions. The adversary sorely tempted him to desire the plates to relieve his family’s poor financial situation. When the Prophet attempted to get the plates, he was forbidden to do so because, as Moroni stated, ‘You have not kept the commandments of the Lord.’ (As cited in Joseph Fielding Smith, Essentials in Church History, p. 49) This lesson had a lasting impression on Joseph Smith as he more clearly saw how Satan was determined to stop the coming forth of this sacred record.” (Book of Mormon Student Manual, 1981, p. 471) Joseph had no difficulty finding the hill "owing to the distinctness of the vision [he] had had concerning it" (JS-H 50). According to Oliver Cowdery, who published an account in 1833 of the Prophet's experiences with Moroni and the plates, "two invisible powers were operating upon [Joseph's] mind during his walk from his residence to Cumorah," 1 the influence of God and the opposing influence of the Evil One. By the time Joseph reached the hill, the power "urging the certainty of wealth and ease in this life" (Messenger and Advocate, 2 (October 1835):197.) had temporarily won over the mind of the young man. He quickly located the large stone that covered a stone box on the west side of

the hill. Joseph had no difficulty unlodging the stone, and before long the precious plates were before his eyes. As soon as he tried to pick up the plates, he felt a shock through his entire body, depriving him of some of his strength. He tried again but was shocked even more than the first time. With increased exertion he made a third attempt, only to be shocked more severely still. In agony of his soul, he cried out, "why can I not obtain this book?" (Dean C. Jessee, ed., *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), p. 7; *Messenger and Advocate* 2 (October 1835):197-98.) The angel Moroni once again appeared to Joseph as he had done the previous night. At once Joseph realized his folly of harboring unrighteous desires. The Lord in his mercy was teaching his young Prophet an important lesson. The angel proceeded to show Joseph in vision "the prime of darkness, surrounded by his innumerable train of associates." Moroni declared to Joseph, "All this is shown, the good and the evil, the holy and impure, the glory of God and the power of darkness, that you may know hereafter the two powers and never be influenced or overcome by that wicked one." (As reported by Oliver Cowdery, *Messenger and Advocate*, 2 (October 1835):198; see also Jessee, *The Personal Writings*, p. 7 and Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958), p. 81.) BRUCE A. VAN ORDEN, *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 2: The Pearl of Great Price, Chapter 24*) but the record thereof is of ^cgreat worth; and whoso shall bring it to light, him will the Lord bless.

15 For none can have power to bring it to light save it be given him of God; for God wills that it shall be done with an ^aeye single to his glory, or the welfare of the ancient and long dispersed covenant people of the Lord.

16 And blessed be ^ahe (Joseph Smith) that shall bring this thing to light; for it shall be ^bbrought out of darkness unto light, according to the word of God; yea, it shall be brought out of the earth, and it shall shine forth out of darkness, and come unto the knowledge of the people; and it shall be done by the power of God.

17 And if there be ^afaults they be the faults of a man. ("The Book of Mormon, which is a much more perfect translation than the Bible, not only makes no pretense of infallibility but specifically addresses the inevitability of errors existing in it. 'Whoso receiveth this record,' Moroni said, 'and shall not condemn it because of the imperfections which are in it, the same shall know of greater things than these.' He also said, 'if there be faults they be the faults of a man.'" (Mormon 8:12, 17.) This principle and spirit apply to the reading of all scripture." (Joseph Fielding McConkie, *Gospel Symbolism*, p. 232) Boyd K. Packer: "Some have alleged that these books of revelation are false, and they place in evidence changes that have occurred in the texts of these scriptures since their original publication. They cite these changes, of which there are many examples, as though they themselves were announcing revelation. As though they were the only ones that knew of them. Of course there have been changes and corrections. Anyone who has done even limited research knows that. When properly reviewed, such corrections become a testimony for, not against, the truth of the books... Now, I add with emphasis that such changes have been basically minor refinements in grammar, expression, punctuation, clarification. Nothing fundamental has been altered. Why are they not spoken of over the pulpit? Simply because by comparison they are so insignificant, and unimportant as literally to be not worth talking about. After all, they have absolutely nothing to do with whether the books are true. After compiling some of the revelations, the ancient prophet Moroni said, '... if there be faults they be the faults of a man. But behold, we know no fault; nevertheless God knoweth all things; therefore, he that condemneth, let him be aware lest he shall be in danger of hell fire.' (Morm. 8:17.) 'And whoso receiveth this record, and shall not condemn it because of the imperfections which are in it, the same shall know of greater things than these. ...' (Morm. 8:12.) ...There has, over the years, been an endless procession of those who would examine these revelations by every formula save the right one. Each becomes evidence, as Paul said, 'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' (1 Cor. 2:14.) These scriptural diamonds, as we have described them, will stand the test." (Conference Report, May 1974 Ensign, "We Believe All That God Has Revealed")) But behold, we know no fault; nevertheless God knoweth all

things; therefore, he that ^bcondemneth, let him be aware lest he shall be in danger of hell fire.

18 And he that saith: Show unto me, or ye shall be ^asmitten—let him beware lest he commandeth that which is forbidden of the Lord.

19 For behold, the same that ^ajudgeth ^brashly shall be judged rashly again; for according to his works shall his wages be; therefore, he that smiteth shall be smitten again, of the Lord.

20 Behold what the scripture says—man shall not ^asmite, neither shall he ^bjudge; for judgment is mine, saith the Lord, and vengeance is mine also, and I will repay.

