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Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Semester 1: Transcripts of Lectures Presented to an Honors Book of Mormon Class at Brigham Young University, 1988-1990

Hugh Nibley

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TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 1

Introduction

The Book of Mormon—Like Nothing Else

Would it be all right if I put on my trusty hat? The doctor says I'm to wear this hat at all times, so here I am. Nothing but the Book of Mormon would put me up to anything like this; you know that. This is ridiculous, and here we are. But the Book of Mormon is worth it; it's worth absolutely anything. At this moment everybody asks certain questions, and the questions we all ask are, "What should I be doing? What am I doing here?" Charles Adams has a famous book on that subject, "What am I doing here?" You find yourself in the most ridiculous situations, and you say, "What am I doing here? How did I possibly get into this mess? What should I be doing?" That is the question, you see. We know the world is in confusion because many people are doing things they should not be doing. And many people are not doing the things they should be doing.

Now the shocking thought comes to us: Is it possible that nobody is doing what he should be doing? The answer is yes. It's not only possible; that's the situation. When the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith in the Grove, according to the oldest and best account of all—that of Frederick G. Williams, written in 1832–33 and dictated by Joseph Smith when he was only 26 years old. It's different from the one we have in the Pearl of Great Price here because the Lord speaks in the first person. In the account we have here, it's an indirect quotation (what the Lord told Joseph), but here the words to the Prophet when he was only fourteen years old are, "The world at this time lieth in sin, and there is none that doeth good—no not one. Mine anger is kindling against the inhabitants of the world to visit them in this ungodliness." There are those who do well and have good intentions, but that is not what it means. It means to do what they should be doing—the best possible thing. If you break an arm, I might with the best of intentions try to mend it, but I could be doing a lot of damage. I'm not doing any good. I'm doing more harm probably, though I mean well and get credit for that. The fact is we are not in a condition where anybody can do what he should be doing because we are not living by the heavenly order anymore. We are not living by the order for which the earth was designed and created; we are a million miles away from it, completely independent. So the Lord says, "There is none that doeth good, no not one and mine anger is kindling."

Many of us are not where we should be. For example, everyone goes to college now. When I was young, very few people went. We don't have anything else to do. There's Goethe's famous line in Faust. Remember old Faust says, in the second Faust: "Here I am an old moss-covered gentleman still studying because I can't do anything else." We just get into the study habit and we can't do anything else. We write absurd articles, and we go on collecting things. Anatole France wrote a wonderful story about that, but we won't go into that.

However, there is a lot of relevant material we are going to bring in here that you may not have heard before. We will slap it on the board, and maybe we will require you to remember what these words are someday, if they are important. The thing is that this is where the Book of Mormon comes in. It's like nothing else. It's the only answer you are

ever going to get to that question in this dispensation. In reading the Book of Mormon no one is ever doing something he shouldn't be doing. Most of the time he would be doing probably the best thing he could possibly be doing. If it is not itself the best thing to be doing, it will quickly put you onto the best thing to be doing because it will have a direct effect on you. It will change you; it will work on you. It is a personal, intimate document. It will hit you. You can't just read the Book of Mormon and nothing else. It immediately puts you on the high road to what you should be doing, like no other book. And it will lead you directly into a course of thought or a course of action of the greatest significance to yourself and to the world you live in. In other words, it will enable you to break loose as nothing else can. Only the Book of Mormon breaks loose because it does break loose. It's like nothing else. Now we have the direct revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, etc., but the Book of Mormon was brought by an angel, a tangible thing. He gave it to Joseph. He gives this clinical description of how the angel was. This is something completely different.

I was going to ask the question, how many have read the Book of Mormon? It's an utterly absurd question. It's like asking, have you seen the moon? Or have you been to North America? The answer is "yes," I suppose, but you haven't told me a thing. How much did you learn from that? With the Book of Mormon, it can mean anything. You can say, "I read the Book of Mormon." I remember when I would say that, and it didn't mean anything, of course. It meant I had piled up so many pages and got my gold star; that was it. That's not what we are reading it for now. Oh, what would we do without the Book of Mormon!

The Book of Mormon is like nothing else. It is totally different from the Bible by virtue of its genesis. Look at the Bible. It took hundreds of years to give us the Bible—thousands, actually, if you include the Old Testament, of course. The documents had to trickle in from different times, different places, and different writers. The *Tanakh*, the Torah; *Nebiim*, the prophets; and the *Kethubim*, the literary writings. These are the three things that make up the Bible—all from different authors. Some parts are poetry, some parts are prophecy, and some parts are history. There are lots of chronicles, etc. Some parts are the law from different times and different places—hundreds of different manuscripts.

Until the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, the oldest manuscript we had of the books of Moses (the first five books) was from the ninth century A.D., the Ben Asher Codex. There are eight thousand different old manuscripts of the New Testament, no two alike. So there is a lot of collating, comparing, and arguing about which passages are which and what order they come in. Then when you have translation, there is no agreement about that. Year after year there are new revised translations coming forth. Well, if the last translation is reliable, why the new revised, improved Cambridge, or Anchor, or whatever it is, edition of the Bible? It's processing all the time. The Bible is a very human document, of course it is. So is the Book of Mormon. It covers thousands of years. It has many authors; it was edited, etc. But it was handed to us in a single passage. Bang, just like that, the whole thing—all edited, all in order, all translated. We don't have to argue about any of that stuff. If it is true, it comes to us whole, and there is nothing to slow us down on it—nothing to hold us up until we have decided what this passage means, or what that is. It was translated directly by the gift and power of God. There is no need to argue about it. It is in words of exceeding plainness, in a very small vocabulary. We may treat that later. But here it comes to us in this package all at once. It is not only like no other book, of course; it's like nothing else. It's like no other thing. It was either brought by an angel,

or it came out of nowhere, this single shot—instant scripture and instant history of a thousand years, just like that.

Imagine you were some young person (anybody, I mean) who promised ahead of time that he was going to get out this book. He told about the angel and the gold plates and said, “This is coming out.” Everybody got all worked up about it and made fun of it. The *Painesville Telegraph*, etc., were all spoofing; they all had great fun about the “Book of Puki,” as they called it. The time was coming, and in a very short time he had to produce the book. Wouldn’t you panic at that occasion? Here you were going to give them a big book. You might say, “Well, I’ll give them a hundred pages, that’s it.” An assignment like that, how could you do it? He had eight weeks to do it in. You would think, “How am I going to face them?” But he gave them the book, for heaven’s sake. Nobody ever bothered to look at it. After that, they were embarrassed and started to change the subject—started to talk about the weather. That’s true. People will raise all these questions about the Book of Mormon, but they won’t wait for answers (you’ll notice that). They will find one parallel or two, and they will say, “Well, for example, there was a dream that Joseph Smith’s father had that was very much like Lehi’s dream” (or something like that). It was a standard dream, as a matter of fact. In the Book of Mormon there were lots of Indian wars. They will say, “Well, there were Indian wars all around New York when Joseph Smith was a child, so that’s where he got it from.” One parallel or two would explain everything. Of course, it doesn’t explain anything because this is a vast book. It is the history of a thousand years from beginning to end with nothing left out. Every aspect today is properly taken care of, and it’s never mixed up. No book has ever been written that could do that. Shakespeare gets all mixed up in things; everybody does that because you can’t help it. We could excuse Joseph Smith if he did it, but he didn’t. There is no garbling in the book at all, which is an amazing thing. You still have a time unraveling its complexities.

We are talking about the Book of Mormon in an unbelieving world. Eduard Meyer was by far the greatest critic of Joseph Smith, the one to judge him. He was a great German historian who died in 1927. He was fascinated by the Book of Mormon. I had a letter, which unfortunately I have lost, from a scholar who is a specialist in Central Asiatic languages. He has just written a very good work on Tibetan epic poetry—the translated works from Tibetan. He is also an expert on Central Asiatic languages. He teaches at Oslo University, and his name is Petr Kavkavskii. He is a Pole who speaks all these languages, etc. He writes me, and he has been reading the Book of Mormon for eighteen years. It’s his favorite book, and he’s not a member of the Church. He says this book absolutely electrifies him. “Where could it have come from? What is it? It’s a vast work, a vast library that someone just handed to us overnight.”

In the early nineteenth century there was no scholarship. That was when Western scholarship reached its absolute abyss. It never got lower; there was nothing being done at that time. There had been great stuff in the eighteenth century. From 1850 on they really cut loose and got off to the races. There was the great age of scholarship after that, beginning with the Germans. But at that time no committee or anybody could have produced the book at all. The materials were not available or anything else. So Eduard Meyer says, “Well, obviously it’s easy to explain.” It’s not easy to explain, but you have to explain it this way: that the angel and the plates were a hallucination. But the Book of Mormon is not a hallucination; that’s the trouble. And he wouldn’t read the Book of Mormon. That’s very interesting because he was criticizing it. He said things like, “I’ve explained it now; don’t bother. The English is too primitive, too crude. It can’t possibly be

anything but just made up by a hick.” But he never found out what was in it because he never bothered to read it; imagine that, the great Eduard Meyer.

So it is in an unbelieving world, you see. How do you account for the Book of Mormon in a world that can't believe in another world, or other possibilities? If you don't believe in it, what's your alternative? There are no alternatives, absolutely none. Joseph couldn't have got it anywhere is the point. That's why no one will take it up. They ask some very searching questions and they should, but they never wait for the answers, you notice. They always leave the room as soon as you start showing that it is possible that this happened. Mr. Chandler, the religion editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, was here a couple of years ago. He would ask these questions, but as soon as we would start to answer them he would cut it off and go to something else. He had two secretaries there taking notes. He wouldn't allow me to use a tape recorder or anything like that. He just had what he wanted taken down by hand. That was criticism of the Book of Mormon, you see. As soon as some evidence popped up, he would say, “Well, let's turn to this now.” This is the way it goes.

This is a fact of enormous significance that the book can't be explained. It is what you would call a singularity, so we will write “singularity” on the board. (Boy, this is education! Tell me if I spell it right; it would be singular if I spelled it right.) A singularity is a thing that does exist but should not exist, as you know. It cannot be described or comprehended, like the universe before it started expanding, or like quasars or black holes. Astronomers and physicists are absolutely sure they exist, no doubt whatever. Yet they cannot describe them, they cannot conceive of them, they cannot imagine what they would be like. Yet they exist. Now that's a singularity. The Book of Mormon is such a thing if you won't accept Joseph Smith's story. Like black holes and quasars, its presence forces us to reassess all our ideas of reality. We are not just talking about philosophy or esthetics, or even theology or ethics, here—the usual matter of religion. Nor are we talking about happiness, the good life, success, and that sort of thing that TV preachers, Norman Vincent Peale, and others talk about. That has nothing to do with it; we are talking about real things here, no Christian allegory. This stuff is to be taken literally, and therefore we are supposed to take it very seriously. It has been given to us because it concerns us, and it comes to us full of instructions on how to use it. As a book, of course, it will turn most of us off because people don't read books anymore. We have other ways of learning things (we think they are good). But it comes to us as a written text.

I'm doing something I've never done before in a class; namely, I'm going to refer to my own previous effusions on the subject. It might be of use going through some of them. They are not bad, and they save me a lot of work because I am surprised how much research went into some of them when I read them today. I didn't realize there's a lot of stuff there (this guy was really knocking himself out here). I should remember that. In the early days at BYU, they had no library here at all. I used to have to go back to Berkeley or back to Harvard or some place like that to look up a few references. But now our library is one of the best. You don't have to go anywhere if you want to work in ancient religions and stuff like that.

We are dealing with a special text now, and the knowledge that comes to us, because it's more specific, is something like a space probe. You send it out and it brings information back. This is what we have in the written word here. Arthur Clarke, who had much to do with the discovery of radar and who is a great popularizer of science, as you know (he now lives in Sri Lanka), pointed out that there is only one way we have of projecting our

knowledge over the past and over distant places, and that's the written word. No technology can handle it. As long as the speed of light is our limit, such a thing as star empires are utterly out of the question, you see. You send a message or a command to the nearest star, Alpha Centauri. In nine years you get a response on whether they have acted or not. What do you do next? Answer back, and its nine years before you have any communication. That's out of the question, you see. As far as visual connections and things like that, you have to send a camera out and get the message back as they have been doing now. That will do it, but otherwise sound waves and light waves alike get suffused, get fuzzy, and you get nothing but the universal hum, the humming background that you get from space—the three degrees, that sort of thing. It gets dampened out. As soon as sound has gone very far, it gets dampened out and you can't distinguish. The same with light. The best telescope in the world is very limited because light waves get suffused and dampened out after they have traveled very far. So the only way is to actually go out there and come back and report.

The book is the most remarkable invention ever made, as Galileo says. It is the miracle of miracles. "If anything is to be hailed as the greatest of all miracles, it would certainly be writing," he said. In 26 simple symbols you can convey not only what happened and what people's names were, but what they did (you can do that with TV), but their innermost thoughts and most sensitive feelings can be conveyed by these 22, 24, or 26 letters of an alphabet. That's all it takes. Nothing else can do or ever has done that. So writing comes to us as a special message and special emissary. That's where you get this emphasis all the time in the Book of Mormon. They talk about the importance of the record, how it's transmitted, how it's handed down, the characters it's written in, the trouble they have writing it (preserving the pages, etc.), because as they tell us, "This is the only way our knowledge can be preserved." That's why they had to go back and get the brass plates. The only device that has defeated time and space—and it does that, as Galileo says. But it's not a human invention, of course. We are told it is a superhuman invention. That's what put me onto this; I was referring to some other stuff. Writing is so minimal, so extremely simple. Any instrument that will make a scratch on any surface will record the most subtle message for any period of time over any amount of space. That's astonishing what you can do. Of course, it has to be a rather permanent surface and things like that, but it's so simple. All you have to do is scratch something on a surface, and you have done it. To read it again you don't need elaborate electronic equipment or anything like that. But the price is this (this is where it comes, of course): How do you unravel it? You don't need an elaborate electronic machine to feed it back into. You have to feed it back into yourself. You have to riddle (to read means to riddle; it's the same word). You have to unriddle what is written there. That's up to you; this is the thing. Reading is an act of faith. When you read, you riddle. You use your wits. That's why to say you've read the Book of Mormon doesn't mean a thing. It's how much you have applied to it here. You have to extract the meaning, and you have to do almost all the work. There's an immense lot of meaning in most of the verses of the Book of Mormon, an enormous lot. I've never noticed it until this year. I teach a Sunday School class on the Book of Mormon, and I had completely missed the point of nine tenths of the verses in the Book of Mormon. I had missed it entirely, and there it was all the time. It's there all right. It's like a Urim and Thummim. You need effort to use a Urim and Thummim. Joseph Smith could only use it when he was in top form. Remember, when he had a quarrel with Emma, or something like that, it wouldn't work. It requires just as much effort to use a Urim and Thummim as it does to use a dictionary and a grammar—far more as a matter of fact.

When you read the Book of Mormon, every sentence is a whole proposition, and it presents a number of possibilities. It may or may not contain a vast amount of information (that's for you to find out). So all reading is a miracle actually. It's like the flight of the bee; there's no reason why it should take place. There's no reason why you should be able to read, except that there's something takes place in your mental processes that's transferred from that. Last night I was reading an Arabic text. Now this is quite remarkable. In an Arabic text you don't have any vowels written. You do not separate the words. There's just the flow of consonants, nothing else. You do not have any capital letters. There is no punctuation whatever. There is no division between paragraphs, sentences, things like that. It is all just a stream of consonants and nothing else, and it's the easiest thing in the world. When they start dividing up the words and start putting in the vowels to help you out—which is required for the Koran because you can't take risks of giving your own interpretation—it is much harder to read (when they try to help you along). It's the same thing with Hebrew. A pointed Hebrew text is an annoyance. It gives you a headache. Take away all those *shaddas* [Arabic diacritical mark indicating the doubling of a consonant], all those little dots and things, and it's much easier to handle. Then you hear the sound; then it speaks to you. But why does it speak to you? This is just the way you react to it; these things are intuitive. But when you are reading, it is just the same thing. What marvels might be there that you are not aware of at all?

So I'm going to make three points which are quite relevant to the Book of Mormon from something I wrote¹ years ago: "Few people realize that in Joseph Smith's day no really ancient manuscripts were known [none at all]. Egyptian and Babylonian could not be read; the Greek and Latin classics were the oldest literature available, preserved almost entirely in bad medieval copies no older than the Byzantine and Carolingian periods [at the earliest]." (Of course, today it's a different story entirely, but not in Joseph Smith's time.) "If Joseph Smith is right, the written records should be as old as the human race itself, for he tells us, 'a book of remembrance was kept . . . in the language of Adam' (Moses 6:5). . . . And what does the actual state of the documents attest? If writing evolved gradually and slowly as everything was supposed to have done, there should be a vast accumulation of transitional scribbles [people trying this out, trying that out, throwing them away, etc.] as countless crude and stumbling attempts at writing would leave their marks on stone [that was predicted], bone, clay, and wood over countless millennia of groping trial and error [that's the way it's supposed to have happened]. Only there are no such accumulations of primitive writing anywhere." No such records exist anywhere, though they should. And slate palettes (Egyptian palettes beginning with the palette of Narmer—the hunting palette, the predynastic palette) you find in Egypt with pictures that are supposed to be the most primitive, stumbling writing. It's very funny that the oldest one, the palette of Narmer, has a picture of the Pharaoh, and he is accompanied by his scribe. The scribe is carrying the two ink wells of red and white ink that a scribe uses to write on paper. This is supposed to be a crude scribbling on stone, but he has his scribe there and the scribe has been writing. This is realized today. "Given the evolutionary hypothesis, any healthy, normal, growing boy can describe in convincing detail how long ago 'the naive child of nature' everywhere drew crude pictures to convey his simple thoughts, and how out of this process moved 'everywhere inexorably . . . toward the final stage, the alphabetic writing.'"

Here I'm quoting from two eminent scholars [K. Sethe and E. Doblhofer]. One says, "The naive child of nature draws his crude pictures." And the other says, "Everywhere, inexorably toward the final stage, it moves forward toward alphabetic writing." What do you find? "But if it really happened that way, we would find traces of evolving writing

‘everywhere’ [as the man says]; veritable middens of scratched rock and bones and shells would attest the universal groping toward the inexorable final stage over tens of thousands of years, while the clumsy transitional forms should outnumber proper writing by at least a million to one [but no transitional forms have ever been found; that’s a surprising thing; they would last, too]. But the vast accumulations of attempts at writing simply do not exist; there is no evidence whatever of a world-wide groping toward the goal. Having made his lucid and logical statement, the author of our last quotation observes with perplexity that ‘it is surprising that the ultimate stage in evolution . . . was only achieved in a very few spots on the globe [not everywhere; he said it happened everywhere, but you don’t find it]. We find ‘only a very few systems of writing,’ says [the German scholar] David, ‘and even these are so much alike and are so closely related in time and space that their independence appears to be at least problematical.’ ”

The chances are there is only one system of writing known in the world, and it comes all of a sudden, and it comes full blown. It had to be otherwise because Doblhofer (a work on the subject) defines “pictorial writing,” which he says is “incredibly ancient,” as “a series of images which can possibly be ‘read’ accurately by any spectator.” See, I draw a series of little pictures and they are crude and simple, but anybody can tell what they mean because a simple, childish mind wrote them. It’s simple and childish to read them. Kurt Sethe, the great Egyptologist, agrees with that. He says that a “pure” picture writing is one which “could be read in any language at sight” (because it is pictures; it’s not a language). “And right here the issue is settled [that there is no picture writing]: if ever there was a true picture writing it has not yet been discovered. Where on earth is a single inscription to which any and all beholders, scholars and laymen alike, regardless of their own language and culture, would give the identical interpretation?” There have been such, but no two people interpret them alike. In other words, they are not simply picture writing. “Doblhofer himself confirms this when he assures us that ‘the most primitive pictorial writings . . . translate . . . abstract ideas with the aid of symbolical signs.’ ” When you are showing abstract ideas instead of a simple house, a tree, a man, a dog, a horse, and are conveying not with a picture of a house, a dog, a horse, but with symbolical signs that have to be memorized, or recognized by somebody else, that’s not picture writing at all. That’s the only kind you find, he says. Where you are using the most primitive pictorial writings, they are just symbolical signs and abstract ideas. That’s a strange conclusion to come to. No wonder they don’t agree on that sort of thing. What I’m saying here is that we have this thing as a gift from heaven. It has been handed down—this keeping of the records, which is such an obsession in the Book of Mormon, and especially in the book of Ether, as you know. They have been handed down from the beginning to come forth in their purity. If they hadn’t been handed down, we wouldn’t have them at all.

“Like the earliest Egyptian documents, the Babylonian tablets bearing ‘the oldest written signs thus far known’ are highly stylized and cannot be read.” And so it goes. This is an important thing, too: “If Joseph Smith was right, books and writing are a gift to man from heaven, ‘for it was given unto as many as called upon God to write by the spirit of inspiration.’ (Moses 6:5).” God gave that knowledge to man. It’s a very simple knowledge—but very subtle, very complex. As I say, it was the most sophisticated, the most marvelous invention ever to come forth. But did anyone invent it? “The Egyptians believed that writing was a sacred trust to be given to the king as ‘high-priest and scribe’ to keep him and his people ever in touch with the mind and will of heaven.” That’s the whole idea. G. Widengren wrote a book on this subject, *The Apostle and the Heavenly Book*. He said, “And so the knowledge is communicated to the king, it is of a mysterious character, bearing upon the great mysteries of heaven and earth, the hidden things, and is

a revelation of the hidden knowledge by the gods [the god]. Can we style it ‘primordial revelation?’” So there is a primordial revelation, and the purpose of writing is to hand down this primordial revelation. In other words, there was a Book of Adam. And a great deal has come out in recent years about this Book of Adam that has come forth recently.

Incidentally, the oldest writing is used for business, for counting bales of wool, kegs of beer, and loaves of bread—but always in the temple, only in temple accounts. They call it the *Gebräuchsschrift* (business writing) and the *Kultschrift* (holy writing). So the temple is where you find it. As Sethe says, “Hieroglyphic is correctly named, for only on the walls of temples is its survival from prehistoric times.” So wherever you find it, “from first to last, ancient writing remains in the hands not of businessmen but of priests; it is a holy and secret thing, imparted only to the elect and zealously withheld from all others. ‘He who divulges it,’ we read of a typical holy book, ‘dies a sudden death and an immediate cutting-off. Thou shalt keep very far away from it. It is to be read only by a scribe in the workshop, whose name has been duly registered in the House of Life.’ [that’s from a very old writing (*Papyrus Salt 825A*)]. ‘Only the prophets may read and understand the holy books’ is the rule. Each system of writing itself is an effective seal on the holy books, a cryptogram, ‘a secret formula which the profane do not know.’ [it’s hermetic—this idea is common]: The idea of a holy book that is taken away from the earth and restored from time to time [the Book of Mormon, you see], or is handed down secretly from father to son for generations, or hidden up in the earth, preserved by ingenious methods of storage with precious imperishable materials to be brought forth at a later date and more righteous generation is becoming increasingly familiar with the discovery and publication of ever more ancient apocryphal works, Jewish, Christian and others.” So this is the idea.

Now, the letter by itself. It takes a process like the flight of a bee, a miraculous process that can’t be explained. But you will notice how you put things together. A letter by itself is meaningless; it has to go into a word. Of course, it’s symbolic. The whole Cabala is based around that. There’s a whole gematria, a whole technique, a whole science based on the significance of single letters and the combinations—not only to form words, but in any combination—what they mean, that they have a mystic combination—forming words, as numbers, or anything else. But the letters have to be put together to make words. The words have to be put together to make phrases or single-word sentences. There is such a thing as a single-word sentence. A. H. Gardiner, the great Egyptologist and author of the big grammar, wrote a book on the nature of the sentence. He gives the example “rain” as a sentence. Here’s where your luck comes in. The single word is “rain,” and that’s a sentence. It tells a whole story, but it depends on how it is said or how you react to it. If I say “rain?” it means “is it raining again; are we actually having rain?” If I say disgustedly, “rain!” that means “it’s raining again.” All it is is “rain” and an exclamation point. It depends on the context in which it is found. You have to supply that. If I say “rain?” (Can it possibly be raining again?) If I say “rain!” (At last we are having rain.)

So it goes on. There are dozens of ways in which that one word will make a sentence. But it doesn’t make sense until you have put it in a sentence, the sentence you want it to mean. You see what you can get away with when you are interpreting the scriptures, if you do that way. If you say a thing like alas, it means a certain situation is implied here, and you get into the situation. But the word by itself has to be in a phrase; the phrase has to be in a sentence. Any self-contained message is a book. The sentence is part of a message; the message is a book, no matter how short it is. It can just be three sentences. With the ancients, length has nothing to do with it. But books were meant to be put in libraries. It’s a funny thing that writing began with libraries; it didn’t begin with single

letters, which are put together to make a word, which are put together to make a sentence, etc. No, it began with the library. It's the hermetic concept of the hologram that contains all knowledge. You start out at the top, just like Adam. You begin with the perfect pattern and run downhill from there. That seems just the opposite of what we say when we evolve; we get a little better as we go on and on and on. That was the delight of the Victorian Age.

Well, I'll read you something at the beginning of this article. It has nothing to do with what I was talking about, but I think it is quite relevant to what we're talking about right now. "We have all grown up in the world nurtured on the comfortable Victorian doctrine of uniformitarianism—the idea that what happens in this world is all just more of the same. What lies ahead is pretty much what lies behind for the same forces are at work on earth today as they were in the same manner with the same intensity and the same effect as at all times in the past and must go on operating inexorably and irresistibly just the same way forever."

Now, we agree with the basic proposition, but we are a million miles away from the fundamentalists. Other worlds like unto this, and other worlds hitherto formed—the same elements put together in the same way with the same pattern and form; you will find them everywhere to the end of the universe. So that is going on. There's a steady process here; what's going on here has gone on in other worlds. It doesn't begin out of nothing, and it doesn't end in nothing. It goes on continually. But they take it this way: They apply it to this world as a steady building up, everything better and better, constant amelioration. "There's no real cause for alarm; this is the conclusion we drew . . . in a world where everything is under control beneath the watchful eye of science, as evolution takes its undeviating forward course, steady, slow, reliable, imperceptibly slow and gentle, gratifyingly predictable." According to an eminent British scholar of the 1920s [E. Bevan] (this is what we believed when I was in high school),

The skies as far as the utmost star are clear of any malignant intelligence. Even the untoward accidents of life are due to causes comfortably impersonal. The possibility that the unknown contains powers deliberately hostile to him is one the ordinary modern man can hardly entertain, even in imagination.

Everything is lovely; nothing can go wrong because evolution is taking us steadily, slowly forward ever toward the better and better. What a happy reassurance is that. "In such a world one needed no longer to run to God for comfort. The matter-of-fact, no-nonsense approach of science has since the days of the Milesian school and the ancient atomists banished all childish fears and consigned horrendous and spectacular aspects of human past and future to the realm of myth and fantasy." And yet what was required reading in the Honors Program a couple of years ago, *The Violent Universe*, about the dangers that surround us. We are among powers that could annihilate us. There's no reason why we should exist. That this world is so comfortable for us in a universe that is so utterly hostile is amazing—a totally different picture. With these powers in the universe, everything is being swallowed up. But with the universe here, there is nothing hostile. Everything is impersonal, and you have nothing to worry about. This doctrine backfires, of course.

How it backfired is the point. The atomists said, "There's nothing there; there's nothing outside." It began with the Milesian school (especially Anaxagoras and Xenophanes, friends of Pericles, and with the Stoics). There is nothing there. There's nothing to fear.

There are no monsters; there's no boogeyman out there. There are no goblins, no devil, nothing like that. In fact, there is nothing out there. Then this horrible gasp. What, nothing? So we are going into nothing. There are some good lines from *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* about that. This is how it backfired in my day, and then we started to learn the *Rubaiyat*:

One Moment in Annihilation's Waste,
One moment, of the Wine of Life to taste—
The Stars are setting, and the Caravan
Starts for the dawn of Nothing—Oh, make haste!

You don't have much time, and you are going nowhere. Lucretius wrote his great *De Rerum Natura* on that subject. All these superstitions about the hereafter—heaven, hell and that stuff—forget about it. There's nothing to fear out there; there is just nothing. Then the horrible shock was much worse. "I've seen the eternal footman hold my cloak and snicker and, in short, I was afraid." Because there was nothing out there. It's something to be quite terrified by. And this is what we run into. You have your choice, you see. I prefer the other stuff. There is evidence that there is the other stuff. But, you see, we have in writing here for us a most choice document. It's not like any other book in existence. It's not like anything else. It is a standing revelation, a standing miracle, as we have it here. No one could have produced this book of a thousand years, covering every phase of the cultural, historical, intellectual, literary aspects. What a miracle of condensation, as we will see! But the point is that it's not just written as a tour de force to show it can be done. Every word of it is significant. It's meant for us, it's directed to us, and it's very urgent that we know this. "This is directed to you, ye Gentiles, that ye may learn to be wiser than we have been." We are in a very powerless state, and this tells us what it is in the Book of Mormon. If you start to panic, grab for the Book of Mormon and it will be all right. We will end with my slogan for the class, Mosiah 4:11–12. Oh, what choice words here! "If ye have known of his goodness and have tasted of his love, and have received a remission of your sins, which causeth such exceeding great joy in your souls [notice, his goodness and his love; he means to do best] even so I would that ye should remember and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God and your own nothingness. . . . And behold, I say unto you that if ye do this ye shall always rejoice."

You will have nothing to worry about if you realize God's greatness, what his intentions are, and what his power to carry out those intentions is. And don't worry about yourself—your career and all that sort of rot. Remember, we should always hold in remembrance our own nothingness. I remember my nothingness, so I don't have anything to worry about. And then I remember God's goodness, and I have something to cheer about. So it's quite marvelous, this Book of Mormon. It has everything in it which we hope to find out.

[In these lectures Brother Nibley quotes and paraphrases material from his own writings. This information is not in quotation marks unless it is quoted exactly and the source is known.]

1. See "Genesis of the Written Word," in *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless* (Salt Lake City: Publishers Press, 1978), 101–27; reprinted in *Temple and Cosmos*, vol. 12 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992), 450–90.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 2 Introduction Nephi's Heritage

The Book of Mormon is an inexhaustible encyclopedia of knowledge, so it would take us forever to get through it. But there are certain things we must notice at the beginning to get off on the right foot. These are things that concern us. We think today, as never before, in terms of world politics. The opening of the Book of Mormon concerns our people (I mean that literally, biologically), and it concerns also our world, the world we live in. So this is going to take a historical resume of some sort.

It starts out by saying, "I, Nephi." You notice it is an autobiography, "I, Nephi." Now, at this time the only style of writing was autobiographical. Everybody wrote autobiographies, and there's a great autobiographical literature in Egyptian. There are some famous autobiographies, and we will refer to some because they are so very close to the Book of Mormon. They take place in Palestine, even at this time. Well, I just picked up one from de Buck's *Reading Book* (pp. 73–74). It's called *The Autobiography of Kai*. He lived a short time before Nephi. He was an important man, and he gave his titles. He started out by saying, "I, Kai was the son of a man who was *nehēt* and *s'ḥ* [who was worthy and wise]." And Nephi started out saying, "I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents." Then Kai goes on to talk about himself here. Incidentally, I notice he referred to himself down here as *ḥd-ḥr* (white of countenance), *nfr bi-t* (excellent of character), *phz ḥ-t* (clean of body and in moral habits). And he shunned everything that was *snk-wt*. The word is very interesting. It means "black of countenance," and it also means "greed or anything that is evil." Notice, in the Book of Mormon, that peculiar thing: "a white and delightsome people" and "a dark and loathsome people." It doesn't refer to skin color at all, but there's a lot about race in the Book of Mormon. That comes in here already; we can see that. But here, you notice he used those peculiar terms. He was *ḥd-ḥr*. He has a picture of a white face (white of countenance). And he was clean of body, and he eschewed *snk-wt* (what is greedy or what is dark of countenance).

It goes on and tells what he did. "I protected the weak against the strong," he said. "I came to the aid of the widow who had no husband. I was a father to the orphans." This reads like the Old Testament, and this is an Egyptian writing just before Nephi's time. He said, "I organized youth organizations of children during the bad times. I was extremely popular with everybody." These are like the *iuventi* they used to have around the Mediterranean. These youth conferences are very important. You have some in the Book of Mormon; we will get to that later. Then he said here, "I came to the rescue of my city in the times when the *ʿwzy* [the robbers] were on the roads." These were plundering, raiding bands—a particularly bad period. This is what would happen: The society would become unsettled, and then you would get roving gangs. They were very common all throughout the Mediterranean. He said, "I came to the rescue of the city against these *ʿwzy* (a person who plunders or robs along the roads). He left a good name behind him; it says what his name was. As I say, there were hundreds of these, not only in the tombs. In those days, you left

a stele outside your tomb with your autobiography on it to recommend yourself. It would include your sufferings and your triumphs, and asked a person to pray for you who passed by there. This was the custom with the tombs; you see it on the walls in Egypt.

We have hundreds of these autobiographies, but also literary biographies. The story of Sinuhe here is a good example because he was an Egyptian who lived in Palestine. You'll notice the very strong Egyptian note here in the Book of Mormon. Nephi's writing in the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians. That is referred to again and again. So this background of the autobiography is a very interesting thing. We have a lot of this in the Book of Mormon too. And Nephi is talking about his goodly parents. Notice, what do goodly parents do? They teach you: "Therefore I was taught [this is a very interesting thing; the greatest favor he could have was great knowledge of the mysteries of God] somewhat in all the learning of my father." That means the standard education—the going culture of the time. Tomorrow, we talk about culture; we're going to talk about some history today if we get around to it. This verse one slows us down, of course. Verses two, three, four, five, six, etc. will do the same thing. Notice, they always mentioned having suffered many afflictions. Well, the purpose of writing a story (whether it's *A Thousand and One Nights*, or anything else) is to tell what the hero has to go through. The *Odyssey* starts out with what the hero had to go through. Upon the sea he suffered many sorrows before he met his final triumph (this is the regular plan). That's the way the *Odyssey* goes: "Many ills he suffered upon the sea." The *Aeneid* starts out the same way, doesn't it? Notice, these start out with the fall of a great city, every one of them. This starts out with the collapse of Jerusalem. And, of course, Odysseus is suffering on his way home from the fall of Troy. The same thing with Aeneas. "Through many trials and tribulations, through many close calls, we painfully are making way to Latium where we have a promised land." It's the theme of a man looking for a promised land. The city has been destroyed because of its wickedness. That's the way the Book of Mormon starts out. This leads us to a very interesting phenomenon that we find in the Book of Mormon and everywhere else. That is what I call the recurrent scenario. The same things are happening all the time, and you will find them happening all the time in the Book of Mormon. This is a very good check, a very good control on things (the recurrent scenario) because things do recur at various levels. Well, we have plenty of chance to recur to that theme.

Let's go back here: "Nevertheless, having been highly favored of the Lord." Notice, in spite of all their sufferings, they were highly favored, and they end up usually happily (they get their promised land). "Having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore . . ." This is an extremely interesting use of the word "mysteries" here. What were the mysteries? These were the mysteries of God. Well, at this time (around 600 B.C.; tomorrow we will refer more to the cultural history of it) this word "mystery" spread everywhere. Of course, this is the Greek word "mysterion." It means "a thing that you don't talk about." A mystery is a thing you cannot find out or learn about by your own resources. Since it's a thing you can't possibly find out for yourself, it must have been revealed—either as a primordial revelation in the beginning and handed down, or it has been revealed to you or somebody else. And when you hear about it, you are always warned, "Don't talk about these things." This is a typical mystery when Moses talks with God face to face in the final words of Moses (Moses 1:41). "And in a day when the children of men shall esteem my words as naught . . . they shall be had again among the children of men—among as many as shall believe" (meanwhile, you keep this very secret). The mysteries are always handed down secretly.

At this particular time everywhere in the world there were cults and sects springing up and spreading, all connected with each other in a very interesting way. These were the mysteries. Everybody wanted to get in on them, but you had to be initiated to get in on them. Well, he is talking about the mysteries of God in their proper sense here. The mysteries of godliness are what we learn in the temple and in the gospel. He said, "I make a record of my proceedings of my days." With the ancient mysteries (the prehistoric mysteries, such as those of Trophonius on Crete) you would go through the mysteries (go through the cave, etc.), the Eleusinian mysteries. But you were always obliged at the end of the initiation (the mysteries) to write down on a tablet, and deposit the tablet there, what your experiences had been. At the end of the mysteries, you were required to record this before you could leave the cave, or the temple or whatever it was. You would leave a record of your experiences in the mysteries—whatever visions it was you had. So Nephi said an interesting thing here, "Yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of my proceedings in my days [of what I've been through]." Having been through the mysteries of God, I'm under obligation to preserve that knowledge.

Then he says, "in the language of my father." He uses language throughout. It's used very often in the Book of Mormon in these earlier books, especially by Nephi, as meaning the manner of speech and the message delivered. This was his language; it means this was the message he delivered. The other meaning of language is, of course, tongue or speech. It's very interesting that the Egyptian word for it is just a picture of a mouth, and it's as broad as you can possibly imagine. It means language, it means speech, it means utterance. It can mean a chapter. No two people translate it alike when it appears in the Book of the Dead. Does it mean a spell? Does it mean a chapter? Does it mean a recitation? Speak the following words? All it is is a picture of a mouth with a stroke under it. But you can't get away from this very odd thing, "the language of the Egyptians," because the book recurs to it on a number of occasions. What would they be doing with the language of the Egyptians? This is the subject of our theme now. Incidentally, at that very time (the generation that Lehi was living) was the time that Reformed Egyptian (Demotic) became the official government language. In the twenty-sixth dynasty, the time of Sennosir III and of Lehi, it became the official way of writing. It was this new reformed type of Egyptian known as Demotic. And at the very same time, the priests who used to be in the former royal court at Napata fled farther to Meroë. There they produced a new type of Egyptian at this time which was Meroitic (I've got a picture of it here). When you compare the Anthon transcripts with Meroitic, it's very impressive. In fact, Brother Bushman back at Brown University (which is one of the four universities in the country where Egyptian has always been a big thing), showed them the Anthon transcript, and Parker immediately recognized them as Meroitic. He said, "They're the closest thing you can get to Meroitic." Here are the Anthon transcripts, and here's Meroitic. (You can't see them; they're too small; I guess we should have slides, or something like that.) This is the new Egyptian which was invented way up the Nile, way up in Meroë, which is even south of Napata. That's the Nubian kingdom. It's very interesting that so many Book of Mormon names come from way up there. In a minute maybe we will see why that is.

Let's consider what the world situation was in Nephi's day, which was very much like ours. Believe me, it's a time for alarm. So we'll have to draw a map first, won't we? Alexandria is here. We'll put Cyprus in there. Then we'll go down here like this and put the Nile. We'll go down here and come over to Thebes. Then we go down to Nubia. Then we have the Dead Sea here. This is what they call the Jawf, this long rift that comes down here. Then you go down here to Abyssinia. Then we must go out here to the Persian Gulf. We

all know the Persian Gulf these days. This goes down to Kathiawar and that sort of thing. Here's the Sea of Galilee. I've got to put the Lisān in there because it's always so spectacular to stand on the cliffs and look at the Lisān. That comes down there. That's the Jordan, and this is the Sea of Galilee. We have to be more careful about Arabia here. As you know, here's the Strait of Oman. Now, that's more like it, isn't it? This one here is where we are having all the trouble today. Then the Tigris and Euphrates go here. They meet here, and then they come here (that's pretty awful, but it will have to do for now). We will put the main cities on here. We'll put Tanis here, Sais here, and Thebes here. Here's Amarna (we need to have Amarna in this). And, of course, we have to have Jerusalem, which is right here. And this is Damascus. And here are Tyre and Sidon. Sidon is a very important name in the Book of Mormon. This is Nineveh here, and here's Babel. This is Susa in Elam. We have the countries and the important cities. Well, this will do for the time being. In view of the recent map test they have been having in the schools, I'm going to say this is not a map of Utah County or anything like that. This is supposed to be the Middle East.

The first autobiography we'd mention then is that of Sinuhe, and it's a very important one. I was going to bring some of the reproductions of the documents; they are very good. They are in Hieratic, and they go back to 1935 B.C.—the famous Sinuhe. He was on an expedition for the king (he was an important man in the court) when news came that the old king, Amunemhet I, had died and Sesostri I had become king. There was a palace intrigue, and he skipped out to save his neck. He went on foot here and ended up way up here in Palestine with the Amorite chiefs. This was in 1935 B.C. This was long before our Book of Mormon times, but he lived in Palestine, where he found it was a great advantage to speak Egyptian. He became the chief of a tribe; he married there, etc. We see very close biblical parallels, like the story of David and Goliath. He fought a giant there, and with one shot he dispatched him with an arrow through his throat. It's a historical account that was very popular. I have at least a dozen different manuscripts which you can collate to show you how these were copied down in the schools later on (but this was standard). But the point is that Palestine was Egyptian at that time. It always had been; it always would be. Back to 3,000 B.C. you find the cave of the Naḥal Hever (the cave of the manuscripts) along the Dead Sea, which is south here. It's about thirty miles south of Qumran, which is just a dozen miles from Jericho. You go down here, and there's a valley that looks very much like Rock Canyon. You climb up to the caves in a breakneck place. There they buried a lot of beautiful bronze instruments to save them from an Egyptian invasion around 3,000 B.C. The Egyptians had been up there and driven them out of Jerusalem way back then. Of course, there were no Jews in Jerusalem at that time, but we will get to them soon enough. As we start out, this is a common denominator and a common culture. It's not strange that the language is mentioned. Of course, Egyptian is a Semitic language with much the same words, the same counting, that you have in Hebrew.

They have analyzed the skulls, for example, of thousands of Palestinians from various periods and many thousands of Egyptians. You can't tell the difference between them; they are the same race (we will see more of that). The point is that Sinuhe was taken back to court again. This was by the great Sesostri I, the founder of the twelfth dynasty, a tremendous king. Now, this is the payoff; these things all start getting connected. Sesostri I is also confused with (hyphenated with) Sheshonk (not Sheshonk I). He's called Sheshonk; that's the name he goes by. Practically legendary, he was a great conqueror, but identified with Sheshonk. Sheshonk is the name we find on Facsimile No. 2. Now, study this carefully when I hold it up; you'll see everything in it very clearly, I know (a little tiny

book). But you all know this, Facsimile No. 2 (if I ever get that book finished; I'm on the conclusion right now, but it goes on and on). Here it is—you see this that is so clear to all of you from where you sit. For many years, the only thing that the Egyptologists recognized on it at all was this—though it was quite legible. They had no excuse for the terrible things they said about Joseph Smith. Nobody made an attempt. They couldn't read it, but it is very easy. He has it here, and the name is Sheshonk (that's the name that is written there). This belonged to a king called Sheshonk. And conventionally, almost everybody identifies Sesostris I with the Pharaoh of Abraham. This was Abraham's Pharaoh. If Abraham's Pharaoh was Sheshonk and Sheshonk was the person who owned this thing in the Pearl of Great Price, I begin to "smell a rat" or something going on here. These connections, as I said, are going to meet us everywhere. But also remember these things are fluid; they swim together, etc., because of the nature of the record. Remember, when we talk about recurrent scenarios, that something can really throw you off, or really help you a great deal too. But this is Sesostris I, the founder of the great twelfth dynasty.

We've got to get some Jews in the picture. Remember, Abraham came to Egypt, and this is Abraham's Pharaoh. (Nearly all people say he is, but I would argue about it. Argue about everything; that's the name of the game.) But Abraham came. Then he had Isaac, and Isaac stayed in Egypt a while. His sons went down to Egypt. Because Jacob's son, Joseph, went to Egypt, he went to Egypt. Whom did Joseph marry? (I suppose we should ask questions and all that sort of thing.) He married Asenath, and this takes us right into the Book of Mormon. Asenath had two sons, you know. One of them was Manasseh, and the Book of Mormon tells us that Lehi was a direct descendant of Manasseh. The other was Ephraim of whom we claim to be descendants. They were the sons of this Asenath who was the daughter of the high priest of Heliopolis (I just erased Heliopolis; I should have put it on here). Here is the Delta which goes immediately up here along the coast. Here is the Red Sea down here. But the Delta goes here. At the base of the Delta is Memphis, and here is Cairo. Out toward the airport of Cairo is Heliopolis. That's the On of the Bible. This is the most sacred, the most ancient, the most enduring shrine in the whole ancient world. This is the great sun center of all mankind. It's a super megalithic complex that has been there from prehistoric times. It always was the top place, right at the base of the Delta here, a little south. Memphis was a little south of that. But this was Heliopolis which is the On, the Ieun of the Bible. On comes from the Egyptian word, Ieun, which simply means "standing stone columns." They used the plural for this particular one. It means "standing stone columns, the twelve columns standing in a row." Jacob set up columns like that when he was in Palestine. But Jacob came down, as I said, and his son Joseph became the vizier of Egypt, the second most important man to Pharaoh. Joseph married Asenath, who was the daughter of the high priest of Heliopolis and a direct descendant of Ham. And we are descendants of Ephraim, while Lehi's people are descendants of Manasseh. So we are getting into the picture right at the beginning here. It's very important how these things all tie up together.

Let's take the Amarna period next after. We showed on the Middle Nile, a place called Amarna, where Amenophis IV, king of the eighteenth dynasty, lived. This is the famous religious king, Ikhnaton, the so-called reformer who taught monotheism. That's not so. The other Pharaohs were just as monotheistic and pious as he, but he had a tremendous ego. But he wasn't very good at some things. (Here is Amarna right smack in the middle between the base of the Nile and Thebes down here.) In the winter of 1887-88 the French excavated the famous Amarna Tablets. I should have brought them along (I have a copy). They are big things. They are in Akkadian, a very interesting thing. The Amarna Tablets date to the fourteenth century (around 1350 B.C.), and they are written in Akkadian, the

common language of Palestine. You couldn't distinguish it from Hebrew in those days, as Albright has shown. There a record was kept in the king's palace (this Amenophis IV). I guess we should call him Akhnaton. That's the name he preferred; he changed it to that, "the glory of aton." Akhn means "glory." This was his archive, and it contained hundreds of letters (over four hundred letters) from various chiefs and kings up here in Palestine, asking him to come to their aid, to come to their rescue. Well, who was invading? Was it Assyria? Not at that time, too early. Was it the Babylonians? Not that early. It was our own people, very largely, all sorts of people coming down from the North—a great mixture of tribes, the Gutti and all sorts of familiar names. Could they be the Goths? But the tribes were really in motion in that time, and they were moving in on various places. The king of Jerusalem, which was not Jewish at that time, wrote very urgently because this was part of the Egyptian Empire (they spoke Egyptian). Later it was all Akkadian. You notice they have a *lingua franca* and it's Akkadian, which is very much like Hebrew. It was spoken all over, and it was written in cuneiform. They already had an alphabetic writing, of course. Egyptian is an alphabetic writing. But they were writing in cuneiform, the common language. Just as English is the thing today, Akkadian was the thing then. Any city you went to (any merchant) your documents would be in Akkadian. These records are all in Akkadian, except for a few exotic languages, telling about these wandering, marauding bands which were driven out by serious climate changes forcing everybody to move. Especially, the king of Jerusalem wrote, "Please come to my rescue. I'm being pressed on all sides by the Habiri, which, of course, are the Hebrews. They have been identified easily enough with the Hebrews. Naturally there was a reaction: "No, that's just too good to be true; it can't be the Hebrews." But it turns out that the Hebrews were moving in during the fourteenth century on Jerusalem.

All the cities had names similar to their names today. Beirut was called Bayrut (it hasn't changed much). And there were the same riots in the streets that there are today. The picture does not change; this is the point. As Heraclitus (the greatest of the really early Greek philosophers) says, "A man's character is his fate." You determine what happens to you. It's your character that will decide that. It's the same thing: Whether people have riots or not is built into them. It's built into their characters and their culture. And it is a two-way sort of thing. The culture will reinforce the character, and the character will reinforce the culture. If you once start fighting, it mounts exponentially and you end up being wiped out. It is very alarming how much the figures having to do with various retrograde movements in the atmosphere, on the earth, and in society today are increasing—how much more rapidly they are gaining ground than anyone ever predicted. Things are going downhill so much faster than anyone ever dreamed. We won't go into that (happy thought) until later.

The next wave of this, less than a century later, are the famous peoples of the sea, or the sea people. They were western Mediterraneans, and they came from as far away as France, Central Europe, etc. We have a very interesting writing on that (a Central European thing) recently. But these are called "the people of the sea." They came in around 1200 B.C., and they destroyed the whole world here. This is what happened. There was a great Hittite empire. Remember, Abraham was concerned that his sons not marry Hittite daughters, but they married them anyway. What did the Hittites speak? They spoke a language like Welsh, very close to our own language. The Minoans over here and the Greeks on the mainland, the Mycenaeans, were speaking something that you would almost recognize as English. At the same time here, the Medes and Persians way up here were still savage tribes (they haven't become dangerous yet, but they would soon enough). They had a language closest of all to English. Anyway, the sea people came in, and they

went by the name of Shardanu, which were the people from Sardinia; Siculi (the Sicels) the people from Sicilia; the Tyrrhenians which are related to the Etruscans of Italy. We have their blood in our veins, every one of us. They were a great mix of people. They weren't really sea people, but they were described as coming along the coast both ways (a squeeze play) carrying their wagons, their children, and all their possessions on these big lumbering ox carts, while the ships accompanied them by sea. Later in the eleventh and tenth centuries the Vikings did the same thing in the North. They advanced the same way. The Vikings advanced more by land than by sea actually, though they were the great sea rovers, as we know. These sea people moved in, and they destroyed the Hittite Empire. It disappeared all of a sudden. It was a great rival of Egypt up until then. Egypt was driven out and didn't have anything to do here. This broke up into a lot of little kingdoms (you can see this already happening). This was the sea people in 1200 B.C. Everything changed when they came in, and the story really begins there as far as Lehi is concerned.

There's another wonderful autobiography. That's the autobiography of Wenamun, the other great standard autobiography that was read in all the schools. We are able to date this very nicely. It dates from about 1085, and it tells a wonderful story—very convincing. He was a director of the temple of Amon at Thebes. Amon is everything at this time. He wasn't earlier, but he is now. This man was a priest of Amon, and he has to go to Byblos on the coast to get cedar logs (this is Lebanon where the cedars grow) for building the ceremonial bark down there (a great ship) and for repairing the temple at Thebes. But he didn't have any money. Everybody was broke. Everything had been overrun by these sea people now. But he had a certificate from Amon of the Way and he had an image that would give him rights. He was a tremendous missionary; he preached Amon, the one God who rules all men. It was straight Old Testament theology. But he was going to try to use that. Up here is Tanis, and at this time chiefs were making themselves independent. At Tanis was a famous prince who made himself king there, Smendes with his wife Tintuamun. Of course, they had the money and the means up here. What you could do if you were strong enough was get a gang around you and make yourself prince of a small kingdom. You could always legalize it by intermarrying with one of the priestesses at Thebes. The chief woman at Thebes was called "the Mother of the God," and there was "the Wife of the God." If you wanted your dynasty to be legalized by Thebes, you would intermarry. This happened a number of times.

Anyway, he went up there, and he wanted to get some money to buy the logs. The king said, "All right, I'll make you out a requisition here." So he got some money, and after months (of course, official business took ages) he was finally able to sail. He sailed up to Byblos, but on the way at Tyre—Tyre and Sidon were port cities; Sidon was the main port in the Book of Mormon (it was more important than Tyre, actually)—but he stopped at Tyre and his gold was stolen. What gold he had was stolen, and he failed to bring the certificate. He went up to try to talk the king of Byblos into giving him the logs anyway. Then you have a scene that is really out of the Book of Mormon. It sounds just like Laman going in to get the precious things (the brass plates) from Laban. The names are close together. Laban means "white"; it means "full moon." He went in and asked the king, and the king said he would sell him the logs. He raised the price, of course. When the king found out he didn't have any money, he ordered him thrown out (the usual thing). But then he challenged the king as a missionary. He said, "Look, I come in the name of God." Then the king said, "All right, it's true, we paid Amon tribute for many, many years. We sent logs to Egypt for many years, but let's go into the records and see." So he sent his secretary in to bring out the records. They had kept the records for hundreds of years, the records of his ancestors. He said, "Look, my ancestors bought this and this

and this from Egypt, but you always paid a good price for our logs. We gave you the logs all right, but you always paid plenty for them.” That made it clear he wasn’t going to get them. Well, it goes on, and he had many narrow escapes. Unfortunately, the end of the story is broken off. He was cast ashore on the island of Cyprus there and got involved in a religious procession. There’s one very interesting episode that’s like a Book of Mormon episode. The one thing that saved his life (he was going to get thrown right out and not get anywhere; the pirates were waiting for him on the sea, etc.) was that during a religious procession one priest passed out. This priest had a vision and uttered words saying that the god commands that this emissary of Amon should be respected, etc. So he was able to save his neck that way. Well, these things are all connected.