21 And he that shall breathe out ^awrath and ^bstrifes against the work of the Lord, and against the ^ccovenant people of the Lord who are the house of Israel, and shall say: We will destroy the work of the Lord, and the Lord will not remember his covenant which he hath made unto the house of Israel—the same is in danger to be hewn down and cast into the fire;

22 For the eternal ^apurposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled. (Joseph Smith: “No unhallowed hand can stop this work from progressing. Persecutions may rage; mobs may combine; armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country and sounded in every ear; till the purposes of God shall be accomplished and the great Jehovah shall say, ‘The work is done.’” (History of the Church, 4:536.))

23 Search the prophecies of ^aIsaiah. Behold, I cannot write them. Yea, behold I say unto you, that those saints who have gone before me, who have possessed this land, shall ^bcry, yea, even from the dust will they cry unto the Lord; and as the Lord liveth he will remember the covenant which he hath made with them.

24 And he knoweth their ^aprayers, that they were in behalf of their brethren. And he knoweth their faith, for in his name could they remove ^bmountains; and in his name could they cause the earth to shake; and by the power of his word did they cause ^cprisons to tumble to the earth; yea, even the fiery furnace could not harm them, neither wild beasts nor poisonous serpents, because of the power of his word.

25 And behold, their ^aprayers were also in behalf of him that the Lord should suffer to bring these things forth. (Joseph Smith. The ancients prayed for Joseph Smith. They knew of him. They were aware of his noble and vital mission in the earth. They looked to the time of the coming of the “choice seer” of the Lord, the days when this servant of the Lord would be instrumental in bringing forth the great and marvelous work of the last days. “So great was his assigned mission, with reference to the restitution of all things, that holy prophets spoke of him, by name, thousands of years before his mortal birth. And as to the mighty work to be started by him – there are as many prophecies foretelling it as there are about any other single subject, not even excepting the host of prophetic utterances about our Lord and his redemptive sacrifice. Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p. 396. DCBM, 4:246)

26 And no one need say they shall not come, for they surely shall, for the Lord hath spoken it; for ^aout of the earth shall they come, by the hand of the Lord, and none can stay it; and it shall come in a day when it shall be said that ^bmiracles are done away; and it shall come even as if one should speak ^cfrom the dead.

27 And it shall come in a day when the ^ablood of saints shall cry unto the Lord, because of secret ^bcombinations and the works of darkness.

28 Yea, it shall come in a day when the power of God shall be ^adenied, and ^bchurches become defiled and be ^clifted up in the pride of their hearts; yea, even in a day when leaders of churches and teachers shall rise in the pride of their hearts, even to the envying of them who belong to their churches.

29 Yea, it shall come in a day when ^athere shall be heard of fires, and tempests, and ^bvapors of smoke in foreign lands;

30 And there shall also be heard of ^awars, rumors of wars, and earthquakes in divers places.

31 Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be great ^apollutions upon the face of the earth; (Joe J. Christensen: “We all hear and read a great deal these days about our polluted physical environment—acid rain, smog, toxic wastes. But these parents recognize that there is another kind of pollution that is

much more dangerous—the moral and spiritual. In a recent conference, Elder Boyd K. Packer said, ‘As we test the moral environment, we find the pollution index is spiraling upward’ (Ensign, May 1992, p. 66). The Apostle Paul foresaw ‘that in the last days perilous times shall come’ (2 Tim 3:1). And speaking of the last days, the prophet Moroni declared, ‘Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be great pollutions upon the face of the earth’ (Morm. 8:31). Sadly, the effects of this great pollution are perhaps most evident in the mass media, films, television, and popular music. Of this, Senator Robert D. Byrd said, ‘If we in this nation continue to sow the images of murder, violence, drug abuse, ... perversion, [and] pornography ... before the eyes of millions of children, year after year and day after day, we should not be surprised if the foundations of our society rot away as if from leprosy’ (Michael Medved, *Hollywood vs. America*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1992, p. 194). Although there are some uplifting exceptions, in most areas of the mass media there seems to be a declaration of war against almost everything the majority treasures most.” (Conference Report, Nov. 1993 Ensign, “Rearing Children in a Polluted Environment”) Brigham Young: “The soil, the air, the water are all pure and healthy. Do not suffer them to become polluted with wickedness. Strive to preserve the elements from being contaminated by...those who the intelligence God has bestowed upon the human family...Keep your valley pure, keep your towns as pure as you possibly can, keep your hearts pure.” (Journal of Discourses, 8:79-80 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 480) Spencer W. Kimball: “When I...fly over the vast and beautiful expanses of our globe...I have the feeling that the good earth can hardly bear our presence upon it...The Brethren constantly cry out against that which is intolerable in the sight of the Lord: against pollution of mind, body, and our surroundings.” (Ensign, June 1976, p. 4 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 482) We will... build up Zion on the earth and purify it and cleanse it from all pollutions. Let there be an hallowed influence go from us over all things over which we have any power; over the soil we cultivate, over the houses we build, and over everything we possess... We are the lords of the earth. Discourses of Brigham Young, 443. Hugh Nibley: One of the best known teachings of the Jews is that when man (Israel in particular) falls away from God, all nature becomes his enemy... In the end, as the wise rabbis saw, “When you completely defile the land,” Israel is told, “then I will no longer dwell in it; and then before long you can no longer dwell in it!” Brigham Young *Challenges the Saints*, 16, 50.) there shall be ^bmurders, and robbing, and lying, and deceivings, and whoredoms, and all manner of abominations; when there shall be many who will say, Do this, or do that, and it ^cmattereth not, for the Lord will ^duphold such at the last day. But wo unto such, for they are in the ^egall of bitterness and in the ^fbonds of iniquity.

32 Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be ^achurches built up that shall say: Come unto me, and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins. (Although prevalent in the centuries before the Restoration, the most obvious fulfillment of this prophecy is the Roman Catholic practice of indulgences. During the 16th and 17th centuries, one could receive forgiveness from sins by paying off the church official. A clever doctrinal foundation was devised to support such a practice: “...the doctrine gradually grew up that Christ had atoned for the eternal punishment of sin, but not for its temporary punishment. The temporal punishment they divided into that of the present life, and that of the future life or of purgatory. It was held, that every man who would attain salvation must suffer the temporary punishment of his sins, either, in the present world or in the flames of purgatory; and that the confessor to whom a man confessed his sins had the power to adjudge and impose this temporary punishment. The punishment thus imposed consisted of fasting, pilgrimages, flagellation, etc.” (Mosheim’s *Ecclesiastical History*, 6th ed., London 1868, notes from p. 564) In order to avoid such a severe temporal punishment, one could pay the church in money or property. Of course, this became a great source of income for the church and also a great comfort to the wealthy who quickly learned that forgiveness could be purchased at a price. Also, this became quite convenient, for eventually, accommodations were made such that the individual could pay for their sins in advance of committing them. This, of course, was necessary because, “Jesus, they said, has not removed all the punishments of sin.” (Mosheim’s *Ecclesiastical*

History, 6th ed., London 1868, notes from p. 564) James E. Talmage: "...we find the Church imposing punishment of fine, imprisonment, bodily torture, and even death, as penalties for infraction of church regulations, and, more infamous still, providing for mitigation or annulment of such sentences on payment of money. This led to the shocking practice of selling indulgences or pardons, which custom was afterward carried to the awful extreme of issuing such before the commission of the specific offense, thus literally offering for sale licenses to sin, with assurance of temporal and promise of spiritual immunity.... In illustration of the indulgences as sold in Germany in the sixteenth century, we have the record of the doings of John Tetzel, agent of the pope, who traveled about selling forgiveness of sins. Says Milner: '...The people believed that the moment any person had paid the money for the indulgence he became certain of his salvation: and that the souls for whom the indulgences were bought, were instantly released out of purgatory... John Tetzel boasted that he had saved more souls from hell by his indulgences than St. Peter had converted to Christianity by his preaching. He assured the purchasers of them [that] their crimes, however enormous, would be forgiven... For, remission of sins being fully obtained, what doubt could there be of salvation?'" (The Great Apostasy, pp. 134, 136))

33 O ye wicked and perverse and ^astiffnecked people, why have ye built up churches unto yourselves to get ^bgain? Why have ye ^ctransfigured the holy word of God, that ye might bring ^ddamnation upon your souls? Behold, look ye unto the ^erevelations of God; for behold, the time cometh at that day when all these things must be fulfilled.

34 Behold, the Lord hath shown unto me great and marvelous things concerning that which must shortly come, at that day when these things shall come forth among you.

35 Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing. (Ezra Taft Benson: "Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing." (Mormon 8:34-35.) If they saw our day, and chose those things which would be of greatest worth to us, is not that how we should study the Book of Mormon? We should constantly ask ourselves, 'Why did the Lord inspire Mormon (or Moroni or Alma) to include that in his record? What lesson can I learn from that to help me live in this day and age?' And there is example after example of how that question will be answered. For example, in the Book of Mormon we find a pattern for preparing for the Second Coming. A major portion of the book centers on the few decades just prior to Christ's coming to America. By careful study of that time period, we can determine why some were destroyed in the terrible judgments that preceded His coming and what brought others to stand at the temple in the land of Bountiful and thrust their hands into the wounds of His hands and feet. From the Book of Mormon we learn how disciples of Christ live in times of war. From the Book of Mormon we see the evils of secret combinations portrayed in graphic and chilling reality. In the Book of Mormon we find lessons for dealing with persecution and apostasy. We learn much about how to do missionary work. And more than anywhere else, we see in the Book of Mormon the dangers of materialism and setting our hearts on the things of the world. Can anyone doubt that this book was meant for us and that in it we find great power, great comfort, and great protection?" (A Witness and a Warning, p. 20-21) Jeffrey R. Holland: "The task of the children of God in these concluding days of the world's history is to proceed with 'unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save,' to 'press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men . . . feasting upon the word of Christ, and endur[ing] to the end. This is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God.' (2 Ne 31:17-18) No other book helps us do this so well. No other book was ever divinely produced and protected solely for that purpose. No other book has ever been written with such a full view of the future dispensation to which that record would eventually come. As with Moroni, so too with virtually all the Book of Mormon prophets: 'Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing.' (Christ And The New Covenant, p. 9) Hugh Nibley: "If the ultimate test of the Book of Mormon's validity is whether or not it really has something

to say, then the closing chapters alone should be enough to silence all criticism. Those chapters are addressed explicitly to our own age (Mormon 8:33-41), and we can be the best judges of how well or ill they apply to it.” (Since Cumorah, p. 399))

36 And I know that ye do ^awalk in the pride of your hearts; and there are none save a few only who do not ^blift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, (how pride is demonstrated:) unto the wearing of ^cvery fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities; and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts. (L. Tom Perry: “I guess one of the greatest mysteries of human history is why people fail to learn from the past. In the case of the Church, why do those who profess to be true followers of Christ repeatedly become victims of the enticements of the world? The evidence is strong regarding the blessings that accrue to those who trust in and follow the ways prescribed by the Lord, yet so many members of the Church fail to heed the evidence. Many of us are more concerned about our fine apparel, the size of our houses, and our luxury cars than we are about assisting the poor and the needy. The forces promoting legalized abortion, pornography, and banning of public prayer also threaten the values that bind us together as a community of Saints. Clearly, the members of the Church face tremendous challenges in the latter days. We must not only resist but mount a counteroffensive against the temptations and teachings of the world if we are to remain a distinctive people. Despite the challenges we face, I plead with each of you to stand firm in your convictions. There is no escape from the whirlwind of judgments God will unleash on the heads of his children who choose to pursue a course that is against his will. We need to heed Moroni's warning to avoid the fate that destroyed his people.” (Living With Enthusiasm, p. 65))