Israel was now soon to be taken. Who took it? Remember, Joshua took and moved in. But he didn’t take all the cities. The main city, the Jebusite city, was taken by David (he came in next). Now, David couldn’t build a temple. He wanted to build a temple, but he couldn’t. But he did one thing that has definite bearing on the Book of Mormon. I’ll show you again how these things are connected (you mustn’t miss any of this). David had a commander named Joab who was a rough, tough character. He didn’t fool around with anything. He sent Joab down south to quell the Arab uprisings in the far South. He went down there, and he drove out Hadad who was a prince at the court of Egypt there. Hadad fled from Arabia over here to Upper Egypt, right to the court of Sheshonk (this was another Sheshonk though). This was Sheshonk I who founded the twenty-second dynasty (we have come down a long time, you see). So Hadad fled to this court, and he married the daughter of one of the king’s wives (they had many wives). But he became ingratiated with the court of King Sheshonk here.

There’s another story (I have to draw the Delta again). Here were the Libyans who were very important people. They were constantly pressing on the Nile, moving in because of bad circumstances. The desert isn’t pleasant, so they were always moving in and settling. They came in a big way earlier than this, and they settled in Hermopolis for five generations. The Pharaohs took them on and hired them as guards and military supporters, etc. They were able to stay without too much trouble, though they became quite independent, these great chiefs. This Sheshonk was the grandson of Bubuwaia who called himself the great chief of the Meshwesh. The Meshwesh were one of these tribes, and they settled at various places (Professor Baer told us about this). He became king later on, but as chief of the Meshwesh he had settled there. He founded the twenty-first dynasty following after. But at the same time you have the priestly dynasties at Thebes from the far south. You have the Libyans in this direction, pressing in. You have the Nubians, or Ethiopians (you can call them either one), from Nubia or Ethiopia from the South, pushing up, and you have the Amu or the Asiatics coming from the north and the east—always the pressure. In the Ramesseum Dynasty (the twentieth dynasty) they were Asiatics, very Asiatic. In the twenty-first dynasty they were Libyans. Then you are going to have Ethiopian dynasties, but they start out in the Temple of Amon at Thebes. The person who started that had been sent down to be the “King’s Son of Cush,” that is the king’s chief son would be sent down to rule Cush in the far south and keep that under control (it was a long kingdom). The king’s son would go down; that was the office he held. This person had the name of Korihor or Harihor. He came up and became the high priest of Thebes. He assumed that, but he kept his military office at the same time. They did that; the high priests of Thebes were military governors. But he had a son, Piankhi, whom he was able to put on the throne. This is interesting because these are good old Book of Mormon names, Korihor and Piankhi. Piankhi is a name that was not found anywhere until the late nineteenth century. There are some very important Piankhis. Of

course, this means “the living one, one who has been made to live.” And Korihor means “in the presence of Horus.” We have Korihor and Piankhi (Paanchi) in the Book of Mormon. You’ll see they’re involved in the same situation when we get to it because they set up priestly courts. Remember, Alma tells Korihor [Brother Nibley means Nehor] when he is brought before him, “Behold, this is the first time that priestcraft has been introduced among this people [we have been able to avoid it]” (Alma 1:12). Korihor ruled by priestcraft.

As if we weren’t sufficiently confused, we will have to get down to Solomon and this Sheshonk here. So Hadad went over to Sheshonk, and David died and was followed by Solomon. Hadad kept urging Sheshonk to invade Palestine which had been Egyptian territory for many years. That was the Egyptian Empire. The great desire of his life was to reconquer all the old lost Asiatic empire of Egypt, and he was the last great conqueror. He did it. We are going to see that he did this, but it was at the urging of others. And (this is biblical, you see) he saw that Solomon was very strong and very rich, as you know. He was the glory of Israel. Sheshonk wasn’t going to take Solomon on at that time, so he married his daughter to Solomon. With her he gave the Gaza Strip to Solomon as a wedding gift. Micharah was her name. The three greatest buildings that Solomon built, we are told in the Bible, were the temple, his own palace, and the palace he built for the daughter of Sheshonk. So they were very close. But as soon as Solomon died, Sheshonk backed Rehoboam against Jeroboam (there wasn’t much difference between them). That was the time when Israel and Judah broke up and it was no longer a united kingdom. This was a great excuse to invade Israel, so Sheshonk looted Jerusalem and sacked the temple and came back with vast wealth. He got all the temple of Solomon and took it back here to Heliopolis. He established it here using the same implements for the same rites, etc. It’s a most interesting thing (the Jews had come from there). Here we have a sort of milk run, a sort of polarity. The temple at Jerusalem and the temple at Heliopolis always had a sort of relationship. It was here that Abraham taught. We are told in all Jewish tradition that he taught astronomy to the priests and the Pharaoh. It was at Heliopolis that Moses was trained and grew up. Joseph, as we saw, married the daughter of the high priest of Heliopolis. Everything happened in Heliopolis, and later when the temple was destroyed the Jews went down and were allowed to build themselves, under Honi [ha-Me’aggel] the circle-drawer, a replica of Solomon’s Temple at Heliopolis. The Sun Temple and Solomon’s Temple are very closely connected, and there are many associations between them. But Sheshonk plundered Solomon’s Temple and took all the wealth out there. Sheshonk was followed by Osorkon I and then Takelot. There was a revolution under Takelot II (it follows him and these various non-Egyptian names). The priesthood then fled down to Napata. After that they fled to Mira and produced our funny Book of Mormon script.

Now it was time for the big powers to get in with everything weakened here. The Egyptian Empire and the Hittite Empire were out. They had been great, mighty and huge. By 1200 B.C. they were finished (the fall of Troy is supposed to be 1174). The Egyptians were out, so it was a chance for the ambitious Orientals to move in on the scene. That, of course, was the Assyrians. They were uncompromising, cruel absolutists. They had certain virtues, great artistic gifts, etc., but they believed in absolute monarchy with a vengeance. They were notoriously cruel in advancing.

So the Assyrians moved in, and in 722 B.C. they took Jerusalem (they had taken Israel already). That was Sargon of Nineveh, capital of Assyria, who came in there. Now he had

taken all Israel, all Palestine, who could save Egypt from Sargon. It was Taharka who moved up there. Taharka was a black and a great ruler. He moved up with an army from Nubia, and he reoccupied Thebes and Memphis. Memphis was the nearest to Heliopolis. Memphis was the ancient capital, and Heliopolis the sacred capital. Thebes had been the political capital most of the time. Taharka moved up and took everything over again. He was in Thebes in 790 B.C.

This takes us up to Lehi now. In the west delta here at Sais (this is Tanis where the desert kings were) was a prince called Necho. He ruled, and he was going to make himself very strong. The best way for him to make himself strong would be to join up with the Assyrians, which he did. Now you have Necho on the Assyrian side. When the Assyrians were smashed, he would change sides. They did that sort of thing. He submitted to Assyria. The Assyrians invaded in 673 and were driven out, but they came back again in 671. When they came back the second time, Taharka returned from the deep south to chase them out again. He chased them up this way, but Esar-Haddon, who was leading them at that time, died. There were domestic troubles in Assyria; the empire was crumbling actually. Then Taharka returned again. In 667–66 Assurbanipal returned to Egypt to get back at him and drove Taharka out. Then the next year Taharka returned and drove him out. It was like a tennis match.

The son of Herodotus told this story. The son of Necho I was Semiticus I (now we are getting to the Book of Mormon). He united the whole Delta, getting the chiefs together, etc. When he was on the coast marching along with his band, a large fleet of Carian pirates approached. When they landed and started to charge, he said, “I can make something of this.” He said to them, “Look boys, don’t rob me. There’s plenty of stuff inland. If you just follow me, I can make you rich.” So they all joined his army, and he built an army of Greek mercenaries. From this time all the Egyptian armies were Greek. Palestine, including Jerusalem, was swarming with Greeks. You’ll find Greek names in the Book of Mormon (you should) because they were popular at this time. The Jews were always willing to adopt foreign names. The time is up, and we haven’t got to Lehi yet, but just about. So Necho founded the famous twenty-sixth dynasty which is the one that thrives in Lehi’s time. For example, we find at Abu-Simbel (way up the Nile where they have moved those big monuments of Ramses II up on the cliff to save them from the new dam) inscriptions from the army of Semiticus I, and they are all in Greek. He had a Greek army. That was what he was using all the time. We are back in the Greek wars now. Necho was killed in the battle. Then Semiticus I again joined the Assyrians, and the Assyrians made him king. It was the Assyrians who put him on the throne actually. Assyria then plundered Thebes, but they lost their shirt in the operation and never came back again. Then one fine night in 622 B.C. Assyria disappeared (the whole thing collapsed). The Medes, the Persians, and the Babylonians got together and tried a squeeze play to knock out Assyria which was threatening everybody. These were the Persians way up here in central Asia. The Babylonians were down here. The Assyrians were here. The Hittite Empire had been eliminated here. The Amorite Empire had been knocked out (everything was Assyria). They weren’t going to stand for that, so the Medes and the Persians got together (this is the great Cyrus I) with the Babylonians under Nabopolassar and destroyed Assyria. The city of Nineveh vanished from history. Well, the Assyrians lasted a couple more years, but that was all.

Now we have the situation that’s set up in the Book of Mormon for the big squeeze-play. Is it going to be Asia? Is it going to be Egypt? Is it going to be the East, the Babylonian Empire, or is it going to be Egyptian? Lehi’s family were split down the center as to which

side to follow. You can see the situation here, all these shifting loyalties, etc. Overnight, a battle can change the whole picture, and you can be in grave jeopardy where you were on top of the world the day before. So there was this great tension. It's typical of the Middle East as it has always been. I forgot to mention the geographical significance of the Middle East as the cockpit of the world, but we can mention that in passing the next time. So it's time to go now, and I hope you didn't miss any of this.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 3

Introduction

Geopolitics and the Rule of Tyrants, 600 B.C.

There is nothing more remarkable, in fact, more miraculous, about the Book of Mormon, than its *Kulturgeschichte*, culture history. It is just loaded with the details that give us an insight into the culture of a particular people. It describes three distinct cultures, and it describes them very vividly. We have been talking about the Near East (the Old World) at the time of Lehi. Remember, the first book of Nephi all takes place in the Old World (one of the most important books), and it describes the ancient civilization of the New World in great detail, a totally different civilization. It also describes the present culture, which is as far removed from Joseph Smith's day as the other cultures are. Who ever dreamed of the culture of the 1980s, which he has so vividly described. Well, that's all in the Book of Mormon.

He couldn't have chosen a better year to have things begin than the year 600 B.C. (a nice round number). Historians call this the pivotal year. There's a book on that by Karl Jaspers, the German historian philosopher, *The Pivotal Year*. H. G. Wells uses that in his once-celebrated *History of the World*, etc. Everybody noticed that around the year 600 B.C. everything pivoted, everything changed. The whole world turned on a pivot, and very suddenly there was an entirely new culture and civilization among nations throughout the entire world. We saw that this also happened in 1200 B.C. (600 years before the same sort of thing happened). What was it? Well it was the climate; it was the people of the sea being driven there—the Sicels, the Sardis, the Tyrrhenio, and the Philistines. As we saw from the Amarna Letters, the same time the Hebrews were moving in, the Philistines were moving in on the coast. All the early books of the history of Israel have to do with the conflicts, and agreements and friendships, between the Philistines and Israel because they were very close together. The Philistines were Greeks, and they settled there back in 1200. That's why it's called Palestine. It's named after the Philistines because they settled in Palestine. The lands were named after the places where they settled, not the places where they came from. The Tyrrhenio are those who settled in Tyrrhenium and became Etruscans; they came from Asia Minor. The Sicels are those who settled in Sicily. The Sardis are those who settled in Sardinia, finally. They tried to settle in Egypt, and in a tremendous battle Bicarinus drove them back on the east branch of the Nile. So they had to go farther up on the coast, and they settled in Palestine. But anyway, 600 B.C. was another of those big times when everything changed. In 600 was the passing of the old sacral kingship (that culture). Before that kings were sacred and so was the temple. The king was never crowned in the palace; he was always crowned in the temple. Kingship was sacred. The kingly line was sacred; it was the patriarchal line. This was so in almost all cities. There is a great deal on this subject. But all of a sudden the sacral kingship passed away, and the question arose, "Who's in charge around here?" Anybody who could grab the power, and so you have the age of tyrants, and you have the new and ambitious age of emperors, and things like that. But first, why? And all this is relative to the Book of Mormon because it's the same thing. You see, as the Book of Mormon starts up everything is in upheaval. Poor Lehi didn't know what to do; he prayed desperately. He went out about his business, and then he had a vision and came home. There was nothing

to do. He had to leave and get out (we'll talk about that the next time, his means of departure, etc.). But everything was in upheaval. His own family was split down the middle. We saw the last time that one side was for supporting Babylonia, and the other side was for Egypt. They had been otherwise; they had shifted positions. At this time, you see, no one had any particular loyalties. It was free enterprise everywhere, and money was behind everything here. We will see why this was literally the case. The twenty-sixth dynasty was the great last dynasty of Egypt and the dynasty under which Lehi lived. Israel was a protectorate of it, as a matter of fact.

How does the Book of Mormon start out? In the first year of King Zedekiah. Well, Zedekiah was put in by Necho II. His name wasn't Zedekiah; Necho II, the Pharaoh, gave him that name. The king of Egypt put him in, who is Necho II. How could Necho II do it? Because he had a lot of money. Where did he get it? He got it from Gyges. Who was Gyges? He was the big man in Sardis, which was the capital of Lydia where they had just invented money (it had been coined in the eighth century). Don't think that didn't make a difference. Money was necessary; the situation required it. That freed everybody to go in and do pretty much what they wanted to.

What happened to the sacral kingship in 600 B.C., what wiped them out? Now we have to go into a little Geopolitics here. This is important because it goes on all the time. Notice, it can only happen in Palestine which is the cockpit of the world. It is today, and it always was. It was in Lehi's time and before in 1200 B.C. Why? Because that is the only place in the world where the sea invades the land mass to a great extent. See, it goes right into the middle of the great European/African mass that comes together. We'll make just a little, dinky map here. Here's India here and Ceylon down here. Then here are the two rivers. Here is the ocean, and here's the Black Sea up here. Here are the oil fields, and the Greeks down here. This is Libya over here, and Abyssinia here.

This is called Geopolitics, and it's what pushed Hitler into World War II. We wouldn't have had World War II if it weren't for Geopolitics. Well, his idea was that it was behind everything—the doctrine of Geopolitics. It's good we have this here because this shows the role that Palestine plays—why this is so extremely important along here. Geopolitics was invented by Alfred MacKinder, a Scottish geographer, in the early twentieth century. It was taken up by Karl Haushofer who was Hitler's official geographer. The theory was very plain. It had already been expounded long ago (Henry Thomas Buckle, way back there in the early days). There's a good explanation of it by Buckminster Fuller. He talks a lot about the land pirates and the sea pirates, culminating in World War I. Well, it's this idea: Central Asia is controlled by the land people—the great land mass of Central Asia. It's called the Asiatic Shield. The shield is that part which is covered by snow about half the year, so you can see it from space. It's shaped like a shield too. Here are the great people of the plains. This is the clock, the driving force of history. Whenever there is trouble, it begins there. Why does it begin there? Because these are nomads in the vast, central part of Asia, living on grass. Their economy, therefore, is quite sensitive. It's a marginal economy. In a bad year they have to move, and they are able to move because they are nomads. They tour all the time. And where do they go? Naturally, they move to the richer and more prosperous civilizations on the periphery. All the world civilizations lie on the periphery—in India, in Egypt, and in Europe. Notice, in every case there is a literal wall; they build a literal wall to keep the nomads out. Here we have the Khyber, the pass in the wall. Then we have the those of Alexander, the iron gates, etc., the pass up here. Pharaohs always, from predynastic times, built the white wall of the North, the wall of the Amu—the wall to keep the Asiatics out. There was always a wall. Sinuhe, in the time of

Sesostris I, describes when he was escaping what a hard time he had getting past the guards there. This is the wall that kept them out. And you know the Cilician Gates that kept them out here. In Europe the Romans built a vast one, running clear from the Black Sea right over to the Rhine (following along the Danube). They are called the limes (always fortified, the whole length, from the Black Sea to the North Sea). Forts at a distance, walls in between to keep out various barbarians who were always pushing in. Whenever times got bad, these people were desperate. They moved and wanted to take over, and they usually succeeded. So there was wave after wave of them. There have been eleven waves that have moved in here and left eleven different languages in India like the skins of an onion. So you have the vast limes ending finally if you go clear up in northern England to Scotland where you find Hadrian's Wall, which still stands. Hadrian's Wall was built to keep the Picts and the Scots out of the empire.

Then there is the greatest wall of all. They had a big problem back here in China because China was wide open to the steppes, wasn't it? They built the Wall of China, which was 1500 miles long. They built that huge wall just to keep these people out of the center. Whenever things were bad, they always spread. As Buckminster Fuller says, "World War I was a contest between the sea pirates [the British Empire whose fleet was in the sea] and the land pirates who were the Central European powers, and Russia along with them. This is where the two really come together—the only place in the world where, for thousands of miles, the sea actually invades the main land mass. This is Africa, this is Asia, and this is Europe. They all come together right here, and the sea comes in and meets them all there. This is the place you have to control if you are going to control the world. This was the theory of Haushofer, and this was why Hitler had his Egyptian expedition—Rommel, and all that sort of thing.

In the time of Lehi, Necho II decided he couldn't stand up to the combined powers. His rule was from 605 (some say 609) to 595; he lived right at the time that Lehi left Jerusalem. Assyria was knocked out, you remember, by Persia and Babylonia getting together, and then they started knocking each other out. So Necho invested in a navy. It was a time of new inventions and new enterprises. A new invention revolutionized naval warfare; it was the trireme which was invented by the Corinthians. Necho bought several hundred of them, hired Corinthians to man them, and trained crews for them. Necho dominated the seas, and he died in 595 B.C., five years after Lehi left Jerusalem. Lehi left well before the fall; he got out in time. Necho sent an expedition clear around Africa (that's well attested) and built a canal from the Red Sea to one of the branches of the Nile (which we have so beautifully delineated here). He had his Carian navy (he was quite the person), and he was bankrolled by Gyges. Here is Asia Minor. Here is Lydia, with its capital at Sardis. This man Gyges was fabulously rich. He was so rich because they invented money in his time, and he took advantage of that. He was right on the scene, and this gave him an enormous advantage. Everybody wanted to trade like crazy in these days. They were getting around a lot, and they had to have some medium of exchange. They had money of various forms and sorts, but this was the first real money, less than a century before Lehi. So money got into the Book of Mormon and played an important part. We find out later that the Nephites designed their own monetary standards and set them up to suit their conditions from time to time. They ended up with an ideal monetary system which is described there. Professor Richard Smith of Harvard, who is a member of the Church, showed it was the most perfect monetary system that could possibly be devised—the most economical, requiring the least number of coins for the greatest number of exchanges and deals. It was a model; it was based on sevens and threes and things you would never expect of a monetary system. But it was a beautiful one.

(Joseph Smith invented it, you see—a twenty-three-year-old hick from the sticks; he figured it all out.) Well anyway, this money was very important, and Necho was bankrolled by Gyges. This tells the story of what was going on at this time; this would be typical. Gyges could do anything he wanted because he had money. There's the famous story of the "ring of Gyges." According to the Greek proverb, an honest man is a man who would be honest even though he had the ring of Gyges. The idea was that the ring of Gyges made you invisible so that you could do anything you wanted. If you had that much money, nobody would question you. But with a truly honest man it doesn't make any difference. Even if he had the ring of Gyges, he would still be honest. But who would be honest with the ring of Gyges when you can get away with anything?

Gyges was followed by a man who is better known to you as the richest man in the world (this is typical of what goes on). He was Croesus, who was also a tyrant of Sardis. You say, "Well, how do these men get to be in charge?" If the king was gone, as I said, everybody was asking, "Who is in charge around here?" Well, it would have to be somebody who was able to take charge—somebody with the personality and force, etc. These were the tyrants; everywhere you find tyrants taking over at this time. The name "tyrant" means something bad because he can do anything he wants to and get away with it. But tyrants were really a great necessity originally. The tyrant was a person of unusual skill and capacity who, with his friends, was able to take over. He would say, "Things are going bad, so we will take over now." He was able to hire soldiers, etc. So all these men are known as the tyrants. You have Polycrates, you have Peisistratus in Athens, and you have Dionysius in Syracuse. Wherever you go you find these tyrants ruling. The kings of Egypt were really just tyrants. They were just a rich family who put themselves in charge of the Saitic area of Egypt and then hired Carian troops, paid for by Gyges' money. They were in business, and they would trade things, etc. There was very active trade at this time. Remember, Lehi was a man who was exceedingly rich, and he traded a lot. He was involved in business. The most important river town in the Book of Mormon is Sidon. Well, Sidon was the great port through which Israel traded at that time. It was open to the Western World. But the tyrants were a remarkable group of men. Plato thought he could make Dionysius II of Syracuse the model king, the philosopher king. But unfortunately his father had been a tyrant too and had spoiled him. He wasn't competent, so Plato wasn't able to do it. Wherever you go, tyrants will turn up, but they can't last. There are democratic uprisings against them; people get together. Their main enemies, of course, are the important families, the rival tyrants. They say, "If you can be a tyrant, I can be a tyrant." So you always find assassinations, murders, great and bloody events. This becomes the theme of the Greek tragedies, you'll notice. They take us back to an earlier time, way back in 1200, when the people first settled down. As Aristotle says, their subject is *tragikoteros*. It's necessarily tragic and lofty. It deals with the rivalries and bitterness of the great houses fighting among themselves. Since anybody could claim the right to be king, the rivalries were relentless. Of course, there were the intermarriages and then the betrayals and then the plots—plotting with somebody outside and then accusing each other of treason. This goes on, and it is the theme of Greek tragedy, which is by nature tragic because it is what people do for power. This is the power of the great houses. It happens on a lofty level; that gives it its majesty—the sweep, the long robes, and stuff like that. But the tyrants are a very real factor. You notice these elements appear all through the Book of Mormon very vividly. There were several tyrants like Zeezrom, or especially Amlici, mortal rival of Alma, who wanted to be king. Then you have the heroes on the other side. Many a time a man, by intrigue and secrecy and bribery, got himself to be king. It happened again and again in the Book of Mormon. See, when you transplant a culture, you take the whole thing with you. Nobody invents a new culture; you have it

already built into you. There are hundreds of years behind it, etc. But this was changed; everything was being pulled up by the roots in this time, so these things were happening here.

There were migrations everywhere, colonies. As I say, these people were forced to move, and they moved in and made trouble. The other people who had lived there before were uprooted. They went looking for better homes. It becomes a promised land (we are looking for a promised land). They were led by a patriarch which means “father leader,” the leader of the colony or the group. They went out and looked for places to settle as colonies. Sometimes they had mother cities. The word “metropolis” means “metro polis,” your mother city that sends you out. The Greeks at this time were sending out colonies everywhere as feelers, “Could we settle here?” They would try to settle somewhere and be driven out and try again. It ended up with a whole network of colonies. Every one of the greater settlements were those that survived. The reason they made the colonies was so that they could survive themselves, so they would have some place to run when they were overrun. Athens’ Acropolis held out. Some of the Omegara held out, Sparta, etc. But very few of them did. They were overrun and scattered in all directions this way. But what was going on in one place was going on in another place. You would find one architecture at this time—the same civic, the same urban architecture and lifestyle. Whether you went to China or whether you went to Spain, you would find it. You would find the same language pretty much (we are talking about the Middle East now). It was Aramaic; now it has become Greek. You see, already in Lehi’s time, the Egyptian army and navy were both Greek. What’s more, the Babylonians and Assyrians were hiring Greek soldiers. Palestine was swarming, not with just Greeks, but with Jews, Libyans, Amu, Hittites, Celts, and Goths (people speaking our own language). They were all mixed up in this mess. It was a time of world upheaval, such as the time we live in today. They looked for their promised lands. And many people were out of any kind of work, and so they would become mercenaries. They would hire themselves out.

This little book here is a very nice one. This is a collection of all the lyric poetry of the Greeks from the sixth and seventh centuries B.C. These are the poets that were writing at this particular time, and they show us very clearly what it was like because they are very personal and intimate, often very bitter. Family histories, etc., tell us exactly what was going on. They are scattered everywhere. We start out in the eighth century, and we have Colinus who is a good example. Colinus was a poet in western Asia Minor, and the Sumerians were moving in. They were going to be Europeans later on, but great droves of them were moving in with their flocks and herds because there was no grass on the plains. They were moving through Asia Minor and coming in. These people had been luxurious and satisfied for quite a while; they were very wealthy. He couldn’t get the youth to do anything. He was trying to get them stirred up and excited because they were spoiled, and they were just sitting on their behinds and doing nothing:

“How long? [how many stirring orations start out with those words, *mechris teo*?] “How long, how long is this going to go on? [Cicero and the famous *Catiline Orations*, how long? etc.] How long are you going to sit on your behinds all the time, when you should be stirring yourselves up? [having a little guts for a change]. Oh youth of the land, aren’t you ashamed of yourself, to sit around here unable to make up your minds? [don’t you know what’s coming down on us?]. Most of you spend your time getting drunk. And you think you’re in peace, and everything is going to be all right. Well, you’re going to find out, because presently [overnight] war will overrun the whole country.”

They couldn't realize what was happening when these times happened. It's like a forest fire. We stand around for a while and think it can't spread much more. Before you know it, all sorts of things are happening. Then he goes into a routine appeal to patriotism—the old appeal for home, country, and that sort of thing. These appeals are found in the Book of Mormon too, as you know. This was written about a hundred years before Lehi. But now we come to his own century, and we get to Archilochus. This is a good example; we have a lot from Archilochus. He was a soldier and a merchant, but as he tells us in his first elegy:

“I am a servant to this *anax* [a prince, a chief, or someone who has taken authority; it's not the king; it's like your Central American generals and colonels that take over] I'm bound to service to him. Really I have this great gift, and I should be a poet. Even though I know the beloved gifts of the muses, I have to serve this heel.”

He goes on and talks about the antiballistic missiles, “these fancy new weapons.” He is very much against them. “I don't have any trust at all in these new far-shooting bows, special slings, war machines, and things like that. Give me the old-fashioned sword; it's the only way a soldier can fight.” They didn't want these new things. He was uprooted, and he was fighting. Here's a good one. He was serving Semiticus in Egypt, the one who was supporting Israel in Lehi's time. He was getting his money from Gyges, but he was getting Gyges' money back from Semiticus who was hiring Greek mercenaries. Remember, this twenty-sixth dynasty is called the Saitic Dynasty from Sais (he talks about it here). Sais is here, and Tanis is here. It's not exactly on this particular branch, but it's a little inland. That was Sais. He says, “My beautiful Saitic shield is lying in a bush somewhere, where I left it with great discretion—judiciously withdrawing from the battle which would have ended my days.” He says, “Why should I fight for that kind of pay? I left my weapon behind in perfectly good condition. I didn't leave it willingly, but I would have ended up dead if I hadn't. Well, I wish it good luck.” And this is so typical of the times: “I can buy myself another just as good.” No sense of loyalty because he is a hireling. There's a famous poem about one of the Prussian guard of Frederick II. You had to conquer the world for the king. These were the eighteenth century boys—purely personal, lots of gallantry, theater, etc. At the battle of whatever it was, Frederick was raging and storming and said, “This is treason; you are deserting.” The fire got too hot, so the soldiers turned and started to fall back. One of the guard said, “No, Fritz (that's the affectionate name they called him), this is not a case of treason. I've done enough today for my fourteen cents.” The soldiers were paid fourteen cents a day. It's the same thing here, “I can buy myself another sword.” He's not worried. It's free enterprise; I'm for myself. If the business doesn't pay, I'll go over to another corporation. Nobody feels loyalty to anybody. These men were tyrants. They could hold the people only so long. That's why *tyrant* has come to have the meaning it has—a person who cracks down and uses force and violence and trickery to put over his deals, and will stop at nothing. That's tyrannical. Originally, as I said, they performed a necessary purpose.

At the same time Archilochus was serving in the Egyptian army, his brother was serving in the Babylonian army on the other side. This is typical. He had to hire himself out too. This is the way things went. Some of his army talk is really good here. This is certainly the spirit of the times now. What do you depend on in a case like this? Where are your loyalties now? Because of economic upset, everybody is uprooted. There is nothing you can count on. The market has collapsed and everything else. This is his friend Pericles he is

addressing here: “Anything you get, it happens to be by *tychē* or by *mora*, by chance or by fate. By fate or by accident, that’s all there is.”

At the battle of Chaeronea where the great Demosthenes threw away his shield when he ran from the field, on his shield was inscribed the substance of his faith *tē tychē*, “to Lady Luck.” That’s all you could hope for anymore when they had lost that sort of thing. Euripides had a favorite chorus, and he ended five plays that way. The great plays are tragic because of the tragic situation you are constantly finding yourself in in this world. And what is the essence of tragedy? It’s not the good guys against the bad guys. Never in the Book of Mormon will you find that. No good army fights a bad army ever. But what is it that brings these people together, and what causes this? How do you explain it? Well, you give up usually without the gospel. You say what Euripides said in his plays. At least five of his known plays end with this chorus, “The gods [fate] take many forms, and many unexpected things they bring to pass. The things we had been taught all our lives to expect were right don’t go into fulfillment at all [it doesn’t turn out that way]. But somehow or other, God finds a way to bring about the one thing we least expected [the things we have never been taught to expect].” He uses “God” in the singular; this is God he is talking about. He says, “Do you want to know how this happened? [he is just ending the tragedy]. That’s how this happened.” Because, as I say, the essence of tragedy is not black versus white, the good guys versus the bad guys (black hats and white hats). It’s the incompatibility of two good things. You have to decide, and they are both good. What can you do about it?

The first Greek tragedy is that of *The Hiketides*, *The Suppliants*. What are they supplicating about? Well, the fifty daughters of Danaus have fled from Egypt to the king of Argos as it begins. It’s always between Egypt and Greece (Egypt, Israel, and Greece are all right together here). They don’t want to marry their cousins. By Egyptian law they should marry their cousins, and by Arabic law they should too. You marry *bint al-‘ammi*, the daughter of your paternal uncle (you’re supposed to). But for a Greek that was a horror. That was almost a form of incest; they couldn’t do it. But if they didn’t marry their cousins, the king of Egypt promised to come and make war against Argos. So the king had his choice (should we make this choice?) No marriage and plunge the nation into a deadly war? Or should we let our daughters (the fifty daughters of Danaus) marry the sons of Egypt. It’s like Joseph and Asenath again, the same thing. Should Joseph have married Asenath, the daughter of the high priest of Heliopolis? Was that right? The rabbis talked and talked about that.

What was the choice? You had either war or breaking a high moral law, one or the other. They were both immoral. It’s immoral to plunge your nation into war. This is the typical situation. So the scene opens with the king, and his opening words are: “Children, we must think about these things; we must weigh the situation.” So we have the necessity of thinking about these things, putting them together, considering the issues. This is the sort of time that they were living in here, as we are today. It’s a different time today. You have no idea how different it is from when I was teaching fifty years ago (believe it or not, half a century ago I was teaching; isn’t that wild). So we go on here. He has something to say about various things, such as the homes they had. His family moved around and couldn’t settle anywhere; this was the trouble. He talks about Gyges here and his great wealth: “I have no desire to become as rich as Gyges [most people don’t, but there were plenty of ambitious people who did]. Such a zeal doesn’t seize me. I don’t rejoice in such things. I do not have any envy of the work of a tyrant [he uses that word]. I do not ask for the

work of a tyrant, and I do not ask for the wealth of Gyges.” They go together. If he has the wealth, he has the power. Of course, power and gain is one of the main themes in the Book of Mormon—seeking power and gain. Everybody does that, you see. Then he says, “Let such ambition be far from my eyes.” He wants to preserve his integrity, but he has a hard time. To show how hard it is are the famous lines on his spear.

Here’s careerism. This is a good example. “There are ambitious people,” he says. “At last Leophilus is in charge of everything [he is talking about his unit in the army]. Leophilus bosses everybody. Everybody has to come to him with their problems. And let everybody harken to anything Leophilus says. Good old Leophilus; he got where he wanted to be. Everything to Leophilus. If he wants it, he can have it.” Then there is the democratic ideal of the soldier. This is the officer, the climber (the important person, the careerist, the brass) that he is talking about here: “I don’t particularly love these tall, strutting, over-dressed generals—strutting around with their chins in the air, their hair carefully wind blown [in blown curls], and their lofty airs. Give me the short, underslung, tough, little guy who can stand in the ranks and really do some fighting. It’s not the same thing at all.” *Rhoikos* means tough, densely built. *Asphalios*, “can’t push him over;” *bebēkōs posi*, “firm on his feet;” *kradiēs pleōs*, “with a heart as tough as stone [you can’t move him].” Of course, that’s the sort of mercenaries these people wanted. But if you didn’t pay them enough, you were in trouble because they would take over. This is what happened elsewhere.

There are others like this. The first one, the oldest, is from Mertillus. Everybody rejoices because Mertillus is dead (we finally got rid of him). There are some good ones here, but you see what the situation was. Alcman of Sparta said, “We have come here looking for a promised land.” And there is also some marvelous nature poetry. This is surprising. It was an age of individualism. These people become individuals, and they see things. Lehi does; he has a beautiful *qaṣîda* when he recites that poem at the river of Lemuel in the valley of Laman. It’s a true *qaṣîda*, and Nephi gets quite ecstatic about nature images. This is the famous one about one night on the Saronic Gulf, absolutely gorgeous. “The purple mountain peaks are asleep, and the waterfalls coming down.” The Greek mountains are like the ones around here, and each aspect of the mountain has a description. It’s in the dusk with the waterfalls. “And all the little things around under the leaves, and rustling here and there. All the things which the black earth nourishes. And the prowling beasts of the mountains and the busy bees are all asleep now. [This is a nice part here.] There is a touch of deep sea life, the dolphins and the whales.” He sees them lying in suspension in the purple, luminescent water of the deep, the benthic waters. He goes into the Cousteau aspect. He follows nature from the mountains right down into the water. There’s this feeling of sympathy. We get great individualism here, and we also get the great geniuses with Greeks (very strong). We don’t want to get sidetracked on Greeks here because we want to get to the Book of Mormon. But there is a lot of this in the Book of Mormon; we will see that’s so.

Then we have these deals. Cyrus made a deal with the king of Babylon, and so they threw out Egypt. But Cyrus was a remarkable man. Remember Croesus, the king of Lydia who conquered Phrygia with all his money? He went to the Oracle at Delphi which was international. Everybody from any country went to the Oracle of Delphi. It was free and open; you could go there at any time. See, it was a worldwide, open society there. He asked what would happen if he went to war. The Oracle told him if he went to war he would overthrow a mighty empire. He was going to war against Cyrus of Persia, which

wasn't wise. Of course, the mighty empire he overthrew was his own. The Oracle didn't tell him that; that's the way Oracles talk. But he went to war with Cyrus, which was very foolish. Finally, Cyrus came to Sardis, and when he was taking the city Croesus had lost everything. This is typical of the times: you lose everything or you gain everything. It was an age of takeovers and losses. He took all his costly palace furniture and everything out in the marketplace, got on top of it, and made a big bonfire to sacrifice himself. He wasn't going to live if he couldn't live under those circumstances. As it started to burn merrily, Cyrus broke into the city, rushed to the marketplace, and saw the smoke ascending. He ordered his men to put out the fire as fast as they could. As one story tells it, he prayed and there was a miraculous rainstorm. So Croesus was delivered. Then Croesus became his best friend and adviser. This is typical. Croesus, having experience, traveled around with him and told him not to try to conquer the world. It wasn't the wise thing to do. But Cyrus wouldn't listen to him, although time and again he saved Cyrus' neck. Finally, there was one country that got under Cyrus' skin. It was the land of the Massagetae, way up in central Russia. He hadn't taken the land of the Massagetae which was north of his own. It was ruled by a woman, Tomiris, a great queen. Croesus said, "Nothing doing; don't do it," but Cyrus didn't listen to him. He went against the country. Then there's the story of the king and queen (like Solomon and the Queen of Sheba). Tomiris invited him to a banquet and had him murdered. She had his head chopped off and put into a bag of blood. She said, "You wanted blood; I'll give you blood." He had invited her son to a banquet and murdered him. Foolishly enough, he thought that because of his power he could protect himself. So that was the end of the mighty Cyrus.

Cyrus was followed by Darius, and he went into Egypt. What is a Persian from Central Asia doing in Egypt? He became one of the best Pharaohs. Out at Karga Oasis, he built a temple of Amon, one of the most magnificent structures, and there is the most beautiful hymn to Amon written by Darius I. Amon is the common name in the Book of Mormon; it dominates throughout the Book of Mormon. Darius' son Cambyses was a good man, but the Egyptians hated him. They accused him of madness and all sorts of things. But his son Xerxes, you remember, was the one who marched against the Greeks. The Greeks overcame him at Marathon. In the Battle of Marathon, the ones who won the Congressional Medal were Aeschylus and his brother. Aeschylus wrote a play called "The Persians." He gives a first-hand account of the Battle of Marathon. Remember what we are dealing with is Xerxes, who was the son of Darius and a Pharaoh in Egypt as well, and was very close to Israel. Cyrus became one of the saints of Israel (the second Cyrus) because he delivered Israel from Babylon (so it goes). But anyway, Aeschylus told about the great victory of the Greeks over the overwhelming Persian force at the Battle of Marathon in which he took a stellar role. In every play the ghost has to appear. It's a religious affair. Like the Hopi dance, you have to have the *Sipapuni* there. There's an altar in the center of the stage, and there's a *Canistra*, a sand patch where no mortal is supposed to set foot. This is the barren area, the neutral area, between this world and the other world where the play does not take place. The *Canistra* is just dust and sand where nothing grows. In the center is the altar. The Hopis arrange it the same way; they have the altar and then they have the two trees with the baho feathers on them, the spirit feathers. That's the *Sipapu*, the hole to the underworld from which the spirit appears.

You would think this Greek play is glory and patriotic flag waving, letting the eagles scream, etc. Not a bit of it. Xerxes is really the hero for Aeschylus. When he comes in, he is utterly bedraggled, beaten, (it's after the battle, you see) and covered with dust. He has been running for his life; his garments are torn—anything but the mightiest king in the world as he comes in. You pity him, and the play ends on an upbeat note. His mother tells

him, “Well, we’ve made idiots of ourselves; let’s go down and try to pick up the pieces.” And everybody feels much better. But in the middle of the play Darius appears, and he doesn’t rebuke Xerxes, his son, for hubris—for going too far (we’ll have to mention that). He rebukes the Athenians. He says, “Let this be a lesson to you, Athenians” [at this moment of patriotic triumph]. This was just right after the battle; they were right there. Of course, this was written years later; he was quite young at the time of the battle. In this patriotic fervor he just throws cold water on the whole thing. He says, “Look, when you get rich and powerful, this is going to happen to you, Athenians. This message comes to you.”

It’s the same thing in the Book of Mormon. The greatest patriotic celebration they had was the celebration of the triumphant rule of King Benjamin in which they had victory, triumph, and prosperity throughout. He held a great assembly of the nation, and all he did was tear them down, put them in mind of their nothingness. He said, “I would that ye should remember [keep in mind] . . . the greatness of God, and your own nothingness. . . . I say unto you that if ye do this ye shall always rejoice” (Mosiah 4:11). He had to teach them to rejoice. These four stages that the Greek tragedians repeat (they are repeated in quite a number of plays) are the four that we follow. We follow them in the Book of Mormon too. They are (1) *olbia* (2) *koros* (3) *hubris* (we all know what that is) and (4) *atē*. This is what you go through. *Olbia* is happiness and prosperity, having what you want (and not necessarily getting it dishonestly). Prospering in the best possible sense is *olbia*. But when you have that, then you get *koros*. That means full. When you’ve had all you can eat, and you insist on eating more, that’s bad—that’s *koros*, that’s overfilling, that’s force eating. You have eaten too much when you have *koros*. That leads to *hubris*, overconfidence. You think you are so important. You automatically feel that you are the good guy, and what you do is all right. You take advantage of others, and then you start playing the game pretty rough. That’s the way powerful people always do. The final stage is *atē*, the point at which you participate in ending the play as fast as possible. When you have reached the point of no return, there is no, *la commedia è finita* no point to continuing the play. Things will just get worse. As the Book of Mormon puts it often, you are either ripe in iniquity (if you get any riper than that you rot, as Shakespeare says), or the cup of iniquity is full. You cannot dilute it anymore; there is nothing you can do about it. If it’s full, you can’t add anything to it. Take something from it is what you’re going to have to do—tip it over. But when the cup is full and when the fruit is ripe, you can’t go anywhere after that. That is the point of *atē*. The other point is to end the play and not let the misery drag on. The person walks as if he were sort of hypnotized, and the things he says and does are destructive. He is subconsciously aware of what he is doing; he is trying to get rid of himself. It’s almost a death wish that you have there. You want to end the play as fast as you can, and that’s *atē*. You see, that will seize upon a people.

These great forces all came out among the contemporaries of Lehi in the year 600 B.C. This whole thing came to a head and got lost at that time. There was no better period in which to launch a new civilization than in the time of Lehi because he was a colonist, a patriarch, and a father leader. He was driven out of a city that collapsed. He was a victim of the great powers, etc. But we have another element in here, and this makes quite a bit of difference. This is so much like our own time and our own world, and the point is that he had the gospel. Remember, he went out and he prayed right at the beginning of the first chapter. He was absolutely sick; he couldn’t stand it. Then he went out and had a sun stroke (or whatever it was out in the desert). He ran home to his house in Jerusalem and threw himself on the bed. Then he thought he was carried away, and he saw what

happened. He saw the Council of the preexistence. He saw the plan, the Lord coming down, and the twelve apostles. He saw how it all worked out. From then on he was one happy man. He could do nothing but rejoice after that. He went out and tried to preach, ran into real trouble, and had to leave town. Well, this is another story which we will take up later. But this picture is a real one, and it includes ourselves. So many things are happening now that we thought would never happen before. As good old Euripides says, "We thought this would never happen." We thought there would be forest fires, but not wipe out a big part of Yellowstone (it's not finished yet) and things like that. We thought there would be a breakup of the ozone, but not five times as fast (as it's going now). We thought there would be a greenhouse effect, but we thought it would take three, four, or five hundred years. We didn't think it would take ten years. So everything is being hastened now. There's an acceleration. You notice throughout the Book of Mormon there's a great sense of urgency. This book was brought at a particular time for a particular place, addressed to a particular people. "This comes to you, oh ye Gentiles, that ye may be wiser than we have been." You don't have much time, but do what you should do, and don't do what you are doing. It keeps telling us that. So the Book of Mormon has a real message for us.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 4
Introduction
Setting the Stage, 600 B.C.

One thing we've got to make just a short remark about here is the evidence for the Book of Mormon. They talk so much about archaeological evidence; that always comes up where the Book of Mormon is mentioned. If you want proof of the Book of Mormon, you must go to the Old World. You won't find it in the New World. You can see why. In the Old World we have massive, legible sources. Remember, the vitally important first book of Nephi all takes place in the Old World; it doesn't take place in Central America or anywhere else, except in the Old World. Of course, New World archaeology won't cut anything because it covers this vast area of the Western Hemisphere, and we have only an infinitesimal sampling. Nobody knows what was going on a thousand years ago in this hemisphere; they haven't the vaguest idea. Moreover, archaeology gives no specific answers anyway; you have to speculate about them. The greatest archaeological progress and programs for centuries were in Egypt. That's where they started digging already in the Middle Ages because it fascinated them. So for hundreds of years archaeology has been at work in Egypt. Twenty years ago everything we had found out about it was thrown away. Through the years they had built up a standard, accepted account (the approved school solution) of what happened in Egypt—how the kingdoms of the North and the South conflicted, then came together and were united in the crowns. That isn't so at all. The things we regarded as the most basic Egyptian history (the result of ages of archaeology and immense expense) don't hold up at all anymore.

Well, we must get on here, but not until we have looked more curiously at a few things that the authors of the Book of Mormon want us to see. A syllabus is a list of things that should be studied. Usually, you end up by studying the syllabus. You study the things you have to, and you are eager to get on from one point to the next, etc. But how do you study these things in the Book of Mormon? The teacher has just one purpose: to save the students time. I can save you a lot of time (here's where we get the books on the shelf). You could have discovered these things for yourselves, but it would take you much more time. A few years ago St. Johns University tried a new method of teaching in which the students went through all the steps of discovery (it was a humanistic sort of thing) necessary to discover the telescope or to discover the mountains on the moon. They constructed an exact replica of Galileo's telescope. Then they looked at the mountains on the moon. Then they discovered the moons of Jupiter, etc. But this takes your whole lifetime. It took Galileo a lifetime to do it. The best way for you to learn it is to do exactly what Galileo did, but then you are through and you have done nothing for yourself. The whole advantage of recording is to save time. The Book of Mormon is an epitome of that. We are constantly reminded in the Book of Mormon that they have cut things down, that things have been very carefully edited and reduced to only the things most vital that the authors want us to have. It is a digest of a vast amount of records that they have gone through and edited for our benefit. They are going to save us time, so I invite you to look up the things that interest you. There will be books on reserve for this class. It's foolish, but most of the things for the time being will be mine because they are the things I've been talking about. That's where you find them. Oh, there are others, but the Book of

Mormon itself is what you need to learn. This is a strange class on a strange subject. It's not like anything else; this is the point. It's a crash course, an emergency course. It's what they call a "quickie course" in the army. We haven't got long to learn; we haven't got long to go. If you had seen the newspaper this morning, you might say, "Great guns, what's happening now!" This is so. The situation is very urgent today. It's not like it has been at other times.

Where do you research in the Book of Mormon? This is the point: you must research in yourself. I'm not talking in the abstract sense; I'm talking in the historical sense here. Actually, you must see yourself in the book. That's one thing students have always been able to do very easily. They can find themselves in the book. The Arab students always identified themselves with Nephi. Boy, he was their man. For a time we had the Point Four. It was President Harris who introduced the Point Four in the Middle East. It was a program by which we would bring Middle Eastern students over here to study. BYU had a great influx of Moslem students from all the Middle Eastern lands. They were required to take religion here. The only religion they would take was the Book of Mormon, and they had me teaching a Book of Mormon class just for Moslems. Some very amusing things came out. But, brother, the Book of Mormon was their book, and Nephi was their hero. They were all for him. But you do find it in yourself. The Book of Mormon is unique, and it has been a great converter. It has been irresistible. It has done more than all the missionaries put together because it involves the reader like no other book. You do identify with it; it grabs you if you read it carefully. You don't even have to read it carefully. So many people are impressed on first reading it.

I was just remembering yesterday when the Salmon brothers were visiting us back in 1959. They are fifth-generation Israelis, eminent scientists now. One of them has to do with the disposition of radioactive materials in Israel, which is a very important problem, of course, because they have to use that form of energy and they don't have much space to put it in. The other one is in North Carolina now, I think; he has moved around. But anyway, they were here for a short time. They went skiing, and John, the younger brother, broke his leg. He went to the infirmary here, and they were held up. Somebody gave him a Book of Mormon and he read it. But then he insisted the next day on being baptized. Now, here was a fifth generation Israeli. He said, "I have to be baptized." Well, he had this huge cast on his leg. Were they going to baptize him with the cast on his leg? Yes, we baptized him; he wouldn't settle for anything else. He just had to be baptized. Well, that's the way the Book of Mormon can grab you. They were fifth generation Hasidic Jews. Hasidic Judaism is the old-fashioned Judaism, and they recognized the Book of Mormon as their book culturally. And the Arabs recognized it. Religiously, it was perfectly clear to the Jews what this was. So he had to be baptized on the spot, and he had never heard of it before.

The Book of Mormon does that, and that is why the only possible test for this course must be an essay of some sort in which you can show how the Book of Mormon has stirred you to thought and action—how it has affected you. The question will be worded as a subject for an essay or two, and identification questions could be significant to show that you follow along. The historical part of it is also extremely important, not just as evidence. But we hope to see why this morning, if we ever get on to this. So that's what it is. All I can do is to show you how it stirs me and the things that interest me. That's all, you see. It's quite unfair that your work should be judged by another—that I should judge you by the way your work impresses me. An essay can only be judged on the quality alone, and the quality is a personal judgement. As Joseph Smith says, "No man's opinion is worth a

straw.” It’s his opinion, and he is welcome to it, but you can’t use it as authority to prove anything in law courts or anything else. Well, they do it all the time, of course. But this is what we’ve got to grade on, and worst of all, I have my opinion of quality. Take today’s lesson, for example. We say, “How long is it to be? In what direction will it move? That depends entirely on what we find out from the text here.

Consider the circumstances under which the Book of Mormon was composed—the tremendous work that has gone into it over centuries. Then an angel bothered to bring it down and personally hand it over. Then Joseph Smith risked life and limb right from the beginning because of the Book of Mormon. Since we are told how carefully it has been edited, with a particular audience in mind, we must assume that every sentence in it has significance for us. They couldn’t afford to waste anything. So, we get going. Here’s a saying of Joseph Smith that I like (two of them): “The things of God are of deep import, and time and experience and careful, ponderous, solemn thoughts can only find them out.” Who is engaging today in careful, ponderous, and solemn thoughts? Everybody is “on the make.” This is almost a joke today, such things going on. “Thy mind, oh man, must stretch as high as the utmost heaven. The Saints ought to lay hold of every door, obtain a foothold on earth, and make all preparations within their power for the terrible storms that are now gathering in the heavens. The angels of heaven have taken council together. They have passed some decisions. These decisions will be made known in their time.”

So the Book of Mormon is our guide for these particular times, and it is essential to know, for example, that this was Jerusalem where it began. It was the first year of King Zedekiah when it began. There we have a specific time and place. As soon as we get to the New World, it is wide open. Anybody’s Book of Mormon geography will go, and they just argue forever about Book of Mormon geography, which is worthless. I wouldn’t touch that—never have touched Book of Mormon geography. There’s no point to it whatever—except they move north, they move south, they meet somebody, etc. But we do know specifically where this was (it was Jerusalem) and when it was (the first year of Zedekiah). This launches us on a sure footing. We know who installed Zedekiah.

Incidentally, I misinformed you last time when I said that it was Necho who installed Zedekiah. Necho installed Zedekiah’s predecessor. Let me give you the lineup here. We will begin with Hezekiah because the Book of Mormon is full of Isaiah, and Isaiah is the great preacher. In the Dead Sea Scrolls Isaiah hopelessly swamps all the others as far as statistics are concerned. So we will begin with Isaiah and King Hezekiah because that’s where the story of the Book of Mormon begins. That was way back in the eighth century (720 B.C.) when the Assyrians descended on Jerusalem. King Hezekiah was a contemporary of Isaiah, and Hezekiah’s son was Manasseh (that’s a good Book of Mormon name), and Manasseh’s son was Amon (another good Book of Mormon name), and his son was Josiah (the great reformer). Josiah drove the Assyrians out of Israel, but at the famous Battle of Megiddo in 609 Josiah was beaten and killed by Necho II of Egypt. They wanted to get rid of Assyria. Once they had gotten rid of Assyria, Necho took over. Four years later Necho, being victorious in Palestine, tried to stop Nebuchadnezzar in 605 B.C. at the Battle of Carchemish (up in the North, not far away), and he was killed. Necho II had overcome Josiah, but he put Josiah’s son Eliakim in as king of Judah and changed his name to Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23–24). He also deposed his brother Jehoahaz. This is the trick: you put your own man in and give him a new name. As I said, Necho was beaten by Nebuchadnezzar. Then Nebuchadnezzar came in and deposed Jehoiakim, the one who had been put in by the king of Egypt. He put in his place Mathoniah who was Zedekiah. He

was installed by Nebuchadnezzar, not Necho of Egypt (his brother was). Then the king changed his name to Zedekiah.