37 For behold, ye do love ^amoney, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted. (Spencer W. Kimball: “Many people spend most of their time working in the service of a self-image that includes sufficient money, stocks, bonds, investment portfolios, property, credit cards, furnishings, automobiles, and the like to guarantee carnal security throughout, it is hoped, a long and happy life. Forgotten is the fact that our assignment is to use these many resources in our families and quorums to build up the kingdom of God—to further the missionary effort and the genealogical and temple work; to raise our children up as fruitful servants unto the Lord; to bless others in every way, that they may also be fruitful. Instead, we expend these blessings on our own desires, and as Moroni said, ‘Ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not.’ (Morm. 8:39.)” (quoted by Marion G. Romney, Conference Report, May 1977 Ensign, “The Purpose of Church Welfare System”))

38 O ye pollutions, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted the holy church of God? (This prophecy is a solemn warning, not just to the Christian world in general but also to the Latter-day Saints, particularly those in the United States. The Saints of God need to labor day and night to retain purity of heart and thus propriety in their dealings with God and with one another. Zion can only be established among a people who are pure in heart, a people who search out the poor and needy, who see to those needs, and who focus their attention, their loyalties, and their time on people and on things which have eternal relevance and worth. DCBM, 4:250) Why are ye ^aashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that ^bmisery which never dies—because of the ^cpraise of the world? (Marvin J. Ashton: “I fear that, at times, we run the risk of acting like seasoned, conditioned athletes who are more interested in what kind of jogging suits we’ll wear than in buckling down to train for the race. C. S. Lewis had an intriguing way of evaluating this dilemma: ‘We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. ... We are far too easily pleased.’ (A Mind Awake, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968, p. 168.) The prophet Mormon put it another way: ‘Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness than that misery which

never dies—because of the praise of the world?’ (Morm. 8:38.))

39 Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not? (Pay a generous fast offering. Neal A. Maxwell: “In urging members of the Church to be more sensitive to other people we seek to avoid the trap the Book of Mormon predicted when it spoke of an age when men and women would allow the needy ‘to pass by you and notice them not.’ (Mormon 8:39.) The Book of Mormon speaks of the need for us to ‘be familiar with all.’ (Jacob 2:17.) This is not simply a matter of economic familiarity and of imparting of our economic and material substance to others, for in an affluent society, food and clothing often are not people's primary needs. We need to be familiar with others psychologically and spiritually—to know them well enough to know their other kinds of needs: spiritual, intellectual, and emotional. We should assist in the meeting of these needs.” (A More Excellent Way, p. 58) In the meantime, while we await the redemption of Zion and the earth and the establishment of the United Order, we as Latter-day Saints should live strictly by the principles of the United Order insofar as they are embodied in present Church practices, such as the fast offering, tithing, and the welfare activities. Through these practices we could as individuals, if we were of a mind to, implement in our own lives all the basic principles of the United Order. Marion G. Romney, BYU Speeches of the Year, 1966.)

40 Yea, why do ye build up your ^asecret abominations to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord, and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads?

41 Behold, the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the ^ablood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer.

* Verse 6 [A.D. 401].

CHAPTER 9

Moroni calls upon those who do not believe in Christ to repent—He proclaims a God of miracles, who gives revelations and pours out gifts and signs upon the faithful—Miracles cease because of unbelief—Signs follow those who believe—Men are exhorted to be wise and keep the commandments. [Between A.D. 400 and 421]

1 AND now, I speak also concerning those who do not believe in Christ. (“Moroni at first evidently intended this chapter to be the last one in the entire Book of Mormon. Thus he addresses himself to ‘those who do not believe in Christ.’ (Mormon 9:1.) Then in a powerful, logical, and forceful manner he outlines the major teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ and indicates why all men must understand and apply these principles if they are to find the peace and happiness they desire. He says the gospel is not restricted to a chosen few, but is available ‘unto all, even unto the ends of the earth.’ (Mormon 9:21.)” (Daniel Ludlow, A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon, p. 307))

2 Behold, will ye believe in the day of your visitation—behold, when the Lord shall come, yea, even that ^agreat day when the ^bearth shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements shall ^cmelt with fervent heat, (The glory of the Lord when he comes to all the world will be such that only those who are of a terrestrial or celestial nature will be able to abide his coming and thereby be capable of remaining on the millennial (terrestrialized) earth. The bodies of those who are telestial or lower will be consumed in the fires of his glory and their spirits sent immediately to hell in the spirit world. There they will remain until the time of the second resurrection at the end of the Millennium. President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote: “Now, when Christ comes, we will get a new heaven and a new earth and all of these corruptible things will be removed. They will be consumed by fire; and somebody said, Brother Smith, do you mean to say that it is going to be literal fire? I said, ‘Oh, no, it will not be literal fire any more than it was literal water that covered the earth in the flood. The Signs of the Times, p. 41, DCBM, 4:251) yea, in

that great day when ye shall be brought to stand before the Lamb of God—then will ye say that there is no God?

3 Then will ye longer deny the Christ, or can ye behold the Lamb of God? Do ye suppose that ye shall dwell with him under a ^aconsciousness of your guilt? Do ye suppose that ye could be happy to dwell with that holy Being, when your souls are racked with a consciousness of guilt that ye have ever abused his laws?

4 Behold, I say unto you that ye would be more miserable to dwell with a holy and just God, under a consciousness of your ^afilthiness before him, than ye would to dwell with the ^bdamned souls in ^chell. (Boyd K. Packer: “More than 50 years ago during World War II, I had an experience. Our bomber crew had been trained at Langley Field, Virginia, to use the latest invention—radar. We were ordered to the West Coast and then on to the Pacific. We were transported on a freight train with boxcars... The baggage car got sidetracked, so we had no change of clothing during the six-day trip. It was very hot crossing Texas and Arizona. Smoke and cinders from the engine made it very uncomfortable. There was no way to bathe or wash our uniforms. We rolled into Los Angeles one morning—a grubby-looking outfit—and were told to return to the train that evening. We thought first of food. The 10 of us in our crew pooled our money and headed for the best restaurant we could find. It was crowded, and so we joined a long line waiting to be seated. I was first, just behind some well-dressed women. Even without turning around, the stately woman in front of me soon became aware that we were there. She turned and looked at us. Then she turned and looked me over from head to toe. There I stood in that sweaty, dirty, sooty, wrinkled uniform. She said in a tone of disgust, ‘My, what untidy men!’ All eyes turned to us. No doubt she wished we were not there; I shared her wish. I felt as dirty as I was, uncomfortable, and ashamed. Later, when I began a serious study of the scriptures, I noticed references to being spiritually clean. One verse says, ‘Ye would be more miserable to dwell with a holy and just God, under a consciousness of your filthiness before him, than ye would to dwell with the damned souls in hell.’ I could understand that. I remembered how I felt that day in Los Angeles. I reasoned that to be spiritually unclean would bring shame and humiliation immeasurably more intense than I felt then. I found references—there are at least eight of them—which say that no unclean thing can enter the presence of God. While I realized those references had little to do with dirty clothes or soiled hands, I decided I wanted to stay spiritually clean.” (Conference Report, May 1997, “Washed Clean”))

5 For behold, when ye shall be brought to see your ^anakedness before God, and also the glory of God, and the ^bholiness of Jesus Christ, it will kindle a flame of unquenchable fire upon you. (Joseph Smith: “A man is his own tormenter and his own condemner. Hence the saying, They shall go into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. The torment of disappointment in the mind of man is as exquisite as a lake burning with fire and brimstone. I say, so is the torment of man.” (Teachings, p. 357))

6 O then ye ^aunbelieving, ^bturn ye unto the Lord; cry mightily unto the Father in the name of Jesus, that perhaps ye may be found spotless, ^cpure, fair, and white, having been cleansed by the blood of the ^dLamb, at that great and last day.

7 And again I speak unto you who ^adeny the revelations of God, and say that they are done away, that there are no revelations, nor prophecies, nor gifts, nor healing, nor speaking with tongues, and the ^binterpretation of tongues;

8 Behold I say unto you, he that denieth these things knoweth not the ^agospel of Christ; yea, he has not read the scriptures; if so, he does not ^bunderstand them.

9 For do we not read that God is the ^asame ^byesterday, today, and forever, and in him there is no ^cvariableness neither shadow of changing?

10 And now, if ye have imagined up unto yourselves a god who doth vary, and in whom there is shadow of changing, then have ye imagined up unto yourselves a god who is not a God of miracles.

11 But behold, I will show unto you a God of ^amiracles, even the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and it is that same ^bGod who created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are.

12 Behold, he created Adam, and by ^aAdam came the ^bfall of man. (Ezra Taft Benson: “The Book of Mormon Saints knew that the plan of redemption must start with the account of the fall of Adam. In the words of Moroni, ‘By Adam came the fall of man. And because of the fall of man came Jesus Christ, . . . and because of Jesus Christ came the redemption of man.’ (Mormon 9:12.) Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ. No one adequately and properly knows why he needs Christ until he understands and accepts the doctrine of the Fall and its effect upon all mankind. And no other book in the world explains this vital doctrine nearly as well as the Book of Mormon.” (A Witness and a Warning, p. 33)) And because of the fall of man came Jesus Christ, even the Father and the Son; and because of Jesus Christ came the ^credemption of man.

13 And because of the redemption of man, which came by Jesus Christ, they are brought back into the ^apresence of the Lord; yea, this is wherein all men are redeemed, because the death of Christ bringeth to pass the ^bresurrection, which bringeth to pass a redemption from an endless ^csleep, from which sleep all men shall be awakened by the power of God when the trump shall sound; and they shall come forth, both small and great, and all shall stand before his bar, (The reality is that there will be a whole hierarchy of judges who, under Christ, shall judge the righteous. He [Christ] alone shall issue the decrees of damnation for the wicked. Bruce R. McConkie, Millennial Messiah, p. 520. All will be brought back into the presence of God, but only those who are judged worthy of the celestial kingdom will be able to remain in his presence for eternity. The rest will then die again a spiritual death.) being redeemed and loosed from this eternal ^dband of death, which death is a temporal death.

14 And then cometh the ^ajudgment of the Holy One upon them; and then cometh the time that he that is ^bfilthy shall be filthy still (sons of perdition); and he that is righteous shall be righteous still; he that is happy shall be happy still; and he that is unhappy shall be unhappy still.