This is typical of the story: Zedekiah very soon rebelled against the Babylonians. He rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar who had installed him on the throne (who trusts whom in these days?). That brought the Babylonians in, and Nebuchadnezzar came and destroyed Jerusalem. That brought him into Jerusalem in Lehi's time because Zedekiah had turned against him. In the first year of Zedekiah is when Lehi had to leave Jerusalem. This is quite a while before because in 587 Jerusalem was destroyed. So this mix-up here is typical of what is going on.

As we mentioned before, in the year 600 B.C., the pivotal year, everything turned on its hinges and there was an entirely new world. The sacral kingship went out of the window, and there was revolution everywhere. Suddenly, the founders of most of the world's great religions appeared. They are all strictly contemporary with Lehi. This book is *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, and it has a chapter on this. We can read some things from here, "Lehi counted among his contemporaries not only the greatest first names in science, politics and business, but also the most illustrious religious founders known to history: Gautama Buddha, Confucius, Lao-tze, Vardhaman Mahavira (the founder of Jainism), [we had a Jainist in the class a while back], Zarathustra, and Pythagoras were all of Lehi's day." The top men, they were never exceeded, and they founded these religions. So you can see it was going to be a new world. They were all contemporary with Lehi (did they know Lehi?). This reminds us of another situation. In Lehi's day was when the Seven Wise Men lived. The Greeks talk about them, and they were all contemporaries of Lehi. These were wise men who had been rich and successful in the manner of Lehi and all left their homes to wander in the world, looking for wisdom. There are all sorts of stories about them. Once a year they would come together at a banquet feast and share their ideas and discoveries. They were seeking only for wisdom. They were the *Sophoi*, the wise men. They were succeeded by the Sophists, phony wise men who completely took over the scene a little while after by cultivating the art of rhetoric (that's something else). But the wise men were contemporary with Lehi.

We can talk about some other men. Who is the first great name in Western science? We should put his name on the board, I suppose. It's Thales of Miletus. We know he was contemporary because he predicted the solar eclipse of 585 B.C., just two years after Jerusalem was destroyed. That was just fifteen years after Lehi, in the prime of life, had left Jerusalem. So Thales of Miletus was a contemporary. His mother was a Phoenician, probably Jewish. He had studied mostly in Egypt; his ideas were Egyptian. See how international everything is? He was the father of modern science; it goes back to Thales in mathematics, geometry, etc. Let's see if we have something to say about good old Thales here: "Another who visited the East on business in Lehi's day was Thales of Miletus . . . Father of Western philosophy and science. His mother was a Phoenician and he received most of his education in Egypt." Here's another contemporary of Lehi. He probably knew Lehi because he was in business. Thales said that he didn't have much money. He traveled around and visited places. As I said, his mother was a Phoenician, and Sidon was the principal Phoenician port. Naturally, he would visit Tyre and Sidon on business. Who visited Tyre and especially Sidon on business? What's the famous city name on the river in the Book of Mormon? It's Sidon. The River Sidon is their outlet to the sea. They named it after Sidon (the city) as colonists always do. They name things after places back home. I'd be willing to "bet a dime to a donut" that Lehi and Thales were friends because Lehi was in business too through Sidon. He traveled about a great deal and had a great

fortune—many, many precious things (gold and the like). So everything comes together in Lehi's time, and this is very important for our world too.

I suppose I should put the names of these religious founders on the board. You know about Buddhism (Gautama Buddha), the largest religion in the world for membership. And Jainism (Mahavira) and Confucianism, which is a philosophy. Then there's Pythagoras, the founder of the hermetic cults that started in Egypt. It all comes out of Egypt too—the same thing with Zarathustra. It has been shown in the last generation, especially by Professor Jaeger, that Zarathustra (the Persian) was the principal inspiration of Plato. But he had a tremendous reputation everywhere. Everybody was traveling around in this time. Everybody was uprooted, *deracine*. Lehi's family was going to go through the same sort of thing. As I said, they were religious. This is an important thing because you are not going to get a new religion unless you get a new way of life. It's a new culture. Whenever you get a new religion, you also get a new script, a new writing, etc. Sanskrit emerges at this time in Hindu. Why? What is Sanskrit? It is Aramaic writing. Aramaic was the international writing at this time. If they find records in Egypt, or Asia Minor, or Babylon, they are written in Aramaic. But Sanskrit is an adaptation of Aramaic characters. The same thing with Hebrew, Hieratic, and hieroglyphic (*hier*o means sacred). Hieroglyphic was a sacred writing that was invented for religious purposes, to be used in the temples only. Then when Christianity came along, the Egyptians didn't keep it any longer. They changed to Coptic, though they had a good reformed Egyptian in Lehi's time, which was Demotic. They changed to Coptic which kept fourteen Egyptian characters, but they used the Greek alphabet. Using Coptic had a special religious significance. Recently, they have discovered a great deal of Coptic, and we have a good collection of Coptic here in the Coptic library. The nice thing about Coptic is that it is very easy and pleasant to learn, whereas Egyptian isn't. The uighur alphabet of the Celtic languages of Central Asia, and the runes of our Nordic ancestors all were invented strictly for religious purposes—the Estrangela and the masnad of the Arabs, etc. Eduard Meyer said, "The most significant contribution the Mormons ever made was the invention of the Deseret alphabet [Brigham Young's Deseret alphabet]." I have half a dozen books in Deseret alphabet, but I couldn't find them. They are out in the garage or somewhere like that. They are very interesting; it was a very good alphabet design. But notice, when you have a new religion, you separate yourself. As a mark of distinction, you have a new alphabet. For a while all our school books here, including Brigham Young Academy, were published in the Deseret alphabet. It's quite a fantastic alphabet and quite a good one. It works very well.

There was also Silas John, a Chiricahua Apache, who in 1904 invented an alphabet for them to preserve their sacred records in. It was a very good alphabet, and they still use it. But it was a secret alphabet. See, all alphabets are supposed to be secret; all reading is supposed to be secret. The Urim and Thummim is something special that way (we talked about that yesterday). Remember, I showed you this Meroitic. When the priests of Thebes fled south and then had to flee farther south, they invented the Meroitic script. This is it, and here it is compared with the characters in the Book of Mormon. They had their own characters that were very much like Meroitic and derived from a reformed Egyptian. There is a good deal said in the Book of Mormon about them having their own writing. The Jaredites had their writing too, which was translated by King Mosiah.

At the center of every culture is a religion; every culture is religious. This again is a new discovery. Civilization does not go without religion. There is a new book out by Herbert Schurtz, the German at Yale University. They made a very careful study of all the cultures

of prehistoric Europe, and the book concludes by saying this, "From the material evidence surveyed, culture appears to be a collective attempt at providing answers to the question posed by man about his position in this life and the next." There was, of course, the Darwinistic (Marxism) theory and the capitalistic theory. They claim that it was a practical, economic thing—that civilization and everything else came in response to an economic need (a need for food and clothing). That wasn't it at all. The thing that comes first is to know where you are and not feel lost. According to Schurtz, the evidence is that every culture seems to be a collective attempt to provide answers to these questions about your position in this life and the next—not where will you get the next meal. As Aristotle said, "The mice and the cockroaches and the bees and the lice have all solved the economic problem." They are all able to live from day to day and from generation to generation. Some of their species are thousands (maybe millions) of years old, and they are still going. They are not very bright, but they have solved their economic problem. That isn't the problem. He said, "Our purpose is not to stay alive but to live well." That doesn't mean "live it up" either. He followed Socrates dictum, "The unexamined life is not worth living." But, you see, the idea is not to stay alive at all. That's not what we're here for, and that's not going to satisfy. That's a great Book of Mormon theme. They're always saying, "Well, we've got all we need." Then everything goes to pot. Schurtz goes on, "As long as a people thought they could answer that question, the culture remained stable. If it collapsed, it was because of the lack of an intellectual and spiritual (mythical, if you will) foundation for a culture's general view of the world."

Here is a very recent statement by one of the most eminent British nuclear physicists, J. G. Taylor. As he ends his book called *Black Holes*, he says, "We may live and die without raising our eyes to the heavens, secure in the safety of our cotton-wool globe [it's not so safe now]. Yet that is false. We cannot divorce our lives from the basic problems of the universe. Whatever we do, we must come to terms with the infinite before we can act. The wish for survival, in one form or another, after this life is absolutely essential for our existence." You're not going to have it without religion. You're going to be empty, and people will become irresponsible, wild, sour, and negative. We're going to get to that in a minute.

Since we mentioned that idea of evidence in archaeology, one thing is very important here in this particular regard—the general nature of the ruins found in Central America and elsewhere. Robert Heine-Geldern started out studying the archaeology of Southeast Asia—the great temples, Angkor Wat, etc. Then he saw the great resemblance to those in Central America, and he became an American archaeologist. He started comparing them. Then he went back to the Near East and compared them. He calls attention to the often stunning resemblance (you've noticed this yourself) between the exotic remains of Cambodia, India, Mexico, and Guatemala. They look very much alike. Now, we should be showing you slides like crazy here, but you've all seen the pictures. Should we draw a picture of one of these towers? "The impressive number of Chinese elements in Olmec, the tiger cult, the bronzes, the jade carving [very Asiatic]." I notice that the American archaeologists have shifted everything now to Asia, the cultured Asiatic—not those primitives who covered the Bering Strait when it was frozen and when it was a land bridge. That's not it at all. Now they come with full-blown culture from Asia, and everything is Asiatic here.

Here we are quoting Michael D. Coe, the foremost American who is always sounding off on this subject from back at Yale. He has been here, and we have had students with him. He said, "Many have noted the great ceremonial centers of Meso-America are highly

reminiscent of Anchor and Khmer civilizations of Southeast Asia.” Then we showed that Robert Heine-Geldern got very interested and started comparing them in a big way. Coe wrote, “Contacts must have been by sea, not directly across the Pacific, however, but using the Kuroshio drift following the great cirque by the northern route [the Japan current, as we sometimes have suggested for the Jaredites].” W. Krickenberg has a book on that, incidentally. “But there is something seriously wrong here for the whole Southeast Asian complex doesn’t arise until the ninth and tenth centuries after Christ [that’s a thousand years after the Nephites disappeared; what are we going to get here?] so they could not have inspired the American cult centers, built a thousand years earlier.” Krickenberg says on page 572, “The only explanation is to look for a common source somewhere, [they look alike because they came from the same place] which Heine-Geldern finds in the Near East [at a much earlier time, of course, both in its American and Asiatic forms].” They were both brought from the Near East; that’s why they look alike. They came from the same center, and it was the Near East. That happens to be where the Book of Mormon people came from.

Now, this is the thing I was getting at about the culture, religion, etc. “If the people came from Asia, there’s a puzzling lack in the New World of Asiatic cultivated plants and domestic animals from the Old World. There is the absence of the plow, the potter’s wheel, the bellows [all the essential implements of culture they should have brought with them] glass, iron, stringed instruments, the true arts.” They didn’t bring any of that with them. What is wrong? Well, they did bring something entirely different with them, and this is why these places look so much like ceremonial centers. There is a religious center in everything. “This is more than outbalanced by the more important cultural items, such as political patterns, cosmology, art, religion, symbolism, and ceremonial architecture. They are alike, far too much alike in the two hemispheres to be explained by the recent and far-fetched theory of convergence. How to explain a super-abundance of one type of cultural accoutrements, along with a complete deficiency in the other kind of stuff.” Well, it’s the kind of people who made the migration; that’s it. So this is what Heine-Geldern concludes here: “The solution is the type of migration indicated. The people who crossed the sea were not artisans or technicians . . . [the kind that were spreading all around the Mediterranean at that time].” We have their poems, their diaries, etc. from Lehi’s time—the great time of colonization and business expansion. No, these were people of a religious and intellectual, a priestly persuasion. What is indicated, according to Heine-Geldern is “a carefully planned and prepared undertaking, primarily with missionary goals, a religious group of people that fled across the sea.” That’s what their centers are. What was the first thing Lehi did when he landed? He built a replica of the temple. It was small and didn’t have as much expensive stuff in it, but it was a temple. They planted that Near Eastern culture right here as soon as they got here and made a replica of Solomon’s Temple, as the Jews were doing. In 1925, ample records were found at Elephantine (far up the Nile at the first cataract), the Elephantine Hebrew texts. They are a lot of Hebrew letters from people living down there—soldiers and people who had fled from Jerusalem and were living way up the Nile. They wrote to the elders at Jerusalem asking for permission to build a temple there, and they did. So this was the practice. (Way up the Nile is where you get Meroitic.) So there are some strange relationships. Continuing from Heine-Geldern: “Then why no trace of Southeast Asiatic religious teachings in America? Why no Hinduism and Buddhism?” The answer again is to look to the Near East. When the Spanish priests and Puritan divines came here, they instantly recognized the Old Testament and the New Testament in the teachings of the Indians, nothing of Eastern Asia. So it’s an interesting cultural pattern we have here in the Book of Mormon.

In Lehi's day, as I said, the barriers broke down. It was wide open; it was another swarming time. Samuel N. Kramer has written the best study of that subject, a monograph on "The Swarming Time." In the year 3,000, in 1,700, in 1,200, and 700 B.C. everything turned. Also in 300, 800 (the Vikings), and A.D. 1,200 it happened again. I've written a number of articles on that. When we get to the Jaredites (as we surely shall in a couple of weeks), we will talk about that sort of thing. This is what happens when society breaks down. It's a matter of survival, and everybody scatters. They move as tribes and as individuals; things break up. It's a heroic age. We saw Gyges financing Persians on one side and Greeks on the other. Croesus is buddy-buddy with Greek tyrants. It was Gyges, the tyrant and rich man, who financed Necho II, and he installed the king, Jehoiakim. He was also supported by Pisistratus, the tyrant of Athens at that time. I think we'll have some time to mention him. So the barriers broke down, and there was this mixing up. Remember, Piankhi, Sheshonqides, Nubian, Libyan, Asiatic, Amu—everything all mixed up; it was international. You could go to any city, and it was metropolitan. You'd hear all the languages from everywhere spoken in the same city—Aramaic dominating, but Greek moving in and going to take over. It was a time of the self-made merchant kings (the twenty-sixty dynasty; that's what the family of Semiticus were). Everything was up for sale to the highest bidder. People were scattering in colonies, and we have their recollections. The Phoenicians at this time founded Carthage. You know the story Dido from the *Aeneid*. They went forth in 800 B.C. [slip of the tongue]. Then Carthage became a center for founding colonies all over. This is what led to the war with the Romans, who were expanding at this time, and the destruction of Carthage. Everybody was expanding, and everybody was grabbing the best possible places they could. We have some very vivid accounts of what went on by eye witnesses, Archilochus, etc. We have these personal remarks by lyric poets.

So things are stirred up in Palestine all the time, and they are mixed and blended. Now, the point is, where is security? Who is in charge around here? We talked about tyrants. If anyone could get the power, it was his. But who wasn't corruptible; who didn't have a price? Who could you count on? There are just two great men we think of whom you could count on. They probably knew each other, and they were Solon and Lehi (the immortal Solon). Solon left Athens in 595 B.C., five years after Lehi left Jerusalem, for the same reason. We talked about the Seven Wise Men. Well, Solon was always considered to be wisest of the Seven Wise Men. He became archon of Athens in 600 B.C., so this puts him in the same bracket with Lehi. Moreover, his family had lost their wealth. He was too honest. He went into the business of trading in olive oil and pottery. He would sail back to the Levant and visit places like Sidon (he loved to travel). It used to be common in the newspapers to designate members of Congress as Solons (there's real irony in that). We mustn't forget this: he is the father of modern democracy. He gave us the first democratic state, and it stuck. The great Solon, the wisest of the Greeks, gets the credit for founding Western democracy. So we have Solon and Lehi, and what a man this Solon was. Fortunately, I was able to find this book last night. We don't have it in the library. This is by my old teacher Professor Ivan Linforth.

I'm just going to quote from Professor Linforth's introduction and then some of the poems to show what the situation was. This was the situation in Jerusalem and in Athens, and it is the situation today here. "Solon, himself, in the longest of his extant poems gives us an account of the principal occupations of the men of this time." Yes, he has one of those poems here. (This is a short cut, so I'll use it in the interest of time.) "He shows us the trader, the husbandman, the artisan, the minstrel, the prophet, and the physician—a busy, bustling world it seemed to him [this isn't the ancient world at all; this is the

modern world] in which all were working blindly with little thought of the future. Moneymaking, he tells us, filled men's minds [everybody wanted a career]. In his day a deep social and economic unrest pervaded the society as a result of unequal distribution of wealth. Society fell into two conflicting classes. One was composed of the best people, the *aristoi*, by which it meant the people of wealth and noble birth. The other consisted of folk at large, the *demos*. Political power lay entirely in the hands of the former class, and magistrates were chosen only from their number. The restlessness, however, of the lower classes seems to have been due not so much to political inequality as to cruel economic conditions." Solon was a member of the aristocracy, and we go into his genealogy here. "It appears that early in life Solon embarked in commerce. He was forced to do this, according to Plutarch, by the impaired state of the family fortune." As I said, he traveled east. He gave Athens the ideal constitution, and nobody was willing to accept it. Each party thought they were shortchanged, as he is going to explain here. So he made a rule when he gave them the ideal constitution that it couldn't be changed without his signature. They also voted that he should take a trip for ten years and not come back to Athens. So he traveled for ten years. He was on business in Palestine, and I'll bet he knew Lehi because these were top men who met each other all the time (I can't prove that, of course; it's a nice picture).

Continuing the quote from Professor Linforth, "... family fortune, which had brought about by the excessive generosity of his father [the story of Timon of Athens is the same thing; he ruined himself by being too generous]. He belonged to a family which was accustomed to help others, and he was unwilling when he was in financial straits to ask aid of his friends who would have been glad to render it to him. Others found the motive for his voyage in his desire to acquire learning and experience, rather than to make money [He is one of the Seven Wise Men, the traveling *sophoi*]. ... Solon must have carried many a cargo of oil and pottery from his own rocky Attica to the wealthy cities across the Aegean, and, in spite of his love for his own native land, must have been charmed by the brilliant society which he found in Asia." He had a wild and merry life on his ten-year vacation.

Let's see how Solon got Salamis back; that won his reputation. "Sometime between 595 and 590 he was elected to the archonship [so this puts him right in Lehi's bracket]. We are told that he was entrusted with extraordinary powers to do anything he wanted. Both sides trusted him because of what he did to get back Salamis." They had lost Salamis—that low, flat, rocky island that blocks the harbor of Athens. They had fought over it for years with the people of Aegina. They passed a law that anyone who should propose another attempt to take Salamis would be put to death (capital punishment). They'd had enough of it. So he put on a funny hat and pretended to be crazy. Like Hamlet, he put on an antic disposition. He stood on a barrel in the agora and recited a song about getting back beautiful Salamis—acting crazy so he could get away with it. People started listening to him. He led an expedition, and they did get Salamis back. So both sides trusted him when there was a deadlock between the two. They made him archon and gave him absolute powers; he could make any change in government that he wanted (such power over the whole machinery of government). "By the joint will of all the conflicting elements, the one man they could trust was Solon [he would do the honest thing]. It was one of Solon's chief claims to glory among the Athenians of a later day that he had been the first of the distinguished line of statesmen who had championed the rights of the people and resisted the rule of special privilege." So he was the founder of Athenian democracy.

Now here we are in Lehi's world. "The general character of the seventh and sixth centuries is well known. It was an age of colonization." This is just the time, you see, for Lehi to set out. He would have in his baggage the whole equipment of the culture. Right at the beginning, Nephi reminds us he was well educated. His parents insisted that he learn Egyptian and all this. So they were in a position to take with them across the ocean all they would need to get a new culture launched. And other people were doing the same thing. Remember, Necho sent an expedition clear around Africa. But at this time hundreds of colonies were being founded—all around the Black Sea, for example, places way up north there. So Lehi is typical; this is just what is going on at this time. Linforth continues: "The old, traditional life of the isolated Greek communities was undergoing a transformation. The old noble families embarked on new enterprises of money making. The lower classes saw opportunities for advancement which did not depend on ownership of the soil. The mass of people began to be aware of hopes and possibilities that never before entered their heads [the American dream, you see]. The world was suddenly open to them. A spirit of adventure and eagerness for a larger and fuller life marked the whole age. One single, concrete thing had an incalculable influence, the invention of coined money [right at Lehi's time; it has the same influence in the Book of Mormon]. The fundamental transformation in human society wrought by the invention of money is sufficiently well known. With these general characteristics of the age in mind, we can see what probably took place" (he goes into this now).

Let's read what Solon himself has to say here. First, we will begin with his most famous of all sayings, "As I get older, I am constantly learning new things." Getting old is a process of learning more, he says. This is the situation, and Aristotle is reporting what was happening here: "The organization of the state being such as I have described, the many were the slaves of the few, and in consequence the people rose in opposition to the upper classes. The feud was a violent one, and the opposing factions were pitted against one another for a long time. [Remember, Ammon speaking to the Zoramite people met on the hill there that they had to build the sacred center. They resented it because they weren't even able to go in; they were improperly dressed, etc.] In the end by common agreement they elected Solon as archon to act as arbitrator between them. His elegiac poem already appeared which begins, 'I am not aware, and pain lies heavy at my heart as I watch the oldest of Ionian states sinking lower and lower.' Solon himself was a man who by birth and reputation belonged to highest class, but his business activities and his limited means placed him in the middle class. In general, he puts the blame for the dissension upon the wealthy class [notice, the resemblance to the power and gain motif in the Book of Mormon here]. That is why he says at the very beginning of the poem that he fears their covetousness and insolence, implying that the hostile feelings, which were prevalent, were due to their causes. Then he says 'To the common people, I have given such a measure of privilege as suffices them—neither robbing them of the rights they had, nor holding out hope for greater ones. And I have taken equal thought for those who are possessed of power and who are looked up to because of their wealth, careful that they too should suffer no indignity. I have taken a stand which enables me to hold a stout shield over both groups, and I have allowed neither to triumph unjustly over the other.' " That's why he's the great Solon, you see.

I told you about that cycle of the four steps. He puts them here in his poem, "When people are too prosperous, then they begin to choke in it. *Olbos* is followed by *koros* [overweening fullness], and this is followed by *hubris*." Then he says, "Just as sure as

anything, you are going to get *atē*.” This is the way Professor Linforth renders it, however: “For excess giveth birth to arrogance when great prosperity attendeth upon men whose minds lack sober judgment.” (Well, if that isn’t like the Book of Mormon, I don’t know what is.) This is typical in a political year: “They who gathered to share in the spoils entertained vast hopes. Each one of them expected to make his fortune and thought that I, though I might prattle mildly now [political promises], would reveal a nature stern enough in the end. Idle were their notions. Now they are all angry with me and look at me with sidelong glances [he hasn’t got a friend left because he was fair to both sides] as at an enemy. They have no reason to do so. What I promised, with God’s help I fulfilled. Other things I did not thoughtlessly undertake. I should find no pleasure in a thing which was achieved through the exercise of a tyrant’s power. Nor should I be glad to see the rich soil of the fatherland divided equally among everybody [so he wants to play fair whatever happens]. The black earth, the supreme Mother, is all of us. I remove the stones of her bondage [which he did]. I drafted laws which show equal consideration for the upper and lower classes and provided a fair administration of justice to every individual. An unscrupulous and avaricious man, if he had got the whip hand of the city as I had, would not have held the people back. If I had adopted the policy which had been advocated by opponents then, or if thereafter I had consented to the treatments which their opponents had already planned for them, this city would have lost many of her sons. This was the reason why I stood out like a wolf at bay amidst a pack of hounds, defending myself from attack against every side.”

He played fair with everybody, and as a result he was in the position of a wolf. Packs of hounds are attacking him on every side because he didn’t give them what they wanted. He wanted to play fair with the others. But that’s what happens. He refused to be a tyrant, and he replaced the tyrant, Pisistratus, who was a friend of his and a very powerful man. Solon said, “For if another man had obtained this office, he would not have held the people back. He would not have rested until by continued agitation he’d got the butter from the milk. But I set myself up as a barrier in the debatable land between hostile parties” (that’s not the one I’m thinking of).

Here he starts speaking exactly like the prophets of Israel. (Well, the time is up now; we don’t hear the bell here.) But, remember, these men in Greece knew the prophets of Israel too. Jeremiah traveled around; he had an independent fortune. He had lots of investments here and there. There are some very interesting things. We have the office documents of a perfume factory, a consortium in Egypt, that had branches all over the Mediterranean in Spain, Carthage, Greece, way back in Asia, etc. Pharaoh guaranteed them protection on the sea and a fair profit. Then he took his cut too. There were investors, businessmen, in all these places that had shares in this company. They had the same sort of thing you see now. They also had the takeovers and all sorts of dirty work too. So the Book of Mormon starts out one hundred percent with a completely authentic ring to the situation and the setting. If you were composing it, is that how you would have started it out? Would you have put all those nice little details in it? Where are we now—the fourth verse of the first chapter? Oh, we are just moving right along here.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 5
(Jeremiah)

Insights from Lehi's Contemporaries:
Solon and Jeremiah

The Book of Mormon tells us “for whom the bell tolls.” Lehi and his great contemporaries started a lot of chain reactions. We don’t mention them just because they were interesting curiosities, or anything like that, but because we are still living on their capital. Why did I put Thales on the board, for example? He first raised the question of science and religion on a really scientific basis, and it has never been settled. The arguments have always been the same ever since, on both sides. Remember, Thales predicted the eclipse in 585 B.C. [858 was a slip of the tongue]. His mother was a Phoenician. He was supposed to be of the family of Cadmus. They migrated and settled Thebes in prehistoric times. Cadmus is the person who is supposed to have brought the Phoenician (phonetic) alphabet to Greece. Cadmus means “the man of the East” in Hebrew or Arabic. He’s the man who comes from the East with the wisdom of Qedem. A descendant of his was Thales who moved to Miletus, and he is the first of the Milesian school. He is called “the first philosopher”—the first person who actually thought by himself entirely, ruling everything else out. This is very important. He began the Milesian School, and one of this group was Heraclitus of Ephesus, a nearby city. These were the cities of Asia Minor, settled by people who had been uprooted, who left the graves of their fathers. Their old cultures had, more or less, cracked up. They were engaged, as we saw, in mercenary works and in trade, and also in philosophy and thinking for themselves.

The Milesian School started out on this basis: “There is a God, but we can’t use him in our calculations. We can’t bring him into the laboratory. We can’t weigh or measure anything about him, so let’s see how far we can get without him.” So they became the first physicists. They first studied the *physis* which is the physical, tangible cosmos (the order of things in the *physis*). They were the physical scientists. Their argument was that you don’t need God for your calculations; in fact, he will spoil things. This is what wrecks all theological arguments. All you have to do is say, “God did it,” and you don’t have any argument left. Anything is possible with God. There’s no argument after that, and it’s absurd to go on arguing about it—though they do all the time. As I said, bringing God into the picture is the way to end any argument. He is infinite, he is everywhere, he is indescribable. You can’t say anything about him without insulting him because he is so far from your comprehension, and yet he can do anything. Anytime you want to explain anything, you just say, “God.” Well, these people didn’t find that approach satisfying. They said, “We can assume that God exists and let that go, but let’s see how far we can go with our own experiments in weighing and measuring. So they became physicists. As they discovered, if God is unnecessary in your calculations, he soon becomes a nuisance. If he’s a nuisance he becomes an obstacle, a pernicious element. They resent him, and before you know it they begin to preach actively against him. We’ve had very eminent scientists come here as evangelists, preaching nothing else but against God. Alfred Kazan has talked to students about that (at least, they’ve read about it). He has said we live in a generation that has decided they can get along without God; and now that leaves them in a rather

tragic situation. This was the same with the Greeks too. They didn't rule God out—but once you start saying, "Well, we can get along without him," you have problems. Laplace was the one who invented the spiral nebula origin of the universe. When Napoleon asked Laplace about God, he said, "I have no need for that hypothesis" (he didn't need God in his work). Men like him claim, "I have no need for that; whether he exists or not is none of my business. We don't deal with the big questions." Well, scientists are back to the big questions again. But this raised the issue which naturally became this: All right, when you are talking about God, how does everything begin? (This relates to the Book of Mormon, incidentally.) How does everything begin is the first thing. What about the cosmology—its organization, what it is made of, why it operates, and what makes it go? This became the first thing; they were looking for a first principal, a *primum mobile*. Thales looked for it and discovered it was water. Now, you notice this is exactly the same thing that the quantum physicists are doing today. They are looking for something smaller than quarks, which are smaller than atoms—some single element or particle which will be responsible for everything. It's that particle that we are after; that's the whole thing. That's exactly what they were looking for, and the process is still going on. They used whatever evidence they had. They used ingenious experiments. Thales decided that the basic element was water. Anaximander, who was the *aoriston* and the boundless, said that worlds proceed out of each other, and you don't ask how, particularly. As the Arabs say, "Never ask how." That's a good way of getting rid of an argument. When you say, "God does it," you ask, "How?" And the Arab says, "That's a *bilā kayfa* (that's a "don't ask how"). You just don't ask how. Actually, as Einstein said, "Science does not explain; it only describes." You describe what happens, but you haven't explained it. Then you go to the next step and describe what happens. You still haven't explained it. We still haven't explained what that ultimate particle is. Then Thales was followed by Anaximenes, an Athenian philosopher and celebrated atheist, who said it is air and has to do with condensation (hot and cold, condensed heavy and light, etc.)—that there's a solid element that is thinned out and is extreme in air; it would depend on the degree of condensation how near you get to atoms. Then Heraclitus said, "It's fire; that is the basic element." You get down to real atomists with Democritus and the Stoics.

Thales was a real scientist, and he raised the question that has never been settled yet. This comes right down to our time. It's the same thing with Solon. He is in direct line with our founding fathers. We must not forget that the founding fathers read their Cicero and their Plutarch, and they knew all about Solon and Diodorus—and the famous speeches of Thucydides and others. They knew those speeches, and they knew the arguments about democracy which Solon began. He was the father of modern democracy. They used them as their guide for producing the Constitution. These men were constitutionists. For four years at Claremont College, I taught a course alternately with Everett Dean Martin. He would teach on Tuesdays, and I on Thursdays. We taught absolutely opposite points of view. He was a founder of Cooper Union in New York, and he was a great student of the Constitution. This was his main theme: the great influence of the classical writers on the authors of the Constitution. So Solon comes right down to us. He was the first and greatest of the administrators. As I said, Senators are sometimes called Solons (it's easy to spell out in headlines), which is not without irony.

We were showing that Solon was more than a rational politician. He saw the religious foundation of things and what the real trouble was and where the enemy was. In a famous elegy of his, he said, "The ruin of our state will never come by the doom of Zeus, or through the will of the blessed, immortal gods. Who is the enemy? Don't blame them. For

Pallas Athena, Magathimus, Obrimopatres, Episcopus (she is the episcopal, the overseer) is the valiant daughter of a valiant sire. Our stout-hearted guardian, holdeth over us her protecting arms. We are all right as far as heaven is concerned. It is the townsfolk themselves and their false-hearted leaders who would fain destroy our great city through wantonness and love of money (we get back to the fundamentals here; in the Book of Mormon they set their hearts on riches), but they are destined to suffer sorely for their outrageous behavior. They know not how to hold in check their full-fled lust, nor be content with the merriment the banquet affords to take their pleasure soberly and in order (we should enjoy life, but these people don't hold themselves back). They are rich because they yield to the temptations of dishonest courses. They spare neither the treasures of the gods nor the property of the state and steal like brigands from one another."

I have a pile of clippings that high from the *Wall Street Journal* showing the shenanigans that go on in high places today. This is absolutely true. Solon goes on, "They pay no heed to the unshaken rock of holy justice [this passage comes up in the Book of Mormon and is practically a quote from Jeremiah; we will turn to Jeremiah in a minute] who, though she be silent, is aware of all that happeneth now or hath happened in the past, and in the course of time surely cometh to demand retribution [the rock of holy justice, which is referred to in the book of Moses in the same way by Enoch]." We talk about "the rock of our salvation." The rock is any firm foothold you can get for a thing, and the rock here is justice—doing that which is right. "Even now there cometh upon the whole city a plague which none may escape. The people have come quickly into degrading bondage. Bondage arouseth from their sleep war and civil strife, and war destroyeth many in the beauty of their youth. It is as if we were prey of a foreign foe. Our beloved city is rapidly wasted and consumed in those secret combinations [right out of the Book of Mormon, you see] which are the delight of dishonest men. [Again, where is the enemy? Not those wicked Lamanites.] These are the evils which stalk at home; meanwhile, the poor and needy in great numbers are loaded with shameful bonds and sold into slavery for foreign lands [because they couldn't meet it on their small farms; they were being taken over by the big land owners, as Isaiah says, 'adding field to field']."

You can match every verse of this with Isaiah who lived before this. But Jeremiah and Lehi were contemporary. Remember, the year 600 B.C. is the peak of Solon's career, just as it is with Lehi. Solon continues: "Thus the public calamity comes to the house of every individual, and a man is no longer safe in the gates of his own court." Crime is going to hunt you down, although you put yourself behind gates, etc. A couple of years ago I visited in southern California with a very high official who is also a member of the Church. He couldn't get into his own house without presenting a special card at the electronic gate opener. The place was patrolled by Doberman pinschers and by search lights. He had to have bodyguards all the time just because he had been so very, very successful. That's the way to live in a prison, isn't it? "His own court which refuse him their protection. It leapeth over the garden wall, however high it be, and surely findeth him out though he run and hide himself in the inmost corner of his chamber." Again, this is the language of the prophets of Israel. They use these very same terms and images. But this is literally true. It will trace you; you can't get away from it. Of course, it is also like prime time TV, where we are taken to the boudoirs of the mighty to see the shenanigans that go on there—usually ending in somebody getting shot.

This is his revelation: "These things my heart prompteth me to teach the Athenians to make them understand that lawlessness worketh more harm to the state than any other cause, but a law-abiding spirit createth order and harmony and, at the same time, putteth

chains upon evil doers. Under the reign of law, sanity and wisdom prevail ever among men.” Here is the principle. This is the “fullness of time,” the ripeness when the cup is full, when the fruit is ripe. In the promised land the promise is given (it is standing all the time) that the people will be swept from the land (they will not just hang around) when the time is fully ripe—when their cup of iniquity is full. The Lord will wait until then. As Solon says here, “Out of the cloud cometh snow and hail in their fury and a thunderbolt springeth from the lightning flash, so from great men [he is talking about Pisistratus who had been the tyrant of Athens; he was a great and capable man, but this is what they will always bring] ruin issueth upon the state, and people, through their own folly, sink into slavery under a single lord. Having raised a man to too high a place, it is not easy later to hold him back.” Mosiah, in chapter 29, gives a long sermon to his people on this subject. His sons refuse to become kings. He says if you make a man king, you can’t replace him. Remember the case of King Noah; it’s going to be awfully tough. “Now is the time to be observant of all these things. If ye have suffered the melancholy consequences of your own incompetence, do not attribute this evil fortune to the gods. You have yourselves raised up these men to power over you and have reduced yourself by this course to a wretched state of servitude. Each man among you individually [this is the way it goes; this is your free enterprise] walketh with the tread of a fox, but collectively you are a set of simpletons. You don’t act together at all, but for yourself you’re all out to get it.” Now this is the fatal thing. Rhetoric is the secret of the whole thing. We get it in the Book of Mormon too: “For ye look to the tongue and play of a man’s speech and regard not the deed which is done before your eyes [the skillful rhetoric, the skillful speech].” This reminds us that the Book of Mormon has characters that are concerned with this philosophical rationalism and atheism, such as Nehor and Korihor, who are also men of great ambition. There’s a whole string of them in the Book of Mormon who are very skillful in speech and do the same sort of thing. The people “look to the tongue and play of a man’s speech.” Remember, he was “skillful in many words,” we are told; he led all the people, and they just loved him. King Noah was extremely popular that way.

But what about the religion? This man has had experience. This is a theme you get in all the Greek tragedies. Remember, the Book of Mormon is a tragic book; it is “a voice from the dust.” It’s very sad, as you know. It begins on a note of destruction and ends on a note of destruction. It begins with lone survivors in the wilderness and ends with a lone survivor. There’s nothing more sad than survival; it’s a dirty word. “Thus all men of mortal mold, good and bad, think by straining every nerve to win a fair name, each man for himself by his own unaided efforts, until something befall him from without. Then straightway cometh pain. Until then, like gaping fools, we amuse ourselves with empty dreams. He who is worn by cruel disease [this is the American dream too; I can give you many cases] pondereth how one day he will be whole [our constant preoccupation with medicine and cures, miracle and otherwise]. Another who is a coward thinketh himself brave. Another still counteth himself handsome, though he hath no beauty of body. If one be penniless and subject to the toils of poverty, he assureth himself that he will someday win great riches.” There’s a marvelous speech by Timon of Athens on this in Shakespeare, in which he talks about what money can do. When Timon finds the treasure, he says, “This much of this will make black white, base noble, wrong right, coward valiant, young old. Why this, you gods, why this?” Money will do that; it will give you the answer. If you are a coward, if you are miserable, if you are base, it will exalt you. “This it is that makes the wappered widow wed again.” She can wed, no matter what, if she has it. “This again gives thieves honor, knee, and approbation with Senators on the bench.” A person can buy himself a place in politics, and he will be honored with the best. Timon gives this long speech. I could recite it for you if I were in the mood. This is the theme, and notice that

Shakespeare puts his play in Athens. *Timon of Athens* is a true story. Timon of Athens was very rich; he inherited this great fortune. But he was also very generous. He entertained everybody; he paid anybody's debts. He'd loan anybody anything they wanted. Doing that, he ran out of funds and became impoverished. Then he went around to his friends and tried to collect. Shakespeare knows how people are, and Timon couldn't collect anywhere. Everybody had a good excuse and felt sorrow. They cut him dead in the streets because he didn't have money anymore, etc. So he became a recluse. He went out in the woods and lived on roots. Then he says, "Earth, give me roots. He who asks better of thee sauce his pallet with thy most inoperative poison. What have we here? Gold! Precious!" Then he digs up a treasure. Herodes Atticus was the person who did it (he actually did). He went out in the woods to dig himself a grave. He was going to commit suicide because he had lost his wealth, and had no recognition whatever. As he started digging, he struck a fabulous treasure which made him enormously rich. He went to the Emperor Nerva and said, "Look, what can I do with this treasure; I can't use all this." Then the good Emperor Nerva said, "Well, if you can't use it, abuse it; it's yours." But he didn't abuse it; he gave the theatre of Herodes Atticus to the Athenians. It's still there. That's the one where they still put on Greek plays from way back in the first century. It's a beautiful theatre. I've seen some Aristophanes produced there. He found his money, but he found that people will do anything for it and will do nothing for you without it (this is the point).

This is the theme with Solon. Here is an example. "This is the trouble," he said, "no visible limit is set to wealth among men." Do you know who the richest family in America is? Did you see that in the newspaper the other day (oh, I cut this out too; it's too good to be true). It's a marvelous comment on our sense of values—the things that we consider to be of real worth. What is the richest family in America, worth approximately nine billion dollars? (That's a lot of dough, you see—nine thousand million.) The people who make M&Ms. That's where they made their fortune, on M&Ms. "They melt in your mouth, not in your hand; nine billion dollars, please." That's what we pay for in our society, the things that really count.

"Even now, those among us who have the largest fortunes are striving with redoubled energy. What abundance of riches could satisfy us all? Increase of goods cometh to mortals by gift to the gods, but out of it appeareth madness [this is the process again, the four steps of the cycle: the *olbos*, the *koros*, the *hubris*, and the *atē*]." This book I'm reading from is not in the library. It's by Professor Linforth from whom I had quite a number of seminars, including Greek composition. He was an eminent Hellenist. The book is called *Solon, the Athenian*.

Quoting from Solon again: "But out of it [the increase of goods] appeareth madness which leadeth to destruction. When Zeus sendeth his madness as punishment to men, it lighteth first upon one and then upon another." Then here is the typical Greek statement, right out of the Greek tragedy, as Sophocles would say, "Oh, human race, how I calculate you to be equal to exactly nothing." That's what Solon says here: "Perfect bliss as state of mind denied to mortal men, wretched are all they upon whom the sun looks down." That's what we learn. Nobody is completely happy in this life. "*Poneroi*, wretched are all those upon whom the sun looks down." Well, where does religion come in here and how does it help him? Well, there's his personal life, etc.? We mentioned his most famous line before.

Let's go on to somebody who's going to tell the same story exactly, but should be required reading for anyone who intends to study the Book of Mormon. If we put nothing else on the reading list, this is number one, two, three, four, and five. Of course, it's Jeremiah. As we read 1 Nephi 7:14, it appears that Jeremiah must have been a close personal friend of Lehi (he mentions him personally). "For behold, the Spirit of the Lord ceaseth soon to strive with them; for behold, they have rejected the prophets, and Jeremiah have they cast into prison [this is contemporary; it's Nephi speaking to his people]. And they have sought to take away the life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land." So they imprisoned Jeremiah, and they drove Lehi out of the land, who belonged to the party of Jeremiah. Now, we have very good contemporary sources which we will soon mention here that put us right into the scene—discovered between 1935 and 1938. No one believed him, as you will see from the book of Jeremiah, they didn't want to believe him. They knew he was right, as he said, but they didn't want to believe him. He had no large following at all, but he had some who were faithful to him, including prophets in the city and in the country (a faithful band). One of those was certainly Lehi. Being a very influential man and being of the party of Jeremiah, Lehi would have known Jeremiah (they were certainly contemporary). Jeremiah tells us about the situation in Jerusalem.

Let's get going here. We will use the King James, which is a great literary masterpiece. We will find good old Jeremiah here, and I'll read off the passages I quote. This will save you trouble if you want representative passages from Jeremiah. This will tell us what the situation is at Jerusalem. You have just heard from Solon (there's a lot more we could put in here) what the situation was in Athens. Incidentally, I think the library is making a photo copy of this, and I'll put it on reserve. They don't have this; it's my own. I got it from Professor Linforth, and it's a rare book. In Jeremiah 5:25 he begins summarizing the situation at Jerusalem: "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. [You could have had good things, but your own sins have kept you from having them; the Lord wants you to have good things.] For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men." Well, this is what sales strategies are for, what public relations is for, what hype is for—to trap people. We have given courses here called "Strategies of Salesmanship." Well, strategy is defined in the dictionary as deception practiced on an enemy. That's exactly what it is, and you win wars by strategy—by making them think you are where you are not, deceiving them about your strength and your intentions. You fool them every way you possibly can. That's the soul of strategy because surprise is what you want to achieve. You want him to move in one direction while you're really moving in another, so strategy wins wars and tactics win battles. They are the same thing, but the idea is trickery all the way through. That's what you are supposed to do. A good general saves lives and everything else if he can fool the enemy and surprise him completely.

Jeremiah 5:27, "As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit [notice, the emphasis is all on deceit—saying things you don't mean; you can't rely on anybody; nobody keeps his word anymore]: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich [through deception; that's the secret of getting rich]. They are waxen fat, they shine [the Hebrew word there, *shemen* is to be fat and gleaming, glossy, fat and sassy; *shemen*, of course, is the very essence of prosperity, and it's just the word for fat]; yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge [they don't take his part]. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely." They want to hear good things, of course. Samuel the Lamanite is the classic in the Book

of Mormon: If a person comes to Zarahemla telling you what is wrong with Zarahemla, you say he is a false prophet and try to put him to death. If a person comes and tells you what is right with Zarahemla, you lift him up on your shoulders, you dress him in fine apparel, and you claim he is a true prophet and become his followers. You just want to hear what's right with the country, not what's wrong with it (paraphrased). "And the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof? [what's going to happen if this is the way it is?]." The next chapter tells what's going to happen to them. Notice that the cause of this is not these wicked people from the north at all that he is talking about. They are the cause of it. But in Jeremiah 6:22 we read: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, a people cometh from the north country, and a great nation shall be raised from the sides of the earth. They shall lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses [this is Babylonia; the Assyrians had already swept through there in a preceding generation], set in array as men for war against thee, O daughter of Zion."

Then in chapter 7, verse 4: "Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these." This is where we have our reference: Church members say, "This is the true church; we have the gospel, etc. We have the temple; that will make us safe." He says, "Don't trust in that." It's repeated three times in the fourth verse here. Then verse 5: "For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor [this is what they were not doing]; If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt [notice walking after other gods comes last in the list; but, of course, it's a bad one; the other gods were Egyptian]: Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever. Behold, ye trust in lying words that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; And come and stand before me in this house [come to the temple in that condition], which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord." Remember, this is what the Lord said when he drove the thieves out, "My Father's house has become a den of thieves." He was quoting Jeremiah.

Verse 15: "And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim." This is a very interesting picture of how strong the Egyptian culture is in the city. It's referred to later on more fully, but he says in verse 18, "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven [that's Isis, the Egyptian mother goddess], and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger?" The ties with Egypt were very close; they had been for generations. In verse 25 here he tells what's been going on: "Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee." Jeremiah is commanded to preach to them. The Lord says, "I know they won't listen to you, but you are going out to preach to them. I sent my prophets before, and they didn't listen. I knew they wouldn't listen to them."

You might say, "Why do you bother to do these things?" Remember, when the Lord came, he said, "Now they have seen and hated both me and the Father. If I had not

testified to them, then they would not be guilty, but now they have to be responsible for refusing. They had the chance.” In the book of John, the Lord says, “What have I done that’s wrong? Which man convicteth me of evil? Then why don’t you believe?” He says, “Because your works are evil.” The Savior had come to bear witness, and he sent the apostles out to preach the same way and bear witness of him “that they may be without excuse.” That’s the word he uses. This leaves them without excuse. If he didn’t send the prophets, then the people would have an excuse. They could say, “Well, we didn’t have a chance; we never heard anything like that.” But he sent the prophets to them continually, and they paid no attention to them. This isn’t fatalism or anything like that. The Lord knows they are not going to receive it. “Thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee.” It was a futile mission he was on, but it was a very important mission. Even when we send missionaries out, we don’t expect them to convert everybody.

In chapter nine he wishes he were out of it all. This is the Rechabite principle. He’s going to refer to the Rechabites later on. The Rechabite principle is “get out of it, escape it, go to the desert, be by yourself.” This has happened from the very beginning. This always happens in the Near East where the desert begins right at the city wall. You can always get away from it. The only problem is how are you going to live once you are out there? So the hermits become men of extreme austerity of life—living, as John the Baptist did, on locusts and wild honey. These are the big locusts, and they are nourishing. They have protein in them. Then John had the wild honey. Well, what else was there to eat if you know what the Jordan is like? In chapter nine, verse two, Jeremiah says, “Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the Lord. Take ye heed every one of his neighbor, and trust ye not [*beware* is the word they look for] in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbor will walk with slanders.” Don’t trust your brother, your neighbor, or anybody: that’s the principle. He says he’s got to get out of there. There’s too much, and he can’t take it. When you can’t trust anybody anymore, what’s the point of going on?

Verse five: “And they will deceive every one his neighbor, and will not speak the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord.” Notice, the deceit and lies. It’s Madison Avenue right down the line, isn’t it? “Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait [to bring him on, etc.]” Let’s look at the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants. He uses this expression there. But remember Solon, where you couldn’t escape it. It comes into your bedroom, etc. Jeremiah says in verse 21 of the ninth chapter: “For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets. Speak, Thus saith the Lord.” These are the four things men are after. The Book of Mormon tells us there are four things that everyone is after. First Nephi says it, and the younger prophet Nephi says the very same thing. The four things everybody seeks for in the Book of Mormon are: wealth, power, popularity, and the lusts of the flesh (plenty of sex and all the rest of it). And these are the basic plots of the sure-selling TV prime time. And isn’t it interesting how many authors it took to produce that glorious plot and its glorious developments and ramifications. Nine thousand two hundred writers struck in southern California during this terrible strike. It took 9200 geniuses to write these old repetitious, thread-bare plots on TV. The industry ground to a halt when the 9200 decided

not to write anymore. I think two good writers could have handled it pretty well. These are commentaries on our culture we get here. This was Lehi's world, this was Jeremiah's world, and this was Solon's world. And there were these very developed societies with everything relatively peaceful at times. But there was great tension between Egypt in the West (in which Israel is putting its trust) and Babylon in the East (the great Asiatic power).

Verse 23: "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom [clever guy], neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches [now what a change of tone; how suddenly everything cools off and becomes utterly delicious; what a contrast when he says]: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord [don't delight in those things]." This takes us back to Mosiah 4:11: "I would that ye should remember . . . the greatness of God, and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long-suffering towards you." Then you "shall always rejoice [there's nothing to worry about]." But it keeps everything churned up if people are after the power, the gain, and the celebrity. As he says, "If you glory, glory in the Lord who exercises loving kindness." Remember the opening passage of the Koran. *Rahmān* means "gentle;" and *rahīm* means he is "holding back. There is no power, there is no might, except God." He has all the power, and yet he doesn't use it—He holds back. He is loving and kind; he withholds all the time. This passage from the Koran is contrasted with the bloody, absolutely murderous, disposition of so many Moslems against each other. And the Christians are just as bad. But these passages explain how the Lord is, and this was the world of Jeremiah.

We'll go on; we need to get some good ones here. Notice Jeremiah 14:12. This is the theme of all the prophets, especially Isaiah. Isaiah is the most quoted prophet in the Book of Mormon. We don't need to quote him here. He was the most quoted author in all subsequent Jewish literature. They quote Isaiah all over the place. The Dead Sea Scrolls are practically built around Isaiah. Here in verse 12: "When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence. Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword [now, these are the false prophets], neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place [the prophets were full of happy talk]. Then the Lord said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them . . . [he comes up against these]." He tells them they cannot obtain peace through strength (armaments). In chapter 15, verse 12, he says, "Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel? Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the spoil without price, and that for all thy sins, even in all thy borders."

They are breaking the sabbath, and it is very important to keep the sabbath. In chapter 17, verse 21, we read: "Thus saith the Lord; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; Neither carry forth a burden [a thousand paces was the limit] out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction." So this is the theme. Then in Jeremiah 18:18, "Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the

tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.” Remember, Solon said, “I was like a wolf between two packs of dogs. Nobody wanted me because I didn’t say what either side wanted to hear.” In that time people said, “Solon is a fool. If I had that power, I would be flayed and consent to the annihilation of my race.”

So Jeremiah was cut off. He was a man alone, and so was Lehi. Remember, he got into real trouble and had to leave town if he was going to save his life at all. Continuing in Jeremiah 22:17, “But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for violence, to do it. . . . Thus saith the Lord; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place. For if ye do this thing indeed, then shall there enter in by the gates of this house, the kings sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people” (Jeremiah 22:3–4). But their eyes are just for covetousness, the opposite of these things, so the condition is clear.

Incidentally, I was talking about the Egyptian pharaoh Necho and Nebuchadnezzar and Hophra, who is Apries. They are all in here. Necho II wasn’t killed at the Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. He withdrew to Egypt and defended it. The Babylonians weren’t able to take Egypt. He did defend it against them. Then he was followed by Pharaoh Hophra who was Apries. He always kept promising hope to Jerusalem in Lehi’s day, but he never gave it. He was lackadaisical, and he lost the city. That was when it fell. But they put all their trust in Egypt because they said, “Egypt has the money and the power.” It also had the navy, but it didn’t save Jerusalem because the king didn’t act. He is talking about this in Jeremiah 25:18–21: “To wit, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, . . . Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people; And all the mingled people, and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekron [Phoenician centers], and the remnant of Ashdod, Edom [way south in Arabia], and Moab [where Amman is today; that’s Jordan], and the children of Ammon.” It’s very interesting that the capital of Jordan is still Amman. Ammon is by far the most common name in the Book of Mormon. Amon was the god of the empire; his name was everywhere at this time. This was the great commercial empire of the twenty-sixth dynasty, and Israel (Judah) was right in the midst of it. This long list includes the kings Zimri, and the kings of Elam (verse 25). They are way back in Persia. And all the kings of Medes, way up in central Asia. That’s where Cyrus came from.

Then they wanted to put him to death, and Jeremiah said, “But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves” (Jeremiah 26:15). “Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man is not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God” (verse 16). It was the priests who wanted to go through with it. This is important here because this is the historical part that has now been so well supported by the Lachish Letters. We will have to refer to them the next time. Chapter 26 is very good historically. He puts this into the local scene and the Book of Mormon scene, as Lehi describes it. Lehi gives the most vivid description of all of the actual situation, the state of mind, in Jerusalem at the time. This gives us the international affairs, and it gives us the moral condition of the city, etc. But it doesn’t tell us about the tension, the particular parties, the differences in families, etc. that you find in the Book of Mormon.