15 And now, O all ye that have imagined up unto yourselves a god who can do ^ano miracles, I would ask of you, have all these things passed, of which I have spoken? Has the end come yet? Behold I say unto you, Nay; and God has not ceased to be a God of miracles.

16 Behold, are not the things that God hath wrought marvelous in our eyes? Yea, and who can comprehend the marvelous ^aworks of God?

17 Who shall say that it was not a miracle that by his ^aword the heaven and the earth should be; and by the power of his word man was ^bcreated of the ^cdust of the earth; and by the power of his word have miracles been wrought?

18 And who shall say that Jesus Christ did not do many mighty ^amiracles? And there were many ^bmighty miracles wrought by the hands of the apostles.

19 And if there were ^amiracles wrought then, why has God ceased to be a God of miracles and yet be an unchangeable Being? And behold, I say unto you he ^bchangeth not; if so he would cease to be God; (God cannot cease to be God. It is utterly and absolutely impossible for him to do so. And Moroni knows this. He is arguing toward the absurd, toward the impossible, to make his point. It is as though Moroni were saying, “It is as ridiculous to suppose that revelations and signs and miracles have ceased as it is to suppose that God could cease to be God.” DCBM, 4:255) and he ceaseth not to be God, and is a God of miracles.

20 And the reason why he ceaseth to do ^amiracles among the children of men is because that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should ^btrust.

21 Behold, I say unto you that whoso believeth in Christ, doubting nothing, ^awhatsoever he shall ask the Father in the name of Christ it shall be granted him; and this ^bpromise is unto all, even unto the ends of the earth.

22 For behold, thus said Jesus Christ, the Son of God, unto his disciples who should tarry, yea, and also to ^aall his disciples, in the hearing of the multitude: (Moroni is presumably quoting here from words spoken by our Lord to the Nephites during his American ministry. They are not to be found in our present text, Mormon’s abridgment of the plates of Nephi, though we do have a record of the Master

speaking such words on the Eastern Hemisphere. DCBM, 4:255-56) Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;

23 And he that ^abelieveth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be ^bdamned;

24 And ^athese signs shall follow them that believe—in my name shall they cast out ^bdevils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay ^chands on the sick and they shall recover; (As soon as the dispensation of the fullness of times was opened, the saints have been privileged to witness these signs. After the many miracles which attended the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, a public miracle was performed by Joseph Smith in April of 1830. Newel Knight had been overcome by an evil spirit. Joseph was called to help: I went and found him suffering very much in his mind, and his body acted upon in a very strange manner; his visage and limbs distorted and twisted in every shape and appearance possible to imagine; and finally he was caught up off the floor of the apartment, and tossed about most fearfully. His situation was soon made known to his neighbors and relatives, and in a short time as many as eight or nine grown persons had got together to witness the scene. After he had thus suffered for a time, I succeeded in getting hold of him by the hand, when almost immediately he spoke to me, and with great earnestness requested me to cast the devil out of him, saying that he knew he was in him, and that he also knew that I could cast him out. I replied, ‘If you know that I can, it shall be done;’ and then almost unconsciously I rebuked the devil, and commanded him in the name of Jesus Christ to depart from him; when immediately Newel spoke out and said that he saw the devil leave him and vanish from his sight. This was the first miracle which was done in the Church, or by any member of it; and it was done not by man, nor by the power of man, but it was done by God, and by the power of godliness; therefore, let the honor and the praise, the dominion and the glory, be ascribed to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen. This scene was now entirely changed, for as soon as the devil had departed from our friend, his countenance became natural, his distortions of body ceased, and almost immediately the Spirit of the Lord descended upon him, and the visions of eternity were opened to his view...All this was witnessed by many, to their great astonishment and satisfaction, when they saw the devil thus cast out, and the power of God, and His Holy Spirit thus made manifest.” (History of the Church, vol. 1, pp. 82-3) Joseph explained that this was the first miracle performed since the Church was organized. Since then, the miracles have continued, almost daily. Some have been more dramatic than others, but they have continued to the present and will continue as long as the saints shall exercise sufficient faith. Bruce R. McConkie: “In this Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints we worship a God of miracles who has given us the same gifts enjoyed by the ancients. We do not boast, yet it is no secret that among the faithful the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, and the dead are raised.” (Conference Report, Nov. 1979 Ensign, “The Mystery of Mormonism”))

25 And whosoever shall believe in my name, doubting nothing, unto him will I ^aconfirm all my words, even unto the ends of the earth.

26 And now, behold, who can stand ^aagainst the works of the Lord? ^bWho can deny his sayings? Who will rise up against the almighty power of the Lord? Who will despise the works of the Lord? Who will despise the children of Christ? Behold, all ye who are ^cdespisers of the works of the Lord, for ye shall wonder and perish.

27 O then despise not, and wonder not, but hearken unto the words of the Lord, and ask the Father in the name of Jesus for what things soever ye shall stand in need. ^aDoubt not, but be believing, and begin as in times of old, and ^bcome unto the Lord with all your ^cheart, and ^dwork out your own salvation with fear and trembling before him. (David O. McKay: “Applicable today is Paul's admonition to the Philippians, given over nineteen hundred years ago: ‘Wherefore, my beloved...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.’ (Phil. 2:12-15.) An outstanding doctrine of the Church is that each individual carries the