Jeremiah 27:12, “I spake also to Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live [you won’t have any trouble; you’ll be all right]. Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence? [if you just knuckle under to Babylon it’ll be for seventy years; then it will be all right, meantime] ye shall not serve the king of Babylon.” The prophets say that, but they are just prophesying lies. It was the Egyptian party against the Babylonian party.

Chapter 28 begins this way (compare with the Book of Mormon): “And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, and in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azur . . .” Hananiah is the false prophet, and he has a debate with Jeremiah. Hananiah is wrong and Jeremiah is right, of course, but they won’t listen to him. Hananiah is a good name for him; it means “happy talk, happy man.” *Hanan* is to be healthy, happy, and contented with everything. He says, “Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. Within two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the Lord’s house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon.” In 597 Nebuchadnezzar had taken the city before and taken this stuff to Babylon. Hananiah said he’s going to bring it back within two years. This is in the first year of Zedekiah, but we are told here it was in the tenth year that the blow struck. That gave Lehi plenty of time to escape.

The Prophet Jeremiah wouldn’t go for what Hananiah said (verse 9): “The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him.” Now, this is the test. Jeremiah agrees that what Hananiah said would be great. He says, “I like what you say. It’s very pleasing. I would think that was wonderful if it happened that way.” Verse 6: “Amen: the Lord do so: the Lord perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the Lord’s house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place.” He’s not an evil wisher, not a spiteful character. He just says, “That’s not the way it’s going to be. What we will have to do is just wait and see how it turns out.” Verse 9: “The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him [so we will know]. Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah’s neck, and brake it.” He was wearing a yoke to show that Israel and Judah would have to wear a yoke of the king of Babel. Hananiah broke it off and said, “There’s not going to be any yoke.” Verse 11: “Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.” He didn’t fight or argue about it. He would just have to wait and see how it turned out. The interesting thing is that he said, “Three cheers for Hananiah. I only hope you’re right, but I know you’re not.”

Continuing with verse 12: “Then the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah . . . saying, Go and tell Hananiah, saying, “Thus saith the Lord; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron. . . . [Verse 15] Hear now, Hananiah; The Lord hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord. So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.” So this proves that Jeremiah, not Hananiah, was right. In making these decisions, Jeremiah is not being rancorous. He says, “This is what the Lord tells me to say.” We always get this picture of the prophets of Israel as fierce, old mullahs,

something like the Ayatollah, showering the sparks of hatred and fear and the great Satan. There's none of that in it at all. He keeps saying, "Look, the Lord is gentle and kind. He wants to help you and do everything he can for you, and you won't let him." He says, "Hananiah has given you a wonderful program. If you would only behave yourself, that's the way it would be. But I'm afraid that's not the way it's going to be." So this is the Jerusalem of Jeremiah. There's a lot more, of course. This is the second longest book in the Bible (52 chapters). Isaiah is 66 chapters. In Jeremiah you will find the story of what was going on. But what you find in the Book of Mormon is not a rehash or a paraphrase of Jeremiah at all. It's a much fuller picture of the specifics of what was going on. You get a marvelous picture of what was happening. We'll talk about that next time and his getting out. Our time is up now, and we must go and hide in the cliffs of the mountains. Jeremiah did that. When he went to Babylon, he hid in a cave for a while. Then he went back. He was a very important man.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

**Semester 1, Lecture 6
1 Nephi 1; Jeremiah 29
Souvenirs from Lehi's Jerusalem**

They also take their troubles, their attitudes, their feuds, their prejudices, and everything else. Lehi had full baggage. Remember, his people were especially prepared to transfer the culture from one world to the other. We want to find out first what happened to Jeremiah because that's very much in the story of Lehi. They were quite closely connected, but this is what was happening in Jerusalem. The reason we are bringing this up is that there are some marvelous documents that have appeared "out of the blue" right from Lehi's day (we will see what they are).

But first, continuing from where we were, we learn that Jeremiah sent letters around everywhere (Jeremiah 29:1). He sent letters from himself to all the captives in Babylon telling them they might as well settle down for a long stay; they were going to be there for seventy years. He was sending other letters around, and we learn in verses 25 and 29 of this chapter that the high authorities were simply enraged by the liberties he was taking just sending letters to people, hither and yon. He was enjoying full freedom of the press here, and it made them mad. Right at the beginning of chapter 30, Jeremiah was ordered next (by the Lord) to write a whole book and send it around. The theme there is that everyone pays for his own sins. They were in bad times, and things were not going well. But in the end the Lord will reward you, and you will answer for your own sins. This is very important, of course; it's one of our Articles of Faith ("not for Adam's transgression"). Then we go on, and we are told at the beginning of chapter 32 that it was in the tenth year of Zedekiah that Jerusalem was besieged. For safety reasons (for security) Jeremiah was thrown in jail, but it was in the palace. The king was rather afraid of Jeremiah. He wanted to get on his good side, but he couldn't do it without prejudicing the princes. Everybody was very tense here and very suspicious of everybody else.

Notice it was in the tenth year. When does the Book of Mormon begin? In the first year of King Zedekiah. This was ten years after that. Jerusalem didn't fall (it's going to be a couple more years) until after Lehi left. He got out in time, but just in time because it fell in 597 B.C., but only for a short time. Nebuchadnezzar went on and tried to get into Egypt, but Necho was able to keep him out. They were having troubles in Babylon, so he went back. Then the Jews felt the trouble was over, but it wasn't over. Jeremiah said it was coming back, and it did come back. We talk about a "Jeremiah" as someone who preaches nothing but doom, gloom, and horror. But that wasn't so with Jeremiah at all. Remember, the last thing he said to Hananiah was, "Well, I hope you're right; nothing would please me better than for you to be right, but I'm afraid you're wrong." But you'll notice this when you read Jeremiah: if you match the verses equally, it's fifty-fifty doom and gloom to joy (you're going to return; the Lord will bless you; eventually, you will repent and everything is going to be good). That's the same with all the prophets; they all say that. Their messages are of "the apocalypse of bliss" and "the apocalypse of woe." They balance each other all the way through the Bible. You have to have them both; the one goes with the other.

When Jerusalem was besieged, Jeremiah was kept in palace detention for purposes of security. But to show his confidence, he bought a farm on the land and said, "We are going to be here." He bought a land of his inheritance. Remember, Lehi had a land of his inheritance, which was a farm where the brothers went down to fetch all the rich things and bribe Laban for the plates. A land of inheritance is a very important thing. This has come out in another batch of documents that has miraculously come out in the last few years. All of these have come out since I've been here at BYU (amazing documents), except the ones I'm going to talk about. They came out just shortly before that when I was down at Claremont. That was sensational! But the new documents that have come out have thrown all kinds of light on Lehi, his world, and his family too.

Then what happened? How did he buy a farm if he was in prison? He did it through his secretary, Baruch, who was a famous man. We have the books of Baruch, and he was an important man. Later on, they said, "The trouble is you are letting Baruch lead you around by the nose. He is the one who is giving all these prophecies really. Jeremiah really just represents Baruch." But Jeremiah himself was an influential man. You notice he got around. He wrote these letters and was very bold. He went in and out of the palace and had property everywhere. It was the same thing with Baruch. Like Lehi, these were important men. These prophets were not just the characters in the long night robe that go around holding up a placard that says "the world is about to come to an end" (a favorite cartoon of *The New Yorker*). No, they weren't that kind. These men knew what they were doing. Jeremiah was an important man. His daughter had married into royalty. So to show his confidence he bought a farm, a land of his inheritance. But he was enraged by the dirty deal they gave the servants. The first time Nebuchadnezzar came there, they did the usual thing. When everything dissolves, you don't want to be responsible for anything. You don't want to be responsible for your servants—their protection and food. So they let them all go, every man for himself. They released all their servants and slaves and let them go. When the danger passed, they immediately sent out the police to round them up, brought them all back home, and put them into service again (in slavery in most cases). Of course, this was against the law of Israel anyway. But Jeremiah was furious at that. He really raised something at that. This is the sort of dirty trick that went on. Speaking of the Jeremiad, he said, "The deal with the servants shows what's wrong." The essence of wickedness is meanness. There's the passage from John Donne that John F. Kennedy used to like to quote: "A dog starved at his master's gate portends the ruin of the state." If a man lets his dog starve, he's that kind of person. Or as Heraclitus would put it: "A man's character is his fate." You can tell what's going to happen if you know who the man is and what kind of character he has. It's going to lead to a tragic end or a happy end as the case may be. This is it; it's the character. We read the passages. That's the kind of people they were. That was what was wrong. It wasn't the Babylonians or the Egyptians that worried them; it was the people themselves. As Solon said, "These people themselves have brought this ruin upon their state." They are full of lust; they can never get enough. They rob each other and steal from the state like bandits, etc. It's the same thing here in our world. It's that kind of world. Notice, it's a world prosperity and it's a world civilization too. Just as today, no matter what city you go to in the world now, how disappointing. Wherever you go, you land in the same airport, you see the same high-rises, and you get in the same traffic jams if you are a little late (it's the darndest thing). That's a world civilization. It was very different when I was young. When you went to China or to the islands, it was so different, it was just another world. People wrote travel books about that sort of thing. But now it's all the same, and it was the same thing in Lehi's day too. Wherever you went, they would speak Aramaic or Egyptian. At this time every important ruler or king had two secretaries. He had an Aramaic secretary to write

Aramaic, which was universal (it was spoken in Egypt and all over this area), and he had an Egyptian secretary who would write Egyptian because there was the Egyptian Empire too. This was the great twenty-sixth dynasty which was a great commercial empire. So these things were going on, and they begat this spirit of greed and meanness, etc. This is reflected all through Jeremiah.

Well, what happened to Jeremiah? I mentioned that he dictated and circulated a book. Then in chapter 35 he tested the integrity of the Rechabites who were very important people. Chapter 35 tells us how he dealt with the Rechabites (they come out earlier in the history of Israel). This tells us that he set them up to the Jews as an example of integrity. The Rechabites were given a permanent position in the temple. Lehi and his family were Rechabites; they joined that particular movement. They were the people who went out into the wilderness and tried to live the gospel in its purity out there. Chapter 35 of Jeremiah is the official history, you might say, of the Rechabites. "The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying [this was before the days of Zedekiah, the earlier time], Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink." So he brought the Rechabites into the house of the Lord and offered them wine, but they refused to drink wine because they had made a covenant that they wouldn't drink wine. Verse 5: "And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine."

Incidentally, we have here a very important aspect of history at this time that has always been neglected until very recent years; namely, the formation of societies, cults, sects, and conventicles. Like-minded people would form groups to preserve their existence, sometimes from the police, etc., and they would become secret. The early Roman Republic history, after this, is full of it. But it's true of the Greeks too. They were suspicious of such societies, and the emperors always ordered them to be broken up. The famous Prescript of Hadrian is about the Christians. Rulers are suspicious of that sort of thing because these groups hold meetings and don't allow other people in. They have sacraments, and people don't know what goes on there. Notice the Rechabites in verse 4: "And I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan." This was a separate room in the temple, reserved to a certain society that met there, these sons of Hanan. This is common. We get this from the *New Temple Scroll*, just discovered in 1950: "... which was by the chamber of the princes, which was above the chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of the door." The doorkeeper of the temple was in charge. You notice here three separate chambers of the temple reserved for families or groups for their particular use—just as we have sealing rooms in the temple and special rooms for certain things. The Rechabites were Israelites, but not Levites. They served in the temple, but they were not of the priestly line at all. Verse 6: "But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever [with integrity they had preserved that rule]: Neither shall ye build houses, nor sow seed." They didn't sow wheat because they said that was what Adam did after he fell. He sowed the field, and by the sweat of his brow he raised his crops. They wished to return to the state of man in his innocence. There have been sects and groups in every age that wanted to do this—go back and live the way man was in his state of innocence before he fell. They would not cut their hair. John the Baptist was identified with one of these groups out along the Jordan, according to the Dead Sea Scrolls. So they didn't cultivate wheat, and they didn't live in houses. They didn't live in the *bayt al-hajar*; they lived in the *bayt al-sha'r*, the houses of hair—goat's hair houses.

They were utopians, and many utopians have tried to do that very same thing, like in America (Robert Owen, etc.). We have splinter groups in the Church all the time going out like that and living by themselves. I'm very well acquainted with Glendenning and the Order of Aaron. I haven't heard from them recently (very fine people). They went clear out by Baker and thought they would live in their primitive simplicity.

Verse 7: "Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers." They were strangers on earth because the earth is in its polluted state. Man has fallen, and they didn't want to share in that way of things. They were emphasizing the yawning gulf that exists between life on earth as it should be and life on earth as it is. These people are always trying to use a direct method to get back. But the Rechabites had integrity. Verse 8: "Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab. . . . Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us." Now, Jeremiah said, "Here's an example for you." And Lehi's going to do that too. When they went out, they weren't intending to cross the sea, or anything like that. They thought they would be living in the desert the rest of their days (we'll get that pretty soon, I hope, if we ever get them out of town). Lehi was, no doubt, a friend of the Rechabites because he was close to Jeremiah. He was in the Jeremian party, you might say. Verse 14: "The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine [repeated again; this is Jeremiah speaking], are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me." Verse 16: "Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; but this people hath not hearkened unto me." This wasn't the commandment of the Lord. It was their father's idea, but they at least kept that. For that reason he said he would bless them, and they would always have a place in the temple. So they became servants in the temple.

The reason they were in town on this occasion is here in Jeremiah 35:11, "When Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem." They came within the walls because they would have been wiped out if they had stayed out in the desert; the armies were going through. For safety, they made a temporary flight to Jerusalem, and there they were given a permanent job in the temple. As I said, Jeremiah made an example of them. Verse 19: "Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever."

Jeremiah dictated a book this time, and it was read before all the people in the temple. Notice, the man got around and had access. They were always trying to stop him or discourage him, but he had influence and friends. We are told a little later on that the king was afraid of the people, and he was also afraid of Jeremiah (just like in the New Testament, they were afraid of Jesus). The princes were out to get him. Jeremiah dictated the book and read it to the people. Then he took the same book to the palace and read it before a group of princes; they wanted to hear it. These princes were the *sārîm*. This is an interesting thing. They are always called the princes in the King James translation, but the word *sārîm* (the plural) is the "elders." It is used in all Semitic languages for "great and old." In Egyptian, if you see a man with a staff, like this (a great man), he is a *sr*. He is a

great man, or he is a *wr* (Indo-European, *wer*), or he is a *smsw*. He is one of the elders. Our word “sir” is related to it—a term of respect. They were the important men, the chiefs, the big men. As I say, in the Book of Mormon it is translated correctly, “elders.” In the King James, it is translated as “princes.” They were not necessarily princes; they were influential land holders. There was quite a body of them, and they were not of royal blood (except a few). They were the *sārîm*, the ones that Zoram was out with by night, holding secret sessions, when Nephi met him and took him out to their camp. They swore him in to be a member of their society out in the desert, and he decided to stay there the rest of his days.

Anyway, he took it and read it before the princes, and they didn’t like it at all. Jeremiah’s representative was Jehudi. Jeremiah was in prison a good deal of the time, but he always had men who would run errands for him. Jehudi took his letter and read it to the princes. They didn’t like that at all (they wanted to hear a special reading). Baruch then explained it to them and gave a lecture. They reported to the king and said, “We can’t go on with this (chapter 36). When they heard what Jehudi had to say, they said, “Forget the book.” Then the king wanted to hear the book. They told the king, “We think you should hear this.” So Jehudi went and read the book to the king. Then there’s a very moving and very convincing picture. If any of you have been to Masada, you know the lower palace is the king’s winter palace there. If you have been to Jericho, there’s a big mound there that was Herod’s winter palace. The warm air of Jericho was much warmer than Jerusalem. The two cities are just a few miles apart, but Jericho is much lower. The deserts were popular places for winter palaces. The king was in his winter palace there when this was read to him. There was a fire burning in the fireplace on the hearth. He heard the book read and said, “Give it here.” He took a knife and cut it to bits, threw it in the fire, and burned it up. That’s the way he was going to treat it. They were enraged by the liberties that Jeremiah had taken. So what did Jeremiah do? He made a duplicate and continued to circulate it around. He was irrepressible; no wonder he was asking for trouble. You say, “How is he going to survive here? Well, he’s the only one that did survive (a very interesting lesson in survival).

The book contained a denunciation (the usual things we’ve read) of the ways of the *sārîm*, and especially that they are not to put their trust in Egypt. It said that they might just as well go along with Nebuchadnezzar because that’s their only hope (that’s the best thing that can happen to them). So Jeremiah made a duplicate, and sure enough, what happened? Necho’s army returned from Egypt, and the Babylonian force, which was camped at the walls, took to their heels to escape. Necho had really built up a reputation; he was a powerful man and king of Egypt. He was coming in again, and the Babylonians took off. So they said, “Ha, ha, the Babylonians are gone; Jeremiah was wrong after all. We trust in Egypt, and that’s the right thing.” (That’s Laman and Lemuel; they were on the Egyptian side.) But in chapter 37, verse 8, Jeremiah said, “Don’t worry, they will be back.” It was the Egyptians that accused him of treason. They complained that he was weakening the people. So then the *sārîm* put him in prison, in a dungeon this time. It was a real beauty, but this wasn’t the worst dungeon (they have their private dungeons). The king brought him out and consulted with him in secret. He said, “Don’t let the people and the princes find out about this.” Everybody was sort of “shining up to” Jeremiah but didn’t want the others to know about it. Everybody was getting nervous; nobody felt secure (changing sides, etc.). They put him in a dungeon, we are told here, because he was guilty of “weakening the hands of the people.” And this is the very same expression used in the letters that were discovered about what was happening. The record says, “He

weakened the hands of the army, he discouraged the military, and he was spreading discouragement and dissension among the common people in the country.”

The king kept Jeremiah under palace arrest, but the princes (notice the intrigue here) had him dragged out secretly and put in a dungeon (what a dungeon it is now). It was full of sewage, we are told. He sank down into the mud and filth (that was terrible). They didn’t give him anything to eat. It was very low down. They had to lower him by ropes down a deep cistern. At the bottom it was filled with sewage, mud, and filth. The record says, “He sank into it.” What a place to be! He nearly died. If he hadn’t been snatched out of there in time, he would have died (that was as low as you could go). That’s the greatest act of contempt possible. And who was it that protested? It was a person named Ebedmelech who was a black man and a eunuch. He was an Ethiopian servant in the palace there. That black man had the courage to go to the king and rebuke him (verse 9). He said, “What are you doing to Jeremiah? That’s no way to treat any human being.” The king was ashamed of himself and ordered Jeremiah brought out because this black man said, “We don’t do that to people.” They let down the ropes and threw down all sorts of dirty rags for him to stand on. Then he put the rags under his arms because he was so skinny, and they pulled him up out of the hole. He would have starved or frozen in a short time if that had gone on much longer. Immediately thereafter, the king had a secret session with Jeremiah, and he told Jeremiah that he was afraid of the people because things were looking bad here (verse 19). He was also afraid of the princes (*sārîm* is a better word for them). Now the princes came to consult Jeremiah. They said, “Things are beginning to look serious.”

Then Jerusalem fell and Zedekiah fled. It’s a tragic story there in chapter 39. He fled to Jericho (right over here), and they caught up with him there. (There is nearly a 4,000-foot drop from Jerusalem to Jericho.) He was caught there and taken up north to Riblah on the Orontes. There he was forced to see all his sons put to death before his eyes. After that was over, he was blinded and taken away to Babylon (he couldn’t have been more reduced). Nebuchadnezzar’s commander took the king to Riblah because that was the headquarters. He had made his winter headquarters at Riblah in the Orontes. This was a favorite place because it was central to the area. Remember, Babylon was not just concerned with Jerusalem. They were concerned with all of Syria here and keeping the whole western empire. It was the same thing with the Egyptians. Necho had made Riblah his center too when he was in power there. So at Riblah they put all the king’s sons to death except one. Nebuchadnezzar came in and immediately started correcting abuses. The Lord said that was going to happen. They used to think he just took away a few of the aristocrats; that’s not so. He took away a tremendous number of people. He left a lot of poor people on the land. They distributed it and started working it among themselves. He gave Jeremiah a free hand to go wherever he wanted. He said, “You go where you want and do what you want [chapter 40].” So Jeremiah joined Gedaliah at Mizpah. Gedaliah was the one among whom the remnant of the Jews left behind were being organized. He was Nebuchadnezzar’s man in charge back in Jerusalem. He organized the people in the country. The people were out here.

This is Amman. At that time it was called Rabbath, but it is Amman. This is the land of the Ammonites. The king of the Ammonites (this shows the intrigue) saw a chance, now that Nebuchadnezzar was gone, to strike at the Babylonians by having Gedaliah murdered. He sent a terrorist squad. They were really terrorists; they were high nobles though. They were invited to a banquet (this is the normal procedure). Elishama and Ishmael invited Gedaliah to a diplomatic banquet where they murdered him. Then they

felt nervous, and Ishmael fled for safety to Mizpah. He went back and joined with the Ammonites. The king of Ammon was responsible for that. He planned this assassination and sent the nobles down to perform it. There was terrorism; it has always been the pattern here (this is old stuff). This Ishmael was in charge of it. He not only moved out of Mizpah, but he forced the remnant of the Jews to go with him, as many as he could. Another story: Gedaliah had an aide whose name was Johanan. He was right-hand man to Gedaliah, and he wanted to punish the murderers of Gedaliah. He took after them, so they fled to the court at Ammon where they would be safe. He caught up with them, freed the people, and led them all back south heading for Egypt. Just six miles south of Jerusalem is Bethlehem, and they made a big camp at Bethlehem. (It was like one of these displaced-person camps. They have tremendous ones now—those east of the Jordan, up here. I visited the ones at Jericho, at Ammon, and in the desert out here.) At this time they had these huge camps of displaced persons. Israel was all displaced persons, all living in tents like the Rechabites now. There was this huge camp at Bethlehem. Then Johanan asked Jeremiah, “Well, we’re on our way to Egypt; isn’t that the safe place to go? Jeremiah said, “Don’t go to Egypt. You will be despised. There is all sorts of tension there. Don’t go to Tanis.” (This is Raphia right on the border here. This is Sais, the Saitic dynasty. But at Tanis there was another dynasty that was very hostile.) He said, “You will be despised; they will give you a bad time. You are as good as dead if you go into Egypt.” But they insisted on going. They went down into Tanis, and he was right. Jeremiah kept saying, “Stay here; everything is all right if you will just stay here. Egypt is going to be destroyed later [as it was], and they will all hate you when you go there.”

They said, “This is just Baruch who has put you up to this. We are going to Tanis anyway.” So Jeremiah went to Tanis with them. He ended up in Egypt too. Many of them went way up the Nile. Jeremiah then sent a letter to the Jews in Egypt (he’s always sending letters around, circulars). The emphasis in these last chapters (44–47) is that they haven’t given up their old Isis cult. He said, “You were practicing your Egyptian religion back in Jerusalem. That was the thing the Lord rebuked you for. Now that you are in Egypt, you are really throwing yourselves into it.” But it was always the women who were doing it. The women were preparing the cakes, burning the sacred lights, and going through all the rites. We have some very interesting records. We have a marvelous writing by the daughter of King Semicus II, Nefer Ibibrei, a hymn to Isis and a ritual account of certain doings in the cult of Isis (it’s interesting that this is written by the king’s own daughter). This was the king in Lehi’s day (this is a later time now). Jeremiah’s last word to them in chapter 47 was, “Your mercenaries are not going to be any help to you at all.” So they were beaten.

Now, we have to move along here. Imagine that in order of battle you are going to try to give a data report on what the enemy’s strength and position is. They are right nearby. Things are under pressure, so you have to do some interrogating. They bring in an officer who is in Zedekiah’s army, but he is a mercenary. (They were nearly all mercenaries, anyway, so they were always changing sides.) This man would be a Carian who had rented himself out with some Greek troops under him. He is not under any particular obligation of loyalty to the king, except the oath he took with the contract to get paid. You offer to pay him more. So you won’t worry about the Geneva Convention too much, and you are going to start asking him questions. This is the Lachish Letters I’m talking about here.

This is what it is now. We have letters in the Bible, etc. We have eight thousand texts of the New Testament, but none of them is earlier than the third and fourth century A.D. There are tiny fragments from the second century, but that’s all there is. The oldest text

we have of the Old Testament, the Torah, is the Ben Asher Codex from the ninth century. Then with the Dead Sea Scrolls we found a complete Isaiah a thousand years older than any other text known. Now we can see what kind of changes have been made, etc. But what if you found some letters from the time of Lehi that weren't copies of copies of copies? That's the only way the scriptures or any ancient literature comes down to us. Mostly fourteenth- and fifteenth-century documents, they are copies from earlier copies. If you can get a tenth or eleventh-century copy, that's great stuff. But what if we had a collection of letters, personal reminiscences of troubles, etc. from Lehi's own time and place (the original letters from Jerusalem)? Between 1935 and 1938 these were discovered at Lachish. (This is Lachish here; this is Jerusalem; it's not too far down. The whole thing should have been a little higher up here. This is Jerusalem; this is Azekah, and this is Lachish. It's pronounced Lachish in the Old Testament. Lachish was the most important center in all of western area. It was on the main road to Jerusalem. (This is Jerusalem over here; I keep thinking I have it too far from the Dead Sea, but I haven't. These places are so close together it fools you. You can stand out here and see the whole length of the Dead Sea. This is Hebron over here.) They would take the road down to Gaza here. Then they would follow what they called the sea road. This is Joppa, this is Ashkelon, and this is Ashdod (these were the Phoenician centers). This is the Gaza Strip down here with Gerar, the capital of Gaza from ancient times. Remember, Abraham's wife Sarah was coveted by the king of Gerar. So you take the coast road. From here down, it's only 93 miles. It's flat coast all the way, and you are in Egypt before you know it. Here these Lachish Letters were discovered, these priceless documents from the time of Lehi. They were written in Lachish, the most important fort on the road between Jerusalem and Egypt.

So you are outside with the Babylonian army. This officer comes in, and you are going to quiz him about the Lachish Letters. You say, "Look, I hear there are some military documents at Lachish, aren't there?"

He says, "Yes, I've heard about them. In fact, I was an intelligence clerk in the office there."

"What kind of an office?"

"Well, it was the guardhouse."

"Where were these letters kept?"

"They were kept in the guardhouse; well, it was really the gate-house."

"Well, will you describe this gatehouse to me [we had pictures of it]."

"It was a sturdy building, the size of this room—two stories. Upstairs were officers' quarters; downstairs were offices."

"Offices for what?"

"Oh, for questioning people going in and out. We have to do this. These are dangerous times."

"Do you have records there?"

“Well, we were keeping letters there. They are not the regular . . .”

“Do they contain military material?”

“I don’t need to talk about that.”

“Well, after all, you are a Greek. Zedekiah’s finished, and we can make it worth your while.”

“Yes, there were military documents, but they were letters.”

“What were they doing there?”

“They were being kept there for evidence in a trial that was coming up.”

“Who was being tried?”

“It was Hosha’yahu.”

“By the way, who was in charge of this guardhouse?”

“It was Jaush.”

This is rendered by Torczyner, who is the editor of the letters here, as “Jaush.” This is an interesting thing; these touches come up all the time. This is from Lehi’s time, and the name is “Jaush” or “Josh.” We learn in Moroni that there was a Nephite commander by the name of Josh who commanded ten thousand men in the field up at Cumorah. Everybody laughed. They said, “Well, there’s the hick from the sticks.” The name “Joshua” was “Josh.” But the name is not found in the Bible; this is the point. Here we have a commander in the Lachish Letters whose name was Jaush. There’s another score for the Book of Mormon. You say, “Who was this Hosha’yahu? Where does he come from?”

“He comes from Qiryat Ye‘arim [it is up here].” *Qiryat* means a settlement or village, and Ye‘arim was the founder. This village is a very important settlement on the way. Azekah is a little farther out.

You say, “Well, how did he get into it?”

“He is a commander in that village up there. He is suspected of having opened some secret military information that was being sent to the commander at Lachish.” The commander at Lachish was Jaush, and this man Hosha’yahu was in charge of this other fortress between here and Jerusalem. He was charged with reading these letters.

“Well, why shouldn’t he read them?”

“Because they were top secret.”

“Why did he have them?”

“As the commander of the fort halfway, he was supposed to send them through, that’s all. He was just supposed to transmit the letters and get them sent on their way.”

“How were the letters sent?”

“They were taken by courier, sometimes by little kids from one place to another so they wouldn’t be suspected. They were carried to Qiryat Ye‘arim, and then he was just supposed to forward them without reading them.”

“What makes you think he was reading them?”

“Because somebody tipped off the prophet Uriah.” The prophet Uriah is mentioned in chapter 26 of Jeremiah—how he was chased to Egypt, etc. He’s mentioned here by name; here’s Uriah. He left Qiryat Ye‘arim and went to Egypt.

“Well, where was Uriah from?”

“He was originally from Qiryat Ye‘arim. We know there was hanky-panky going on because he was tipped off and took off for Egypt.” His father (this we get from the Lachish Letters) went off from Qiryat Ye‘arim with the adjutant general and the principal inspector of military fortifications to the palace in Jerusalem for a special audience with the king. Well, obviously he had gone off to plead for leniency for his son. We are told that they chased him clear down to Egypt, brought him back, and put him to death in the palace. Here his father goes up to plead for him. So we have contemporary letters telling about this from the very time it was going on. (Incidentally, I have a rather lengthy summary of this material in the December 1981 *Ensign*.)

Continuing with the interrogation: “Well, now wait a minute. I’ve heard that the guardhouse there was burned.”

“Oh yes, it burned; it collapsed.”

“Well, I guess that’s ‘good-bye records’ isn’t it? They’re gone.”

“No, they’re not destroyed.”

“Well, did you take them out? Did you rescue them?”

“No, we didn’t.”

“Well, how could they be preserved?”

“We wrote them on potsherds.”

“Are you crazy? These big, clumsy potsherds? You don’t keep records on them. Why not on papyrus?” (This is all in it).

“Because we couldn’t get papyrus.” (He wanted to say “dummy” at that point.)

“Why not?”

“Don’t you know your army cut the road to Egypt? We can’t get anything over the Egyptian road anymore, so we wrote on potsherds. That’s a good way. They’re convenient; people always write on potsherds.” They were kept there, and when the tower collapsed, instead of wiping these out it baked them and made them permanent. These are permanent records now. They will last as long as the fossils up in the hills—the trilobites and brachiopods that you find up in Rock Canyon. They are millions of years old and yet the fine details are still on them. So it will be with these Lachish Letters. They are on burnt, baked clay now, and they will last as long as anything. So we have them, and we don’t have to worry about that. Now, how can I get hold of these?

J. L. Starcky started excavating in 1935. In 1938 he had business to go back to in Jerusalem. On the way he was held up by bandits and killed. This is typical of life in Palestine in the 1930s. (It has never been secure; everybody is out for himself. It’s a dangerous place and always has been. As you know, it is today; daily murders go on in Israel now.)

So these letters were written in Lehi’s time. Well, what about them then? Being written on potsherds, they survived. They were in the guardhouse being kept as evidence pending the military trial of this Hosha’yahu. He was being court-martialed and was suspected of treason because he may have read the letters. Somebody tipped off Uriah. They didn’t know whether he did or not; that’s why they were going to have the court-martial. Uriah was really in danger. The king’s soldiers were put on his trail, and he was fleeing to Egypt. He was fleeing because he was wanted by the police in Jerusalem because he had been “weakening the hands of the military and the people in the country,” it says.

That’s exactly what happened, you remember, at the beginning of the Book of Mormon. “And in that same year there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed” (1 Nephi 1:4). Now that was the message of doom and gloom that was regarded by the king, of course, as treasonable: Saying they should take sides with Babylon, and they were going to be destroyed. That’s what Uriah was guilty of: “weakening the hands, spreading dissension, spreading disinterest and discouragement both in the country and the city.” That’s exactly what Lehi was charged with. At an earlier time, a couple of years before this, he went out and tried to preach, and he had to skip out of town to save his life. The police were after him. It tells us that the police sent out by Laban tried to overtake him, but he got away from them. All this is in the Book of Mormon too, but these Lachish Letters fill in the picture here. They were considered subversive because they were opposing the official policy and undermining morale by their preaching. As Jeremiah puts it, “Therefore the princes [that’s really the *sārîm*] said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them” (Jeremiah 38:4).

Lachish letter number six tells us: “The words of the prophet are not good. They are liable to loosen the hands.” The Book of Mormon adds this other one: “That same year there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed” (1 Nephi 1:4). This was the disheartening news that discouraged people and was regarded as subversive. We can date the letters with perfect

accuracy by the layers. The place burned down and caved. We go on questioning the officer: "Where were these records kept?"

"They were kept in the lower room."

"Well, the roof caved in and smashed everything, didn't it?"

"No, we stored them under the benches around the sides of the room so they wouldn't be in the way. We had these benches for people to sit on when they came to be examined, have their passports stamped, etc." So that's where they were—under the benches. One time they found eighteen letters, and a little later on they found six letters. So here were these letters telling us everything that was going on. News like this: "Something terrible has happened; we can no longer see the signal fires of Azekah." That city was almost halfway between Lachish and Jerusalem. They sent messages by signal fires, by code. When the messages stopped coming from Azekah, they knew something terrible had happened. Lachish was the very last city to fall; it fell after Jerusalem and all the others. It hung on longer than any others, so this gives us an eye-witness account of what was happening right up to the end as things got worse and worse.

Letter four tells us that Uriah's father, Shema'yahu, went up from Uriah's village to Jerusalem on urgent business accompanied by the chief inspector of military outposts. Torczyner said it was, without any doubt, to use his influence with the king in behalf of his son. These prophets weren't aged men with long beards. They were young, vigorous men. Lehi was in the prime of life at this time. Furthermore, the scribe of Jeremiah keeps assigning the Uriah episode to the time of Jehoiakim (608–597). The scribe said that it's in the early period, contemporary with Lehi. Scholars are agreed now that Jeremiah 27 belongs not to Jehoiakim's reign, but actually to the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah. So the Book of Mormon is right after all. They used to think it was wrong chronologically because Uriah appeared in the time of Jehoiakim and not of Zedekiah. But it is in the time of Zedekiah that he appeared. The Lachish Letters show that.

"As to the writing, notice they contain ninety lines of clear writing, beautiful language, and highly important context. The language is pure Hebrew, most closely resembling that of the books of Jeremiah and Kings." It's important that the writing on the gold plates was in Egyptian because the king at this time had an Egyptian secretary too. "They show, to everyone's surprise, that in 600 B.C. writing was almost common knowledge and not a secret art known only to a few. They also show the Egyptian scribal tradition at that time exerted a major influence in the official record keeping of the Near East. The king who attacked Jerusalem from the East at this time brought two scribes with him, as he did on every expedition [as we learn from A. T. Olmstead's work]. The chief with his stylus and tablets and his assistant with a papyrus roll [or Egyptian parchment and Egyptian pen]." They would write all records in two languages, one in Egyptian and one in Aramaic. The Egyptian, of course, would take up only about a third the space to write as the Aramaic. Aramaic was clumsy, and you would have to take up a lot of space. But right in the twenty-sixth dynasty (at that time only), Demotic became the official court writing. It's very short shorthand; it beats our shorthand. You can get things in little space. We see those Anthon transcripts, etc., looking like shorthand. Well, it was that. In the Book of Mormon they keep telling us, "We would write in Hebrew if they had room on the plates, but we are using this special script. We are using the Egyptian way of writing so we can get all this stuff in." Since it was translated by the gift and power of the Lord, there are no

philological questions raised at all. That's nice. Imagine, if we had the plates, how we would argue until the end of time about what made what. We could never agree on anything. We would be fighting until the cows came home, and there would no point to it at all. Fortunately, the angel took the plates back, so we can't fight about them. But he gave us the text. We can fight about that if we want, but it is a very clear, very lucid text.

So they found it necessary to have an Aramaic scribe to deal with the one and an Egyptian scribe to deal with the other. The proper names are interesting. They nearly all end in *iah*. There was King Josiah who began this line (the great-grandfather of Zedekiah). He was the one who reformed the law. Moses was the first reformer of the law, and Josiah was the great restorer and reformer of the law. All the names at that time suddenly begin to end in *iah* which means they belong to the Yahvist the party of reform, the old Jewish party. So you get these *iah* names with these very interesting endings. Now, we are going back to the original text and these names that end in *yahu* and *iah*. For example, the Lachish name *Mattanyahu* also appears at Elephantine, at the same time that the Jews went up the Nile, just as *Mtn(i)*. The forms *Mathonihah* and *Mathoni* both appear in the Book of Mormon. In the Lachish Letters you get *Mattanyahu*. After the Assyrian conquest they dropped the *H*. But in Lehi's time, they still kept that, so there are plenty of *ihah* endings in the Book of Mormon.

Harry Torczyner was the one who edited the letters. He was the son of the first discoverer of the Dead Sea Scrolls. He said, "These *yahu* are certainly the token of a changed inner-Judaean relationship to *Yahweh*. These reforms in some way parallel the first reformation of Moses." He finds these *yahu* names a reflection of the act of general reformation inaugurated by King Josiah. Now, who is the great reformer of the constitution and the giver of the new law in the Book of Mormon? It's King Mosiah. His name combines *Moses*, the first reformer of the law, and *Josiah*, the second reformer of the law. King Benjamin called his son *Mosiah*. That's just the thing to name him as the great reformer of the law. These *iah* names are characteristic of Lehi's time, showing that he belonged to Jeremiah's party. So we go on about the names and the activities of the prophet.

What we see in the Lachish Letters and the Lehi story is relatively narrow circles of friends, relations, and clandestine flights. (Oh, dear, the time is up now.) The most exciting story of all is how little Mulek escaped and how the Mulekites took off after all the rest of them had left. The Mulekites' king was the lonely survivor from the king's family. Were the Mulekites ever heard of again? Yes, they turn up in the Book of Mormon, of course. We will mention them the next time. (Things never go as fast as we hope they will.) The portrait of Laban is absolutely marvelous. Notice this, *Jaush* or *Josh* was the military governor of Lachish at this time. It was the second largest city as well as a strongly fortified place. He was in charge of everything as the military governor, and the records were kept in his office. Who was Laban? He was military governor of Jerusalem, we are told. They were out by night, remember, in secret council with the elders (the *sārîm*) and he was in his ceremonial armor when he met with them. Laman and Lemuel said, "He's in charge of fifty men in the city and ten thousand men in the field." He was in charge of the city police. He was the governor of the city, and the records were kept at his house. They were family records, and he was related to Lehi. That was where they knew they could get their records because they were kept in the house of Laban, the military governor. Not a likely place to keep the genealogy of the people, but that's where it was. It was the same thing in Lachish. In a time of alarm, they were put there for safekeeping. That was the safest place to keep them. And sure enough, we learn from the Copper Scroll

that when Jerusalem was threatened, they took all the documents they could and hid them in various places around the city. They were quick to get them to a safe place; that's what happened. That's probably why the brass plates and all the genealogy were being held under guard—kept under lock and key by Laban. Laban wouldn't let the brothers have them unless they paid him plenty, so they paid him plenty and he said, "April fool." This is typical of the intrigue. Everybody was playing dirty; everybody was out for everything. It's such a marvelous picture of life in the world we live in, isn't it. You can't beat the good old Book of Mormon.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 7
1 Nephi 1; Jeremiah
The Days of King Zedekiah:
“There Came Many Prophets”

Well now, we have to get Lehi out of Jerusalem. With all these stories and all these other notes and things, I turn and read that first chapter of 1 Nephi, and it's miraculous—the condensation, the prose, the simplicity, the directness. He has the four qualities that Matthew Arnold attributes to Homer. The Book of Mormon has them; I don't know anything else that has them. If you were to be asked on a test, for example, “What is the significance of the Lachish Letters for the Book of Mormon? They are immensely important. They are contemporary records—first-hand records, not records that have come down to us. They are the original documents, and they name names. They don't name Jeremiah. It's interesting that Jeremiah is never named in the Bible except in the book of Jeremiah. In Jeremiah's time the person they were all consulting as a prophet was Huldah, a woman. She was the prophetess; it's very interesting. Like Lehi, Jeremiah was an amateur prophet. You can see that he was engaged in business dealings and things like that. He moved around a lot, preaching as he went. The same thing happened with Lehi; it's very clear there in the first chapter. But it [the Lachish record] mentions Uriah who was a friend to them both. It mentions some other people and what went on, and various places.

They are leaving, and the situation is so close to the Book of Mormon. It's very dramatic and very intense. This is quite clear in both documents. But here we have something with which we can check the Book of Mormon story step by step. So we go on: “The Lachish letters center on the activities of the prophets. They are causing grave concern to the government; they are subversives.” We read in 1 Nephi 1:4, “In that same year there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed.” That was subversion; that would never do, you see. So the government was after them. Torczyner, the editor of these Lachish Letters, said, “It must certainly be admitted that there was more than one prophet at this time. There were prophets circulating around.” Israel usually has a chief prophet at a particular time, like Isaiah or Jeremiah, but Jeremiah wasn't even the chief one at this time. Uriah was an important man. He had been preaching perhaps longer than Jeremiah had. As I said, the prophetess was Huldah. She was the center of attention if they wanted the big stuff. Torczyner says here, “The central figure, of course, was Jeremiah, but it is only by chance we know about him. He is not even mentioned in the book of Kings; it's the Prophetess Huldah, an otherwise quite unknown figure, whom Josiah consults.” Well, that was back in Josiah's day, but now we are down in the time of Zedekiah. We are told that Uriah's religious influence had been great. Uriah prophesied, “according to all the words of Jeremiah” (Jeremiah 26:20). So he was spreading Jeremiah's message. Lehi did the same thing, so this was the Jeremiah party, you might say. And they were not popular, remember. Nobody wanted them with all this doom and gloom. They were running from the police everywhere.

Question: You tell us that Jeremiah was a little-known prophet, and this prophethood was well known. When you say the word “prophet” to me, I think of the hierarchy in the Church that we have today. Was it like that at all back then? Answer: No, that has nothing to do with it. As Brigham Young said, “Prophecy is not an office; it’s a gift. Some people have it and some don’t.” We are told that anyone who has a testimony of Jesus Christ has the gift of prophecy. But you have no right prophesying for the Church. There are various people who have the gift very strongly. No president of the Church ever had it more strongly than Eliza R. Snow. She made some marvelous prophecies, but she didn’t speak to the world and to the Church. This is given as a special gift, like healing, etc. There are some interesting stories on that.

Uriah was a prophet and had this particular gift. He went around and Jeremiah was authorizing him. You notice how Lehi took up the activity later on. Lachish Letter number six tells us, “The words of the prophets are dangerously undermining morale of both the military and the people. Behold, the words are not good, both to weaken the hands of the country and the city everywhere.” Jeremiah 38 says the very same thing, “For thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war [soldiers, *yedê anshê ha-milḥāmāh*] that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people [*kōl hā-‘ām*]” (Jeremiah 38:4). This is what we are told in the Book of Mormon, that many prophets came prophesying doom, and the people must repent. Nephi said that there were many prophets. “Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart, in behalf of his people” (1 Nephi 1:5). In the fifth verse already; things move fast in that first chapter. In reply to his prayer, he received a vision which sent him out to join the prophets. Nephi said, “My father . . . went forth among the people, and began to prophesy” (verse 18). This was as a result of this vision. What happened? He wasn’t a prophet before, but then he joined the prophets. He went forth among the people. You notice that every mention of the prophets here says that they were discouraging the people—that they were spreading dissent (repentance) among the people. It worried the ruling party, of course; it made them look bad. Verse 18: “. . . and began to prophesy and to declare unto them concerning the things which he had both seen and heard” (his vision). Well, he got into real trouble then, as you know. In 1 Nephi 7:14, Nephi tells us, “For behold, they have rejected the prophets, and Jeremiah have they cast into prison [this is not by revelation; he knows this by the news]. And they have sought to take away the life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land.” Such is the situation.

We find out from these Lachish Letters, as Torczyner says, that Uriah and others have hidden in the hills of western Judah for a long time. Lehi and his family went out and hid, but they didn’t hide long; after three days they moved down the coast. But the brothers went and hid in the caves near Jerusalem. As you know (many of you have been there, I’m sure), the whole limestone area around Jerusalem is just peppered with caves, wonderful caves all over the place. Right up to Jerusalem, there are caves everywhere—the cave of Machpelah and all the famous caves. There are hundreds of caves. The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in as many as three hundred different places, including the huge cave of Murabaat (which is much bigger than this room) where they found hundreds of documents. They were just a few miles from Jerusalem, and nobody knew of their existence until quite recently. We’ll come to them. They are the second great find that has direct bearing on the Book of Mormon. But Torczyner said, “They may have hidden in the hills of Western Judah.” And we find Lehi doing the same thing. It’s very interesting here that “Uriah’s story is being told,” as Torczyner points out, “only as a parallel to Jeremiah’s not less dangerous position.” Uriah’s story is a parallel; they were both doing

the same thing (this is where you get the characteristic repeated scenario, etc.). Well, that's exactly what Lehi's story is, a parallel to Jeremiah's. That's what his son said. Nephi said, "They put him into prison and cast my father out." Like Uriah's story, his is a parallel to Jeremiah's "not less dangerous position." So we can add Lehi to this as a thoroughly typical figure of the time. Then there's the name *yahu*, etc.

This is a national calamity, of course, with the background of darkening skies, etc. But the Lachish Letters are concerned with relatively narrow circles of friends. You see groups working together (little circles). We read about clandestine flights from the city in both the Book of Mormon and here, involving friends and family (going back to talk with Laban, etc.). Nephi and his brethren go back to town to persuade Ishmael, a friend of the family who had a family of daughters, to come down and join them. Nephi gets Zoram, the servant of Laban to come. They go up to strike a deal with Laban who knew them. He knew the boys when they came there, and he knew they had this great wealth. Well, they brought it up and showed it to him. They found out in the plates that they were related to Laban. So we have this sort of aristocracy in the town, and this is where the trouble is. This is clearer in the book of Jeremiah than anywhere else. It was long believed that it was only a few of the chief families that were taken away into Babylon. We know today that it was very different. They took everybody except that relatively small group of poor people. Nephi and his brethren went back, and they began to split up right off. When they went on their first mission to get the brass plates, they split up. Later, they took sides in the family. Laman and Lemuel and two daughters of Ishmael wanted to go back and give up the whole operation. They said, "We are fools to leave Jerusalem." Remember, he said, "The people of Jerusalem were a righteous people, for they kept the law of Moses." Then Nephi said, "If the former inhabitants of this land had been righteous, do you think the Lord would have allowed our ancestors to move in here and drive them out? No, it was because they were unrighteous, and that's exactly what's happening today." When they were going through Arab country there, he said, "Do you think if those people had been righteous, it would have happened?"

It was the same thing that happened here. Here's what they said in 1 Nephi 17:22: "And we know that the people who were in the land of Jerusalem were a righteous people; for they kept the statutes and judgments of the Lord, . . . they are a righteous people; and our father hath judged them." They got so prejudiced that they even planned to murder their father if they got chance. They were especially disgruntled at having to defer to their father in a very interesting quality. This is another thing that is mentioned in the Lachish Letters, a *piqqeah*. A *piqqeah* is a person who sees things that others do not see. It means very sharp sighted. Here we are told that a man of prophetic calling, one of the prophets they are trying to catch (not Uriah), is *ha-piqqeah* (with the definite article). He is the *piqqeah*, the sharp seer. He is a man who sees something that other people don't see, but it is real. Such people were held in suspicion then. This is what Torczyner said, "They looked down upon them as being visionary." See what Laman and Lemuel said about their father. Torczyner said, "This means the open-eyed or the visionary man [he underlined visionary], the seer, the man whose eyes God has opened to see the things that others do not see. To the followers of the prophets this was the highest term of praise, but for his critics it was a term of derision." This is what the brothers say to Nephi already in the second chapter, "They did murmur in many things against their father, because he was a visionary man . . . [using exactly the same word; they weren't going to follow him; he was a *piqqeah* just like these other prophets that he knew] and had led them out of the land of

Jerusalem, to leave the land of their inheritance, and their gold, and their silver, and their precious things, to perish in the wilderness. And this they said he had done because of the foolish imaginations of his heart” (1 Nephi 2:11). They wouldn’t believe a prophet. He was a *piqqeah*, and that’s what they accused him of being, “visionary.” These are exactly the qualities that Lehi revered and treasured, and he had them himself.

In 2 Kings we read where Elisha asked the Lord to open the eyes of certain servants that were with him. He opened them (the word is *piqqeah* again), and then they saw that there were hosts standing by that they didn’t know were there at all. They were on a different level. You can understand how that is. People who watch “Star Trek” and things like that know that you can disembody and appear in other places. There are other dimensions, other wave lengths, and things like that. That’s what a *piqqeah* is. He sees things on a different wave length that you can’t see at all, but it is there. Because you can’t see it, doesn’t mean it isn’t there. Anyway, the brothers thought so.

This is an eloquent passage in which Torczyner sums it up: “The Lachish Letters reflect the mind, the struggles, the sorrows, the feelings of ancient Judah.” Notice, there were high feelings in the family—talking about murder and accusing their father. Their brother called them down, and they beat him up. The angel came and told them to stop doing it (all sorts of things). Then they humbled themselves and went and asked their father’s pardon. The next thing you know they are murmuring again. Well, this is typical of those people. Do you read the news about Lebanon, the Near East today? It’s that way all the time, isn’t it? It’s just like this Starcky here. He was making a peaceful mission, just 25 miles from Lachish back to Jerusalem to bring some stuff, and he was stopped in the road by some Arabs who wanted what he had. They took it and murdered him, just like that. This is what goes on. It’s not a safe country to be in. I had a terrible experience in Sidon once, but we won’t go into that.

“... the mind, the struggles, the sorrows, the feelings of ancient Judah.” The emotions run so high. To an even greater extent the family of Nephi split along political lines. If the situation of Uriah parallels that of Jeremiah, even more closely does it parallel that of Lehi when we learn from the Lachish Letters, “. . . a warning from the prophet to one of his friends who is apparently in the same danger as he himself is. It is, therefore, a prophet fleeing from his home and his friends, a prophet wanted by the military authorities.”

We saw that at the center of nearly all the letters was a high military officer. It’s very interesting that the Jaush we talked about (*Yaush* or *Jaush*; *Yaush* is the way it is usually rendered) was the man who was going to try Hosha’yahu of Qiryat Ye‘arim for treason because he had tipped Uriah off and let him escape to Egypt. They fetched him back to the palace and killed him. But the funny thing is that Yaush was a good friend of Uriah himself; he didn’t want to have Uriah killed. So what position did that put him in? This is the situation we find in the Book of Mormon all the way through here, and we can run into these split loyalties ourselves. The essence of tragedy is not the good guys against the bad guys; it’s not black against white at all. It’s the incompatibility of two good things.

You should see the Theban (Greek) plays; they are very good productions. They are about Oedipus and Orestes, and it’s the same thing. What makes it really tragic? Why is the case of Orestes so tragic? Well, his father was murdered. He was bound by sacred oath to avenge the murder of his father; he must do it. But the murderer of his father was his

mother. He was also bound not to kill his mother; it's not good to do that. What's he supposed to do? Well, he solved the problem, as all of us would, by going stark raving mad. It was too much for him, you see. He must avenge his father, but he can't kill his mother. So what can he do? He went mad. What do you do in a case like that? This stumped Aeschylus. He had the solution, and they always leave it hanging. This is what happened: Orestes went to the hill of the Areopagus where Paul preached his sermon and where there is another one of those caves from the most ancient, archaic times. It was the spirit of the earth, and so they used to go there. The jury—the twelve good men and true—in long, black robes (just as they still wear in England; judges still wear the black robes, and for murders they put on the black hoods) were supposed to judge them. So how did they judge? The only way they could—six against six. Six said he was innocent because he couldn't help it—he was avenging his father. Six said he was guilty for killing his mother, although he had to do it (he did it, you know). So what do you do in a case like that? It is deadlocked. The only thing you can have is a *deus ex machina*. A statue of Athena there suddenly came to life. Athena descended from heaven in a basket (a machine; that's the *machina*), and she cast the final vote (casting the white pebbles against the black pebbles; the black for death and the white for life). The moral is that the problem can only be solved by direct intervention from heaven. God must intervene in some way or another, so Athena came and cast the deciding vote which was for acquittal. He was innocent. Then he gained his sanity back. The last play was called "The Furies." Then it became "The Eumenides," which means "the blessed ones" or "the favored ones." So they changed their identity from furies to eumenides.

This is the same situation in Lehi's family. There was something to be said on both hands. The brothers [Laman and Lemuel] say, "We have to respect these people; they are living the Law of Moses very strictly. They are going to church and all that sort of thing." Nephi says, "That isn't enough; that doesn't count." So what's going to happen? Their father is visionary. It's great to be visionary, but they are not going to follow him. And this man Yaush who had been ordered to investigate the prophet who had escaped "appears to have been on the best of terms with the king, and both men still respected the prophet." Remember, the king respected the prophet. He brought him in for secret consultations and said, "Don't let the people find out about this. Don't let the princes (the *sarim*) find out about this, but tell me, how is it going to be?" Then he didn't like the news that Jeremiah gave him. Notice what Torczyner said, "Their hearts ached that they should be responsible for his destruction." They had to do it, but it's terrible that they had to do it. This is a situation we may find ourselves in from time to time. "And in both dramas both sides had ties to the Egyptian party." Lehi supported the anti-Egyptian party, and that's a strange thing. It's a strange thing also that the prophet Uriah was fleeing to Egypt, not to Babylonia. He had been supporting the Babylonian party and had been against the Egyptian policy of the government. Why should he flee to Egypt? Torczyner said, "That's a paradox." He can't figure out what was going on. Why did Lehi's people flee toward Egypt? They went down to Arabah in the same direction that Johanan took the people from Bethlehem to Egypt, and took Jeremiah along with them. Torczyner asked, "Why would the good man flee to Egypt of all places when his crime was supporting Jeremiah in calling for peace with Babylonia?" He favored Babylonia and should have gone to Babylonia. Torczyner said, "It's simply astonishing that he fled toward Egypt instead of Babylonia." Well, Lehi's family did the same thing.

This Jaush was a very important person. Let's see what we say here: He was the military governor of the second most important town, the oldest and strongest fort, halfway between Egypt and Jerusalem (that is Lachish). The records were being kept in his house,

which was really the guardhouse. It was his house by virtue of his office. He had to stay there in the dwelling quarters upstairs. You find the same thing with Laban, as the man says here, "Laban's official position resembles that of Jaush. They play a key role." Torczyner postulates that Jaush must have been the military governor of Lachish, and possibly governor of the city. Laban had a very high office. He was a military governor; we are told what he was here. He was out with the elders counseling by night. The king was rather weak; he sort of turned things over to Laban. There are wonderful character pictures here, just painted with a few deft strokes, as Shakespeare did. You get a very good picture of Laban in his ceremonial armor—his greed, meanness, and cruelty, etc. So you don't feel a moment's hesitation when . . . Well, I must tell you that story (that's my favorite one) when we get to Laban's demise.

He was possibly governor of the city, but probably would have been housed in the region of the palace fort or keep, especially I would say, during the crisis both in Jerusalem and Lachish for the sake of safekeeping. If the records weren't there all the time, they would be put there for safekeeping during this time of crisis. Anyway, that's where they were in both stories, at the military governor's house. The military governor was an important man at this time. The most important man at Thebes was the high priest of Amon, but he was a military governor. He was a high military officer at the same time. So there were these offices of military governor, high priest, and king at Thebes. But there were rival kings at Tanis, and Bubastis, and Sais (it was a mess). The picture is characteristic here: "... a mighty man apparently in command of at least fifty men, and possibly even of tens of thousands."

It's interesting that we read in the Amarna Letters from the earlier time when Jerusalem was being besieged that the military governor commanded fifty men in the city for patrolling the streets, etc. and ten thousand men in the field. Well, that's the very same thing you find in the Book of Mormon where the brothers say they don't dare go back and face Laban: "How is it possible that the Lord will deliver Laban into our hands? Behold, he is a mighty man, and he can command fifty, yea, even he can slay fifty; then why not us?" (1 Nephi 3:31). Nephi replies, "Let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord; for behold he is mightier than all the earth, then why not mightier than Laban and his fifty, yea, or even than his tens of thousands?" (1 Nephi 4:1). It's like the normal setup of a division, a brigade, or a platoon today which has so many men. It's very stable and lasts for centuries.

Where is the king in all this? Well, in both cases he is a weak character. Remember, he told Jeremiah he was afraid of the people and the princes. He didn't stop the princes when they took Jeremiah away from the palace prison and put him in a dungeon—down in that filth so that he sank in. Incidentally, the word the Bible uses to describe the rags they threw down to him is "filthy." He was down there in the filth. He stood on the rags, and then they put more rags under his arm pits and pulled him up. But the king was a weak character. He didn't take the lead at all because he was scared stiff. Remember, he had been installed by Nebuchadnezzar who changed his name to Zedekiah from Mattaniah. He was responsible to the king of Babylon, and yet he was supporting Necho, the Egyptian king who had just chased the Babylonians away. He thought, "The Babylonians won't come back now. The safe thing for me is to stick with the Egyptians." But if you owe your job to Nebuchadnezzar, when he comes back you're going to be "in the soup." As we see, he was. He was taken to Riblah and blinded and then taken away to Babylon.

Torczyner summarizes the letters. We could be going through and reading the letters. It would be very interesting, but that would slow us down. It would take forever. Since Torczyner knows something about them, we will trust him to say what's in them: "As for Jaush, the king appeals to him in everything concerning this part of the country." He consults him on everything. He's the same weak king here in the Lachish Letters that you find in the Lehi story. Notice, they don't go to the king to get the family records back; they go to Laban. Laban would probably have enjoyed the same preference at Jerusalem that Jaush did in Lachish. "The archives were housed at Laban's official residence, making him a top candidate for counselor to the king," like Jaush. Then there's the story of negotiating for the brass plates—the bribery and threats of violence. We are getting ahead of the story, but that is so beautifully reflected in the story of Wenamon, an earlier Egyptian story from the time. He went to buy some logs for the temple at Thebes. He was a high priest there. He had letters of credit which he lost, and he had been robbed in the harbor because of all these international troubles. When they wanted to collect the money, he said, "I was robbed in your harbor."

The king said, "Well, it was probably your men who robbed you."

He said, "No, it was a Syrian crew that robbed me."

"Ah, they gave you a Syrian crew, did they? They were out to plunder you; you can see that." Everybody was up to tricks like that. Wenamon asked for the logs, and it's interesting that he said, "Reverence Amon who is the ruler of the world." Notice, Amon was everything there, and he is also important in the Book of Mormon. By far the most common name in the Book of Mormon is Ammon. Amon was the king of the empire. Of course, we have a hymn about Amon [spelled *Ahman*]. "What tho, if the favor of Ahman possessing, this world's bitter hate you are called to endure?" [Hymn #266, "The Time Is Far Spent," Eliza R. Snow].

Anyway, the king said, "All right, I respect Amon; I'll give you the logs when you give me the money. The records are all right here." Then he had his secretary go in, and there were all the records stacked up from hundreds of years back. He brought them out and said, "Look, you paid so much for logs when you came another time. Yes, we respect Amon and all that, but you paid cold cash for the logs before." So he had to raise the cash. The point is that the king had the records right in the room next to his palace. It gave a very vivid description. When Wenamon went in, he said, "There was a big window at the back [a beautiful scene]. The Syrian Sea was dashing on the rocks as he lay on the cushions with a window behind him." He went into this airy room in the palace, but the records were right next door. This was the situation.

I might as well tell you the story about Nephi's successful encounter with the drunk Laban and his deception of Laban's servant to gain access to the treasure in the archives. Notice his night mission. He went where the Spirit led him. We see that Zoram, the servant, had been out with the elders by night, and he was scared stiff when he found out who Nephi was. Then Nephi found Laban lying drunk after the meeting. He was out there dead drunk in the streets, in his full ceremonial armor. Nephi wondered what he was supposed to do. Then he had a long debate with himself (we should mention that). At the time when I had to have all Arab classes here (I should say all Moslem; but they were all Arabs—some Persians). There were two sitting in the front row, Salim and Fayek Salen down in New Mexico now. He became a physician to Qadhafi. He was only seventeen years old when he came here, and he lived at our house. He was a very bright little guy. He

knew all the *Mu‘allaqāt*, the seven Hanging Poems by heart. That’s really something; they were written before Islam, you know. Well, I told the story of cutting off the head of Laban there, which has always shocked everybody as being immoral. Well, it is. It shocked Nephi, too. He had to argue with himself for an hour. He wouldn’t do it (I’ll tell you about that when we get to it). But anyway, these boys were worried. I could hear murmurs all over the class. They didn’t like this story of cutting off Laban’s head like that. Fayek Salim raised his hand and said, “Mr. Nibley, there is something very wrong about this story; this is not a good story. When he found Laban lying in the street like that, why did he wait so long to cut off his head? That doesn’t ring true—any Arab would have done it like that, of course.” In other words, the story does ring true. I explained that Nephi was a city boy, and he was rather squeamish about cutting people’s heads off and things like that. But that’s just the natural thing. That would have been the natural impulse. The streets, of course, were pitch dark; they were not illuminated by night. He could have gotten away with it by moonlight. But that’s getting ahead of the story. We’d better move along, hadn’t we? No, I don’t know that we should. I mean you could spend the rest of the semester on that first chapter. My land, what a document it is!

The situation matches that in Lachish Letter eighteen. This letter must be forwarded from Jaush, the important man here, to the king. It would pass through Qiryat Ye‘arim and be taken by night. Well, now if the king’s own messenger can’t take a message from the high command in the field back to the king without having to do it by night (sneak it through), things are pretty bad, aren’t they? They tell us in the Lachish Letters that the halfway point between them was Azekah. That was where the signal fires were, so they could signal direct code from Jerusalem. They had gone out. Azekah had fallen, so the letters had to be taken personally now by hand, and also by night. Oh, it was tough going!

I can remember no less a person than Prince Bernard rushing in at about 2:00 o’clock in the morning on a rainy night in Holland at Eindhoven. He dashed in on his motorcycle to deliver some messages. He was a very dashing person and rather enjoyed this—Prince Bernard himself at headquarters. But little kids would carry them most of the time, and this is what we have here. Lehi’s son takes Laban’s servant with him “that the Jews might not know concerning our flight, . . . lest they pursue us and destroy us” (1 Nephi 4:36). Remember, they tried to pursue them, but they lost them. And as it told us before, the Prophet Uriah was running away and being chased by the police. They caught up to him. They got extradition, took him out of Egypt, and took him back to the palace. Even so, we see in the Lachish Letters “a prophet fleeing from his home and his friends, a prophet wanted by the military authorities. The military correspondence of the Lachish Letters with its grim suspicions and disloyalty, the double dealing, fervid denials, charges and investigations [You see, Josiah at Qiryat Ye‘arim denied everything. He hadn’t been guilty of it at all. But somebody had to be suspected; somebody was opening the mail. Somebody helped the prophet escape. Who was it? There were charges and denials. It may have been Jaush himself who was a friend of Uriah. So there’s all sorts of intrigue here] and reports remind one of the later Bar Kokhba Letters, original letters from a much later time but the same place and same situation.” We will mention them the next time. Torczyner suggests that “the prophet’s warning letter could have been sent while the prophet was still near his town through a little boy, most suited as an unsuspected messenger.” Little boys were used for that in the time of David. In 2 Samuel there are a couple of passages. He says, “Such small boys are used also today in Palestine, often for quite responsible missions.” They also brought all kinds of information during that unfortunate operation, Market Garden in Holland at Arnhem. The best ones to bring

information were the little Dutch kids. They got a thrill out of it. It was really exciting to bring them, so they would bring the messages.

The name of the boy was Nedabياهو, a very interesting name because he is mentioned in 1 Chronicles 3:18 (Nedabiah). We're not in the book of Jeremiah; we're now in Chronicles, the events of the kingdom. This Nedabياهو is the grandson of King Jehoiakim. Torczyner said that it is "possible, even probable," that he is the very one named here. "Is the king's own grandson bearing letters from the prophet?" That's the question here in letter three. "He delivered the letter from the prophet to one Shelum, warning him of the danger he was in. It was delivered by the Nedabياهو, the NKD of the king. The exact meaning of NKD, we are told, is unfortunately not definitely established, but it simply means 'offspring' or 'descendant.'" He [Torczyner] figures now with the new chronology that he was probably Zedekiah's grandnephew or even grandson. The Hebrew *nekhed* may certainly be used for *grandnephew* as well as for *grandson*. By an interesting coincidence, which he does not mention, the word used for the NKD in the Septuagint (which is actually 300 years older than any Hebrew version we have; that's the Greek version that was translated in Alexandria and is much older than any of our Hebrew texts) is the *seed*. It calls this little boy "the seed of Zedekiah." That's what the Book of Mormon calls him, "the seed of Zedekiah." Well, who was he? Nedabiah, whose title "may equally well mean the grandson of Jehoiakim or the grandnephew of Zedekiah" (one or the other) was quite young. Torczyner said, "One would prefer the age of 10–13 to that of 5 years." According to the chronology, he could have been 5 years old. Quite little kids would carry the written messages. Someone 10–13 has a better chance of getting through, I think. I wouldn't trust a 5-year-old for a really dangerous mission, would you? Boys 10–13 were "carrying dangerous letters between the towns and camps for the prophet's people." Since he was carrying the letters to the prophet's people and the letters warned them to decamp and get out (that's what the main purpose of the letters was; he would have been picked up by the last group), it seems like he was being treasonable to the royal family, doesn't it? He was on Jeremiah's side, and he was delivering letters to the people to the effect that they should clear out. Well, what would happen when they learned that the royal family had been captured and taken away, which is what happened while the boy was out among the settlements. "When news reached them [the people he was delivering letters to] that the royal family would be wiped out, only one course survived." That was to take the kid with them and get out themselves. He could not go back to Jerusalem because his family was in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. His army was taking them up to Riblah to kill them all. He couldn't join his brothers; they had already been taken. This sort of situation turns up all the time.

I'll tell you the most remarkable thing that actually happened. The first town to fall in Normandy was Carentan. They went through Carentan the first day. Oh, it was a mess because the enemy immediately took it again. They went out on a little piece of land along a canal. There was a factory overlooking it, and we saw somebody looking out the window of the factory. Major Danahay sent someone to find out who it was. He said, "There's a spy up there; we'll have to go get him." They brought him down. There he was in the factory looking out, and he was a German (this was in Holland). So Major Danahay said to David Bernaise (a fiery, little Jew who won a silver star with two clusters; he was no friend of the Nazis), "Take him out and shoot him." So he took him out, and he was going to do it. David was a very close friend of mine. We were in the same little tent there. He took him out, and they came to a little drainage ditch. "Gehen Sie bitte über den Fluss" (Step over the ditch there), he said.

The man said, "Do you speak German?"

"Yes," David said.

"Where did you come from?"

"I come from Maximiliansau."

"Maximiliansau! That's just little place on the Rhine. There was a celluloid factory there."

"Yes."

"Did you know Herr Bernaise?"

"He is my father."

It turned out that this man he was about to shoot was his father's close friend. He had managed the factory for David's father, and he was the one who made it possible for the family to escape from Germany and get to New York. He was just about to shoot him when he found out the man was his father's friend. They threw themselves at each other, and the man said, "This must be little David." So there you are; he was just about to shoot him. These things do happen, and it was very moving. Dave Bernaise was quite the character. Then immediately this man [the suspected spy] became a valuable source of information. You can't waste that.

Well, what about Mulek? We have to get Mulek in here. In Heleman 8:21 we read, "Will you dispute that Jerusalem was destroyed? Will ye say that the sons of Zedekiah were not slain, all except it were Mulek? Yea, and do ye not behold that the seed of Zedekiah are with us, and they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem?" So one group escaped; they were the Mulekites. We know now from the Lachish Letters that people were escaping. This is twelve years after Lehi. That's another thing we have to notice, the timing of this. Torczyner said that this episode happened between 590 and 588. What's a good round number between 590 and 588? I think it's 589, don't you? Now 589 was exactly eleven years after Lehi left Jerusalem. We're told in the Book of Mormon that the Mulekites left Jerusalem eleven years after Lehi. That figures very closely, doesn't it? The "company escaped from Jerusalem bearing with them the youngest son of Zedekiah, the only member of the family not put to death when Jerusalem was taken. From the descendants of these people in the New World, the Nephites learned that Jerusalem actually did fall as was prophesied." Remember, the Mulekites figure in the Book of Mormon; they are more important than the Nephites actually. Zarahemla wasn't a Nephite city at all; it was a Mulekite city. Remember, Mosiah was voted king when he came there because of his great ability, etc. But it was always a Mulekite city, and we are told that the Mulekites were far more numerous than the Nephites at all times. The two of them together weren't half as numerous as the Lamanites. So we have some very interesting mixtures here. They were dealing with each other all the time, too. We tend so to oversimplify the Book of Mormon.

"Will you dispute that Jerusalem was destroyed? Will ye say that the sons of Zedekiah were not slain, all except it were Mulek? Yea, and do ye not behold that the seed of Zedekiah are with us, and they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem?" Nowhere are we told that Mulek was the leader of the community. Why did they bear his name? There was

a Mulek, and they were called the Mulekites. Because of his apparent youth this would be unlikely. “But as the sole survivor of the royal family, naturally he would be the most distinguished member of the troop, Mulek, the little king.” But that name is very interesting. They don’t call themselves the “king people”; they call themselves the “Mulekite people.” This would be Mulekites. That’s the way we do it—Mulaikum. These are the diminutives. The word is *Mulek*. The word for king is *malik*. You see the word *malik* all the time, and it means *king*. But *mulayk* means *little king*. It’s an affectionate term that means “our dear little king.” We have *Melek* and *Melchites* and *Malakians* and all sorts of people in the Book of Mormon, but only one group of Mulekites. That’s a diminutive, but it occurs very often. It means a *king*, a *leader* and that sort of thing. So the name tells us everything here. *Mulek* is not found anywhere in the Bible, but anybody who has had first-year Arabic knows that a diminutive takes the form *fuʿayl*. So *Malek*, the king, would be *Mulayk* or *Mulek*. And anyone who belongs to a society or is a follower is an *iyya*—*Mulaykiyya*. It would be translated in the Bible as *Mulekite*. So they called themselves Mulekites because they were the people with the little king, and they were proud of him. They don’t give him credit for being king or anything like that, but they call him “little king.”

So we get this picture very vividly drawn. (I see the time’s almost up now.) This takes us directly to another batch of documents that are much more extensive and have equal importance for the Book of Mormon. You would think that the Dead Sea Scrolls, coming 600 years after this, wouldn’t be so important, but don’t fool yourself. They are absolutely loaded, but we are not going to take too much time with them.

These records were found in 1961. They have been finding these Dead Sea Scrolls all along. The same thing happened when Jerusalem fell to the Romans. The point is that the people all flee. They go out into the desert and hide in the caves. It’s not just at Qumran that you find these things. It is all the entire length and down to the south. Here we find a tremendous batch of letters from the Cave of Letters that gives us all the business doings that were going on, how the people bought and sold their farms, etc. Then there were the legal matters, the court matters. There was rich woman named Babata. She was a mean one, but she got herself terribly rich claiming farms here and there. We see the rich with the lands of their inheritance and their dealings with each other. Again, the charges of treason and the like that go on. We won’t have time for this now, but we will mention some of it the next time because it is important. If it weren’t beginning to sound so familiar, we wouldn’t bother about it. We are told that the Book of Mormon is meant for us, and we had better read it. “This comes to you, oh ye Gentiles, that ye may be wiser than we have been.” So we’d better see what they were up to and what happened to them. Well, we know what happened to them. Now we are being told why. But these letters show how beautifully documented the Book of Mormon is. Read that first chapter. He says everything. It’s an abridgement, but it hits all the high points, touches all the bases, and gives us these character pictures. That’s the way it is.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 8

1 Nephi

Escape from Doom

Let's review quickly the first book of Nephi. In the first verse we saw the family well loaded with cultural baggage at the time of a major cultural transplant. The key name to Lehi's period for all Western civilization is *Zarathustra*. In the 1920s Professor Werner Jaeger was the first one to point out that the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle are replete with the teachings of Zarathustra, who was another contemporary of Lehi. From the Avesta and Iranian centers, his teachings spread to the East, and already were completely at home in the schools of the West. Incidentally, we read in the *Midrash* (this is the typical legend, of course) that Zarathustra followed the teachings of Abraham. But you all know Nietzsche's famous work *Also Sprach Zarathustra* [*Thus Spake Zarathustra*] and you all know the introductory phrases to *2001*, when Straus does that miraculous thing with a simple C-major chord. Remember how it starts out? Well, that's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* right out of the Book of Mormon.

We saw that Nephi had good parents and a good representative education. His education included not only his own culture and religion (the learning of the Jews) but also the language of the Egyptians, which was the dominant world language in all that area at that time to a far greater degree than people have realized heretofore. Now refer to the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 1:4, "There came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed." Now that's the alternative offered us throughout the Book of Mormon. Here is a computer printout of all the passages calling for repentance in the Book of Mormon. They go on and on and on; the word *destruction* appears 456 times. That's the theme. As it opens, they will be destroyed, and it ends on that theme. You find it all the way through. *Repent* appears 360 times. They [*repent* and *destruction*] are almost always mentioned in the same breath, as they are here. You have your choice: You can repent, or you can be destroyed.

This is way the Lord deals with his chosen people. Others are not bound by that rigid rule. They go on forever, and this is a surprising thing. We think about Zarathustra, etc. The Iranians (Persians) are just as crazy today as they were in his day. He talked about them, rebuked their stupidity, etc. That's the main theme that Nietzsche took up when he wrote *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. But other nations are still there. The Greeks are still there and just as Greek as ever. It's marvelous to go there; you know you're in Greece all over the place. I was visiting relatives of Jimmy Nakos in Thebes. The old man had just died at the age of a hundred. When they had the funeral, you'd think it would be in the Greek Orthodox Church, but what did they do? They brought beautiful Attic vases and urns and put them on the grave (the old classic motifs). You see them on all the graves in the rural cemeteries. You'll see fewer crosses than beautiful, classic vessels holding food and things like that. But anyway the Greeks are still going, and the Egyptians are still going. They are as Egyptian as they can be; that's why they are such lovable people. They never resort to violence if they can help it, and they get along beautifully with each other. It's the oldest, most stable civilization in the world—thousands of years and the same Egyptians. The Arabs are the same lovable, obnoxious Arabs—the same as they have always been (fighting

each other). With the people of the North it's the same thing (in the sagas). There were the same troubles up there, but they've gotten more civilized than the others. But the point is that those nations were old when Lehi left Jerusalem; they were ancient then.

But Lehi's people and everything on this continent is gone. The promise here is when they are fully ripe in iniquity they will be completely swept from the land; they will be utterly destroyed—swept from off the face of the land. That's the rule for the Promised Land. Of course, this continent and the Western hemisphere are covered with ruins. Nobody has the vaguest idea who was here or anything about them at all; they are gone without a trace. The Mayan people are still there among the Mayan ruins, but there are a lot of guesses about what was Olmec, etc., when you go along the coast there at Hermosa. Nobody knows to this day. When you summarize everything that's known it's ridiculous, and it's all purely speculative. The thing is that the people here disappeared, and they disappeared without a trace, just gone.

If you just go back to the nineteenth century, you get some marvelous things. Boudinot, a Frenchman, wrote a work called *A Star in the West* in 1820. But the descriptions of Indian life at that time in the eastern part of the United States you get from Abraham Wood's diary (he lived among them) and from the Founding Fathers. Actually, Washington was a very good friend of many of the great Indian chiefs. Remember, he worked back in the frontier in his youth. Jefferson and especially Franklin were always speculating about the Hebrew origins of the Indians. They had all sorts of information. In the drawings of Catlin, you see what different people they were, and what a strange culture vanished without a trace. This is the thing that happens here, and let that be a warning to us.

"Does this apply to us?" we ask. Let me read a statement of Joseph Smith here. This is what he said in 1833: "I have been carefully viewing the state of things throughout the Christian land. I have looked with feelings of the most painful anxiety. Upon one hand, I behold the manifest withdrawal of God's spirit and a veil of stupidity." There's the sentence of doom. It's not wickedness, but you know you're gone when you're stupid. "It was worse than the cry that it was a mistake," as Talleyrand said. It's a veil of stupidity, and you see it everywhere. (You listen to debates, etc. and say, "Why didn't the dunce think of this? He had a marvelous opening there, and he missed it completely.") This goes for both sides; everybody is floundering around these days. "A veil of stupidity . . . seems to be drawn over the hearts of the people. On the other hand, I behold the judgments of God sweeping hundreds of thousands of our race, I fear, unprepared down to the shades of death." This was in 1833, a time when revolution swept all of Europe. That's when Belgium and Holland became independent. Another revolution failed in France. Then it wasn't until 1848 that they had the big one in Germany everywhere. But the 1830s was a time of revolution all over Europe. The Scandinavian countries (Denmark and Sweden) won independence. All sorts of things were happening then. It was a hopeful time, but a murderous time. "I think it is high time for the Christian world to wake out of sleep and cry mightily to that God day and night whose anger we have justly incurred. I step forth into the field to tell you what the Lord is doing and what you must do in these last days." Now, that's a presumptuous thing to say, but he had something to say.

Now, here's our Book of Mormon story: "Christ proposed to make a covenant with the Jews, but they rejected him and his proposal. The Gentiles received the covenant, but the Gentiles have not continued, but have departed from the faith. They have become high minded and have not feared; therefore, but few of them will be gathered [few were,

actually]. The nations of the Gentiles are hastily preparing, getting ready for the first stage of the part allotted to them when the Lord rebukes the nations. The Lord declared to his servants some eighteen months since that he was then withdrawing his spirit from the earth. The governments of the earth are thrown into confusion and division, and destruction to the eye of the spiritual beholder seems to be written by a finger of an invisible hand in large capitals upon almost everything we behold." *Destruction* is the word again.

But isn't it interesting that we have this love affair with the mandatory explosion that has to end the police series (the daily cop show, car chase, etc.). There has to be lots of violence. With this insatiable appetite for violence we have now, you can't sell a TV program that doesn't have it (this fixation is an ominous thing). "I will proceed to tell you what the Lord requires of all people, high and low, in order that they may escape the judgments of God which are almost ready to burst upon the nations of the earth. Repent of all your sins [there it is; faced with destruction, the answer is to repent]. Not many years away, the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed [of course, the Civil War was moving in on them] as has not had a parallel in the history of our nations. Pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation off the face of the land to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel [so he goes on]. Repent, repent is the voice of God to Zion, and strange as it may appear, yet it is true, mankind will persist in self-justification [just as the Lord told Jeremiah: 'Call on these people to repent. I know they won't repent, but you have to call on them to repent'] until all their iniquity is exposed, their character past redeeming [they will say they've done no wrong no matter what they've done]. Hear the warning voice of God lest Zion fall and the Lord swear in his wrath the inhabitants of Zion shall not enter into his rest. Intemperance, immorality, extravagance, pride, blindness of heart, idolatry, loss of natural affection, love of this world, indifference toward things of eternity are increasing among those Latter-day Saints who profess to believe in the religion of heaven. Who but those can see the awful precipice upon which the world of mankind stands in this generation and can labor in the vineyard of the Lord without feeling a sense of the world's deplorable situation?"

Then this one: "Some may pretend to say that the world in this age is fast increasing in righteousness, and the dark ages of superstition and blindness have passed [he knew this line, you see]. The gloomy cloud has burst, the gospel is shining—carried to the diverse nations of the earth. The idol is destroyed, the temple of images forsaken, etc. But a moment's candid reflection will suffice for every candid man to draw a conclusion in his own mind whether this is the order of heaven or not that we see."

Well, you say that 1833 was a long time ago, etc. Well, I haven't been teaching at BYU very long [43 years], but shortly before I came here, I knew my great-grandfather. I remember him very well. I talked with him, and we were very friendly. He was twenty-two years old when the Prophet was martyred; that hasn't been a long time. The Prophet only lived a few years after he gave this. And yet, there's only been that one generation between ours, and I've seen the whole thing. We talk about the generations of deadly wars. I remember so clearly the day that World War I began. We played soldier all through that. In World War II we went out and played soldier in the same dirty lots. It was in France that time. It was a chilling thing when we went to Mourmelon. After the Holland fiasco at Arnheim, we went back to Mourmelon. We had a short rest there, but it was interrupted by the Bulge, the break-through there. When we settled in Mourmelon, it was in the beginning of December. The area around there has been preserved since World

War I as a tourist attraction. It's a typical battlefield. They've kept all the trenches, all the shell holes, all the barbed wire (rusted), all the dugouts, etc. They were still there. It was raining, and they were full of mud. That's where we had to take our rest area—just as if we were living World War I all over again. Boy, talk about a déjà vu. "This is where I came in," one would say. This is what we used to play out in the back lot in Portland where it rained a lot too. But you see, things move much more rapidly than you think. Don't think that things change slowly; they change extremely rapidly, and are moving very fast right now.

Well, on with it. Here's an interesting article by Bury St. Edmund, a very distinguished university. The Reverend George Pattison wrote this last year in the *Expository Times*, and it's called "A Meditation on the Book of Jeremiah: A Moment in the Void." He says, "We suddenly discover that Jeremiah was written for today." It sounds like today's world so very closely, and he tells us why this is. And, of course, the Book of Mormon at last comes through loud and clear. This is exactly what it has been telling us there (the situation in the time of Lehi when he had to leave). Pattison wrote: "Consciousness at the end is not merely nigh, but is even now upon us—that insight that the foundation of the world order is absolute nihilism." That is no hope for anything future—no hope for any hereafter, that this is all there is. That's what nihilism is. There is no more; this is all there is. Don't expect anything else. As we said before, "Una perpetua nox dermienda" (one perpetual black night awaits us), and that's all. Since this is all there is, we act that way. That is nihilism.

"That remains the truth of our situation today." The Reverend Pattison is quite an eminent scholar, and he has written some interesting things here. There's no reason to go into this at agonizing length, but he says, "Moreover, it remains truth even if the future course of events does not lead to the outbreak of a major nuclear exchange, for the mere possibility of such an event discloses an attitude toward life which is the negation of all reverence. It is the attitude which even now holds sway, whatever happens in the future. We have before us a strange condition, a single complex of historical forces [this is like the beginning of Nephi here, you see] outstanding among which are conflicts between the major industrial and world empires—two world empires facing each other. Such a division of radical negation gnawing out the heart of the social fabric is also to be found in the book of Jeremiah. In this attempt to discover from the book of Jeremiah insights into the contemporary situation, I shall accept the canonical formula book. Jeremiah's time, like our own, was a time of much darkness, marking a crescendo of violence and destruction. The prophet sees this process culminating in an outburst of international madness when he writes the twenty-fifth chapter, 'There is a cup filled with mine anger.'"

Incidentally, that expression is used ten times in the Book of Mormon—"the cup is filled with anger." And when that time comes, remember, you can't fill it with anything else. It can't be diluted; there is no point to going on with the show. He [Jeremiah] says, "When they drink from it, they will stagger and go out of their minds because of the war I am sending against them." Everybody is going to act absolutely crazy. This is the cup he is talking about. [Continuing from Pattison:] "The prophecy, in fact, includes a list of all the nations, not just the two, to whom the wine cup is given. It is neither more nor less than a catalog of the whole international community of the prophet's day [which, of course, is what we get from Jeremiah, and we get it from the Book of Mormon too] described in terms of collective drunkenness—without reason, without purpose, without meaning. Whatever ideological gloss they may choose to put on their beliefs, so called, the prophets unmask this nihilism—the statement of not-to-be-averted revelation of the void

at the heart of the national and international community [the emptiness of everything]. What really links Jeremiah to us is the military chutzpah, the outward manifestation of an already chosen nihilistic orientation toward existence." This is a thing that's mentioned very often in the Book of Mormon: "Man shall not smite, neither shall he judge. Cursed is he who puts his trust in the arm of flesh." You are not going to get the answers that way, but they never learn. In Mormon 5:2 there's a really deep feeling that it is already too late. Mormon prayed fervidly for his people, but he knew it was without hope. He says he had no hope. He prayed for them and did the best he could, but there is a point of no return (*atē*) when you can't go back. Have we passed that point? Is it too late?

[Continuing from Pattison's article:] ". . . is now just a matter of unfolding the consequences of this choice. In our own day it seems that too much reflection on our world problem crushes any sense of individual responsibility." This is an important theme in the Book of Mormon: What can the lone individual do against the system? You find this all through the Book of Mormon (Lehi, Nephi, Ammon, Malachi, the brother of Jared, Moroni, Mormon). They are all one man who doesn't agree with all the rest. What do you do in that case? That was Lehi to begin with. There is nothing you can do about it, and you have this feeling like Lehi. Remember, he went out and he was worried sick. He worried much about it until he had the revelation. ". . . on account of the magnitude and complexity of the issues raised. Surely, many would say, 'it is better not to think about it and go on with living since there is nothing we can do about it.'"

During the terrible approaching crises in eighteenth-century France, Voltaire said in *Candide*, "It's a hell of a world." He showed that it was and said, "You just stay home and cultivate your garden; that's all you can do." But Plato had said the same thing, "The best thing you can do," he said, "is find a place out of the wind where the dust, the newspapers, and the garbage won't bury you. Just lie in the sun there and try to escape the filthy wind the best you can." That's the way Plato ended up his great hopes after he had already coached Dionysius of Syracuse to be the philosopher king. It was a complete flop because Dionysius was spoiled rotten. So this is the world we live in. It's the same thing here, you see. What are you going to do? He says Jeremiah is unable to show the people the way through. He says, "You're going to be destroyed anyway," and that's true. They're stuck in Jerusalem. The Book of Mormon gives us another chance. Lehi could get out and start it all over again. They were good for another thousand years, and then the same thing happened again. So he was allowed an unlimited extension. We mentioned that passage in 1 Nephi 7:14. This is Jeremiah speaking, "Wherever I speak I have to cry out aloud, violence and destruction. Lord, I am ridiculed and scorned all the time because I proclaim your message." Remember, when Lehi came out and started to preach after his vision, they mocked him. The same thing happens here to Jeremiah. "He's not trying to help the people; he only wants to hurt them," say his accusers. He is not only slandered verbally but suffers physical mistreatment and imprisonment [in the sewer]."

He was helped. Now this is a very interesting thing that comes out quite clear in the Lachish Letters. This man apparently knows nothing about the Lachish Letters. He never mentions them, and he misses some good chances. Incidentally, if we have to read Jeremiah with 1 Nephi, we must also read the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants. This is the message to us. We just read from Joseph Smith's teachings, but this is the revelation. There are interesting things here, and we all know it. It presents us with the same things, the apocalypse of woe and the apocalypse of bliss. This is divided exactly in the middle. The first eighteen verses are warning and destruction. The second eighteen

verses are nothing but good news. Remember, after Lehi had his vision he rejoiced and was exceedingly glad. He knew everything could be all right now. He felt very happy, went out and tried to cheer the people up, and was kicked out of town.

“And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days. . . . Wherefore, fear and tremble, O ye people, for what I the Lord have decreed in them shall be fulfilled” (D&C 1:4, 7). And it shall go forth to all, etc. But then the situation, “And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed . . . [we won’t go through the whole thing]. They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall” (D&C 1:14, 16). Remember, Babylon was the city that was moving in at that time. But, of course, this is the city we live in. It’s a very Babylonian civilization we are in today (remember, in Babylon they had skyscrapers).

Now this is the point: “Wherefore, I the Lord, knowing the calamity [this is fair enough] which should come upon the inhabitants of the earth, called upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., and spake unto him from heaven, and gave him commandments (D&C 1:17). . . . And inasmuch as they were humble they might be made strong, and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge from time to time. And after having received the record of the Nephites [this is in view of the calamities; knowing the calamities, He gave us a means by which we could receive the knowledge we need as we need it; if we are humble we receive knowledge from time to time], yea, even my servant Joseph Smith, Jun., might have power to translate through the mercy of God, by the power of God, the Book of Mormon” (D&C 1:28–29). Knowing the calamity, I have given you the Book of Mormon. This Book of Mormon is addressed to calamity; we have seen that. “And also those to whom these commandments were given, might have power to lay the foundation of this church [to do something]. . . . Nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven; And he that repents not, from him shall be taken even the light which he has received. . . . I the Lord am willing to make these things known unto all flesh; . . . and will that all men shall know [this is a very important statement; you get it in Lehi and in Jeremiah and the earlier prophets] that the day speedily cometh; the hour is not yet [not tomorrow], but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion” (D&C 1:30, 32, 33, 35). War, of course, is the devil’s dominion. Peace is going to be taken from the earth, and we will have wars going on, like now. But it’s going to get worse.

But the next verse is the other side. Notice, it is balanced. You may have noticed if you read through Jeremiah that the bad verses are always balanced by cheerful verses. He is going to love the people and take them back after all. They are going to be received. There is going to be repentance later, but meantime they’ve got to do something. It gives them a reason to hope and a reason to repent. He didn’t say they were too far gone, like Macbeth, “I am in blood stepped in so far that, should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o’er.” It would be easier for me to just continue the way I am going and cross the river of blood than it would be to return and try to repent. In other words, he says, “I’ve reached the point of no return.” Always we are told in the Bible and in the Book of Mormon, the Lord has deliberately prolonged our life that we have a better chance to repent. As long as you are in the flesh you can always repent. Nobody is safe home as long as he is in this world, and nobody is damned. That doesn’t come until the judgment. You can repent, even with your last breath. It is Ezekiel who tells us that. He

says, If a man who has done righteously all his days and becomes wicked, then he is a wicked man regardless. If a man has done wickedly all his days and decides to repent, then he's a righteous man [paraphrased]. A righteous person is one who is repenting; a wicked person is one who is not repenting. A righteous man is not one who is all good. There is no such person at all. We have all this mixture. And a wicked man is not one who is all bad. We don't have any of either. If you are repenting, it's like being on the stairway. A person at the bottom of the stairs facing up is better off than the person at the top of the stairs facing down, if it's the way of repentance. So this is what we are told. It's never too late, and that's a marvelous thing. But Satan wants to discourage you and say it is too late. Why not go through with it? "I am in blood stepped in so far that, should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o'er." In other words, "I might as well go on; a few more murders won't make that much difference."

Question: What can one man do then? Answer: Well, we're going to find out. That's exactly what the Book of Mormon is about. You notice, Lehi was told what to do. He received his visions and directions. He didn't get any support or cooperation from outside from anybody. He had to buck it all himself, but he did. He kept trying to get through. The Lord will always open the way if you keep trying and looking for ways to get through. There is always a crack opening somewhere. Be prepared to take advantage of the little cracks and openings that show up, and the Lord will always provide them. When you face a stone wall, what do you do in that case? Well, he did. Nobody could have been up against a worse situation than Lehi was. (We were going to talk about that from Pattison's article.) But here it is, "And the devil shall have power over his own dominion. And also the Lord shall have power over his Saints [that's the other side], and shall reign in their midst, and shall come down in judgment upon Idumea, or the world. Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled" (D&C 1:35–37).

So we have the Church launched with the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants on the same theme that we were talking about. It's significant that this man [Pattison] doesn't know anything about the Lachish Letters, but this is a thing he truly notices: "Jeremiah is helped and nurtured by what we would call a subculture of protest. There are other people thinking the same way, and it has always been this way in Israel. The continuous undercurrent in Israel's life [this is the thing that Lehi picks up on], the culture of protest, was not just the tradition of the occasional great figure but embodied in an actual community able to support and sustain its members." He gives us the example of Jeremiah and Ahikam and Huldah—and the king himself was behind it. "Personal contacts between Huldah and Ahikam and Jeremiah suggest a network, however informal." He says, "Uriah was out of the network; he was apparently a free lance." But now we know he wasn't. He was very much in it, as we learn from the Lachish Letters. He is the connection there. Pattison says, "He has no support group." But he did have a support group. He had a support group at home. There's the case of Shema'yahu's father going up to Jerusalem to plead for him with the king, with a very high military officer to back him up, and things like that. And Jaush was a secret supporter of him. So we get these support groups. Which side are you on? What is going on here? Then he [Jeremiah] says, "Do the sensible thing. If my nation submits to the king of Babylon, build houses, settle down, plant gardens, and eat what you have grown. You might as well take it in stride." This advice, not surprisingly, was construed as treason by the nationalistic leaders. They said, "No, we're going to fight them; we've got to exterminate them." This is a situation that occurs quite often in the Book of Mormon.

“The false prophets represent boundless egotism and the level of imagination of other leaders [they show boundless egotism too for their own wishes]. One day they free their Hebrew slaves [we talked about that before]. They choose an arbitrary, subjective freedom—their idea of freedom in place of attention to the common welfare.”

“Very well, then,” says the Lord in Jeremiah 34:17, “I will give you freedom—freedom to die by war, disease and starvation [paraphrased].”

“False freedom of ego destroys the basic being aware of others.” So much for Pattison’s article. It’s a very helpful one that I’ll put on reserve. Then we have section one of the Doctrine and Covenants. And there’s a very important thing here in the Book of Mormon. Lehi went out. Verses 5–13 in chapter one we didn’t talk about, but they are an authentic ascension text. It wasn’t until 1873 that a German scholar named Martin Haug discovered the phenomenon of the Ascension story. Of course, it’s all over the place, but it’s only in recent years that we have found this great literature of ascension. They are digging up all sorts of Coptic and early Christian documents (mostly in Egypt) dealing with these things. The ascension texts we have all over from the earliest times. They are about a righteous man who is suffering and worried about his people. He prays and is taken up to heaven where he sees God on his throne. He is given an explanation of things, taken down, and ordered to write what he has seen and then go forth and preach. When he goes forth and preaches, the people don’t believe him and he is put to death. This is the pattern that Lehi followed; it’s a perfect ascension text. He was raised up to heaven. There are various varieties of them and some very old ones. There are different things we can’t go into now; I’ve written a long section on them recently. There’s an ascension of Isaiah, there’s an ascension of Paul, there’s an ascension of Job, there’s an ascension of Moses. They are very important and were all discovered in this century—these ascension texts. Now we can add to them the ascension of Lehi because they had identical experiences. They went up and received their commission on high. The ascension of the Rabbi Ishmael is a very important one because he was supposed to have repeated the ascension of Enoch, which is very important. We know that Enoch ascended in our book of Enoch in the Pearl of Great Price. He was a regular “shuttle service.” He came and went between heaven and earth. He really did; that was his mission. In the course of time everybody [that was righteous] was removed during that rescue mission which he was operating.

So this is a typical ascension text. We won’t dwell on it, but this is what gave him heart. When he came back, he knew that he had an explanation. What did he see? Remember, he thought he saw God sitting on his throne. He went out and had a sunstroke. There was light on a rock. He rushed back to Jerusalem, cancelled all calls about his business (he had been going about his business), cast himself on his bed, and passed out. Then he said he thought he saw God sitting on his throne surrounded by a numerous concourse of angels singing hymns of praise. It was a general meeting being held. It was the High Council at the time of the creation of the world. Then he said he saw twelve special men going down, represented by stars, and circulating among the children of men. This was the mission of the Twelve Apostles or the Twelve Tribes. Then he saw the Lord going down, and he was the brightest one of all. What he saw was the plan of salvation being put into operation, showing that this all has meaning—what’s behind this whole thing. It said he saw many, many other things which he couldn’t write. Remember, he was a visionary man. What’s more he had a *scribendi cacoethes*; he was a nut for writing down everything. Lehi said, “I can’t begin to write down all of it.” He kept everything, and so did Nephi. He said, “I’m

writing in the book of my deeds in my days.” He was writing his own account, but he included his father’s story. This part of 1 Nephi should certainly be called the book of Lehi because it is Lehi’s story, not Nephi’s. Nephi gets it from his father’s writings too.

So he came down and got the good news. As I said, that genre of text is a very common one now known to be both Christian and Jewish. We have a beautiful example of it here. It would have been very hard to have plagiarized it. In verses 14 and 15 we have a positive explosion of good news. You are right in the gloom here; things are about as bad as they can possibly be. Then all of a sudden, notice in verses 14 and 15, how it changes. This is all through Jeremiah. They are falsely accused of [perpetuating] a Jeremiad, which is nothing but doom and gloom. That isn’t so at all. You notice there are as many happy verses in Jeremiah as there are gloomy verses. Throughout the Book of Mormon you have that balanced so-called “apocalypse of woe” and “apocalypse of bliss.” Here we get it again. How does the fourteenth verse begin? Does somebody have it?

“When my father had read and seen many great and marvelous things [notice, the writing of the book is very important; he sees the book the way John does], he did exclaim many things unto the Lord; such as . . .” This is typical; you know he is writing in Egyptian now. This is not the way you do it in Hebrew—*mdd* or *rdd*, “such as, the following”; I told him, and then you say, “such as” and then actually quote your speech. This is just an example of other things you might have told him. “Such as” is a typical device here. “. . . such as: Great and marvelous are thy works [he is so joyful he is just bursting with it now; what a change of attitude], O Lord God Almighty!”

Brigham Young said, “I was never so happy in my life as when I looked over my shoulder [they were being driven out of Nauvoo in the dead of winter] and saw the temple on fire. Lord, take it if you want it; it’s yours. We are now free, and we’re going out,” he said. That’s the way Lehi must have felt going out. And I asked my grandfather who walked across the plains, “Grandpa, did you suffer and struggle?”

He said, “It was a picnic all the way; we laughed and hollered. We were really like kids out of school all the way.”

“Well, what kept you going with food, etc.?”

This is a scandal; I shouldn’t tell you this. He said, “Every morning, the captain of the company had every man, woman, and child in the company drink a big cup of hot, steaming Arbuckle’s coffee, black. That carried us through the day.” I told that to my boys once. Shortly after that we were driving down Hobblecreek Canyon, and there was the old Whiting log cabin there. We decided to go down and look at the log cabin, and there part of the wall had been shored up by a very old, very heavy box that had written on it “Arbuckle’s Coffee, St. Louis, Missouri.” I took the board, and I still have it at home. But it was Arbuckle’s coffee that brought them across the plains. Don’t tell anybody that. But the fact is that they were being happy; they were enjoying themselves all the way.

“Thy throne is high in the heavens, and thy power, and goodness, and mercy are over all the inhabitants of the earth; and, because thou art merciful, thou wilt not suffer those who come unto thee that they shall perish! [here is the reassurance]. And after this manner was the language of my father [notice how he uses that language here] in the praising of his God; for his soul did rejoice, and his whole heart was filled, because of the things which he

had seen, yea, which the Lord had shown unto him.” He wasn’t just philosophizing or reaching a sensible conclusion. He had actually seen and knew that everything was all right now if he just behaved himself. His whole heart was filled with joy. Notice how that matches verse 5 up here, “Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart, in behalf of his people.” He was very sick hearted about it, and then his whole heart was filled because he got his answer. So that’s a wonderful change. (If I ever forget my book again, may my right hand lose its cunning. That’s a safe thing to say because it already has. No good on arpeggios at all anymore.)

Then in the nineteenth verse he suffers the fate of a prophet and is driven out. He goes out and starts to preach to the people, and they won’t listen at all. Jerusalem is already too dangerous. Others would leave later, and he is told in a dream to get out. What happens in chapter two we have in *Lehi in the Desert*. We can just go through it quickly. It goes through all these desert things. For seven or eight years, my classes consisted entirely of Arab Moslems. From all the Arab countries they came to BYU to study because President Harris had started the 4-H program over there. They had to take religion, and the consul didn’t want them to take Christian religion. They took Book of Mormon and loved it; it was their book. They ate it up, except for little Fayek.

This is the way they go. “He departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance [we’ll mention that later; it’s mentioned a number of times, and that’s an important thing], and his gold, and his silver, and his precious things [he was rich], and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness.” Just like that. Well, we already had him traveling in the wilderness when he saw this light on a rock as he went forth. Being in the merchant business, he knew what he was doing and he was ready to go. He knew what he would need. They took their tents. (I have some pictures here. This is what made me leave the Book of Mormon. I started going through files and getting at things.)

When I first came here, I started writing *Lehi in the Desert*. The Church had a rather ridiculous film out in which they showed Lehi’s people all going through the desert carrying everything they had on their backs because the book doesn’t mention any animals of burden, you see. One person would be carrying a jar, etc. Now to wander eight years in the wilderness and cross the Rub al Khali, the worst desert in the world, in that condition, you’re not going to get very far with all the little kids walking. Who would carry everything? Everything had to be carried. Lehi was a rich man. He was carrying down all his family and provisions and tents into the wilderness. Here’s a typical chief’s tent (I’ll show you these pictures here). Here’s the tent. Now, you’re not going to fold up a tent like that and carry it on your back. It’s a huge tent, their tribal tent. Over and over again, Nephi says, “And my father dwelt in a tent.”

There are two ways of living in the East. There’s the *bayt al-hajar*, the houses of stone, and the *bayt al-sha‘r*, the houses of black goat’s hair. It’s woven black goat’s hair. There are the two ways. When he says, “My father lived in a tent,” that says everything. That’s their whole life and culture. The Arabs—like my friend Lawand—that live in cities still, during a period of the year, leave the city and go camp outside in tents as their ancestors did. They are proud of that. They love the Bedouin life and stick to it. They don’t like living in the cities, though they live in houses of great elegance in a place like Riyadh, etc.

This picture has changed so much. When I wrote *Lehi in the Desert*, it was the 1940s when [almost] nobody had crossed the desert. In the 1930s there was a race between Captain Burton and Shelby as to which would cross it first and the usual debate. Major Chessman claimed to have reached Riyadh across the desert, and nobody believed him. He described the gardens of Hufuk in such great detail they decided he must have been there after all. Within five years of that my uncle, who was the chief engineer for American-Arabian Oil Company (that's where I got these photographs from the air; they were looking for routes), repeatedly crossed the Rub' al-Khāli in a jeep. And we had a whole contingent of BYU people in Riyadh. Dr. Petty, who is President of the London Temple now, was there for fifteen years. He was our best eye doctor here in Provo, but he went to minister to the royal family there in Riyadh. All of a sudden it became wide open, but this was howling desert. The Rub' al-Khāli is absolutely empty. They said nobody could ever cross it, but it has been repeatedly crossed.

As I said, when I came here I thought that film was ridiculous. I was in the Church Office Building one day, and President Joseph Fielding Smith's door was open. He always left his door wide open; anybody could walk in. So I walked in and said, "The Book of Mormon has people crossing the desert. They must have had animals and beasts of burden. The Book of Mormon doesn't mention that, but that doesn't mean they didn't have them. By implication, they are all over the place." I explained to him, "Look, they would have to carry tents, they would have to have implements, they would have to have supplies to survive for eight years—weapons and all the rest. You don't carry those things in your hands. You have to carry them on beasts of burden. Moreover, when the brethren ran away, they escaped from Laban's police. He said, 'They pursued us but they couldn't overtake us.' Well, they weren't going on foot because we know that the police of Jerusalem had good, fleet-footed Arab horses. They had ways of getting out. And, of course, there would be asses or camels to cross the desert." At this time the camel is the thing. We have a picture here from the desert. Here's a contemporary one right up here. It says "this is a man fleeing, riding a camel and seeking a place of water." This sounds very much like the Book of Mormon, doesn't it—"seeking a place of water." And it says that his name is Joseph, and he is the man who had the picture made. Seeing this, you can imagine Lehi or some of the brethren fleeing from the police or whatever it may be. We have these contemporary pictures.

You notice when they camp a while, they build an altar in the desert. Here's the typical altar they build when they make a camp. This is for a *madbah*, for a particular sacrifice or a particular purpose. It's usually to celebrate a successful return from an expedition or journey. We are told in the Book of Mormon that Nephi and his brethren came back from Jerusalem safe and sound after Sariah had been climbing all over Lehi for letting them go. She was really mad. When they returned the group built an altar and made a sacrifice in thanksgiving because they had gotten home. This is the *madbah* for the return of company, etc. This is one of those typical altars. See, you can use it as an altar. You don't have to work hard on it or anything like that. In fact, with some altars it's against the rules for a chisel to touch the stone. So here's an altar in the desert, and we have these things like this.