responsibility to work out his own salvation, and salvation is a process of gradual development. The Church does not accept the doctrine that a mere murmured belief in Jesus Christ is all that is necessary. A man may say he believes, but if he does nothing to make that belief or faith a moving power to do, to accomplish, to produce soul growth, his professing will avail him nothing. 'Work out your own salvation' is an exhortation to demonstrate by activity, by thoughtful, obedient effort the reality of faith. But this must be done with a consciousness that absolute dependence upon self may produce pride and weakness that will bring failure. With 'fear and trembling' we should seek the strength and grace of God for inspiration to obtain the final victory. To work out one's salvation is not to sit idly by dreaming and yearning for God miraculously to thrust bounteous blessings into our laps. It is to perform daily, hourly, momentarily, if necessary, the immediate task or duty at hand, and to continue happily in such performance as the years come and go, leaving the fruits of such labors either for self or for others to be bestowed as a just and beneficent Father may determine. I am not unmindful of the scripture that declares: 'by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.' (Ephesians 2:8.) That is absolutely true, for man in his taking upon himself mortality was impotent to save himself. When left to grope in a natural state, he would have become, and did become, so we are told in modern scripture, 'carnal, sensual, and devilish, by nature.' (Alma 42:10.) But the Lord, through his grace, appeared to man, gave him the gospel or eternal plan whereby he might rise above the carnal and selfish things of life and obtain spiritual perfection. But he must rise by his own efforts and he must walk by faith." (Conference Report, Apr. 1957, p. 7) In the truest sense, we cannot work out our own salvation. We cannot save ourselves any more than we can create ourselves. Creation and redemption are the works of a God; they are not within our own mortal domain. The works we perform – receiving the ordinances of salvation, operating and function in the Church and kingdom, performing deeds of services and acts of Christian kindness – in the ultimate sense cannot save us. They are necessary but insufficient. On the other hand, when we have been changed and renewed through the Holy Ghost, when our hearts have been remade through the merits and mercy of our Lord and Savior, then the works of righteousness flow from a regenerate soul. Our works are then his works. They are motivated and empowered by him. The Apostle Paul wrote: "Wherefore, my beloved... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." And now noted how and from whence such works arise: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13, DCBM, 4:256)

28 Be ^awise in the days of your ^bprobation; strip yourselves of all uncleanness; ask not, that ye may consume it on your ^clusts, but ask with a firmness unshaken, that ye will yield to no temptation, but that ye will serve the true and ^dliving God.

29 See that ye are not baptized ^aunworthily; (James E. Faust: "Should we not baptize all those who want to or are willing to be baptized? The answer is not that simple. It is a great responsibility to bring someone into this Church who has not been adequately taught and who has not received of the Spirit so that through baptism they may become a new person through repentance. Moroni gave a solemn warning about this in Mormon 9:29: 'See that you are not baptized unworthily.' " Some of our young missionaries are so hungry for baptisms they may urge people to be baptized before their investigators understand what they are baptized for. Peter said, 'Repent and be baptized.' (Acts 2:38.) We must be certain the repentance process is at work." (Church News, 06/29/96)) see that ye partake not of the sacrament of Christ ^bunworthily; but see that ye do all things in ^cworthiness, and do it in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God; and if ye do this, and endure to the end, ye will in nowise be cast out.

30 Behold, I speak unto you as though I ^aspake from the dead; for I know that ye shall have my words.

31 Condemn me not because of mine ^aimperfection, neither my father, because of his imperfection, neither them who have written before him; but rather give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been.

32 And now, behold, we have written this record according to our knowledge, in the characters which are called among us the ^areformed Egyptian, being handed down and altered by us, according to our

manner of speech. (When we think of the language of the ancient Egyptians, we immediately think of their hieroglyphic style of writing. In this style, pictures are used to tell the story (see Facsimile No. 2 & 3). Was the language of the Book of Mormon a modification of a hieroglyphic language? Certainly not. There was another type of Egyptian writing which was used among the merchants of Lehi's day. This was called the demotic form. Sidney B. Sperry noted, "This was a very rapid or shortened form of hieratic used in the books and the documents written from about 700 B.C. to A. D. 470. During much of this period demotic was the ordinary writing of daily life, but is occasionally found chiseled even upon stone. From the dates given, it will be apparent that if Lehi and Nephi knew Egyptian they may have been familiar with this very shortened form of Egyptian." (Milton R. Hunter, Pearl of Great Price Commentary, p. 21) Hugh Nibley stated that this form of "Egyptian could be written in less space than Hebrew because in Lehi's day demotic was actually a shorthand, extremely cramped and abbreviated; and it was...peculiarly adapted to the sounds and thought processes of one language...Egyptian." (Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites, p. 14, 16) A modification of this "demotic" style is likely the language of the Book of Mormon. Hugh Nibley: "The world has always cast a superior and mocking eye on the inordinate concern of the Book of Mormon for things Egyptian. With surprise and incredulity it is now learning that Egyptian culture counted for far more in Palestine in 600 B.C. than anyone had ever supposed. It is significant that the Book of Mormon concern with Egypt is strictly cultural—it never mentions Pharaoh or speaks of Egyptian government, but only of Egyptian culture and especially language. It makes it perfectly clear, however, that Egyptian was for Lehi a second language, 'for he having been taught in the language of the Egyptians therefore he could read these engravings, and teach them to his children' (Mosiah 1:4). We have seen that Egyptian was taught to 'Ethiopians, Syrians, and all other foreigners' in Lehi's day. Moroni tells us (Mormon 9:32-33) that the language of Lehi's descendants was not Hebrew or Egyptian but a mixture of both, both being corrupted in the process, so that 'none other people knoweth our language,' which would certainly not have been the case had they spoken only Hebrew. ...Did the wealthy Lehi...command his sons to learn Egyptian so they could save space when they kept records? Of course not: when they learned the language, neither Lehi nor his sons had any idea that some day it would be useful to keepers of records on metal plates. They had no other reason for learning Egyptian characters than to read and write Egyptian. It was only later when historians became cramped for space that they saw the advantage of continuing to write in Egyptian. And the Egyptian characters can only have been preserved for their use because the language was also preserved." (Hugh Nibley, Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites, pp. 16-17))

33 And if our plates had been ^asufficiently large we should have written in Hebrew; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us also; and if we could have written in Hebrew, behold, ye would have had no ^bimperfection in our record.