I have a whole sheaf of highly classified photographs. That was forty years ago, so they are no longer classified. This is one, and it is interesting because this from the Jabal Marai, just where it turns west to go to Egypt. But the point is that it shows these long stretches of

fertility along here, of *rimth*, the bushes that grow over these underground water channels or aquifers. Sometimes in the photographs you will see them running as far as a hundred miles, and you follow them. In the wilderness Nephi said, “We survived by keeping to the more fertile places of the wilderness.” Well, there are more fertile places of the wilderness, and you stick to them. The Arabs survive by following these places where the underground water produces vegetation. It’s just like the Denibito marsh down there where the Hopis are. There is just enough of a water table to bring vegetation, but all the rest is a howling wilderness. What a desert that is! It’s a desert plus a desert.

We talked about the Rechabites. Here’s a very interesting thing. There are still those who claim to be descendants of the Rechabites. They are a pretty sleazy lot. Those are leather garments they are wearing. They are the garments they [Adam and Eve] wore after the Garden of Eden. You remember, they don’t cultivate the soil, live in houses or anything like that. They are very strict and pious. This photograph was made many years ago. In fact, it says made by Freiherr Baron von Oppenheim whose main business in being there was to spy for the Kaiser. They were going to build a Berlin to Baghdad railroad before World War I. Oppenheim, who was an archaeologist, was really there as a spy, and he provided this photograph. But these Rechabites are hard to find. They are a rare group who live very strictly and very piously. They actually do live on grasshoppers and honey the way John the Baptist did. You can see what a handsome group they are. The time is up now; that’s too bad. I was just about to unfold the map and show you the route they [Lehi’s group] took. We don’t want to dwell on this too long, but this is part of the picture—going into the wilderness, and the hardships we have to face and the choices we have to make. How closely Latter-day Saint history parallels this. They did go into the desert. The Salt Lake Valley was as desolate a place as there was in the world at that time. And it was a nice hot summer when they went in on July 24. That’s not the coolest day in the year, you know. Then they came down into the valley. These remarkable parallels are something to notice, anyway.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 9
1 Nephi 1–3, 15
In the Wilderness

I hope you brought your Books of Mormon because that's the handbook; that's everything. It's all in there, far more than you think—far more than I ever guessed, as I'll show today, right now at the beginning. It's something I've never seen there before, and it's extremely important.

When I rudely interrupted myself last time, we were talking about President Joseph F. Smith. I was talking with him in his office, and we talked about crossing the Rub^c al-Khālī. The Rub^c al-Khālī means the “empty quarter” because it is empty. It's the worst desert in the world. The worst parts of the Sahara have Tuaregs and an occasional tree and some water in them. Not long ago they were quite wet. But not the “empty quarter.” There is nothing in it, and yet they [Lehi's family] crossed that. And they had a journey of eight years in the desert. Did they carry all those tents and things on their backs? Of course they didn't. I explained that to Brother Smith, and he immediately changed his mind. He said, “I was completely wrong. Obviously, that's the only way they could do it.” So don't get the idea that Joseph F. Smith was an old curmudgeon; he was not. He was very open minded and very liberal. All you had to do was point out the situation. Everything is very clearly set forth in the Book of Mormon.

But let's consider now just the second chapter. In the first chapter they go down very rapidly. We are not going to linger in the desert now. Eight years is too long for the course, so we will have to get through fast. But there are some things to notice here. He took all his stuff and went down to the borders. It mentions “the borders” twice in the fifth verse. That should be capitalized because that's what that area has been called, the Jabal, which means “the Borders.” Joseph Smith didn't know that. Neither did Oliver Cowdery, so they left it uncapitalized. But that area in which they went was the Jabal. Jabal is the range of mountains that separates one country from another. This had that name, Jabal. So they went down into the Borders. Notice they found here, after three days, a valley beside a river of water. Why a “river of water”? Because usually it's a “river of sand,” *nahr raml*. But this is a river of water. Well, how would they find a river of water in the desert at that time? (We might as well unfold the map here.)

Here is the trip they took. Here's where they came. They left Jerusalem and went down here, a three day's journey. On camel the normal rate is thirty miles a day, but you can make thirty to sixty miles a day. Under pressure, you could make a hundred miles a day. Camels move right along. (It would be down here.) They call this the Jawf, and this is called the Araba—this long depression. These are rifts. The Vatenaha valley is a main African rift, and they were a complete mystery until the 1930s when Professor Wegener introduced the continental drift theory. Now we realize that the earth's crust is moving, and these are breaks. This long one goes all down the Jordan Valley and continues right on down here. You see this long rift here, and it is a deep depression all the way down here

with high cliffs, just like Rock Canyon, on either side. Down this side of the Dead Sea, it is immense. We'll see some pictures of that later.

Then they went on down here and continued here. These valleys and gullies empty down here in the river in the winter time. Once in a while they run with water, but most of the time they are dry. When you find a *wadi* that has water in it, that's a "river of water" and is considered something very unusual. It tells us in 1 Nephi 1:4 that it was at the commencement of year. So this was the winter time when there was water running. The sight of it sent Lehi into fits of ecstasy, as we will see. (That's what an Arab does whenever he sees water.) This is the way they came down.

It says down here [on a map], to my surprise, that it was prepared by me. No it wasn't, because I would never call this Irreantum. This is Irreantum. There's an Egyptian writing that tells us it's the fountain of the Red Sea and even uses the word *Irreantum*. Somebody put that down there and said I was responsible. Why do we know that they went this way? They turned this way. This is the Rub' al-Khālī, the empty quarter. And it is empty. It hadn't been crossed by anybody supposedly in 1930. Then there were two men who claimed to have crossed it. It's a milk run now. This is the world we live in. Joseph Smith said it was on the nineteenth parallel that they turned south by east, and this is the way they went (east and a little south). That would have them come out at the Qara Mountains which are rich in timber and very unexpected. They caught Captain Bertram Thomas by complete surprise. He discovered these mountains, and they weren't discovered until the 1930s. Imagine that! They didn't even know that there was such a nice fertile place there. We will refer to this later, but you get the idea. They came down the coast there.

We are not lingering on geography. It's points of doctrine we are interested in now. We have to mention the *qaṣīda* though. "And it came to pass that he called the name of the river, Laman, and it emptied into the Red Sea; and the valley was in the borders near the mouth thereof" (1 Nephi 2:8). There's the Borders for the third time—this area called "the Jabal." It's a mountain range. So it emptied into the Red Sea. We know where they were, and he renamed them. That's what the Arabs do when they go down here. After all, if you are going in strange territory, you give names to things as you go. The pioneers did that. Certain things like Chimney Rock have been named various things. Timpanogos has quite a number of names. They have renamed Mount McKinley now. It's back to Denali, its old Indian name. Different people give things different names, so he named it that.

Then he recited a *qaṣīda*, the oldest form of poetry in Arabic. *Qaṣīda* means when you are wandering and looking for something and finally come to some beautiful aspect of nature, a valley or an oasis, or something particularly lovely. Then you say, "*Qifā ṣadīqāni*—stop, my two friends, and let me tell you about this." He compares these beauties of nature to the eternal goodness of God and to human characteristics, etc. and makes it a moral lesson for the beholder because it moves him very deeply. That's a *qaṣīda*. It means to make a journey looking for something. They are always looking for something or they wouldn't make a journey. The point is if you are Bedouin Arabs, you are not going anywhere at all. Yet you're constantly on a *qaṣīda*—the eternal quest, knowing you are not going to find anything. The place you are in is no more interesting than the place you are going to. Lehi recites a *qaṣīda* to his two sons (Arabs recite it to two

friends). Well, I cited some examples of this in that book called *Lehi in the Desert*. We won't linger on it, but notice the ecstasies he goes into: "And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea." That expression, "fountain of the Red Sea," is the one that is used. Remember, the ancients believed that the sea was the fresh fountain and it fed all the rivers of the land; it was the other way around. This one up here is called "the fountain of the Red Sea." There's a writing called "The Victory over Seth" that was read in all the temples of Egypt every day, in which this expression occurs. As I said, we won't linger over these things.

"[Then] he spake unto Laman [his oldest son], saying: O that thou mightest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all righteousness!" (1 Nephi 2:9). The sea was never stagnant for the ancients. If any water runs for more than half an hour, it is considered continual (practically perennial) by the people of that area. But it is seasonal. Notice, it says this was at the commencement of the year when the waters would be running. Then he spoke to his other son, Lemuel (who has a good, pure Arabic name, incidentally), and said, "O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, firm and steadfast, and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord!" Again, why would a valley be "firm and steadfast"? We say mountains are firm and steadfast. Well, where does the Arab find life, security, and safety? It's in the valleys where there is water and vegetation. Anywhere else you are a dead man. Nobody wants to go up on a mountain there. You wouldn't want to go up on Cascade Mountain here if you wanted to survive. You would stay down in the canyon.

Laman and Lemuel didn't want it. They were against their father. We mentioned his being a *piqqeah*, a visionary man. They didn't want to leave the land of Jerusalem and their inheritance. That's very interesting. Notice, it says, "... led them out of the land of Jerusalem, to leave the land of their inheritance [we will come to "inheritance" presently], and their gold, and their silver, and their precious things, to perish in the wilderness. And this, they said he had done because of the foolish imaginations of his heart. And thus, Laman and Lemuel ... did murmur against their father ... because they knew not the dealings of that God who had created them. Neither did they believe that Jerusalem, that great city [from the first they were disillusioned], could be destroyed according to the words of the prophets." (1 Nephi 2:11-13).

Notice it didn't say *taken* but *destroyed*. Jerusalem had already been taken in 950, 720, 605, and 597 B.C. but it was spared every time. Sometimes it was taken by the Babylonians, sometimes by the Assyrians, and sometimes by the Egyptians. Nobody wanted to ruin Jerusalem; they wanted to take it so they could have it as a base, etc. Remember, Nebuchadnezzar had been very forbearing. He had spared the people. He had been kind to Necho and sent him back to Egypt to be Pharaoh there and serve his interests. When Necho turned against him, he got very angry. It was the same thing with Josiah. He was willing to cooperate with the Jews, but they played "footsy" with the Egyptians. When he took it in 597, he spared the city and went back. But when he came back this time, he was really mad and destroyed it completely. They [Laman and Lemuel] said the city couldn't be destroyed because nobody ever wanted to destroy it. They didn't say it couldn't be *taken*, but it couldn't be *destroyed*. They felt secure all the time. They had the wealth and all that sort of thing. They had all these things in common with others. As I said, it was a world civilization; they shared these things. So they didn't believe that.

But now we come to a surprising thing! After all these years, this is a thing I have never noticed myself. (You have to bring the Book of Mormon; anybody who doesn't bring it doesn't get a gold star next time.) "And it came to pass that my father did speak unto them . . . and he did confound them" (1 Nephi 2:14). They couldn't complain anymore, but they still didn't change their minds. "I, Nephi, being exceedingly young [listen to his condition there], nevertheless being large in stature, and also having great desires to know of the mysteries of God, wherefore, I did cry unto the Lord; and behold he did visit me, and did soften my heart that I did believe all the words which had been spoken by my father . . ." But he had to have a special revelation himself. He didn't like the idea at all. Then he had to work hard on his brother Sam to convince him. Nobody liked the idea of leaving Jerusalem. Nephi liked it just as little as the others. After he prayed and cried unto the Lord, the Lord visited him and softened his heart so he would go along with his father. He wasn't "gung ho" to go out and have some fun in the desert. He didn't want it, and his brother Sam didn't want it. Then he talked to Sam, "making known unto him the things which the Lord had manifested unto me by his Holy Spirit [he conveyed his special revelation to Sam]. And it came to pass that he believed in my words" (1 Nephi 2:17). But he had to be convinced too. So everybody had to be sold on this trip in the first place, including Nephi and Sam. I hadn't noticed, but it is plain that nobody wanted to go out into that desert. That would be something.

Then we come to the theme of the Book of Mormon in 1 Nephi 2:20–24. You might say, "Why do we linger so much on this part? We are not going very fast." We mustn't go fast because it is here, and right here we have the whole Book of Mormon. This theme is repeated throughout the book in different ways and different situations. It's a sad story, this story from the dust, as we will see presently. It's for us. Alas, alas, I wish it wasn't, but this is it—the rule for the promised land: "And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise; yea, even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands." We dwell on that.

Remember the migrations at this time. They were all looking for promised lands. Tyrtæus was looking for a promised land, and he told his people about it. Hesiod, the great Greek poet and contemporary of Homer, was looking for a promised land. He told how they looked and found nothing but bad places wherever they went, and they just had to keep on the move. And, of course, at the beginning of the [*Aeneid*], Vergil says, "Through many disasters and trials, many close calls, we are making our way toward Latium where there awaits us a seat in a promised land." They were going from Troy clear over to Italy to find a promised land. So at the time of Lehi, most people were looking for promised lands. Everybody was shaken up because of world revolution. So this was it. They [Lehi's family] would find their promised land. But if "thy brethren [Laman and Lemuel or anybody else] shall rebel against thee, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord. And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments, thou shalt be made a ruler and a teacher over thy brethren. For behold, in that day that they shall rebel against me, I will curse them even with a sore curse, and they shall have no power over thy seed except they shall rebel against me also" (1 Nephi 2:21–24). The Lamanites are never the problem in the Book of Mormon. When the Nephites rebel also, the Lord wants the Lamanites to be there in place to stir them up. "And if it so be that they rebel against me, they shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in the ways of remembrance." In other words the Lord is saying, I want them breathing down your neck all the time. You will not solve your problem by getting rid of the Lamanites. They tried to do that and failed, and it was their own undoing, as we know. So who is the enemy? There is no conflict or battle in the

Book of Mormon between the righteous and the wicked. We will see that. It is always when people are equally wicked that they collide. So this is the promise, and this is the theme of the Book of Mormon.

Then we come to the third chapter of 1 Nephi. Notice he “returned from speaking with the Lord, to the tent of my father” (1 Nephi 3:1). He returned to the tent. They are living in the *bayt al-sha‘r*. Then his father said, “Behold I have dreamed a dream, in the which the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brethren shall return to Jerusalem” (1 Nephi 3:2). Then they have to go back to Laban and fetch the plates. Well, we talked about Laban and the character of Jaush in the Lachish Letters. He was the military governor, and he kept the records. We are going to have a new case turn up today where the very same thing happens again, years later, and the records are kept in the guardhouse. As we rush along through chapter three, let’s go back here and turn to a source even more important than the Lachish Letters, that tells an awful lot of things. Although this chapter is vitally important, we are going to have to flee. “It must needs be that we flee out of the land.” They must flee out of the land; sometimes you can’t stay. Lehi said, I don’t have the vaguest idea why we have to obtain the records, except it may be to preserve the language of our fathers [paraphrased]. It turned out that wasn’t the main reason. They contained “the words which have been spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets . . . since the world began [the holy prophets before them—quite a record]” (1 Nephi 3:20).

As I said, I want to get off the first book, so we are going to move right on. I’m going to go right over to the Bar Kokhba Letters and the Dead Sea Scrolls which are enormously important for the Book of Mormon. But notice this in the fourth chapter: “Let us go up again unto Jerusalem, . . . for behold he [the Lord] is mightier than all the earth, then why not mightier than Laban and his fifty, yea, or even than his tens of thousands?” (the garrison of fifty and the troops of ten thousand). The regular division in the army is ten thousand, as it was at the Hill Cumorah and in the *Battle Scroll*, too. One wants to linger on all these things, but I want to talk about these scrolls because we don’t know anything about them. Remember when he builds the altar? You have the altar here.

So on the big map, you see the cliffs and the caves along here. These cliffs are full of caves. But this the Bar Kokhba. This was in 1961, and these are other scrolls from farther down along the rift. (We have some good maps here.) As you go along this rift, the cliffs are very high, as I told you. Here is where they found the scrolls in these caves along here. It’s a very perilous situation. I have some good pictures here to show what the situation is (it’s this sort of thing). Here’s the valley where they found them, the Naḥal Hever. It’s the sort of stuff you find down in southern Utah. It’s very precipitous, very steep, and very dangerous where they found these particular ones here. Across the valley on the other side, this is the Roman camp. The Romans were camped here, and they could watch and see everything that was going on over there. So the people had to sneak out by night to get groceries, etc. As a matter of fact, they were never able to escape, and they perished in these caves. There are many of them, and these are the caves of documents. They are rich in documents which are very important. Here, for example, you can see how very precipitous that is. Here are the caves.

When the Israelis were tipped off about this and went up to start looking for them, the place was crawling with Arabs. There were little Arab boys crawling all over the place because they knew they could get one pound for a square centimeter of scroll if it had writing on it. They got in there and collected them. The Israelis concluded, “Why fight it?

If they are willing to risk their necks, let them bring in the scrolls.” So they would provide the boys with cigar boxes with cotton in them and say, “Now, put them in here and then we will pay you for them. And the bigger the piece the more you will get paid for it.” So they became diligent looking for these, and they knew all about these caves. But fortunately, the people who hid in the caves didn’t just drop their materials and leave them. They buried them in the earth on purpose, so they were still there. We got these priceless documents from these caves along the Dead Sea.

This wasn’t in 1947 when they got the other ones, but this was in 1961. Here they are from the inside of the caves. There are many caves. (Here’s a map showing where they are. It’s a good big map, so you can see it even from there.) Here, for example, is the Cave of Letters. It’s a big cave that goes in. Here’s where they found some marvelous metal vessels. Here they found a cache of letters, and here they found doctum of the Psalms. So they [the people who hid in the caves] had the scriptures with them. Here they found a bunch of keys to houses in Jerusalem and En-gedi. People brought their keys with them and wanted to go home again. They locked up when they left home. Here they found the Babata archives. A very rich woman had always been in litigation and had made herself a lot of money in real estate. She kept all her documents, and they were there. Then we find out about “lands of inheritance” and this sort of thing that they talk about [in the Book of Mormon]. Remember when the boys wanted to get their treasure, and it was exceedingly great. They brought it back and showed it to Laban to bribe him for the plates. All he did, of course, was grab the money and keep the plates too. But we know what these “lands of inheritance” were. The lands weren’t in Jerusalem. They said, We will go down to the lands of our inheritance, and then we will fetch back all this gold and silver and precious things [paraphrased]. We know where the lands of inheritance were because all the rich people and the middle class fled south and east. The poor people stayed behind because they couldn’t afford to go. Nebuchadnezzar spared them and reorganized them under Jeremiah and people like that. But the rich people did exactly what Lehi’s people were doing. They skipped off in this direction.

We have the archive of this widow Babata (and she is some dame) and then we have this marvelous glass work here. And here’s a net with all sorts of sewing. Some people brought their knitting to repair clothes, etc. Here are a lot of skulls in a basket. There were lots of baskets and things. Here at the back of the cave are the letters of Bar Kokhba himself. Jerusalem, as the Book of Mormon tells us, has been destroyed from time to time. This was one time. The letters from farther up north are from the time it fell in the year A.D. 70 to the Emperor Titus. These are from when it fell again (finally) in Hadrian’s time in A.D. 132. Bar Kokhba had made himself president of Israel and organized an army to fight back. These are the documents that have to do with that and tell us a lot about it. This was later, but it had gone on before. But the surprising thing is people had been going to these caves and doing this for hundreds and hundreds of years. Here, for example, we have these bronze mace heads and these strange temple vessels, beautifully made bronze things. They are over 5,000 years old—2,500 hundred years before Lehi. But 3,000 years before these people, the Jews [he means people living in the area of Jerusalem] were still hiding. At that time they were hiding from a Pharaoh of the First Dynasty of Egypt who came up and chased them out of Jerusalem. Way back then, imagine that! Of course, they weren’t Jews at that time; they were another people. But that’s what these caves are for. When you get invaded you go hide in the caves. So these things had been hidden 3,000 years before Bar Kokhba; it’s amazing and extremely curious. It says, “Among the 240 different shaped objects of copper, about 20 chisels, axes of various shapes and sizes, 82 black objects bearing this.” Here’s a sort of crown. Now this is 3,000 years before Bar Kokhba went

there in A.D. 132. So this was the “milk run” so to speak. Anytime somebody rang the bell, everybody took off to the caves. This is a practice in some parts of the world. After all, if you had been in London during the Blitz, you would know as soon as you heard the siren that you should run down to the subway. So we have the same sort of thing going on here, but it’s what is in the documents that interests us.

Question: Did Lehi’s family hide in caves? Answer: Yes, they hid. Remember, these caves are a long way from Jerusalem. (I’ll show you the map here; this doesn’t show anything.) Here’s the Dead Sea. Here’s the Lisān that comes up like this, and here’s the Jordan. Here is Qumran. You go twenty miles beyond Qumran and you get to En-gedi. That’s where a lot of these people had their farms, etc. This was a very popular place for the rich. The lands of inheritance were somewhere down here in Azar. Below En-gedi is the Naḥal Ḥever. They call it that now, the “Brook Hever.” The Arabs give it a special name. These canyons go all along here. Qumran itself is very impressive; it looks just like the side of Rock Canyon—from Qumran and right along here. This is the lowest spot on earth; you remember that. This is way down there. These are very impressive cliffs, and this is where these people were hiding out in these side cliffs here. The Naḥal Ḥever is this low one just below En-gedi where they go out and bathe today. The oil seeps up and makes this tar. People rub it on, and they say it cures them of rheumatism. You see these fat ladies from Jerusalem completely covered with this black tar, basking in the warm waters of the Dead Sea—which are somewhat salt, as you know.

It’s an interesting situation here. Let’s see some more things here that might, as long as we’re on the book, intrigue us. Here’s a basket that looks like the kind you buy in Mexico, and it’s in perfect condition. There’s just one break in it, and it was full of household goods. We talked about the bronze vessels, beautifully made vessels. Here’s a basket full of household ware, valuable dishes, and things like that. They were very well made; you notice that these things are. These are ritual dishes. Notice the ash pans for the sacrifice at the temple, the burning of incense in the temple. So they brought their sacred vessels and their household effects. They also brought their business records, and that’s the important thing about it. There’s a marvelous section here on the business records. See these vessels—nice things and fancy stuff. Then, as I said, the most important things are the written records.

There’s a woman’s mirror. They have quite a lot of cosmetics and stuff. That basket had cosmetics in it. Now here’s a bundle of papyri, very carefully folded, all very neatly labeled with wooden labels so they are properly filed and fed into the computer. That’s Professor Yadin himself. He has visited Provo a number of times. We’ve had some wonderful talks with him. He has told us some marvelous stories. We’d get together down at Kent Brown’s house. He’s a marvelous man, and he’s dead now. He just died a couple of years ago. He was the head of Israel Antiquities and also the leader of the army in the 1948 war. He could tell some very exciting stories about that totally unexpected victory. It’s an interesting thing: the very week the war broke out, they discovered the Battle Scroll of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which described how ancient Israel went to war. They had to be clothed with righteousness. It was that which fired them more than anything else, he said, to go ahead and win a war in which the odds were fifty to one against them. They won it, and I could a tale unfold where that’s concerned.

Anyway, one document is particularly interesting. (Here they are digging in the caves.) Oh, here are instruments. Here's a pair of sandals and household knives—things like that. This is another basket in very good condition. (There's Yadin at work.) Here's a bundle of documents. "The big Archive of Papyri is found!" Notice the meticulous wrapping and packing. This is another archive of papyri very carefully wrapped up. See, these people kept their records. Notice how record conscious they were when they fled. The thing Lehi wants to get (because the Lord told him to get it) is the family records. They have to go back and get the family records, their genealogy, and the books of Moses (the bronze plates).

Here they are working in the caves. I wasn't in these caves, but I've certainly climbed all over Qumran. Here is a prize as far as I'm concerned. As you go in the Scroll Room at Jerusalem, you turn to the left, and the first document you see is this document which has a light behind it. It's a contract to the ownership of a farm down there. One of the owners of the farm was this man here Alma ben Yehudah, which Professor Yadin rendered "Alma [without any apology], son of Judah." People have laughed for years about that name *Alma*, because it is a Latin word and a woman's name. It means *soul*, *alma mater* and that sort of thing. They tried to figure out some Hebrew name that means a "coat of mail" or another word meaning a "young man." But this is just A-L-M-A, like that, so Yadin properly made it "Alma, son of Judah." You know he was a man, and you know he was a Jew if he is Alma, son of Judah. But I'll write his name on the board. Some of you may have seen it before [laughter]. That's the name. It's very striking to walk into the Scroll Room, and the first name that hits you in the face is "Alma, the son of Judah." So there was an Alma, after all. It's a perfectly good Jewish name. But if people are run out of town, how can they expect others to know about them? So we have here a most remarkable find. Here are some of the door keys. I don't think they are too subtle (wooden handles, etc.), but they worked. Question: (not audible) Answer: It's on the scroll in Jerusalem now. It [the Shrine of the Book] has that dome that spreads out. You go in and the scrolls are [displayed] all around. When you go in, the first scroll you see has the name "Alma." It has a light behind it and is pretty writing.

Well, we have to get on to the serious stuff. This is very important: The Lord prophesied these very destructions, the one in A.D. 70 and the one in A.D. 132, in Matthew 24. Joseph Smith has chosen that particular chapter to give us a correct version (and it is a correct version). He put everything in right and put it in the Pearl of Great Price in the Joseph Smith section. This points out what the situation is. The Lord made it clear to the apostles what was going to happen to Jerusalem when it was destroyed. This is Matthew 24, and it's verse 15 in the King James Bible, and verse 12 in Joseph Smith—Matthew. Joseph Smith rearranged the verses. They don't make sense the way they stand now [in the King James Bible]. As a matter of fact, they are never used as sermons in Christian churches. As a rule they avoid this because there is a good deal of confusion here. The verses were rearranged to suit a particular prejudice—the prejudice being namely that the Lord would only come once, that he wouldn't come again (they couldn't have more than one destruction). But that's the point of the whole thing. He deals with one thing happening after another. He talks about the destruction of Jerusalem, then into the restoration, then the Restoration of the Gospel, and then the destruction in the last days. He ends on the final note in our Joseph Smith version. "And thus cometh the end of the wicked, according to the prophecy of Moses, saying: They shall be cut off from among the people; but the end of the earth is not yet, but by and by" (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:55). That's not the destruction of the earth at all; that's not yet. It's the end of the world. He repeats it three times, "This is the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked." But

this is not the end of the earth; that's by and by. You don't talk about that. We don't know when that will be; that's another story.

He describes exactly what's happening here when he says (and nobody notices it either), at this time there will be a destruction. "Then let them who are in Judea flee into the mountains" (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:13). That's what they have always done. They would go to these steep wadis, the mountains and the caves, which are right next to Jerusalem. There are thousands of them. They have discovered 518 documents from the Dead Sea Scrolls in over a hundred caves. So the caves are all over the place way down here. This had nothing to do with the Qumran caves, but they are still Dead Sea Scrolls. So they flee to the mountains; that's what you do. "Let him who is on the housetop flee, and not return to take anything out of his house." These people returned to take things out of the house. One person returned too late and lost her life. This Babata was rich and thought she could get a way out, but she lost her life. She couldn't get away with it. It was a very serious situation. Don't go back to Jerusalem for anything this time. This is the big time, he says. "Neither let him who is in the field return back to take his clothes." Then he says, if you have new babies, get out of town ahead of time [paraphrased]. Notice, this is a warning ahead of time. It's not just telling them how terrible it's going to be when he says, "Pray ye the Lord that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." You must arrange things so you can get out ahead of that. If you have any women who are pregnant, he says, don't stay in town. Get out of town in good time, and pray that your flight be not on the Sabbath (you need to arrange it).

"For then, in those days, shall be great tribulation on the Jews, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, such as was not before sent upon Israel, of God, since the beginning of their kingdom until this time; no nor ever shall be sent again upon Israel" (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:18). What happened with this fall? That's when the Jews were driven out for the last time. As I said, the town had been taken again and again. As the Book of Mormon says, it had been destroyed and people returned. This time he said they are not coming back—not for two thousand years. This was going to be by far the worst of all, and it was. The Jews never came back. Remember, they became nonpersons; they had no identity whatever. Then came the great persecutions of two thousand years. Macaulay in his famous essay on the political disabilities of the Jews pointed out that as late as the 1850s the Jews were not allowed to vote or hold property or anything like that in most countries, including England. That was what Macaulay was protesting about. The duke could decide to take over everything they had. They [the Jews] were advisors and assistants all over because they were brilliant men, but at any time they could be executed, or anything they had could be confiscated. They had no rights whatever, as you read in Shakespeare and elsewhere. So this was the worst they would ever have.

"All things which have befallen them are only the beginning of the sorrows which shall come upon them [for this two thousand years]" (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:19). But then they went back after. Remember, until very recently (in the 1840s and 1850s) all the Christian churches absolutely insisted that the Jews would never return to Jerusalem because the veil of the temple was rent, and the Lord said the temple was destroyed and the Jews would never go back to Jerusalem. It was like that all the time up until 1948 when Harry Truman sent an ambassador. He visited the pope on the way, and the pope said, "Absolutely nothing doing; the Jews must never go back to Jerusalem. It would frustrate all prophecy." They thought the Jews would never go back. I have an article on that in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*. I had to look up a lot of this stuff, and, believe me, the Christian world was against it. The only people that ever believed the Jews would go back

to Jerusalem, of course, were the Mormons. We always preached that they would go back to Jerusalem, just as we would have Zion over here. "And except those days should be shortened, there should none of their flesh be saved [and, of course, they would have been wiped out completely time and again]; but for the elect's sake, according to the covenant, those days shall be shortened" (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:20). So this is the sort of thing that happened. They should not go back and they should flee to the mountains (that's what they always did before), and they should be careful not to flee in the winter time, when they were expecting children, or on the Sabbath (on which they couldn't move). This was the one [destruction] that the Lord prophesied. And here we actually have hundreds of documents recording that particular event—that double event, the one in A.D. 70 and the one in A.D. 130–32.

The rich and the middle class hurried south and east to the lands of their inheritance. This is what happened here. We'll put Babata on the board because we have all her possessions, etc. She was a rich and very unpleasant sort of woman. She had all this property and had married various husbands to get the property. Her first property she inherited from her father. That became the land of her inheritance, and it was a rich farm in dates, etc. They say, "It had a good address." These people were very conscious of the lands of their inheritance down here (we'll look up some examples in the book; we'll put it on reserve and you may have a chance to look at it). This long section goes on with all these documents—the whole stash of her documents and legal affairs, and what she was up to. "The largest cache of documents in the Cave of Letters was the archive of Babata, the daughter of Shimeon, son of Menahem. Thanks to this woman who managed to survive two husbands and must have spent most of her life in litigation, either suing the guardians of her fatherless son or being sued by various members of her deceased husband's family, we have come by a priceless source for the records of legal and historical data." Her father had a shrewd lawyer which enabled him to get away with anything. She married into the family of Khthusion which formerly came from En-gedi. She married Yehudah Khthusion. Notice that they don't hesitate to mix Greek, Nabataean, Hebrew, and Arabic names. They are all mixed up all the time, just as they are in the Book of Mormon. Her husband had a residence in Mahoza. Where he settled became his inheritance through her.

Toward the end of the first century, a couple of decades after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, Babata's father, Shimeon (who was originally from Jerusalem) went down and settled in Mahoza, way down at the southern tip of the Dead Sea, which was in Nabataean country. He was under the king of the Nabataeans. That was a very rich land, and he settled there and had a farm. Then Babata inherited it from him. Then she married a couple of guys and claimed their property too. There were very important fights about water rights. "The document is extremely rich in legal terms identical with those found in fifth century B.C. Aramaic documents from Egypt, as well as Jewish." From the time of Lehi there are the same documents in Aramaic and Egyptian. "The deed must have been drafted by a clever lawyer. Shimeon managed by this document to get away with just about everything." The lawyer had it fixed. Remember, you get a lot of crooked lawyers in the Book of Mormon too. Babata had a friend who was a Roman lady, Julia Crispina.

Here's an interesting remark that casts light on the situation of going down to their inheritance, etc. "This illustrates some of the traits of assimilation among the wealthy Jewish families of the time, not only in the fact that it was drawn up in Greek [one of the documents among all these Hebrew documents is a Greek one], but specifically it says that it's written according to Hellenic law. In this document Yehudah, the son of Eleazar Khthusion, gave to marriage his own daughter, etc." The point is they were doing all the

legal tricks, but notice the assimilation of the wealthy Jewish families that intermarried with each other. Remember, they found out that Laban was related to Lehi when he started looking at the genealogy they brought back (they were all upper class people).

Notice this: "The list of palm groves is not the same as the one she declared in the census, which were hers through her father. And the document states quite plainly the basis of Babata's ownership of her husband's grove 'which you hold,' says the buyer of the crops, 'as you say you do of your bride money and due. Now, the purpose of the IOU which you mentioned comes clear.' From now on Babata was burdened with an additional property and begins a long engagement in litigation with certain members of her deceased husband's family." They fight for the property now. So this went on, and we have these sordid stories.

"This document explains, however, how Babata eventually [Now, the family headquarters, where she came from now, was not in Jerusalem but in En-gedi. It is a very important settlement right near where these two great gorges open. The one to the south is the Naḥal Ḥever, the Hebrew gully, with palm groves way down at Petra] found her way to En-gedi, not solely because of her property there, but because of her numerous relatives in that place. Because of her second husband's other wife, Miriam, the daughter of Be'ayan, she found herself remotely connected to the commander-in-chief of En-gedi in Bar Kokhba's administration." So you get the military in the picture.

Oh, this woman, Julia Crispina, was her friend in 132. In the next year, 133, Julia Crispina turned up in Egypt where she owned a rich farm in the delta. So you see how these people had their investments everywhere. Julia Crispina was a friend of Babata. Babata never escaped; she died in the caves there. The Romans had them trapped. She couldn't get out, but her friend, Julia Crispina, carried on. We find her happily ensconced on her farm in Egypt a little later. They were all trying to get out to Egypt; this was the idea. The picture is rather a vivid one here.

Oh, there's one picture I want to show you here; it's an interesting one. Remember, we are told that Lehi saw a dream and then Nephi saw the dream. The water he saw was filthy water, and it swept the wicked away to destruction when it came. That was what the Arabs call a *sayl*. Remember, those gullies that go down. When it rains in the mountains behind, which are quite high, all of a sudden a wall of water will come down the valley and sweep everything away. For years they will be dry. That's where most of the water and shrubbery is, so the Bedouins will come along and camp in at the mouth of *sayls*. There is a lot said in the poems, etc., about what happens when you are suddenly caught in the stream of filthy water and swept away. I cited some more passages on that in the book called *Lehi in the Desert*. But we have one right here. You can't see it from there, but somebody can. Here they are in the cave in all the dust. This is the Cave of Letters; it's a big place. They [the Jews] were going to hide out indefinitely there. Everything is "out of the dust;" we'll mention that.

Here he says, "Watching a rare waterfall in Naḥal Ḥever, west of the Cave of Letters." It's quite a waterfall, but it isn't a white waterfall. It's mud, filthy water, when it comes down. I've seen it around St. George and places like that. You'll see these gully washes come out; they're very dangerous. Well, you mustn't ever hike up the Zion Narrows. If you do, you can get caught up there. A group of five Boy Scouts from my ward (the old Manavu Ward) were drowned up there. They got caught in the Narrows when the water came

down. The rainstorm was way up there by Loa and Bicknell. You never expect it and down she comes. This is a good, lively waterfall, but it's filthy. It's a stream of filthy water. That's exactly the nightmare that Nephi had. His father saw the wicked camped there, and a stream of filthy water came along and swept them all away to destruction. It sweeps them out to the sea; this river opens to the sea.

This is another one of these cultural notes. This is 1 Nephi 15:27 (we have to jump around so here). "And I said unto them that the water which my father saw was filthiness; and so much was his mind swallowed up in other things that he beheld not the filthiness of the water. And I said unto them that it was an awful gulf, which separated the wicked from the tree of life." Remember that enormous gulf. You walk along in the desert and you come to one of those huge gulfs. You see them in Canyonlands, etc. I spend a lot of time down there. You noticed that Roman camp. There was a 2,000-foot drop between it and the caves on the other side. They were right together, but you couldn't get from the one to the other. He said that's exactly what happens to the wicked. There's an awful gulf between them, and down that gulf comes this filthy water and sweeps them away. "An awful gulf, which separated the wicked from the tree of life, and also from the saints of God. And I said unto them that it was a representation of that awful hell which the angel said unto me was prepared for the wicked . . . the justice of God did also divide the wicked from the righteous" (1 Nephi 15:28–30). So he compares it to this very thing. "And they said unto me: What meaneth the river of water which our father saw?" (1 Nephi 15:26). He said the water was filthy water and it ran down the gully and swept away the wicked.

There's another scroll that's very important here. This is the only picture I have of the *Copper Scroll*. This *Copper Scroll* found in Cave Three in 1949 is very important. John Allegro wrote a book on them called *The Treasure of the Cooper Scroll*. There's a recent article about them here by Norman Golb from 1987. They weren't on rolled copper; they were on sheets, regular size sheets like this. Then there were holes along here, but they riveted them together so they could roll them up. The reason they put it on copper was so they wouldn't perish because (as Golb tells us) they were extra valuable. They had to be preserved, so they put them on bronze or copper (almost pure copper; it's a slight alloy). Of course, it was oxidized. They weren't able to unroll it; they had to split it at Manchester with a fine diamond saw. Now they can lay it out in sections and read it. It tells where all the other stuff is buried—all these other treasures—and where the written documents are buried. This is why it's so valuable. So when it became extremely important to keep a record, they kept it on bronze. You'd say, "the brass plates." Remember, "brass" is a new word. It is only used in English since the end of the nineteenth century. "Bronze" is the French word. We always said "brass." You won't find the word "bronze" in the Bible at all, though the Old Testament is a Bronze Age document. But we always called it "brass." When he says "brass plates" it's perfectly safe to think of those as "bronze plates" because brass is a mixture of copper and nickel, whereas bronze is copper and tin, and much more common and easy to make. As I said, throughout the Old Testament the word "bronze" never occurs because it is always "brass." A copper alloy is always "brass" in English, and that was seventeenth century English. It makes no difference; the main thing is that it's copper based.

This *Copper Scroll* is that, and it tells about where the most valuable treasures are buried and where the records are to be found. They are hidden all over the place. Will we ever be able to run them down? This is a very interesting confirmation of the idea of bronze scrolls and the constant concern with burying and keeping records, which is an obsession in the Book of Mormon, as you know. And also a confirmation of the gold plates.

Now we get to the most important thing—what this is all about. All this cultural stuff is just to back up other things. Captain Bertram Thomas discovered the Qara Mountains in 1930. Here's a picture of them. They are very lush, beautiful mountains which are unexpected. They are right on the edge of the Rub' al-Khālī, the most absolute desert in the world. They come as a total and complete surprise, and there they were. But what interests us most is the doctrine. What do these scrolls tell us? This is extremely important. This article was in the May/June issue of *The Sciences* by Norman Golb at Chicago. I'll have to get that article from *The Atlantic* in 1960 by John Allegro. He was one of the first students of the scrolls, and he lost his job at Oxford because in 1960 he wrote an article pointing out that everybody hated the scrolls. The Jews wanted nothing to do with them. The Christians wanted nothing to do with them. The first discoveries were made in 1947, and that's another story. You'd be surprised how the Church is involved in this. In 1964 I was sent back there by the Church, and I did an awful lot of snooping, etc. It was "touch and go." There was nobody there at Qumran. A big fight was going on all the time. It was really a risky business, but there were some remarkable things about the scrolls. For example, the scrolls were discovered by a shepherd boy called Mohammed Dhib who was up looking for sheep. A sheep went into a cave, and he threw a rock after it. When it made a clink, he heard the clink and went in and discovered the scrolls. He gives an account of that story here. I stayed a week at American University in Beirut, and it was all trouble there—shooting in the streets and the airport was closed. I stayed at a house there, and it was a very profitable time. I spent a lot of time talking with the butler, majordomo, of a man who was in charge. He was very much interested in the Gospel. He especially went for the Pearl of Great Price. The interesting thing is that he was the uncle of that Mohammed Dhib who discovered the scrolls. These things all tie up. Then I got into another situation and strange things happened.

We are going to talk about the doctrinal teachings of the scrolls and why they didn't like them. Six or seven years ago the foremost Catholic scholar of the scrolls, Father Joseph Fitzmeyer, taught here in summer school. He gave a course in Aramaic with only three or four people in it. He was the Catholic authority on the scrolls, and Father de Vaux. Father Milik was the one who was editing the Enoch Scroll etc. He said that not five percent of the scrolls at that time (just a few years ago) had ever been translated and published. They just want to leave them alone. The trouble is that the Jews say, "They are much too Christian." The Christians say, "This robs us of our originality with the Jews having their sacraments and Twelve Apostles before the time of Christ. What's going on here?" They don't want them either. Neither the Christians nor the Jews want them, so by a sort of pact of mutual consent they soft pedal them. They don't like to talk about them. Norman Golb had the nerve [to publish his article]. You notice the article wasn't in a Jewish publication or anything like that. In fact, Solomon Zeitlin, the editor of the *Jewish Quarterly Review* (they ran a long article in two issues), is the grand old man of Hebrew. He always thought that the Dead Sea Scrolls were nothing but a medieval forgery. "They're a fake. Somebody faked them in the fourteenth or fifteenth century," he said. He wouldn't be shaken from that with all the evidence in the world.

I remember talking to Professor Albright back at Johns Hopkins. Joseph Saad said, "Professor Albright really discovered the Dead Sea Scrolls. He recognized what they were."

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 10
(Dead Sea Scrolls)

The Book of Mormon and the Dead Sea Scrolls

Now we are going to talk about the Book of Mormon and the Jews in the light of the new discoveries. I mentioned the *Copper Scroll*. These copies are very faint where you can see this, and they are bigger than this. This is a typical page. The leaves go that way, and here are the holes along here. They put them together, and this is what they say. They have given us the text here, which is very clear and legible. It is painfully etched (pressed) into the copper. Remember, the Book of Mormon record keepers often complained about the difficulty of writing on this medium with their hands; they hated to do it. We have it here, and this is typical.

As it starts out, it's very intriguing. It sounds like a mystery or something like that. They have given us a translation or transliteration here. Item Number One: "In the fortress which is in the Vail of Akhar forty cubits under the steps entering to the east, a money chest and its contents, a weight of seventeen talents." That's a lot of money buried there. Here's another one: "In the trough of the palace basin the tithe vessels consisting of the [see, they hid the sacred vessels too so the Romans wouldn't get them] and for all the tithes stored for the seventh year produce. The second tithe from the mouths of the opening, the bottom of the water conduit six cubits from the north toward the hewn immersion pool." They cleverly buried that under the swimming pool so that nobody would guess that that's where it was, under the floor of the pool. These are very clever places where they hid this stuff. Of course, we don't know how to locate them today. "In the underground passage which is in the court a wooden barrel inside a bath measure of untithed goods, seventy talents of silver." That's a lot too. It goes on and on like this. "In the cistern which is nineteen cubits in front of the eastern gateway are vessels and a hollow that in it has ten talents." It has a Greek code writing on it. It goes on, but the ones that are most interesting, of course, are the ones where it tells us that there are records buried—that there are documents which they preserved just exactly as Lehi's people were careful to preserve them.

Here's more temple stuff: "In the court of blank, blank—nine cubits under the southern corner, gold and silver vessels for the tithe, sprinkling basins, cups, sacrificial bowls . . ." Remember the caves we looked at. (We might as well pass this thing around the way we do in school.) This is the one about Bar Kokhba. There's a perfectly preserved bag, just the kind you get in Mexico today, with keys, vessels, and kitchen tools in it. You can look at the stuff there; just pass it around. We're not going to spend any time on this. It's just to show you what we have. It's interesting that here is the way they were found originally, and they were kept on these copper rolls which were originally plates like this. Then they were riveted together and rolled up to be hidden with the other rolls. They were easier to handle that way.

Question: When we see *brass* in the Old Testament, are we supposed to read *bronze*?
Answer: Well, you can read *bronze*. They did have brass, the alloy of copper and nickel, but, of course, copper and tin was much commoner. The word *bronze* doesn't occur in the

King James Bible at all because it wasn't used until the 1880s. It wasn't an English word at all; it was a French word. We use *brass* which means *bronze*. All you do is drop the *n*. But in the King James version when they know it means *bronze*," they always say *brass* because the word *bronze* was not used, not only in the seventeenth century; it wasn't used even until the middle of the nineteenth century. In Joseph Smith's time they didn't use the word *bronze* at all. That was a word for artists in Paris to use, and it was a new thing. Everything was brass. Brass or bronze is a copper alloy, and that's what this is too. This is not pure copper. Here's one of the figured coins. These were very well hidden. "The inner chamber of the platform of the double gate facing east, the northern entrance, buried three cubits deep. Hidden under it is a pitcher, in it one scroll and under it forty-two talents." So they were hiding their documents too.

Question: How many of these things have they recovered? Answer: None of them. They don't know where these things were. They have looked for some. They might blunder on some, but the scene has changed considerably. It's like going into San Francisco now after the earthquake and trying to find something. Here's another one. Where would you look for this? "In the drain pipe which is in the eastern path to the treasury which is beside the entrance, tithe jars and scrolls among the jars." And another one: "In the stubble field of the Shaveh facing southwest in an underground passage looking north, buried at twenty-four cubits . . ." That's way down there, you see; it's thirty-six feet deep in a field. Well, you start looking for it and see if you can find it. Dig thirty-six feet here, there, and everywhere. And so it goes. "In the funnel [they don't know what that is] in the water pipe that runs to the basin of the drain buried seven cubits under the toilet . . ." Well, there it is nicely hidden. The last place people wanted to mess around was inside these things. So much for the *Copper Scroll* here. We have to get on now with what we were talking about.

Now, that book Bar Kokhba that's going around there is very important. The theme is "out of the dust." It's a Book of Mormon motif that's very clear. This would mean a lot to the Jews, as far as this goes. Professor Yadin has been here a number of times. As I said, we spent some very fascinating evenings with him because he is a great talker. He was the commander in the 1948 war and told about the narrow escapes they had (quite a story). But he was the one in charge of that dig, and he said, "The Israeli scholars were understandably moved. We found that our emotions were a mixture of tension and awe yet astonishment and pride at being part of the reborn state of Israel after a diaspora of eighteen hundred years." Remember, what the Lord tells us in chapter 24 of Matthew in the Pearl of Great Price: This is going to be the number one scattering of the Jews, worse than any persecution they've ever known before or after [paraphrased]. This was it: Eighteen hundred years of being nonpersons, having no privileges and no protection whatever, was a terrible time. That's the way Professor Yadin put this, and this is the way Nephi put it: "And it shall be as if the fruit of thy loins had cried out unto them from the dust for I know their faith. They shall cry from the dust, even after many generations have gone by."

See the pictures of the caves. They are in dust up to their ears there because these things were actually buried under the dust. They weren't just left there casually. These documents were buried. That's important—and still being able to read them on the spot. They were able to pick them up and read them right off. Nephi said, "For those who shall be destroyed shall speak unto them out of the ground, and their speech shall be low out of the dust, and their voice shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit; for the Lord God will give unto him power, that he may whisper concerning them, even as it were out of the ground;

and their speech shall whisper out of the dust” (2 Nephi 26:16). That’s exactly the effect you have here. They were absolutely awed and overwhelmed when they could read these records of their own ancestors—open them and read them as if they had been written the day before. “These texts were deliberately buried. The people who left these records died soon after they buried them, and died on the spot, the victims of a savage religious war. And 2 Nephi 26:16 says, “For those who shall be destroyed shall speak unto them out of the ground.”

What do these records contain? These records are from the Cave of Documents. [Documents from] the caves you find from 70 B.C., from the earlier destruction up north at Qumran and all around there, are doctrinal. They are full of doctrine, as we will see. But these are the accounts of their doings, their business records, etc., and there are a lot of them. Documents and military and civil correspondence are in the words of Mormon. “For thus saith the Lord God: They shall write the things which shall be done among them, . . . Wherefore, as those who have been destroyed have been destroyed speedily . . .” (2 Nephi 26:17–18). In one night they were wiped out. The Romans didn’t even bother to go in the caves. They didn’t bother to go over there at all. They knew the people couldn’t escape; they just died in the caves—terrible thing. “Not only all their letters and legal papers, but their household effects and their bones were left behind in the caves. As to the destroyers,” says Yadin, “nothing remains here today of the Romans save a heap of stones on the face of the desert. But here the descendants of the besieged are returning to salvage their ancestors’ precious belongings.” And again 2 Nephi 26:18 tells us: “And the multitude of their terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away.” The enemy just disappeared. That happened to the Romans, and so it goes.

We have the story here of the fighters under Bar Kokhba. Or in the Book of Mormon in turn between Lehi and the refugees in the desert, and Moroni, the hero, fighting against fearful odds to save his people. Bar Kokhba was, of course, the hero. We have letters actually signed by him from these caves—not just the story of Bar Kokhba that was preserved in Greek, passed down through the Middle Ages, and turned up in Warsaw somewhere in the ghetto in a printed version from the seventeenth century. That’s the way we usually get stuff, you know. But these are the original documents.

And, “The army’s mighty world-conquering powers determined to hold Palestine and subdue the Jews for that purpose.” From Lehi’s day we are told about the rich lady, Babata, and the metal objects. The practice of fleeing to these caves is far older than Lehi’s day. Of course, this comes seven centuries after Lehi’s day. But we know they were doing it three thousand years before—going to these same caves, bringing their household effects, storing their valuable temple vessels, etc., in these caves. It was the usual practice. So the Lord tells them, when the “abomination of desolation” comes, then flee to the mountains and don’t turn back. You stay there; it’s going to be worse than ever [paraphrased].

Then the autograph of Bar Kokhba himself. “Bar Kokhba’s people reissued Roman coins as slogans of liberty resembling those on the trumpets in the armies of the Battle Scroll from the Dead Sea Scrolls. Such devices are ‘year of redemption of Israel,’ ‘year of freedom of Israel,’ or ‘freedom of Jerusalem.’” Notice, they use the word “freedom” a great deal. That sounds modern, and some say, “Well, that’s Joseph Smith; he got it from his American background.” These people who fled from Jerusalem to save themselves, and Lehi among them, did it for freedom. Remember what they told Zoram? Come down to us where we are in the desert, and you shall be a free man. So it is here. And compare this with Moroni’s standard: “In memory of our God, our religion, our freedom, our peace, our

wives and children.” We’re talking about the Title of Liberty and the like in the Cave of Letters. We talked about Alma, son of Judah.

Here’s a very interesting thing. “This is a correspondence between Bar Kokhba and a general commanding up north,” he says. Bar Kokhba had to deal with just such characters as those Alma had to deal with, and he did it in the same way. “To the brothers [for he called them his brothers, as Moroni always called them his brothers when he wrote his letters] in the city of En-gedi [from the Cave of Letters that’s just a half-hour walk] he personally wrote a letter in Hebrew that survives to this day: ‘In comfort you sit eating and drinking from the property of the House of Israel and care nothing for your brothers.’” Thus Yadin says. Then we read in Alma 60:1, 7, “Behold I direct mine epistle to Pahoran in the city of Zarahemla . . . and also to all those who have been chosen by this people to govern and manage the affairs of this war. . . . Can you think to sit upon your thrones in a state of thoughtless stupor, while your enemies are spreading the work of death around you? Yea while they are murdering thousands of your brethren.” It’s the same situation, and the same answer too. The answer was that Moroni was wrong: Pahoran hadn’t betrayed, and he had actually been driven out himself. The crooked crowd had taken over the government, and he was in hiding himself. So it was misunderstood.

The same thing happens here exactly. He says, “Why haven’t you brought help to us.” Remember, Moroni accused Pahoran of withholding supplies. Another leader, Galgula, was called to task by Bar Kokhba for holding out supplies, including a cow. He wrote to his superiors, and here was his answer to Bar Kokhba. He said, “We haven’t been sitting on our thrones idle. Were it not for the Gentiles [meaning the Romans] who are near us, I would have gone up and satisfied you concerning this lest you say that it is out of contempt that I did not come to you.” Moroni ran into just such a situation with Pahoran, where he [Pahoran] said, “And it is those who have sought to take away the judgment-seat from me that have been the cause of this great iniquity. . . . They have withheld our provisions, and have daunted our freeman that they have not come unto you. . . . And now, in your epistle you have censured me, but it mattereth not; I am not angry” (Alma 61:4, 9). Well, they are almost too close. It would be a damning circumstance if these things had been found after the Book of Mormon came out; you would know where Joseph Smith got them all. They were found before. The explanation can be found with the Jewish people here.

Let’s get on to the situation here. Now this article by Golb that I put on reserve. Did I talk about this one? “Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?” Yes, we mentioned this and the picture he gives us. What do you have? The whole length of the Dead Sea here. There’s *Lisān*. That’s getting very shallow now; you can walk right across there in a dry year. Here’s the Jordan, here’s Qumran, and here’s En-gedi. Here’s the cave where they found the scrolls, etc. This is Masada thirty miles down here. These deposits were made in the year A.D. 70 when the Romans under Vespasian were besieging the city. The Jews were driven out, but they came back and settled. Then they revolted under Bar Kokhba. They were beaten finally and were banished from ever coming back to Israel again. They could never come back to Jerusalem again. After A.D. 130 it was a death sentence for a Jew to be found in Jerusalem. So the Jews were out there, and they moved to Pella up here a ways. It’s in Jordan now. They [archaeologists] are still excavating and have all sorts of stuff there. That’s where the earliest Jewish settlement was. This is what happened. They were moving out of Jerusalem, but they moved in a broad front. Here are the caves of Murabbaat. There are thousands of documents here—five to eight hundred different texts.

They moved here and here, down to farms here, and down to the Nabataean country. They left documents all along here from the whole period. These aren't the documents of some little sect, which, as Pliny says, was only four thousand people. These represented the prevailing Judaism at Jerusalem before the rabbis took over.

Now I'll tell you the story of Johanan Ben Zakkai. In the time of Lehi, 587 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem and took the Jews back to Babylonia. Well, what didn't they have anymore? They didn't have a temple anymore. But the doctors carried on; they had their own school. They didn't have a temple, but most of the doctors were glad to see the temple gone because they didn't hold any priesthood. They were just learned men. The Book of Mormon has marvelous comments on what they do. Remember, they were always "looking beyond the mark,"—too smart for their britches. They will argue in three volumes about one verse, etc. They love to do that—love to split hairs. They will cavil on a tenth part of a straw. So the doctors carried on in the School of Pumbeditha in Babylonia, and there were the masters of the two great schools there who presided over the prince of the captivity when the prince was inaugurated and crowned. They had their own prince there, etc. But the two schools dominated everything. When they came back to Jerusalem, they continued to function. They weren't priests; they didn't operate in the temple. But the temple, under Nehemiah, was rebuilt. During this time in Jerusalem there were these two bodies.

When Vespasian was besieging Jerusalem in the year A.D. 70, Ben Zakkai was head of the schools there—not of the temple, but of the schools. The Romans blockaded the city, and, as at Masada, there was a famine. The people were dying like flies, and Ben Zakkai wanted to rescue the people. He said, "If we go out and make a concession with the Romans, then they will let us go. We can make a deal with them and at least save our lives." But the famous Zealots were led by Ben Zakkai's own brother-in-law [nephew] who was called Abba Sikra (Sakkara). They were the *Sicarii*. At all times in the Roman Empire, there were the terrorists who were known as the *Sicarii*. A *sicarius* is a short knife, *sikein* in Semitic language. It is a short knife that you can keep hidden under your robe or shirt. The *Sicarii* went around with these knives in a crowd, and there were great crowds in those days. They could knock somebody off and slip away in the crowd and never be caught. They were an institution such as you find in the Book of Mormon, the Gadianton. They got away with it. He was head of the *Sicarii*, and they were the Zealots. They had sworn that they would not allow anybody to make any concessions to the Romans at all. Anyone who did so would be a traitor. Well, he was the brother-in-law of Ben Zakkai who came to him and said, "What do we do? These people are dying. How can I get out of the city? If I could only talk with Vespasian, I could make a deal with him." Abba Sikra said, "I'll allow you to go this time. How are you going to get out of town?"

Well, they had a plan. Ben Zakkai's students announced for several days that he was very ill and that he got sicker. Then it was announced that he was dead. So he climbed into a coffin, perfectly healthy. They were carrying him out of the gate, but the *Sicarii* were guarding the gate and wouldn't allow anyone to leave at all. They would make no concessions and said, "You can't go out and join the Romans. You can't leave." They said, "Who's going there?" "It's the head of the schools, the great Ben Zakkai," was the reply. They said, "Well, we have to do the usual thing." They always put a spear into people going out to make sure they were really dead and weren't just trying to get out of the city. The students raised a uproar, "Do you mean to say that you will abuse the great prince of the schools here?" So they let him go out. As soon as he was out, he went to see the Emperor Vespasian. Ben Zakkai was introduced. He was quite famous, and Vespasian

knew about him. Vespasian was a very shrewd, very honest, and quite a kind man—one of the best emperors they ever had. He [Ben Zakkai] went in to Vespasian and said, “Hail, Vespasian—king, emperor!”

Vespasian said, “You must be mistaken; I’m not a king or emperor.”

He said, “Today you will be emperor. Hail, Vespasian, emperor.” As they were talking, a messenger came in all out of breath and announced that Vitellius had died and that the Senate had chosen Vespasian to be emperor. So then he was willing to grant Ben Zakkai anything he wanted. He said, “What do you want; what can I grant you?” Well, he asked a very simple thing. He said, “Grant me that I and my students may leave the city and go over the Jordan and found a school at Jamnia.” So they founded the first rabbinical school. Jerusalem was destroyed, and the temple was destroyed and never rebuilt. The rabbis were glad to see it go; they were too much in competition. As I said, they had no priesthood, and they argued about the temple. So this became the rabbinical schools and normative Judaism. It’s the rabbis that have been deciding what’s Judaism and what isn’t.

But what were they teaching before A.D. 70? That’s what we find in the Dead Sea Scrolls. It’s very clear that it’s not just the teachings of some little sect in the desert. This represented, on this broad front, people retreating by the thousands and bringing these documents. They tell us what was really being taught by the Jews in the time before the fall of Jerusalem. Here’s where we check with the Book of Mormon because these writings have been very unpopular. (I notice I had some articles here that I attached to this one.) I said that Allegro lost his job at Oxford because he pointed out in 1960 that from 1950 to 1960 the scrolls were suppressed. And as I said, we had Joseph Fitzmeyer teaching here a few summers—the foremost scholar on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Incidentally, my daughter is teaching along with him now as a teaching assistant at Catholic University, of all things. She’s a medievalist; she loves the Middle Ages. The only place you can get it is Catholic University, so there she is. Anyway, Joseph Fitzmeyer said that not five percent of them had been translated. They wouldn’t touch them with a forty-foot pole. I’ll have to show you some of these, but we’re not going to talk about them. Here are just some copies of scrolls; these are not the original scrolls, you understand.

Here is the Enoch Scroll that wasn’t published until 1976. It was published by Oxford, and Father Milik and Matthew Black were the ones involved. Matthew Black did the English version of Father Milik’s. Matthew Black was here for a week and had a great time. He was here at the very time this came out. He was completely bowled over by Joseph Smith’s book of Enoch. He always said, “Well, we’ll explain that someday. Someday something will turn up that explains it. He had some sort of source.” Of course, Joseph Smith didn’t. We can’t go into this, but this is the Enoch Scroll which is very valuable. But see, it was withheld for twenty years. Everybody was scared to death of it. Father Milik read it.

Here’s the *Milhāmāh Scroll*, the *War Scroll*. This is a transliteration of the text. Here you find the “order of battle” which you don’t find in the Bible. Of course, there are 114 pages of wars in the Book of Mormon. So you can check up on strategy, tactics, and all the rest of it there very nicely. Here’s the *Zadokite Fragment*, but we can’t go into this today. (We can get photographs of them.) These were found in Damascus and are called the Damascus covenant. They were found in a wall there, in a genizah where you can find these. The Zadokites were another group that ran off after they left Qumran. The Romans came and drove them out. Just as they drove Alma out of his wilderness place, the Romans

drove the Jews out of Qumran. Then the Jews migrated on up to Damascus and carried on up there. So we have scrolls from Damascus too carried by the people of Jerusalem and spread all over the place. Then farther out in the desert at a place called Racine there was another settlement of them, which I visited and wrote up in the *Revue de Qumran* some years ago. So you find them all over the place here. That's the *Zadokite Fragment*. These people really belonged down at Qumran.

Here's the *Hodayot Scroll* (the *Thanksgiving Scroll*), the hymns of praise. They are biographical of certain prophets and teachers, and it's the story of Alma and the story of Abinadi. They are matched up parallel right down the line, including their churches in the wilderness being driven out and the rules they made and all this sort of thing. Here's the *Genesis Apocryphon* which was found in Cave One. It was the first one found. This was edited by Father Fitzmeyer himself. It's the story of Abraham in Egypt that fills in all the blanks with things that aren't found in the Bible. There are eleven chapters in the Bible about Abraham, but it doesn't have these stories. But our book of Abraham has them—the story of Abraham and Sarah with Pharaoh, etc. So there we are again.

Here's the most valuable of all. It didn't come out until 1977, and it also was edited by Yigael Yadin. We were visited by various people—by Rabbi Milgrom from Berkeley and by Abraham Kaplan from Israel, the foremost authority on the temple. See, they [the Jews] are going to rebuild the temple, but they are scared to death of it. They are very good friends of ours. Milgrom is a rabbi and professor of Hebrew at Berkeley, and Kaplan is from Israel. They both tell us that they are very much frightened. In fact, three years ago I was invited (rather commanded) back to Washington, D.C., where they had a big powwow among the Christians and the Jews about the rebuilding of the temple. What are the Jews going to do about it? They were frightened because of two things. The first is who's going to be in charge? This is the Temple Scroll here, and it's a long one. Here's the scroll; it's the longest of all, about sixty-eight feet long. It goes on and on and on. Unfortunately, it was hidden under a floor in Kando's Grocery Store up in Jerusalem. This part was rotted away by water. But there it is as plain as day. It describes what the Jews do in the temple, and it's not the temple you find in the Old Testament. It's very close to our temple. It's not identical; you can well understand that. But the things that worried them were: Who's going to be in charge? This says the Levites, not the Cohens, are in charge. That's going to mean trouble. The other thing is, "When we get the thing built, what are we going to do with it?" They come to us to find out what you do in a temple.

Here's the 4Q, the Cave Four Enoch. So it goes. These scrolls are really something all of a sudden. I think they are best of all for the Book of Mormon. Here's something from Vermes, the foremost Roman Catholic scholar: "The impact of the Dead Sea Scrolls on Jewish studies during the last twenty-five years . . ." [Brother Nibley forgot to finish this quotation.] That was in 1975–76 before this suppressed stuff came out, and at that time they were suppressing them. And here's Rudolph Meyer writing the same thing in November 1976 in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*. He says, "It's clear by this time that interest has vanished in the scrolls." How very interesting: they dropped them like a hot potato before they even looked very far in them. The Christians didn't like them because they were too Jewish. The Jews didn't like them because they were too Christian, and we will see why presently. He says, "It is clear that the high tide in the discussion of Qumran has long ago been withdrawing, and the tide has gone out again." He says that there's no loss there. He's glad to see it go "because what we should do now is for a time engage in intensive studies on details which have been completely overlooked." All people have been doing is generalizing and really gotten nowhere.

So we get these various people telling us these things. They did everything to suppress them and fought about them. I had the field all to myself in 1964 when the Palestine Museum, which was in Jordan not in Jerusalem at that time, was entirely deserted. I had Joseph Saad all to myself. He was the director of the whole operation. The Rockefeller Foundation supplied the funds, but they had to have committees of Protestants, Catholics, Greek Catholics, and Jews to interpret these. They farmed out the various scrolls to different groups to get them out. The Enoch Scroll and the Temple Scroll were delayed for as much as twenty-seven years. They refused to let them out. He had the scroll in his possession for twenty-seven years, and he didn't want to let it out (Yadin had it, and so did Milik). They were worried about these things. But now we get them, so let's see what they say. That's about the best thing we can do now.

This is a very important one, the Sereh Scroll. It's called "Cave One of Qumran, Serekh" (*serekh* meaning "the opening words are"). Doctrine and Covenants is what it is. The *serekh* is the order of the church, and this is the *Serekh Scroll*. This was called *The Manual of Discipline* when it was first found. Usually it's MS just like the *Damascus Fragment*, but they call it the *Serekh Scroll* now because that's what the Hebrews call it. Isn't it lucky though? What a break! If we hadn't found this, we would still be wondering to this day what this could all possibly be about. But in the very first cave they opened there were seven jars against the wall. In these seven jars were manuscripts. In this was the manuscript that is the explanation of what the whole thing is about. This tells us the order of the church, why these people are here, what their object is in coming out here, etc. And it's not sectarian here. This is a very interesting thing why they have come out here. These records have been hidden, but they were written in Jerusalem—not written out here apparently, as Golb says. There wasn't a scribe. They only had two desks and one ink bottle, and that was it. No pens or anything like that.

Question: When were these written? Answer: The scrolls run from the second century B.C. to the first century A.D., nothing later than A.D. 70. We can take these dates from the coins, etc., that were found around. The ones down south that were found in the dust come from about A.D. 132 because the Jews came back and tried to make a go of it again. But they didn't have a temple then. It was all gone, and they were not going to get it back again. But this is what they were out doing. This came first of all, and it was quite exciting how they got it. The building where it was, St. Mark's Monastery, was bombed and completely destroyed about an hour after it was taken out of there. Otherwise, we would never have known what was going on here. Miller Burrows is the one who gave it the title of "The Manual of Discipline," and John C. Trevor and Brownlee. Trevor is at Claremont now, where I used to be. It was published in New Haven in 1951. This was just as they came out. It was discovered in 1947 by the boy. But then they [the scrolls] went from hand to hand. There were big arguments about who they belonged to—all sorts of fights and all sorts of funds put up trying to grab them. Millions of dollars were offered for them. Who was to get them, the Christians or the Jews? They were taken to the St. Mark's Monastery first, and they were smuggled around.

The person you have to deal with to get anything in the scrolls is a sly Greek by the name of Kando who operates a drugstore in Bethlehem. He has an establishment in Jerusalem too, and the Temple Scroll was hidden under the floor of his place in Jerusalem where, unfortunately, it was exposed to ground water which destroyed the whole top half. It's twenty-eight feet long, and it's all about the temple. Well, this one is about the temple too and everything else. It starts by saying, "This is the *Sefer Serekh*." It's very clearly

written; they copied it. They have obligingly transliterated on the other side (there's no translation here.) We're going to have to see what it says. "This is the *Sefer Serekh* [this is the Book of Rules, the book of ordinances, the Doctrine and Covenants] *ha-yaḥad* of the church *midrash* for the teaching of blank, blank, blank which shall be done by those who intend to do good and to return from evil before the face of God as has been commanded by the hand of Moses and by the hand of all the holy prophets." That use "by the hand of" is a Book of Mormon use that, again, you won't find in the Bible in this sense. The expression, "We have been rescued by the hand of . . ." made a lot of people laugh about the Book of Mormon. So this is what it is, and it starts out by telling us that this is the Book of the Rules.

There is a supplement to this called the First QSA. That's this one here. This has the beginning complete that was damaged in the other ones, and it starts out by saying, "And this is the order of all the assembly of Israel in the latter days *be-āḥarīt ha-yāmīm* when they gather together to form a church." Georg Mohlin wrote the first Catholic book on the Dead Sea Scrolls. This name *yaḥad* they call themselves by is usually translated "the unity" or "the community." It means "the one." It's like "the oneness of Zion." But he analyzed it and said, "The best word we can use for it is *church*." We just had Mohlin here, and he said, "The best name we can call these people, is 'Latter-day Saints.' Unfortunately, this title has been preempted by a certain sect, so we can't use it." But if you wanted to know what the Dead Sea Scrolls people called themselves, it was "Latter-day Saints." They did; this is what it says when it starts out here, "When they shall be gathered together in the last days to walk according to the ordinances [notice the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants sort of language] of the sons of Zadok." *Zadok* is the same word as *Melchizedek*. *Zadok* is the priest, and it means "the righteous one." *Melchizedek* means "the king of righteousness." So they not only had the sons of Aaron, but in the last days they were also going to have the ordinances of *benei-zadok*, of the sons of Zadok. That's why that one from Damascus is also called the *Zadokite Fragment*, because they called themselves *Zadokites* of the higher priesthood of *Zadok*. As I said, now we know that they came from Jerusalem too. They went over to the east and scattered everywhere. The Mandaean, who are still going today, are descendants from these Dead Sea Scrolls people. We may return to this *Serekh Scroll* because it has a very interesting thing to say here.

It starts out here and says, "And when they come here they shall bring all their *da'at*, mind; all their *koah*, physical strength; and all their *hôn*, property and give it to the Church of God." That's the *yaḥad-ēl*. They would do this for various reasons, etc. And then, "They are here for a testing." Incidentally, in this part we are reading at the beginning here, they have a general meeting until a crowd has come. They assemble them together and read them this and make their covenants, etc. It's just like the temple. They give them an introductory talk, and this is it. Then they have the ordinances and the covenants that go after. This is all very un-Jewish from the later times because the rabbis had nothing to do with the temple. A rabbi is simply a learned man and nothing else. They are without the temple and haven't had it for a long time. But this all looks back to the temple. That's why it sounds so unfamiliar. This quaint old sect. What were they doing out there? They weren't quaint old sects; they were just the regular Jews.

Quoting from the scroll again: "They shall come here to be tried and be tested, and they shall not return again from following after the covenant from any fear, or any terror of persecution, or any testing of the fire in the government of Satan." The *memshelet-Belial*

means the government and rule of Satan. In other words they expect persecution. It says they have to covenant not to return from any fear or terror or dread of the fire under the prince of this world. Then after this is given, it says, "And all the people shall join together. All those that are here shall covenant and say, after the priests, 'Amen, Amen.' " Then the priests read an account of the falling away of Israel and the sins of their fathers. First the priests read an account of all the blessings God has bestowed upon them. This is very much like "Coronation of Benjamin" talk, etc. Then the Levites read an account of how Israel has gone astray and fallen and "that's why we're here." They are not restoring the Gospel; they are waiting for more light and knowledge and for the return of the Savior.

Well, the next one is just like the beginning of Luke. Remember, we are told about Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth. They were priests. They were direct descendants of Aaron, both of them, and they walked perfectly (*tāmîm*) after the commandments. "Teleios," it says. These were the very people to whom the angel came. The angel appeared to Zacharias in the temple, and he became the father of John the Baptist. It begins with him. And, of course, these people were baptists. They were baptizing in the desert very near where John the Baptist baptized. Some say he belonged to this sect, but it wasn't a sect. He had a group of his own out there. "And the priest shall bless all the men who have accepted the *gôrāl* [this is something that you receive by lot, your *portion*, your *inheritance*; everyone has his own], all those men who have the *gôrāl* [the inheritance] of God and who walk perfectly in all his ways. And they shall say, 'Blessed be all those who do righteously.' " So they bless those who are walking perfectly after the commandments of God. We are told that Elizabeth and her husband walked perfectly in the commandments. You don't find that anywhere else except in the first chapter of Luke, and here it turns up in the Dead Sea Scrolls where the priest blesses all those who walk perfectly after the commandments and judgments of God.

Then what's another one down here? This is the requirements, etc., the order of the first law. We'll go back here and start reading: "And for the knowledge of every man in Israel every man shall keep himself [Doctrine and Covenants] in the office or position which he holds in the Church of God according to the eternal covenants. And no man shall be considered beneath his office, and no man shall place himself above his office, above the place to which he has been assigned." But he says, "There is office, but there is no rank. Everyone shall be humble. They shall be equal in all things [there's emphasis on equality in the Book of Mormon; we get this all the way through], for all are the same as one in the Church of Truth. And they shall be of proper humility and goodness and love and mercy and *maḥshevet-tzedek*—the thinking of righteous thoughts. For they shall be equal in these things, and these shall be the sons of an eternal foundation."

So the Jews had pretty fancy ideas, and repentance is the theme. Again, you find that in the Book of Mormon; it's not a Jewish thing necessarily. Here we are: "For in the spirit of the true *etzāh* [plan] of God are all the ways of a man by which he atones for all his abominations." So they are out to repent and atone. Then it talks about the way to perfection, etc. "And when he returns his soul again to all judgment and righteousness of God, his flesh shall be purified by a washing [this is a washing ordinance] in the waters of *niddāh*. This means a washing away of filth; there shall be a washing of baptism. At Qumran one of the striking things is their pools—baptism pools, we thought. The Christians who first went there and excavated these (Father De Vaux was in charge of the

operation there) wouldn't have that at all. They said these were just places for dying leather—tanks for leather processing because down at Ein Fashkhathere is an ancient leather plant. But as soon as the Jews took over in 1967 they put signs up everywhere. Now you go there and it says, "These are the places of baptism." And, of course, that's what they were. I remember going through with a doctor who wasn't a member of the Church. He was so impressed by that experience that he got baptized himself. "That was the thing that did it," he said. "You are right; they baptized out here. They did all the same things."

Quoting again from the scroll: "And they shall be sanctified in the waters of *dôkh*. That's a mysterious word, but it is cognate with our *dunk*. In the waters of *dunking*. *Tengein* means "to dunk," "to put into the water." Our word *tint* comes from that. You tint a thing by dyeing it. You dunk it into the dye and that's what happens. Well, you wash them in the "blood of the Lamb" and that sort of thing. "These are the various steps by which they shall go on the way of perfection." They actually use the word, *perfection*. "*Lalekhet tāmîm*, to walk perfectly in all the ways of God as he has commanded from dispensation to dispensation." It has always been the same law, and it is a sort of restoration of the Gospel that they are talking about here. There are some very interesting things here.

"The purifying of a person in the government of *tēbel*." *Tēbel* is the "world down below," the world we are living on here. It is the lower world while we are here and while we are tempted. "And there are placed before everyone who comes into this world two spirits by which he must walk all the days of his life, and they are for his testing and for his trial." Of course, they are the spirits that Moroni talks about in Moroni 7. Every man is tempted and enticed by the devil in one direction and tempted and enticed by God in the other direction. The pull is equal, and it is up to him to make the decision which way he will go. This is the "doctrine of the two ways," it preaches. To every man that comes there are two spirits (and they accompany him all the days of his life) by which he is to be tested. "You obey him whom you list to obey." So here are the two. And he says, "This is according to God's plan which he set up from the beginning."

Here's what we've come out for. "And these are the councils of the spirit for the sons of truth while they are on the earth, and which will be the testing [*pequddāh* is a *testing* or a *visitation*; somebody comes and checks up on you, etc.] of all those who walk in this way. And it is for this: for healing, for increase of peace, for length of days, for the multiplication offspring [these were not celibates out here at all; men, women, and children were buried in the cemetery together] and all the blessings of eternity, and for eternal joy and lives [plural] of glory, [this is *nētsaḥ*, and it's the same as the Latin word, *nio*, meaning *to shine*, or *to be glorious*; *nitein*, shining, brilliant, the high glory], and for a crown of exaltation *middat-hādar*, with a garment of glory [*hādar* is white brilliance] in the light of the eternities."

A rabbi will tell you, "Well, we don't have eternal life. Heaven is a philosophical concept." But this is the sort of language we use, isn't it? This is not orthodox Judaism. You can see why they didn't want it. It's not orthodox Christianity either—this eternal progression thing and getting the crowns, and being tested while you are here. Then we get to the preexistence, the plan as it was made in the beginning.

We are going to go on with the text of the Book of Mormon next time. But this is important: “For they are the chosen of God for an eternal covenant, and to them is all the glory of Adam.” This has upset everybody. They say, “Well, it means *man*.” But it’s not *hā-ādām*; there’s no article. It’s a very interesting thing. When Jastrow translated it he wrote, “all the glory of man.” Then in a footnote in the back he said, “This reads ‘the glory of Adam,’ but, of course, we can’t accept that because Adam fell and he didn’t have any glory. He brought ‘death into the world and all our woes.’ ” They don’t like Adam. But when it says “theirs is all the glory of Adam,” you can see why they didn’t like to publish any more scrolls. They don’t want them, and they’ve not been published. You don’t read about them, and there isn’t much excitement about them. They haven’t translated even a fraction of them yet. They know what’s there. It’s amazing, but they don’t like it very much.

This is very important for the Book of Mormon. You can see that because this is the religion of the Book of Mormon. This is the language that Moroni and Nephi use. This was just the beginning. All of these documents use that particular literary genre, the revelations and the histories, etc. And it’s right out of Lehi’s people; yes, indeed.

You can get good paperbacks. You can get Vermes on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Vermes has translated the Dead Sea Scrolls. Just look in the bookstore; you’ll find some good paperback copies of the Dead Sea Scrolls there if you want to read them and see how much like the Book of Mormon they are.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 11
1 Nephi 4–7
Scripture and Family

There are just two short passages I want to read from that *Serekh Scroll* we discussed before. These are some that are particularly jarring to both Christians and Jews. They show why the scrolls have been neglected and how much they mean for us. This is the *Serekh Scroll*, the first one. It's from the eighth plate. They are rolled up and have pages like a book, but they are put together side by side. You never read a scroll like this as they do in the movies and on the stage. You never do it that way; you have to roll it this way. It's twenty-three feet long, so you have to keep rolling it and unrolling it.

This one [the *Serekh Scroll*] says, "And in the council of the church there shall be twelve men in charge. And there shall be three priests [at the head of everything] who shall be perfect in all things that have been revealed from the Torah [the law] and in doing righteously and in judgment, loving mercy and being humble in their ways—each man walking with his neighbor—to be firm in the faith while they are upon this earth, with a strong sense and resolve and with a contrite spirit." That sounds familiar: a presidency of three, the council of twelve, and the qualifications. They have to be perfect in just about everything. Along with that, they have to be humble, not pull rank or anything like that, and walk with a contrite spirit. Then it quotes here where they come out. It says, "When those times will come in Israel to establish a new order of things, they shall go forth from the midst of the company of men of iniquity [*iwel* is iniquity, apostasy, going the wrong way; they shall go forth out of the midst of the wicked] to go out into the desert [the *midbār* of the desert is not complete desert; it is always the area between the desert and the sown, where you go out; you can graze cattle there; you can't farm there, but neither would you starve there if you are careful] and to prepare there a way for the Lord [and they write Jehovah in code here] even as it has been written by the Prophet Isaiah in 40:13, 'In the wilderness make straight his paths. Prepare a highway in the wilderness for our God.' That is according to the teaching of the scriptures. When they are there, they shall observe all the laws that have been given by Moses from the beginning and all the commandments which have been given from time to time, from dispensation to dispensation in the church as it has been revealed to the *nēbî'im be-ruah qedôshô*, by the Holy Ghost."

It's very interesting; they often refer to the Holy Ghost. I've had some Israeli students in the class, and they really sat up when they heard that, "Does it say that?" [they said]. Yes, it says "Holy Ghost" all right; that's what we have here. Then this ordinance that is in the supplement to the *Serekh Scroll* (found at the same time). In this one about the order of the church, there is just one section we want to read, "And this shall be the order of all the community (*yaḥad*) of Israel in the last days when they shall organize themselves into a church in order to walk according to all the ordinances of the sons of Zadok [Melchizedek, the righteous]." Then there's the description of the sacrament at the end here. "And when they are met for the table of the church [the *shulḥan ha-yaḥad*, the sacrament or special

meal] or to partake of the new wine [*tîrôsh*], and the table is all properly set and everything in order, and the wine has been properly mixed for drinking, no one shall put forth his hand [it's the syntax here] upon the bread or reach it out to drink the wine until the priest has first blessed it. He must bless it before all. He blesses the bread and then he blesses the new wine. Then he reaches forth his hand and puts it on the bread. He's going to pass it, or he partakes of it first. Then it isn't just describing part of the ritual, but it says hereafter: "Hereafter, the Messiah of Israel shall reach forth his hand upon the bread. After he has blessed all the community of the church, the sacrament shall be passed to each man according to his office in the church. And this is the order of the church for all the meetings of the quorums whenever ten men shall come together."

Whenever as many as ten come they must have the sacrament is the point, and it must be done in this way. The bread and the wine should be blessed because after comes the Messiah. Well, of course, that's why we have the sacrament. This has no resemblance at all to the eucharists of the Christian churches, etc., or anything the Jews do. St. Basil, one of the eight great doctors of the church, wrote (and Origen said the same), "We know that they baptized, but nothing in the scripture tells us how they baptized. We know they married, but we have no examples of what a marriage ceremony should be. We have none of these rituals handed down. We know they had the sacrament, but we don't know how it was administered. There is nothing said about that. The last supper is one thing, but how do you do it in the church?" So here we have the way it should be done in the community. Of course, it's the way we do it. Why? Because the Messiah will be with them. In Matthew 14 and Mark 26, after the Lord has had the sacrament he says, "I will not partake of this wine again with you until I partake of it anew in my Father's kingdom" (then we'll have it again). Every time he appears after his resurrection, he orders bread and wine to be brought and has the meal with them, as he does with the Nephites in 3 Nephi. He administers the sacrament to them; he blesses it personally. If the Messiah of Israel does that, why do we do it? One purpose: "That they do always remember Him." Why? "That they may have His Spirit to be with them." Right now. This represents the presence of the Messiah—the time when he shall come. When he was with us before he had this meal. When he shall be with us hereafter, he will have this meal. We are remembering both of them right now. We are looking forward to him. "That they always have His Spirit to be with them and they always remember him." So this is what the sacrament is. You can imagine how this has upset both the Christians and the Jews. They say, "Well, we don't have anything like this. What's going on here?"

Well, now we have to move along, and there is plenty here. So let's turn to the Book of Mormon. (If you haven't got your Book of Mormon, you might as well go home. It's a nice day; for heaven's sake, go out. There's no point in coming to class without your Book of Mormon.) In chapter four they are going back to Jerusalem again. Notice, it talks about Laban and his city patrol of fifty and his tens of thousands in the field because he was high commander—exactly the same position that Jaush held in the Lachish Letters. You notice that Nephi is a very powerful speaker and a terrific persuader. What a salesman he would be! There are a number of speeches by him here, and he is great in the *suasoria*. He is very strong in the protreptic type of oratory, which is urging somebody to do something. He has a line of reason that builds up to a climax and then just forces you into it.

He said, Back to Jerusalem, phooey [paraphrased]. They've had a bad enough time. They were chased out the first time and didn't get anywhere; now they have to go back.

“Therefore let us go up; let us be strong like unto Moses; for he truly spake unto the waters of the Red Sea and they divided hither and thither” (1 Nephi 4:2). They would accept that tradition, you see. Then he argues in a line, “Ye know that this is true; and ye also know that an angel hath spoken unto you; wherefore can ye doubt?” Well, now wait a minute. They saw an angel and they can doubt? “Wherefore can ye doubt?” Why weren’t they completely overwhelmed by the angel? Why didn’t that convince them for the rest of their lives? This is an interesting phenomenon. Brigham Young said, “Pray that you will not see an angel, because everyone who has seen an angel has apostatized from the Church.” Nearly all of them did. “Wherefore can ye doubt?” When the angel is gone, you are still there. That’s the point. You are still yourself; you haven’t changed your character. You may see ten angels, but that doesn’t make any difference. There was the glory of Moses on the children of Israel, but as soon as he left them they immediately were up to their old shenanigans—the golden calf and all the rest of it. Do these things leave a permanent imprint? A person goes back to his normal life, and in this life the earth has a very strong hold on us. Nothing is more powerful than gravitation—the weakest form in the universe.

Mel Cook was an explosives expert at the University of Utah. He invented the explosion. He said, “If the entire earth was made of TNT and it all blew up, what do you think would happen? Here’s the weakest force in the universe, the force of gravity. It would only expand less than three percent. It wouldn’t go “boom” like they do in “Star Wars,” etc., when the planet explodes in all directions. That doesn’t happen. The force of gravity is so powerful, that it would only swell up three percent. That’s if the whole thing was solid TNT. And it holds us too. As Faust says, “After all that you have experienced, all your spooks, etc., the earth has you again and it holds you very hard.” This is what happens to all of us here. So if you see angels occasionally, don’t let it turn your head. What kind of a display really changes your character? It’s inside and it’s invisible. It’s some experience you have that hits you all of a sudden.

Well, he goes on here. He says, You know the angel spoke to you. Why can you doubt that? [paraphrased]. “Let us go up; the Lord is able to deliver us, even as our fathers, and to destroy Laban, even as the Egyptians” (1 Nephi 4:3). Here is already a very interesting anticipation of Laban’s fate. He’s going to destroy Laban (the Lord will). It’s Nephi’s subconscious speaking here, I suppose, but you see what an argument he has. Then this fifth verse is interesting too. In an old *Saints Herald* where Emma Smith was being interviewed after the death of the Prophet, she said when they got to this passage (Joseph Smith was translating with the seer stones), he looked up with surprise and said, “Emma, did Jerusalem have walls?” He didn’t even know the city had walls. He didn’t know anything about what he was writing here. Yes, Jerusalem had walls.

Nephi goes on. He was led by the spirit. This passage reassures anybody. “And I was led by the Spirit, not knowing beforehand the things which I should do” (1 Nephi 4:6). This is a very popular passage in the Book of Mormon because inside of all of us there comes that time when you are led by the Spirit not knowing what you should do. Yet you are willing to be led. What does your own judgment have to do with it? You don’t know the situation. They don’t know the situation in Jerusalem. What are they going to do? Well, he finds Laban drunk, etc. Then it takes thirteen steps for him to rationalize with himself. He doesn’t do it; it’s the Spirit. But he is so reluctant to kill Laban. I told you the story about the two Arabs, where little Fayek Salim said, “There’s something wrong with this story.” It’s always criticized: “This is such a bloody thing that should never have happened. This shouldn’t have been put in here,” [people say]. But this is the way Arabs do things.

After the class Fayek and [another student] were really quite worried. They said, “Why did he wait so long to cut off his head? That was not according to Arab custom or behavior. It was his chance.” But he had waited a long time. He had a real struggle here, you’ll notice. “The hilt thereof was of pure gold, . . . and the blade thereof was of the most precious steel” (1 Nephi 4:9). Steel is always precious. They had plenty of steel in Lehi’s day, but it was very precious—Cordova steel and Damascus steel. A sword was worth thousands of dollars they were so valuable. It could cut through an anvil it was such marvelous stuff. Seven hundred years older than this is the purest steel blade of Tutankhamen with a pure gold handle. The blade is pure steel, and that’s what he said here—a very precious and very valuable weapon.

Here’s Laban dead drunk in the street, a disgusting figure. But you are hardly going to attack a sleeping man. As we are told in the ballad of Clerk Saunders, “For shame to slay a sleeping man.” We don’t do that sort of thing. He didn’t want to do that either, but he was “constrained by the Spirit.” He had the impulse to kill Laban. “But I said in my heart: Never at any time have I shed the blood of man.” That’s the first thing. He wouldn’t do it because that’s the first rule: “For the Lord . . . neither doth he will that man should shed blood, but in all things hath forbidden it, from the beginning of man,” as we read in Ether 8:19. So he shrunk and wouldn’t do it. That means he was sick at his stomach. He wasn’t going to do it at all. “And the Spirit said unto me again: Behold [notice the next reason] the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands” (this is your chance). Like other high military officials in our time, Nazi criminals, etc., Laban was a murderer. Nephi knew he was a murderer and a lawless man because he had robbed them. He was a thief. He made them a promise. When they went to deal, he chased them out, tried to kill them, and took all they left with him. That was the end of the deal. That’s the sort of a person he was dealing with, so he thought of that as a pretty good reason. Then there’s another reason: “Yea, and I also knew that he had sought to take away mine own life; yea, and he would not hearken unto the commandments of the Lord [another argument]; and he also had taken away our property” (1 Nephi 4:11).

Well, it’s about time. No, he still won’t do it. Then verse 12: “And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me again [after all this holding back]: Slay him, for the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands [then another argument]; Behold the Lord slayeth the wicked to bring forth his righteous purposes. It is better that one man should perish than that a nation should dwindle and perish in unbelief.” (You’ve got to get that record.) “And now, when I, Nephi, had heard these words, I remembered the words of the Lord which he spake unto me in the wilderness, saying that: Inasmuch as thy seed shall keep my commandments [So it’s the commandments. This is a special order, you see. This isn’t just an impulse and a chance. He wouldn’t be justified in doing this on his own, but now he gets a special order], they shall prosper in the land of promise [another argument]. Yea, and I also thought that they could not keep the commandments of the Lord according to the law of Moses, save they should have the law. And I also knew that the law was engraven upon the plates of brass [he wouldn’t get them otherwise]. And again, I knew that the Lord had delivered Laban into my hands for this cause [it had a definite purpose; this has taken thirteen steps to convince him that he had better go ahead with it]—that I might obtain the records according to his commandments. Therefore I did obey the voice of the Spirit.” Well, he was a skilled hunter, as you know, with a bow. When he was in the mountains there, he was pretty good. But after an agony of debate, he finally did it. Then he put on Laban’s garments and girded on his armor.

Then an interesting thing happened in the treasury. As they were carrying the engravings out, he met the servant of Laban. Here you get a typical glimpse into the Lachish Letters, don't you? 1 Nephi 4:22, "And he spake unto me concerning the elders of the Jews, he knowing that his master, Laban, had been out by night among them." Holding night sessions with the elders has a great sense of danger and tension here. He was wearing his ceremonial armor. It was a crisis. "And I spake unto him as if it had been Laban. And I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings, which were upon the plates of brass, to my elder brethren, who were without the walls. . . . And he, supposing that I spake of the brethren of the church . . ." (When I said "the brethren," he thought I meant "the elders" and that they were outside and wanted to get the plates out of the city.) This is an interesting situation, you see. As they went along, the servant babbled to him. "And he spake unto me many times concerning the elders of the Jews, as I went forth unto my brethren, who were without the walls." The servant kept up a steady stream of talk and filled him in about the elders and what was going on in town, etc. He was a very conscientious secretary. When Nephi and Laban's servant appeared in the dark, they [Laman and Lemuel] ran for their lives. They thought it was Laban. He called after them and said, "It's only me."

Then Laban's servant was terrified. Nephi grabbed him, held his mouth, and persuaded him to come with them. He was large and powerful. Here we get a bit of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were happening at that time. We have scrolls from this earlier time along the Dead Sea now in the Cave of Letters, etc. Verse 33: "And I spake unto him, even with an oath that he need not fear." Remember, Zoram was the servant of a man who was not very easy to get along with; you can be sure of that. You know what type of a man Laban was by now. There are the best little character sketches in the Book of Mormon. Zoram, I am sure, was very glad to do this. His name is very interesting (it's a Canaanite name) being a servant and probably not an Israelite. Throughout the Book of Mormon, the Zoramites always retain a special ethnic identity. They are always Zoramites and always by themselves. Zoram is of another blood (Ishmael is probably related; he comes later) and he would be a free man. That's why he would go into the desert. "He should be a free man like unto us if he would go down in the wilderness with us." That's the only way you can do it. They've gone forth into the wilderness, as we just read. When the time comes, the Sons of the Covenant shall leave the world of the wicked and go out into the desert to prepare His way. This is the idea, you see.

Question: What does Zoram mean? Answer: It means "a strong, refreshing rain." It's not a Hebrew word; it's Aramaic.

Question: If they were outside the city taking records out, would that indicate that clear back it was a regular thing in times of crisis to take them out? Answer: No, they were trying to make a break for it. We know they had been stowing the records. They had places to stow the official records. Look at that *Copper Scroll*. Remember, these were the temple treasures, the official treasures of the nation. So they were already hiding these things up well ahead of time. This was another crisis. Things looked bad here, so this could have been going on. It blew over for eleven years and then it got really serious. They [Laman and Lemuel] thought it wouldn't be destroyed; nobody destroyed Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar didn't destroy it in 597 B.C. He wanted to save it as everybody else did. Once you have conquered it, it's to your advantage to leave it there. It was only because he was hopping mad when Zedekiah, whom he had put on the throne, rebelled against him. (Notice *Zedekiah* is similar to *Zadok* here.) He wasn't going to tolerate that so he destroyed the city, put all of Zedekiah's family to death, and blinded him.

Verse 34: “Surely the Lord hath commanded us to do this thing; and shall we not be diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord?” If you are going to keep the commandments of the Lord and be diligent, you have to do what they were doing. You have to come out of the midst of the wicked. Remember the passages we read last time: “They have come to plan a temple, a true temple, for Aaron and for Israel until the Messiah of Israel shall come.” They are preparing His way in the wilderness. “Shall we not be diligent in keeping the commandments of the Lord? Therefore, if thou wilt go down into the wilderness to my father thou shalt have place with us.” That means being accepted as a member of the society. When you are fleeing from the enemy (and this comes later in the dreams of Nephi) and you go to a great sheikh’s tent, you go in and kneel and put the Kaf (hem) of his garment on your shoulder (a figure we find very clear in the Book of Mormon), and you say, “*Ana dakhîluka*, I am your suppliant.” He is obliged then to say, “Have a place; have a family; have a share in our tent.” You are taken in. *Ahl* is a *family* and *ôhel* is a *tent*. *Marḥaba* is a *wide place*. People move over so you have a place to sit down, and then you are a member. Nephi says the same thing in verse 34: “Therefore, if thou wilt go down into the wilderness to my father thou shalt have place [*murḥab*] with us.”

“Zoram did take courage at the words which I spake [they sounded good to him]. Now Zoram was the name of the servant; and he promised that he would go down into the wilderness unto our father. Yea, and he also made an oath unto us [he enters the covenant] that he would tarry with us from that time forth.” After that they didn’t worry about him; they knew he wouldn’t break his oath. “When Zoram had made an oath unto us, our fears did cease concerning him.” He joined the community. The community was raided, and they were outlaws. The king and especially Laban had been out to get them. They chased them out, it says here. Verse 36: “Now we were desirous that he should tarry with us for this cause, that the Jews might not know concerning our flight into the wilderness [the police were after them], lest they should pursue us and destroy us.” So Zoram couldn’t go back and report. That would never do. That’s what happened in the case of the prophet Uriah going down into Egypt. Someone reported, and they went after him and caught up with him.

Question: [Not audible] Answer: That’s what the city was—all Jews. It was a Jewish society. You had to be a Jew, like in Israel today. It’s purely political. After Solomon there were the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. This was the kingdom of Judah. That’s called the Judean Desert. [Jerusalem] is the Judean city, and David is king of Judah. It’s a national designation. It has nothing to do with religion actually. Judah was the fourth son of Jacob. They were divided into tribes, and his tribe settled there and had the city. The other tribes were around there. Lehi didn’t belong to that tribe. He belonged to the tribe of Manasseh. He was descended from Joseph, as we find out later.

Here’s another interesting touch in the next chapter. Remember, none of the people wanted to go. Nobody was on fire about this journey. Laman and Lemuel, of course, were flat against it. Nephi had to have a special revelation (Lehi had had plenty of them), and he had to persuade Sam to go. Now we see that Mama [Sariah] was against it from the beginning too. She didn’t like it at all. She was filled with joy when they returned because [1 Nephi 5:2] “she had supposed that we had perished in the wilderness; and she also had complained against my father.” Sariah is the worried Jewish mama here. She really tore into him. She complained, just like the boys did, that he was “a visionary man,” a *piqqeah*.

(How can you trust in your crazy visions? Now what?) Verse 2: “Behold thou hast led us forth from the land of our inheritance, and my sons are no more, and we perish in the wilderness.” You can hear her going on and on. She gave him a bad time until they finally came back again. Then there was great relief because they had come back. Then there was joy. “And after this manner of language had my mother complained against my father.” She really worked on him. Nobody liked this trip. And his patient rejoinder is so typical: “I know that I am a visionary man” he says. “But behold [the tense is important here], I have obtained a land of promise.” He already had it, you see. The promise is a promise. All things are present once you have made the transition—once you have accepted it. “I know that the Lord will deliver my sons out of the hands of Laban, and bring them down again unto us in the wilderness [don’t worry, it’s all right]. And after this manner of language did my father, Lehi, comfort my mother, Sariah” until they came back, and then, verse 7: “Behold their joy was full, and my mother was comforted. And she spake, saying: Now I know of a surety [she had doubted all along] that the Lord hath commanded my husband to flee into the wilderness [until then she had been scolding him all along]; . . . and after this manner of language did she speak.” He brings us into the family with these things going on.

Then they rejoiced and offered their *mizbeah*. And notice what was in the plates. It was the *Tanach* he brought back. It wasn’t just the plates of Moses. *T* is for *Torah*: that’s the five books of Moses. *N* is for *Nēbî’îm*, the prophets. And *K* is for the *Ketubim*, which are the literary works (like the Psalms) and the histories. They call the entire Old Testament the *Tanach*, and that’s exactly what was in the bronze plates, as we read here. Notice verse 11: “And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses.” Verse 12: “And also a record of the Jews from the beginning [their complete history is there too], even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah.” The inhabitants of Judah were Jews. Verse 13: “And also the prophecies of the holy prophets.” So it contained the prophecies of the holy prophets, a record of the Jews from the beginning right down to Zedekiah at the time they left, and the five books of Moses. It was the *Tanakh*. So the Nephites had the complete Bible. And also they had their genealogy, and Lehi found out that he was a descendant of Joseph. Why didn’t he, who was an important rich man, have it? Well, these documents were very rare, and they were secret. He wouldn’t have been able to get them. Laban was also a descendant of Joseph in a direct line. That’s probably why they were in his house. But only one person at a time could receive these genealogical records; that was the direct descendant. In this case it happened to be Laban. Verse 17: “And now when my father saw all these things, he was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed—That these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people who were of his seed.”

This is an amazing thing. At that time the Old Testament was not in the possession of Jews. You couldn’t have it because it was a secret book. The circulation was very limited. The law was read publicly once a year, but only by the *soferîm*, the scribes and Pharisees. That’s why they were so jealous of their rights. The *soferîm* were the ones who started interpreting the law in Babylon where they didn’t have a temple. They got a proprietary claim. They called themselves the rabbis, which means “the great ones.” It’s their own title. The Talmud is full of the most outrageous boasting. You’ve never heard men who built themselves up as they did. They were absolutely insufferable, just like the scribes and Pharisees (a *soferîm* is a “scribe”) of the New Testament that the Lord had to face up to. But you didn’t have a copy of the Bible in those days, and what’s more, nobody but Judah

could have it at all. It wasn't until the third century that Ptolemy had the seventy Jews come down. He was the king of Egypt and direct successor of Alexander the Great. He was a great and competent ruler, and he was collecting the greatest library in the world. We talked about Cyrus of Lydia and all the tyrants. They tried to build up their prestige by collecting big libraries. The bigger the library the better; it was better culture. As a rival to libraries in the North, Ptolemy wanted to have the largest library in the world. He thought he had every book on religion, but he was told, "There's one book you don't have, and that's the book of the Jews. So he ordered the seventy Jews to be brought back to Alexandria. He shut each one up in a special cubbyhole by himself and gave him a copy of the Old Testament to translate. Then he compared the translations. Of course, the story is that they were all word-for-word and letter-for-letter. We still have the Septuagint. That's why it's called the Septuagint: it was a translation by seventy Jews. By comparing them he knew that they were right. What's more, the Septuagint is far older than any Hebrew text we have. The oldest Hebrew text we have is the *Ben Asher Codex* from the ninth century A.D. We have the Greek text of the Old Testament from the third century B.C. We have that and we compare it.

It's a very interesting thing. Remember, in Cave One was a complete copy of Isaiah, a thousand years older than any other Hebrew copy of Isaiah known. I could have brought it because I have a bound copy. There are three thousand different readings of it, but they are mostly trivial readings, showing how marvelously well these scriptures have been handed down. But where there are differences, the Dead Sea Scrolls (the old, old ones) usually follow the Septuagint. And there are long passages from Isaiah in the Book of Mormon. Where they differ from our King James Bible, they follow the Septuagint, too. They follow the older text, so we have it here. But remember, nobody outside of Israel ever thought about the Old Testament. Ptolemy didn't even know about it, though he was a very learned man. He didn't know about it until a Jew in his court told him about it. So he got these seventy men and had it translated. But until then it was known only in Judah and only to a very select group of scribes who jealously guarded it. So when it [the Book of Mormon] says a thing like this: "That these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people" (1 Nephi 5:18), it is very shocking news. The copies were made in Alexandria. That's where we get our Septuagint. It spread throughout the whole world from there, and all the world has the Bible now. Nobody ever dreamed that this local, national record would become the world record. Verse 19: "Wherefore, he said that these plates of brass should never perish; neither should they be dimmed any more by time. And he prophesied many things concerning his seed." Notice, this doesn't refer to the Book of Mormon; this refers to the brass plates. They are still bright. They have come down to us, and we still have them to this day. He said the records were "of great worth unto us." Why did they need them on the trip? Verse 21: "... that we could preserve the commandments of the Lord unto our children" (the commandments in the prophets, in the writings, and in the book of Moses).

Then he tells us he is going to give us an abbreviated account. "Wherefore, the things which are pleasing unto the world I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God and unto those who are not of the world" (1 Nephi 6:5). That's important. The Book of Mormon is not to be peddled for entertainment or TV fare. It's not meant to be diverting. Mark Twain said, "It's simply chloroform in print." Most people can't even get through it; they think it's the dullest book in the world. We know it's anything but that, but it isn't written as a best seller. It isn't written for the sake of the story or the thrills, though people are trying to build it up for that to make a quick buck. Today it goes on

everywhere. When you pick up the Book of Mormon, you shift your mind into another gear especially. It's not to relax; you have to make it a working force and really get going.

Here they still have to take another trip back to Jerusalem. It was to get wives—"that his sons should take daughters [of Ishmael] to wife" (1 Nephi 7:1). They went straight to the house of Ishmael; they knew where they were going. Verse 2: "And my brethren, should again return unto the land of Jerusalem, and bring down Ishmael and his family into the wilderness." Notice the name "Ishmael." Remember, the great rival of Isaac was Ishmael. Ishmael claims the covenant. The Arabs [mostly Moslems] are from Ishmael. They claim that it was not Isaac who became the true heir of the covenant, but it was Ishmael. So there is always this fierce rivalry between the two peoples—not between them [Isaac and Ishmael]. They both buried Abraham together. I mentioned that at a meeting once when we had a lot of Arabs in the school—how Ishmael and Isaac were reconciled and were good friends. That hit some of the Arabs so hard that one of those boys went functionally blind. He just went wild. "Don't tell us that Ishmael ever, ever made a concession to Isaac—a Jew! Absolutely not!" And he went crazy. As I said, he went functionally blind for two weeks and decided to drop the course. That wasn't the course though; it was a talk I gave. The consul in Salt Lake City complained and said, "So many of those boys are having nervous breakdowns." They recognized the Book of Mormon was their book, and what could they do about it? You go home and it means trouble; that's not nice. Those Arabs don't mess around, and they were good ones. This is what you have. Ishmael was a good Arab. Anyone with the name of "Ishmael" you can be sure is Arab.

Lehi himself is of Manasseh. The rule among these people is that you must marry your *bint amm*, paternal uncle. Every girl must marry the brother of her father. It's very likely that Lehi and Ishmael were brothers because they were both of the tribe of Manasseh. Manasseh was the desert tribe. They lived way east of the Jordan out in the desert—Manasseh and Joseph. Manasseh was the wild one. Verse 4: "We went up unto the house of Ishmael, and we did gain favor in the sight of Ishmael, insomuch that we did speak unto him the words of the Lord." He listened because he was a righteous man. "And it came to pass that the Lord did soften the heart of Ishmael [that was necessary again; that's the way the Lord gets things done in the Book of Mormon: he always has to end up softening somebody's heart or nothing would move, and it's the same thing in our society] and also his household, insomuch that they took their journey with us down into the wilderness to the tent of our father."

Notice that they are not only willing but they are able to do it right then. They don't have to stay six weeks and get ready—settle their affairs, etc. Ishmael was ready to go. They went up to Ishmael's house; he was a desert man. Lehi himself was a merchant. When he was traveling in the desert on his trip, he saw the light on the rock. Then he staggered back home. But they make no fuss about the trip. We talk about the elaborate preparations of Nephi and that sort of thing. These people know how to get around, and certainly Ishmael did. He didn't hesitate apparently. This would be out of the question, of course, if the family were a settled family and not used to travel or anything like that, but they had that tradition.