34 But the Lord knoweth the things which we have written, and also that none other people knoweth our language; and because that none other people knoweth our language, therefore he hath prepared ^ameans (Urim and Thummim) for the interpretation thereof. (Hugh Nibley: "If we had the original text, which we do not, and if we could read it, which we cannot, any translation we might make of it would still be inferior to that which was given, as we claim it was, by the gift and power of God. If we had the original text, scholars would be everlastingly squabbling about it and getting out endless new and revised translations, as in the case of the Bible. In fact, if our English text of the Book of Mormon came to us in any other way than by revelation it would be almost worthless! For members and investigators could ask of every verse: 'But how do we know it is translated correctly?' A revealed text in English is infinitely to be preferred to an original in a language that no one on earth could claim as his own. It frees the members and leaders of the Church as it frees the investigating world from the necessity of becoming philologists, or, worse still, of having to rely on the judgment of philologists, as a prerequisite to understanding this great book. At the same time, it puts upon the modern world an obligation to study and learn, from which that world could easily plead immunity were the book in an ancient language or couched in the labored and pretentious idiom that learned men adopt when they try to decipher ancient

texts.” (The Prophetic Book of Mormon, p. 96) Here will be, there can be, no absolutely reliable translation of...scriptures unless it be effected through the gift of translation, as one of the endowments of the Holy Ghost. The translator must have the spirit of the prophet if he would render in another tongue the prophet’s words; and human wisdom alone leads not to that possession. James E. Talmage, The Articles of Faith, p. 237.)

35 And these things are written that we may rid our garments of the blood of our ^abrethren, who have dwindled in unbelief.

36 And behold, these things which we have ^adesired concerning our brethren, yea, even their restoration to the knowledge of Christ, are according to the prayers of all the saints who have dwelt in the land.

37 And may the Lord Jesus Christ grant that their prayers may be answered according to their faith; and may God the Father remember the covenant which he hath made with the house of Israel; and may he bless them forever, through faith on the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

BIBLE DICTIONARY MIRACLES

An important element in the work of Jesus Christ, being not only divine acts, but forming also a part of the divine teaching. Christianity is founded on the greatest of all miracles, the resurrection of our Lord. If that be admitted, other miracles cease to be improbable. Miracles should not be regarded as deviations from the ordinary course of nature so much as manifestations of divine or spiritual power. Some lower law was in each case superseded by the action of the higher. They were intended to be a proof to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ (Matt. 11: 4-5; John 2: 11; John 10: 25; John 20: 30-31). Many of them were also parabolic and instructive, teaching by means of symbols such divine truths as the result of sin and the cure of sin; the value of faith; the curse of impurity; and the law of love. The miracles of healing also show how the law of love is to deal with the actual facts of life. Miracles were and are a response to faith, and its best encouragement. They were never wrought without prayer, felt need, and faith.

It is important to notice the different names by which miracles are described. They are called signs, as being visible tokens of an invisible power; they are powers or mighty works, because they are the acts of One who is almighty; they are simply works, or the natural results of the Messiah’s presence among men; they are wonders, marvels, because of the effect produced on those who saw them. The following miracles are found in one Gospel only

Matthew.

- (1) The curing of two blind men (Matt. 9: 27-31).
- (2) the casting out of a devil from the dumb man (Matt. 9: 32-34).
- (3) the stater in the fish’s mouth (Matt. 17: 24-27).

Mark.

- (1) The healing of a deaf and dumb man (Mark 7: 31-37).
- (2) the restoration of the sight of the blind man at Bethsaida (Mark 8: 22-26).

Luke.

- (1) The draught of fishes (Luke 5: 4-11).
- (2) the raising of the widow’s son (Luke 7: 11-16).
- (3) the healing of the woman with a spirit of infirmity (Luke 13: 11-17).
- (4) the healing of the man afflicted with dropsy (Luke 14: 1-6).
- (5) the cleansing of the ten lepers (Luke 17: 12-19).
- (6) the healing of Malchus (Luke 22: 50-41).

John.

- (1) Water made wine (John 2: 1-11).
- (2) the healing of the nobleman's son (John 4: 46-54).
- (3) the healing of the impotent man at Bethesda (John 5: 1-16).
- (4) the restoration of sight to the man blind from birth (John 9).
- (5) the raising of Lazarus (John 11: 1-45).
- (6) the net full of fishes (John 21: 1-24).

Miracles are a part of the gospel of Jesus Christ. If miracles cease it is because faith has ceased. See Mark 6: 5-6; Morm. 9: 10-20; Ether 12: 12.

THE
BOOK OF MORMON
AN ACCOUNT WRITTEN BY
THE HAND OF MORMON
UPON PLATES

TAKEN FROM THE PLATES OF NEPHI

Wherefore, it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites—Written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile—Written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation—Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed—To come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof—Sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by way of the Gentile—The interpretation thereof by the gift of God.

An abridgment taken from the Book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, when they were building a tower to get to heaven—Which is to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever— And also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting himself unto all nations—And now, if there are faults they are the mistakes of men; wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment-seat of Christ.

TRANSLATED BY JOSEPH SMITH, JUN.
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