Question: It seems strange that they were required to marry their brother's children. Answer: This was a strict rule among the Arabs who preserved the old archaic customs. It was a very strict rule among the desert Arabs, but not anymore. It could have been then. That was a long time ago. Remember, this is a peculiar family here. These are not full-blooded Israelites. They have all this Egyptian blood in them and everything else. They

were descendants of Joseph through Asenath, the daughter of the high priest of Heliopolis in Egypt. She was the mother of Ephraim and Manasseh. They were descendants of Manasseh. We boast that we are descendants of Ephraim. These people got around; that's the idea. This is one thing we don't realize. We used to think that in old times people didn't get around at all—never looked over the hill. In some societies that's true. People either don't get around at all, or once you start moving you might as well keep going. Once you start in your yacht out to Catalina and you have enough supplies, you might as well go on to Hawaii. Why not? You have that impulse. I've had friends that did that. As long as you are going, what difference does it make? Two days, five days. Once you start it is hard to stop, actually. So people have been circulating an awfully long way for a very long time. There are these marvelous things being discovered now about the navigation in the South Seas, from islands such as Tonga.

So they were willing and able, but the two sons of Ishmael changed their minds. "Two of the daughters of Ishmael, and the two sons of Ishmael and their families, did rebel against us." The daughters set it going; they did not want to leave town. The two sons of Ishmael sympathized with them. They put their heads together and decided, "No more, no more." Then Nephi had a chance to display his rhetorical skill again. He was going to persuade them to stay with the group. Notice the line of argument he used: "They were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem." Notice, the lands of their inheritance were not in the city of Jerusalem but far down where they went to get their property for Laban. The "land of Jerusalem" is a term that was used anciently. When it says, "Jesus will be born in the land of Jerusalem," people make fun and say, "He was born in Bethlehem." Well, Bethlehem is in the land of Jerusalem. It was anciently referred to as that. Bethlehem is a suburb. It's just six miles south of Jerusalem, an easy walk.

This sounds like Nephi is a prude at the beginning, but he isn't. These were very serious circumstances. Verse 8: "I spake unto them, saying, yea, even unto Laman and unto Lemuel: Behold [now he starts one of his lectures] ye are mine elder brethren [recognizes them with courtesy], and how is it that ye are so hard in your hearts, and so blind in your minds, that ye have need that I, your younger brother [you should be ashamed of yourselves; I'm not assuming anything; I shouldn't be doing this], should speak unto you, yea, and set an example for you?" Is this tactless? No, this is no ordinary situation. First argument, *exhortatio*: "How is it that ye have forgotten that ye have seen an angel of the Lord?" Second argument: "How is it that ye have forgotten what great things the Lord hath done for us, in delivering us out of the hands of Laban [you just escaped Laban, and there was not one chance in a million of getting away with that], and also that we should obtain the record? Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten that the Lord is able to do all things according to his will, for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise faith in him? . . . [he is going on with his arguments]. And if it so be that we are faithful to him, we shall obtain the land of promise [these are the positive arguments]; and ye shall know at some future period that the word of the Lord shall be fulfilled concerning the destruction of Jerusalem [you don't want to go back there]. . . . For behold, the Spirit of the Lord ceaseth soon to strive with them; for behold, they have rejected the prophets, and Jeremiah [he knew what was going on in the city; here's our Lachish business] have they cast into prison. And they have sought to take away the life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land." (Now what sort of a chance have we got there?)

Then he said to them very tactfully after these arguments: All right, if you want to go back, you are perfectly welcome. I have no power over you; I'm your younger brother [paraphrased]. Verse 15: "And now, if ye have choice, go up to the land [go ahead], and

remember the words which I speak unto you, that if ye go ye will also perish.” (Go ahead, and welcome.) They thought about that again. They became furious, tied him up, and left him behind to be devoured by the beasts. This is another common practice in the desert. You won’t kill a person; that’s murder. But if you tie him up and just leave him there, you don’t have to worry. Let the animals carry it out. That’s a custom you read about in the Arab poets, etc. The Lord gave him strength and he burst his bands. Prayer plus effort did it. He prayed with all his might and strained with all his might. Verse 18: “And it came to pass that when I had said these words, behold, the bands were loosed from off my hands and feet, and I stood before my brethren, and I spake unto them again.” He didn’t consider this a miracle; he said nothing about it being miraculous. He just said that he prayed and he strained, and his bands were loosed. “And it came to pass that they were angry with me again” (They weren’t overpowered at all).

Then the daughters pleaded with them. The mother and one of the daughters pleaded with them. This is a thing that no Arab under any circumstance can resist. If a mother or daughter from another tribe pleads, you are under obligation—even if it is your worst enemy. It’s the chivalric oath. The rules of chivalry in the Middle Ages were adopted during the Crusades and taken back [to Europe] in the time of Edward I. They were taken from the Arabs. Of course, all the chivalry in the Crusades was shown on the side of the Arabs. Saladin, the greatest, noblest knight of them all, was so kind to Richard I who slaughtered everybody else. When Richard was sick he sent him his favorite physician. He sent him some sherbet and recipes and things like that. No westerner would ever do that for him. That was Saladin. So the daughters pleaded and softened their hearts.

Incidentally, if you want the greatest travel book ever written (it’s called that, and I think rightly so), it’s the two volumes of Charles Doughty called *Travels in Arabia Deserta*. This is the great classic that was written at the end of the nineteenth century. You can get it in paperback. This describes minutely all the customs. He went out and lived among them all those years and suffered greatly—but what an eye, what an observer! There are others, of course. The later ones are by Captain Bertram Thomas, Harry Philby, and others.

Then they bowed down before him. They might well have given in after being mad and binding him up a little while before. But bowing down before him? When you’ve done a serious wrong to someone, the only way to apologize is to bow down to them. That’s another custom. Bowing down was an act of apology and not of submission. They were not bowing down in submission at all. They were still the older brothers, but they apologized for the wrong they had done. They reversed it, and they pleaded with him that he would forgive them. You ask, “Is this plausible?” Well, this happens all the time; it’s classic. Verse 21: “And I did exhort them that they would pray unto the Lord their God for forgiveness.” And then they went back to the tent of their father and offered sacrifice. Notice, every time they come back they offer the sacrifice of the return. After a successful journey, or expedition, or project, you offer a special *mizbeah*.

Notice the beginning of the next chapter: “We had gathered together all manner of seeds of every kind, both of grain of every kind, and also of the seeds of fruit of every kind.” Does that mean a vegetarian diet? Were they going to live on seeds? No, they were intending to settle somewhere. They were going to plant these and farm and establish a community. When they were told to cross the ocean, they were all just completely bowled over. But here, obviously, they were going to settle and make another community in the desert. There have been many, many of those. “Make straight his path in the wilderness”

waiting for the coming of the Lord. Then again there is a very significant statement showing the levels of revelation you can have. Verse 2: "Behold, I have dreamed a dream; or, in other words, I have seen a vision." What's the difference between a dream and a vision? Well, you just have to know for yourself from the nature of the dream. This was a classic dream of dreams. Anti-Mormons have written saying, "Well, Joseph Smith, Sr., had a dream like this. Once he dreamed he was in the woods, and there were a lot of stumps there." But this is the most common of dreams.

How does Dante start? "*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita, mi ritrovai per una selva oscura*. In the midst of the journey of my life, I suddenly found myself in a dark forest. It occurred to me that I had lost my way." And *Piers Plowman*, the twelfth-century English epic goes on and on. But then he comes to the parting of the ways, and he must decide the way. He's lost and has to have a guide to guide him on his way. That's the story of *Everyman* and all sorts of stories. It's the story of Zosimus, a third-century mystic writer. He gets lost and has to be guided. And John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. He's lost, remember. He is in the "swamp of despair." He has taken the castle, etc. He always has to be guided. So the idea of a person who is lost in this life is not unusual. Incidentally, Dante is met by a guide and who is the guide? It's Virgil, isn't it? Well, Virgil himself writes about the two ways. There is the ivory gate and the gate of horn. The horn is a bad dream, and the other is a good dream. It's this idea of finding yourself lost. That's what we are in this world; we are lost. It's a very common dream. These people are out in the desert under very dangerous circumstances. We've described Lehi's dreams elsewhere. We don't have to go into them here.

He sees a man dressed in a white robe "and he came and stood before me." This is a person who is going to be his guide. *Paralemtor* is a classical word for the person who guides you through the ordinances of the temple. It is a man dressed in a white robe. He found himself in "a dark and dreary waste—*per una selva oscura*—in a dark forest," as Dante says. Then he came to a large and spacious field that opened out. That's the *maydan* which plays a very important part in mythology and dreams. The *maydan* is a field of contest, an athletic field. Wherever you hold a chivalric contest, a fight or a display, that's a *maydan*. This is frankly a parable, an allegory. He says it is. Verse 10: "I beheld a tree, whose fruit was desirable to make one happy. . . . The fruit thereof was white, to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen. . . . It was desirable above all other fruit." By that was a river of water. This is the Egyptian question, and you ask how literal is this. If you are in the desert what do you need to keep from perishing? You need food, of course. What will give it to you? Only a tree. You will die of thirst or hunger. You must have water and food. The tree will only grow where there is water. I have a picture of one in the desert. (It's hard to believe that these pictures were once so top secret that I would have had to go to the *calaboose* if I told where they came from.) This is right along Lehi's way—right along the Arabah here. And here's a spring that comes down at the foot.

Here's a typical picture of a street in Jerusalem. It would be easy to bump somebody off in that street and get away with it, wouldn't it? Lots of the streets of old Jerusalem are just like that, as some of you know. But anyway, the tree is joined by a river of water. Well, the first Psalm begins that way: The righteous man shall be as a tree planted by a pool of water [the tree needs the water] which brings forth fruit and its leaves fall not off [paraphrased] (Psalms 1:3). He would know the first Psalm; he'd know that by sight. So it's a figure to dream about; everybody would dream about it, naturally. That's what we have here. He dreams about that because that's your life. Your life is saved if you have

found the water and the fruit. You are not going to find the fruit if there is not water by it.

Well, I have a picture here from the Dura-Europos Synagogue, the oldest Jewish building known in the world. It was discovered a few years ago and excavated at Dura-Europos on the Tigris, well into Asia there. It's a third-century synagogue, the oldest one known. Here is the tree of life, and it's bearing all sorts of fruit. Under it are Isaac [he probably means Jacob] and the twelve tribes of Israel. Here is Joseph blessing Ephraim and Manasseh, or Isaac blessing Jacob and Esau. Here are the Twelve. Here is the Orphic figure who is playing music of beautiful harmony. The tree is full of animals. There are birds and animals. All creatures are being fed on the fruit of the tree. This is the tree of life, and it is right over the main shrine (this is where the Shrine of the Torah was) of this very ancient synagogue—the oldest Jewish church we know of. Right over it is this tree of life with all the symbolism that is brought out by Nephi here. He is going to say that all creatures are fed on it. There's a picture of this in *Since Cumorah*. But the tree of life was a central thing. Nobody knew anything about this until about 1940 when the Dura-Europos was discovered. It told us all sorts of things about the Jews we didn't know before. But notice what an important position they give to the tree of life. Here are the twelve sons of Israel surrounding Jacob, or Israel. Then we come to the rod of iron. We will take it up at the tree next time.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 12

1 Nephi 8–11
The Tree of Life

We were talking about that tree which is later explained as the Tree of Life. In 1 Nephi 8:10 he starts talking about the tree. We were pointing out the main shrine of the ancient synagogue at Dura-Europos the oldest Jewish remains in the world. Right above it is the Tree of Life, and it has Orpheus striking his lyre, bringing harmony into all things. This represents the love of God. The animals and birds are in the tree, and all are being fed from the fruit thereof. We will refer to that later. He goes on and talks about it here. In 1 Nephi 8:14 we read, “And I looked to behold from whence it came; and I saw the head thereof a little way off; and at the head thereof I beheld your mother Sariah, and Sam, and Nephi; and they stood as if they knew not whither they should go.”

We showed this before. Here’s a typical case of a river of water coming out of nowhere in the desert. Of course, the inevitable tree is growing there; you always find that. And springs come out miraculously, aquifers, etc. Needless to say they are greatly appreciated because they save your life. There are very few of them. When they entered the Empty Quarter, there were none. They crossed the largest desert in the world during their eight years. That was toil and they described what they had to go through. But here’s this typical stream of water with a fountain, the head thereof. The word *ra’s* is the word for *spring* and *head* in Arabic. Like an *‘ayin*, an *eye*. That’s where the stream originates, so when he says, “the head thereof,” he is using the proper idiom to designate the head, the beginning of the spring.

They didn’t know where they should go. Now this theme of “the crossroads” is classic in literature, the two ways. You have your pearls of great price. Notice, in the round Hypocephalus at the bottom are two lines designated sixteen and seventeen. (Shouldn’t I have brought this along? Yes, I should have, but I’m not going to get off the track too far.) Recently, Goedecke has written a very good study on those two lines. You see the top and the bottom. When you reach down here at the bottom, this represents not only the underworld but also the “place of turning” where you change your course. Three times it is mentioned, “Don’t *thi’* there. Don’t lose your way. Don’t choose the wrong way.” *Thi’*, as Goedecke has shown, means “to take the wrong course and lose your way.” When you get down here, this is the lowest course, and you are about to go up again. But don’t start up on the wrong course. *Nn thi’* is the expression that is used twice there. Be sure not to do that. It’s very emphatic, you see.

“Don’t take the wrong course” is a common thing. There is the story of Heracles at the crossroads from Xenophon, and True Thomas of Erceldoune in the twelfth century. He went to the netherworld and they said, “See ye not yon broad, fair road that is winding over yon, lily laden? That is the way of wickedness, though some say it is the road to heaven. See ye not yon narrow road so thick beset by thorns and briars? That is the road of *rihwisnes*, though after it but few aspire.” This is True Thomas. He is called True

Thomas because he had a vision and he never lied, so people thought he must have been taken away. In this vision he saw the two roads—the road of dalliance and the road of righteousness together. But this theme of the two roads you find all the time. When Heracles is at the two roads, on one of them is a fair dame beckoning him on. On the other road is a dame with a very stern countenance, “Dame Virtue.” Of course, that’s the road he is supposed to follow. This is a stock theme in ancient literature, following the right road. Remember, as we said before, Dante starts out saying, “In the midst of this black forest, I discovered I had lost my way.” Then his guide appears, who is Vergil. He was the writer who wrote about the gate of horn and the gate of ivory.

So Lehi beckoned to them and told them, This is the way, this is the way. Come over here [paraphrased]. They did, and he told them that they should partake of the fruit which was desirable above all fruit. He wanted Laman and Lemuel to come too, but they wouldn’t do it. Then he beheld the famous rod of iron in 1 Nephi 8:19. What is the rod of iron? It’s along the bank of the river, and it’s something to hold on to so you won’t fall in. There is a statement in the *Midrash* about this. The temple mountain in Jerusalem has been flattened off artificially to make a place for the Dome of the Rock that stands there today, the great mosque of the Moslems. Before then it was really quite steep where the temple was originally built in the time of David, and in the Jebusite city. The sacred way that went up to the temple was steep and narrow and went zigzag up the side. You can see this in Athens at the Acropolis. The sacred ways always go up that way. It was slippery and it was on the rock. When it would storm, you could fall off—with old, feeble people, etc. So there was a railing that went up, and you could follow it. It was iron, and it rusted away in time. It was replaced with a wooden railing. They had to cling to the iron rod to get up to the temple so they wouldn’t slip and fall on the rocks.

Another example is at Adam’s Mount in Ceylon, the most sacred place in the East. That’s where Adam is supposed to have landed when he descended from the other world and came here. They show a footprint there, etc. From there he went wandering, and didn’t find Eve until he got to Medina. But when he got to Mecca, he made an imitation of the original temple. The Angel Gabriel came and showed him how to build it out of sheets of light, etc. But here we have the sacred rod. There was originally a railing that went up, and it has been replaced by a brass chain that people pull themselves up by. It’s like the ship of Theseus on the Acropolis that was replaced bit by bit as it rotted away. But you can see pictures in *National Geographic* of people pulling themselves up. Sometimes it’s a chain, sometimes a rope, sometimes a cable—anything they can get to make it and pull themselves up to the top. It’s an *omphalos*. Every ancient temple, every ancient world shrine had an *omphalos*, which means an *umbilicus* and represented the center of the world—the birthplace of creation. You pull yourself up to the top of Adam’s Mount in Ceylon or Sri Lanka by means of this hand railing which has been replaced by various things as it has rotted away over thousands of years. So this idea of holding to the rod and pulling yourself up is a very common one. And also this idea: “And I also beheld a strait and narrow path.”

“See ye not yon narrow path so thick beset with thorns and briars to which few aspire? True Thomas sought by Furley bank, and fairly he beheld with his eye.” He fell asleep on Furley bank and beheld a vision, you see. The same story is told about Piers Plowman. In Middle English you always study *Piers Plowman*, a poem from the fourteenth century. He goes forth as a pilgrim and falls asleep by the Malvern Brook. He has a vision of the two ways to go. He is given the choice of the two ladies. This idea of being lost and wandering is very common. We are lost in this world. You have the great *Amduat* which is written

only in the tombs of the greatest kings in Egypt, “the way to find the way.” It’s quite a document, an amazing thing. And there’s the Book of Gates for more common people, and the Book of Breathings—the most important document in the Joseph Smith papyri that we have so far. That’s a handbook, a guide, and a map to the other world that will show you the way you should go, the right way. There’s also the *Stundenwache*, and in the tomb of Ramses III there are these elaborate maps to show how you are to go in the other world—which way you are supposed to take and which you are not supposed to take. It’s a guide; the Sensen Scroll was that. A handbook is necessary. Of course, they have the Liahona here and the divination arrows. You hold firm to the divining rod if you are supposed to be led to something. The idea that we are lost and need something to hold to is very important. There are various images used for this. This [in the Book of Mormon] is sort of an allegory, and he is going to explain it later on.

There was the strait and narrow path, and then the large and spacious building as if it had been a world, and everybody striving toward that. First there’s the wide and spacious field, the *maydan*. We mentioned the *maydan* before. That’s a Persian word, but it goes back everywhere to the idea of *maydan*, where the fortunes of men are settled in the world. Every battlefield, every field of jousting is a *maydan*, where you settle the affairs of the human race. You come together and counsel. There’s the great assembly. It’s described in the beginning of the Book of Abraham—the hill of Olissem by the plain where they all met for the sacrifice of Abraham.

Then there rose a mist of darkness. These mists of darkness, Doughty tells us, are very common and terrifying. It’s funny, the desert isn’t the place where you would expect to find a mist of darkness, but you do. A good example is the worst desert in the world, the Rub’ al-Khālī. But equally desolate is the coast of Peru, as some of you missionaries may know. The coast of Peru gets no water at all and yet it gets heavy mist. It’s drenched in these heavy mists all the time—a mixture of dust and fog that comes in from the sea, yet not a drop of water. It’s a terrifying thing. This phenomenon has been described by Cheesman and by others. Julius Euting described it very well. Many people have described this mist of darkness. This came and they got lost in it, “insomuch that they who had commenced in the path did lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost” (1 Nephi 8:23). That’s the scene of the first Psalm, isn’t it? The righteous man, as I mentioned before, is like a tree planted by a pool of water, which bears fruit in its time and its leaves never fall off. But that is not so with the wicked who are like dry, shriveled up vegetation that the wind blows away. Then it says, “For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish” (Psalms 1:3–4, 6).

Āḥad means “to get lost in the sand.” I remember when I was with Professor Popper who was an Arabist. I had Hebrew from him, and I was his only student in this particular class long ago at Berkeley. One man was teaching all the Arabic and all the Hebrew at Berkeley when I took it as his only student. Today there are at least forty people teaching each language. That gives you an idea how the world has changed since my day. Those are exotic languages that nobody paid any attention to. But anyway *derekh reshā’im tōḥēd* means “the way of the wicked shall get lost in the sand.” *Tōḥēd*, *āḥad* means “to wander, get lost, and not know where you are going.” That’s what happens. That’s what he is talking about here: “. . . did lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost.” I think the word *derekh* is interesting too. That’s the Arabic *ṭarīq*. That’s our words *track*, *trace*, *trek*, *trudge*, and *drag*. So many ancient Egyptian and Semitic words are related to

English that, you will find, are not shared with any other language. Only with English. It's a strange thing. English is an archaic language, and we speak it. It's monosyllabic. Almost everything we say is just one-syllable words. No other language has worn down that far. We have no more case endings; we ignore them completely. We don't even pay any attention to declensions. "He said it to my wife and I." You couldn't use worse English than that, but everybody says it. It's horrible, but we're not going to bother to say *me* anymore. We don't decline things anymore.

Anyway it's interesting, "The way of the wicked shall perish," and it does here. They lose their way. Then the others came and "caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press forward through the mist of darkness [they had to have a support, something to guide them; it guides them and it supports them at the same time; it tells you where to go] clinging to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree" (1 Nephi 8:24). We are told that it rotted away, as iron will rust, and was replaced by a wooden railing later on. Then he cast his eyes on the other side of the river, and there was the great and spacious building. What a picture! "And it stood as it were in the air, high above the earth [the top floors were filled with people partying—it was a highrise] . . . both old and young, both male and female; and their manner of dress was exceedingly fine; and they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those . . ."

Well, this wasn't discovered until the 1920s at Shibam and other such places in Arabia. I was able to dig up an old *National Geographic* that will show you what we are talking about here. These really exist; they go back to Babylonian times. With all the space in the world why would people shoot up ten- and twelve-story skyscrapers? These are ancient. (You get a good view of it from there, I'm sure; as good a view as the pilot did here.) "These are the ancient skyscrapers of Shibam. Many of them centuries old hark back to the power of the Hadhramaut Kingdom." Here they are, and they are still occupied. All along the outside here, the windows don't begin until at least twenty or thirty feet above the ground. This is for safety, so they can't be raided. But they are high in the air, and at night, if it is lit, that's what you see—a great and spacious building shining in the air. We have some other examples here. With real estate so cheap and nothing but sand around there, why would they do that? Well, they are clinging together in a desert. See, just a few date palms grow here, and this is where the city of Shibam is. It wouldn't be there if it wasn't a trading center. It's on the caravan routes, the Hadhramaut, the incense route. In Europe they had to burn frankincense in the churches, so there was this unfailing market. There was only one place to get it, and that was southern Arabia. That's the only place it grew in the world, so they had this monopoly and grew very rich. Here they are traveling along with their stuff.

Here's a more modern city, but these towers aren't like it. Their idea was to go high up into the air. Here is an ancient city that is a ghost town now. These go way back. It's on a mound that goes clear back to 2,000 or 3,000 B.C. But all these great, towering houses you can see so clearly are all deserted today, yet they were these great and spacious buildings rising high into the air and full of important people. This is where they lived in the top. Of course, that's where it's cool, that's where it's breezy, and that's where it is safe. But you notice that the windows all begin high above the ground. When they are lit at night with their oil lamps, you get the idea that they are soaring in the air, as he says here: "And it stood as it were in the air, high above the earth." Well, these windows stand as it were in the air, high above the earth. They are not really suspended, but they are high above the earth. They look as if they were suspended by night.

They were having a party [in Lehi's vision] with exceedingly fine dresses and all the rest. They were making fun of the people who had partaken of the fruit. That wasn't the thing to do, but the people in the city were always doing that. They call them the *bayt al-sha'r*. Of course, our people felt bedraggled, and they were ashamed of that. But it's true that the distinction between the *bayt al-sha'r* and the *bayt al-hajar* is very great, between the people who live in the houses of stone and the people who live in the desert. They look on the people who live in the desert as the people in the American West looked upon the Indians. They were Bedouins and wanderers—living upon the face of the earth, picking up what they could. So they made fun of them here [in 1 Nephi], and they were ashamed of that. They didn't want to be mocked anymore, so they wandered off and were lost.

Continuing with 1 Nephi 8:30, "But, to be short in writing [very interesting], behold he saw other multitudes pressing forward; and they came and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press their way forward, continually holding fast to the rod of iron, until they came forth and fell down and partook of the fruit of the tree [here are the two ways]. And he also saw other multitudes feeling their way towards that great and spacious building. [They came and couldn't cross the water and] were drowned in the depths of the fountain; and many were lost from his view, wandering in strange roads." Oh, that's another thing. When I got these, I would have had to spend at least ten years in the pen if I had revealed any of them because these were secret photographs made for an oil line across Arabia. My cousin Preston was the chief engineer for American-Arabian at that time. He sent me these but said, "Whatever you do don't tell anybody about it." This is the sort of terrain they had (we can pass them around). See how easily you could get lost among these things and wander around. If you have been in the Mohave, you know that's easy enough—or here. My father used to have a big share in the Elephant and Eagle Mine at Mohave. It was a very rich mine out there. But if you got lost going out there, people said, "We won't go look for you."

Here is a river of sand, not a river of water. The heat and the oppression are terrible. These were all taken just east of the Red Sea there going across Arabia, taking the shortest route they could find. You notice it's a military plane they are using, the rascals. Here it's utterly hopeless terrain to follow. (We'll pass these around. Postcards to send home, huh? Having a fine time; wish you were here. You'd be dead if you were.) Here is the main drag, as it tells us—the pass through the mountains east of Aqaba following the road to Ma'an. Ma'an was the only city up there. It was another of these trading centers, one of these tall cities. That was the only way you could get through. Sometimes it is flooded, and you can't get through at all. Here is an example following the more fertile places of the wilderness where you have these underground aquifers, where it has rained ten years before and there is still ground water so you find something. It is like the Denebito Wash, the sole support of the Hopis down there. Without that wash they wouldn't get anything. But these run, we are told, for hundreds of miles sometimes right across the continent of Arabia. It's a vast thing, half the size of the United States and nothing in it. Here they are going on, and they have their tents on their camels. They make big bundles, of course. Here they are crossing the terrible Rub' al-Khālī of desolation, and it is utterly desolate. It took them [Lehi's group] eight years to cross this, and it describes what they went through. We are not going to dwell on that. That's in *Lehi in the Desert*.

Incidentally, here's a better picture of the *Copper Scroll* as it was found in Cave 3. It's a big thing. Remember the idea that the most valuable document must be kept on bronze (or brass if you want to call it that), and here it is. That's Cave 3Q and this is Cave 4 where so many things were found. A whole library was found there. Here's one I wanted to show you. I stumbled across this yesterday looking through some photographs. This was made in Room 35 of the Cairo Museum, and it stands right next to the Rosetta Stone. (It has to be a model of the Rosetta Stone which is actually in Paris.) But this is a very interesting thing. Here is an inscription in Egyptian, and here is the same inscription in Greek. Here in the middle is a little strip about five inches wide. It's the same whole thing in Demotic, showing you how conservative, how short it is. (Here's the same thing in a darker photograph.) See, the top part is Egyptian, and all this bottom part is the same thing in Greek. This little strip in the middle takes care of the whole thing in Demotic. This is reformed Egyptian, which became official in the twenty-sixth dynasty. It only lasted for a short time because it was too hard to learn, but it was the thing in Lehi's day. Everybody was using it. There it is, and note the economy of that. You have a big book for the rest, and a little strip takes care of that. It's quite a thing! There are other things here. (Here are the Qara Mountains; we may have use for them).

This great and spacious building has to do with our religion, of course. We are all partying these days, and we want the expensive highrise and the rest of the things. So many were drowned (1 Nephi 8:32). "And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building [that was the popular place] . . . and they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also; but we heeded them not. . . . Because of these things which he saw in a vision, he exceedingly feared for Laman and Lemuel."

Notice here in chapter nine he repeats it again: "And all these things did my father see, and hear, and speak, as he dwelt in a tent, in the valley of Lemuel." That was their base camp; they had been there a long time. They didn't intend to move until the Lord gave him a dream and told him to move. Notice, fourteen times in 1 Nephi it says, "My father dwelt in a tent." This makes it very specific that the style of their life was totally different. (There's a bigger one [picture] of this hell that you have to go through with almost no rain. It has been known to rain once in a hundred years, and they have long records of that, which isn't a very high precipitation.)

Then he talks about these plates, a summary of other plates. The Lord has commanded him to make these plates, and he doesn't know why. But the Lord has commanded him to make them, and he is making these plates to put his record on. There are others, but this is the special one for us. Chapters ten, twelve and thirteen go together, and they are very important. Chapter ten sounds like familiar stuff to begin with. Don't fool yourself. This puts it all together; from beginning to end it is one story. This is the account of the Jews, and chapter twelve is the account of the New World version—a summary of what is going to happen in the New World version. Chapter thirteen is the world-wide version, what's going to happen in all the rest of the world. So first we have the Jews. Then we have the people in the New World, including the Gentiles. Then we have the whole world embraced in this. Remember, we started with the Brass Plates as a little tiny speck. Even Lehi, who was an important man and a very religious man, didn't own a copy of the Bible. There was just this one copy he had to get from Laban, and it was worth "stealing" to get it. So it all starts out with this little tiny point of light, and it says that these plates shall never grow dim again, and they (the Old Testament) shall finally come to the entire world. As we said, it was the Tanakh. It had the Torah, the prophets, and the histories, and the literary writings (the Kethubim). But why aren't the literary writings there? Why isn't

Esther there? And Tobit and all those writings? Because they were not found in the [Old Testament]. They come long after the time of Lehi. Joseph Smith was very smart not to get sucked in on that one, wasn't he? No, there's none of that—just the histories, not the literary writings. There's lots of poetry. The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiastes and the like are later, and they come from the schools.

Notice that this chapter [1 Nephi 10] is what happened to the Jews. “He spake unto them concerning the Jews,” it says in the second verse. [Nephi] puts it all together here, and the Dead Sea Scrolls certainly vindicate the necessity of this indispensable chapter. From the beginning to the ending it is all one history. This is the theme of chapter ten, and it's a grandiose prospect, the same as we find in those other two chapters. So we'll go through it. The next step was that they should be destroyed. After that they would be carried away captive to Babylon—which happened. And they would return—which they did, of course—“and possess again the land.” Then six hundred years later “a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews—even a Messiah, or in other words, a Savior of the world [this is Jesus; John the Baptist is mentioned later]. . . . How great a number had testified of these things, concerning this Messiah . . . or this Redeemer of the world. Wherefore, all mankind were in a lost and in a fallen state, and ever would be save they should rely on this Redeemer.”

This is the peculiar situation. As I said, there was just this one point of light. The book came into the possession of Lehi, and then just one lone family was to carry the whole civilization, the whole culture, to the New World where it was to last for a thousand years. Notice, the Lord works with very small centers, and it's the same thing here. What about the rest of the human race? This [verse 6] is the rest of the human race. All mankind were in a lost and fallen state and would be forever if they didn't rely on the Redeemer—and how few people knew about the Redeemer. Without the Atonement we are not going anywhere, and nobody in the world knew about the Atonement. How few people know about it today. Isn't that a strange thing? The first words of the Lord to Joseph Smith when he spoke to him in the grove, after he had introduced himself were: “The world at this time lieth in sin, and there is none that doeth well, no not one. Mine anger is kindled against the inhabitants of the earth to visit them according to this ungodliness.” That sounds pretty grim, so it was swept under the rug. It dates from 1831 and was older by far than any other account we had of the First Vision. It was written from the dictation of the Prophet by Frederick G. Williams, and the Lord speaks in the first person. In the version we have from later on (the Wentworth Letter, etc.) it says, “He told me this and he told me that.” But this is what he actually said. Why shouldn't we have embraced that? Somebody doesn't like it. I don't know. The world doesn't like this story, and they reject it.

Then John the Baptist in verse 7: “And he spake also concerning a prophet who should come before the Messiah, to prepare the way of the Lord.” That was John the Baptist to prepare and make straight his way in the wilderness. He follows the Dead Sea Scrolls condition very closely, as you know. Why is he so important? He is the link, as we read in Luke, which begins with two righteous people—both direct descendants of Aaron—Elizabeth and Zachariah, doing their stint in the temple. He had to go just a few days a year to do his service in the temple. They lived in the country, out in the hills, and he came in to serve. He went into the Holy of Holies to get things ready, and there he saw an angel. No one had seen an angel in four hundred years. Of course, he was struck dumb; he was absolutely terrified. The same angel went to Mary. Then Zachariah announced that his son would come and turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, etc. He announced

the birth of John the Baptist. So the gospel began in the Meridian of Times with the Angel Gabriel introducing himself and coming to John the Baptist. It's good that Gabriel should come to John the Baptist because his work was to baptize and turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. The fathers were dead. Then it goes on that they who sat in darkness should see a great light there in the underworld. There was the chance to work for the dead. Of course, Gabriel is Noah, as Joseph Smith said. Who is better to administer the "water works" than Noah and John the Baptist? They are together in this operation. But the necessity and importance of baptism are being emphasized here. So he went forth in the wilderness to make straight the paths of the Lord. This is the link, you see.

Verse 9: "And my father said he should baptize in Bethabara [he is telling about John the Baptist here] and . . . that he should baptize the Messiah with water. [And the gospel would be preached among the Jews then.] . . . concerning the gospel which should be preached among the Jews. . . . And after they had slain the Messiah, who should come, and after he had been slain he should rise from the dead, and should make himself manifest, by the Holy Ghost, unto the Gentiles." Notice, the best people he could come to, his chosen, wouldn't accept him at all. What is the Lord throwing the gospel away on us for? Talk about pearls before swine. Nobody wants it, nobody accepts it, nobody understands it. It's a very puzzling thing that's going on here.

Then he talks about the olive tree on which the fifth chapter of Jacob goes into detail. The olive, as you know, is the immortal tree. There are olives in Athens and olives in Jerusalem which were growing in the time of Lehi. They live as long as redwoods or anything else because you can't kill them when you trim them down and cut everything off. When there was a raid and the city was destroyed and burned down, the olives would start growing again. So it was a miraculous tree of life. It had inextinguishable life in it. You find these two-thousand-year-old olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane. They are immense because they just keep putting out shoots and growing. What's more they can always be grafted. We will talk about that when we come to Jacob, if we ever get to Jacob. He talks about that. We used to live in Rossmoyne in Glendale amidst eight hundred acres of olives which my father acquired somehow or other. But we knew all about the olives (they were the marvelous olives you could get up at Sunland) and the cultivation of the olives and how they have to be treated. They are amazing trees he is talking about here. They should be scattered. You can do this to an olive to improve the quality. I think there is a section in the book *Since Cumorah* that talks about the olive culture there. Verse 14: "The natural branches of the olive-tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel should be grafted in [you can graft anything onto an olive tree] or come to the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer. And after this manner of language [using the olive tree as an image, etc.] . . . I have written as many of them [these things] as were expedient for me in mine other book." So if you want to find out about that, I recommend you go to the library and ask for Nephi's other book. They're as likely to have it as most of the stuff I have recommended which they do not have anymore, including the most important books; they disappear.

He saw in a vision "the things which he spake by the power of the Holy Ghost." You notice what he is talking about here: Time, place, and culture are no object, as experience has shown. The gospel is the same whether you introduce it to the Hopis, the Moslems, the Icelanders, or Nigerians, or whoever it is. You may preach to all of those and you will find the gospel has the same response in all of them. It's amazing that we don't have to adapt ourselves to their culture at all. Just preach the gospel to them and they embrace it. They can keep their culture too as far as that goes. I know devout Moslems who are equally

enthusiastic in embracing the gospel. There's no reason why they shouldn't be. Notice in verse 17 that this is universal: "I, Nephi, was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all those who diligently seek him, as well in times of old as in the time that he should manifest himself unto the children of men. For he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; and the way is prepared for all men" (1 Nephi 10:17–18). See, this universal now; he is not talking about only the Jews. He sees it breaking loose through the Jews and going to all the world. In Abraham it's the same thing: "All those who diligently seek him." Remember, that was Abraham's great merit. In Abraham 2:12 he says, "Thy servant has sought thee earnestly; now I have found thee." Abraham sought diligently first and then found. "The way is prepared for all men from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him. For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them [making no distinction], by the power of the Holy Ghost [the Holy Ghost is free to minister to anybody who makes himself eligible no matter where you are], as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round [this is a cosmic thing]. Then continuing with verse 21: "Wherefore, if ye have sought to do wickedly in the days of your probation [this is the first mention of the days of probation in the Book of Mormon, which is often mentioned, and it speaks volumes, of course], then ye are found unclean [and you can't possibly dwell with God]. . . . And the Holy Ghost giveth authority that I should speak these things, and deny them not."

The first verse of chapter 11 gives the steps by which you solve any problem. The solution to any great problem, whether it's nuclear power or anything you want to solve, is found through these steps in the first verse. First, you desire to know. In the Eyring Building they have how the TV was invented—the first steps by which you get something. The first and most important question was not asked. The first thing they asked was, "Is there a demand for it? Will it make a profit?" The first thing you should ask is, "Will it do more harm than good?" But how can you know? "For it came to pass after I had desired to know the things that my father had seen. . ." First you have to desire to know; then you have to believe that it can be done. People gave up on the atom because they didn't know it could be split, but once Rutherford had done it at least half the difficulty had been overcome. Then everybody jumped on the problem because they knew there was a solution. That was the greatest obstacle. It had never been done; it was theoretical and probably could never be done. But as soon as it was done, the biggest part of the problem was solved. So if you believe it can be solved, that's the most important step. "And believing that the Lord was able to make them known unto me . . ." Then what do you do? You sit pondering. You size the problem up from various situations. You research and do everything you can. You sit pondering, and if you keep pondering, suddenly (this is the only way you will get it; you can't ponder it into existence) you will have a flash of insight. Suddenly you will get the bright idea. It's something over which you have no control, according to all great scientists and inventors. It just comes to you as a flash after you have been working on the problem, maybe for years. Then it comes. So this is the way it comes to Nephi here. First you desire; then you are sure it can be done, the Lord can do it. Then you work it out in your own mind: ". . . pondering in mine heart."

Then "I was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord, yea, into an exceedingly high mountain." Here's the solution. We think of all sorts of high mountains of revelation: the Mount of Transfiguration, the Mount of Olives, the ancient Ziggurat on which the king went up to make contact with heaven, the pyramid which was the holy mountain in Egypt, and the mountain of the Lord's house in the Bible. The temple is on the mountain

of the Lord's house. There's the Acropolis, the capitol, the highest place. You go up to the top of a mountain because people [generally] don't go up on an exceedingly high mountain. The Mount of Transfiguration is the most notable because it is high. Nobody ever went up there. You're removed and aloof from the world; you're by yourself, etc. That's the place to have it. And this is an exceedingly high mountain he had never seen before. So he's caught up here. What we are talking about is another dimension. When you have a vision like this one here, you are in another dimension. All you can do is describe it. He says that this is going to be largely just metaphors to try to make you realize the sort of thing he is talking about. Notice he says, "upon which I never had before set my foot." Well, is it real or isn't it? "And the Spirit said unto me: Behold, what desirest thou? And I said: I desire to behold the things which my father saw. Then the next step, "Do you believe it?" He replied, "Yes, I believe it." Then "the Spirit cried with a loud voice, saying: Hosanna to the Lord." This is the most exciting experience anyone can have when suddenly there is a breakthrough, and this is it. The voice of the Spirit cried, Well, we've got somebody qualified here; hosanna, three cheers to the most high God, and you shall behold them [paraphrased]. You believe it, you are qualified, and this is the answer.

Verse 6: "Thou shalt behold the things which thou hast desired. And behold this thing shall be given unto thee for a sign. . . . Thou shalt also behold a man . . . and ye shall bear record that it is the Son of God. And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me: Look! And I looked and beheld a tree [now he is being shown things; he sees a tree] . . . exceeding of all beauty; and the whiteness thereof did exceed the whiteness of the driven snow [this whiteness is mentioned throughout the Book of Mormon; we will see it right in this same chapter here]. Notice, this is another dimension. You would think the fruit would be at least orange, pink, rosy, or some tempting color. Nobody wants to eat snow—white fruit. Verse 10: "And he said unto me: What desirest thou?" As Nephi spoke to him, "he was in the form of a man; yet nevertheless, I knew that it was the Spirit of the Lord [now we are using some sort of double talk; as I said, we are in another dimension]; and he spake unto me as a man speaketh with another." And he says, "Look," and "I beheld a virgin, and she was exceedingly fair and white." Why do they use *white*? Well, I just went to the dictionary to consult *white*. I could think of a lot of [synonyms], but they think of a lot more here. In Arabic there's an expression that means, "may God cheer him," or "may God show him favor." Literally, it says, "*bayyaḍ Allāhu*, may God whiten his countenance." Another one is, "he is white of face," which simply means, "he is of good character," or "he is a good person." In the Book of Mormon it says the Nephites were "white and delightsome" and the others were "dark and loathsome." It means *white* in this sense, in the sense of *good character*. But it is the regular word for *white*. You ask for the *al-bayyāḍ*, who is the *white man* of the place? That means the "foremost man, the most respected man." If he is *white*, he is most respected. What are *ayyām al-bayyāḍ*, "days of whiteness?" They are "happy days, days of prosperity." I guess it would be the *beliye noch*i in Moscow, "the white nights."

Then this is an interesting thing: Here is *yāḍ baydāʾ*. *Baydāʾ* is the regular feminine. (Colors are always a defective form.) It means "the white hand," which means *beneficence, power, favor, merit, glory*. And there are two kinds of men. The human race is divided into *al-sūdānu* and *al-bayḍānu*. The *sūdānu* are the black ones, and the *bayḍānu* are the white ones. Well, that wouldn't be natural in a culture where people are either outdoors or indoors. You know in Greek paintings, of which we have thousands, all the men, being

outdoors, are always painted a dark bronze; and all the women, staying indoors and keeping white lead on their faces, are always white. It's a cultural thing with members of the same race. So we get this idea of the contrast between the good guys and the bad guys, called *black* and *white*. This is important, this white business.

And here's a regular word for woman, *mar'a*. A *hijir* is a curtain indoors, the apartment for woman. A woman is one who does not go outdoors and get in the hot sun. But the regular word for woman is *mar'a*. As I said, the *hijir* is *the veil*, the *harîm*, "the inner part of the house." It could be the kitchen or anything else. It's just not going outdoors, with the two cultures. But it's a cultural thing whether you are black or white—the whole thing, cultural and moral. But "black and white" are the universal words to use for "good and bad."

So we go merrily on our way here: This virgin was "exceedingly fair and white." It doesn't mean she was leprous or anything like that; of course not. This is the expression it was using: "fair and white" would go together. Verse 15: "And I said unto him: A virgin most beautiful and fair above all other virgins." Again, you see the other dimensions. This "is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh." That "Son of God" has been inserted. We used to use in this class Wilford Wood's printing of the first edition of the Book of Mormon, so everybody had a first edition. It was more helpful. We got rid of it because it is not divided into verses, so it is very hard to locate things in it. It's just a straight story, but it reads much better that way. You can still get it. It's called *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, Volume I, the Wilford Wood series. It didn't say, "mother of the Son of God;" it said "mother of God." And, of course, throughout the Book of Mormon Jesus Christ is God. He is the Lord and the Creator. (There would be a quibble about this sort of thing.) When he came down to earth, he still had his status, but he was born of a mother. This became a great controversy between the sects of the Eastern and Western churches. The Eastern church asked, "Should we use that expression 'mother of God' or not?" The idea that God could have a mother is very offensive when you consider [believe] that God is like nothing you can possibly imagine. But God for us is not like nothing you can possibly imagine. He has been carried away in the Spirit, in the next verse, which means he is in this other dimension.

Verse 21: "And the angel said unto me: Behold the Lamb of God [of course, it wasn't a real lamb], yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father! Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw? [notice, 'do you know the meaning'—it's an allegory; this isn't a real tree, or is it?]. . . . It is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men." That's what we have in this picture. The person is striking the lyre to bring harmony to all nature with the animals and the birds—showering its favor above the altar in the temple here. They didn't have an altar or a temple; they had the scroll of the law there. Yes, this is what the meaning of the tree is: "it is the love of God, . . . wherefore, it is the most desirable above all other things." That's why the fruit is so desirable; it is the love of God. But then he tells us in verse 25 that the waters also represent the love of God, . . . which waters are a representation of the love of God." This is another allegory.

Verse 26: "Behold the condescension of God!" Remember, the world is absolutely out of it. Nobody accepts this, and nobody understands it. What a strange thing to work in a vacuum like that! What's going on, one begins to ask. That's what we have the Book of Mormon for. "Behold the condescension of God" to work with such people. "And I looked and beheld the Redeemer of the world, of whom my father had spoken; and I also

beheld the prophet [John] who should prepare the way before him. . . . And I also beheld twelve others following him.” In 1 Nephi 1:9 Lehi had that dream too in his ascension vision. He saw the angels descending to minister to men and “beheld the Lamb of God going forth among the children of men.” And what happened to him? At last he visits the children of men, and he is completely rejected. He can’t get anywhere. Remember, even the apostles all fled and left him at this time. Verse 32: “He was taken by the people; yea, the Son of the everlasting God was judged of the world; and I saw and bear record.” It really happened. If his own people did this, He would have been wasted on the rest of the human world. That’s why an absolute atonement is necessary with no strings attached. Because if anybody could be disqualified for atonement for any reason, we would all be out in the cold. The Atonement is absolute; it covers everything—even whether you want it or not. We will get to that later. He was lifted up on the cross, and the multitudes of the earth were gathered together against the apostles. They were wiped out.

Verse 35: “And I beheld that they were in a large and spacious building. . . . Behold the world and the wisdom thereof [that’s what the building stands for]; yea, behold the house of Israel hath gathered together to fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” Who has gathered together to fight against the twelve apostles? The house of Israel, of all things. Verse 36: “The great and spacious building was the pride of the world; and it fell, and the fall thereof was exceedingly great. And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again saying: Thus shall be the destruction of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, that shall fight against the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

I must tell you about the Castle of Ghumdan. There’s a great epic of the Arabs. Way back in the early days, in the beginnings of the world, there was a great castle that was high above the earth and was full of vanity and full of people. It fell and great was the fall. They still show the ruins. That was the great Castle of Ghumdan. So this becomes legendary. It is the house representing the vanity of the world. It fell and was destroyed completely. There have been such things. In Jericho the DiGianni owns the palace that someone took twenty-seven years to build. It was going to be the most gorgeous palace ever built. The ruins are still there, but they won’t take you to see them. Auni DiGianni and his brother are the cousins of King Hussein and heads of the archaeology and antiquities in Jordan. They were until they were both assassinated. That’s what goes on over there. At the last telling, that’s what happened. The ruins there are very extensive, and you never saw such elegance. They had everything, including a tepidarium and frigidarium. They had the hot, cold, and normal baths right next to a sumptuous banquet room. Then they had booths for everybody. They even had special booths for the guards at the gate to meet their lady friends, etc. Everything was taken care of. It was the most sumptuous palace imaginable, and they took twenty-seven years building it. The night it was finished the builder was going to have a grand dedication. The lights were all lit, etc. There was an earthquake that completely demolished it that night. At the same time he (I’ll think of his name) had a heart attack and died that same night. After twenty-seven years this is what happened while they were getting ready. So this is Ghumdan, the vanity of man and what happens to the vanity of man. This becomes a lesson, of course. This really happened; the ruin is there. It’s an astonishing ruin—the luxury of that place! But it was wiped right out before its dedication.

The Titanic is another model of the same thing, isn’t it. Here was the vanity of the world—the greatest ship in the world, the unsinkable ship. The richest people in the world were on it. The Vanderbilts were on it and some others, and down they went. That sobered up the whole Western World. We are still sober when we think of what happened

in April 1912. So he [Nephi] is talking here about the vanity of the world and what happens. I see the time is up now. At this rate we are not going to finish the Book of Mormon this semester. But these things have a point; the Lord is putting them in there for us. They become more significant all the time—along with this little running commentary that we get throughout the Book of Mormon that gives us enough hints, enough footnotes, enough points of evidence that we can check on it. It isn't just as if somebody sat down and decided to make up a moral story. You try doing that yourself, and you won't get anywhere. Nobody will; it just doesn't happen that way. There's only one way to keep from recognizing the Book of Mormon; that's don't read it. I know a lot of people that succeed that way. Fawn Brodie, who wrote the classic against Joseph Smith, never read the Book of Mormon. In her copy of the Book of Mormon there are about two comments. When she says that the Liahona was a "an arrow spinning inside a crystal" and things like that, you know she hasn't read it.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 13

1 Nephi 12–14

Nephi's Vision

The last thing we mentioned was that Castle of Ghumdan. The point is that the people were very vain and wicked at that time. The prophet warned them, and they paid no attention. Then the earthquake came, and the proud house fell with all the people in it. Incidentally, I showed you an ancient city that is a ghost town—the one on top of the mound with the ruins. That was Sheba. That's where the Queen of Sheba came from, who came to visit Solomon, outwitted him on many points, and taught him a lesson. That was Queen Balkis, so that takes these buildings way back before the time of Lehi; moreover, they are in the very area where he went, southwestern Arabia. You also find these structures in Babylonia, and we also have Egyptian models from the Old Kingdom showing houses of that type. In the Ancient World they were not uncommon, and even today.

We were noting that chapter ten of 1 Nephi deals with the Jews. Chapter eleven does something else. Chapter twelve deals with the New World version—Israel in the New World, the Book of Mormon people. Chapter thirteen deals with the Gentiles and the whole world; it takes the world view. But that eleventh chapter, as we noticed, is a sort of other dimension. It removes the veil and gives us a brief glimpse of another universe of discourse, some place where everything is very different.

It occurred to me this morning that every speech in the Book of Mormon, and there are many, is passionate. It's passionate speech; there's nothing that isn't. The Book of Mormon is trying all out to get through to us, you see. After all, it was hand-delivered by an angel. "Well," you say, "that's a hard one to take." All right, look into the book and then decide something or other. What does this reflect? This isn't just a faded negative or something like that. This is a series of brilliant little vignettes in which we can look right through, like into an Easter peep show. We can look through and see a world of long ago, but it's a very well-documented world. It's unmatched for contemporary literature now, so we can check on this when Joseph gives us these pictures of things that were going on. There is something extra here when the Book of Mormon passion wants to get through to us. It keeps saying, "This is for you, and you had better pay attention. You haven't got much time."

So we come to 1 Nephi 12, the New World version. Verse 1: "And I looked and beheld the land of promise." Of course, now you expect the happy land; it's the land of promise. Remember, Lehi said, "I have obtained a land of promise," just after he left Jerusalem. But what picture do we see? The next verse immediately throws cold water on all our hopes for the rosy land of promise. "And it came to pass that I beheld multitudes gathered together to battle, one against the other; and I beheld wars, and rumors of wars, and great slaughters with the sword among my people." Is this the promised land? Is this the place of security? It goes right on: "I beheld many generations pass away [do they settle down to a blissful existence alawato? Oh, no] after the manner of wars and contentions in the land; and I beheld many cities, yea, even that I did not number them." I recently saw a list of

75 cities in the United States with more than half a million people in them. There are more cities than that larger than Salt Lake City. They are numerous. Too many cities; that's the trouble today.

Then it goes on, and we get a mist of darkness. Could this be pollution or nuclear winter or something like that? This is a depressing picture; notice the next verse. It's a mist of darkness. Of course, this is the great destruction that took place at the time of the Crucifixion. There were earthquakes and mountains tumbling and cities sunk and burned with fire, and many that tumbled to earth. That's described in another part of the Book of Mormon, if we ever get to that. But it is a very accurate description of an earthquake that registers eight on the Richter scale, all the details and things that happened. We won't go into that now, but this is what he saw. This was the picture at that time. Then he saw a "vapor of darkness, that it passed from off the face of the earth."

Then he saw multitudes. After the mist of darkness, we get this vapor of darkness. What's a vapor? It's a mixture of dust, maybe nuclear particles, cloud mist, rain, etc., if it is nuclear winter. Whatever it is, it's a vapor of darkness that passed from the face of the earth. Then he saw multitudes. When the cloud cleared, everybody was just lying there fallen because of the terrible judgments of the Lord. That may be a later episode than verse 4 which describes the great earthquakes at the time of Christ. "And it came to pass after I saw these things [then he sees another such occasion] I saw the vapor of darkness." When that passed away, he saw everybody pretty sick. Then the heavens opened and the Lamb of God descended. "The Holy Ghost fell upon twelve others," and then the disciples of the Lamb. Then he talks about the Twelve Apostles, so this is the time of the Nephites that he is discussing here. The Jews had the Twelve Apostles. They are never called apostles in the Book of Mormon. He explains that here. Notice in verse 10 he calls them "twelve ministers" because the apostles, we are told, shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Do they duplicate them over here? No, they are never called apostles here; they are called disciples. You saw in the Dead Sea Scrolls that they had to have a council of twelve and a presidency of three. The Jews already had that. This was part of the ancient order of things because they had twelve tribes and each tribe was represented in the temple. Now the new *Temple Scroll* makes it very clear that everything is done in terms of twelve tribes and the presidency. Moses had Aaron and Hur supporting his hands on either side [Exodus 17:12], and so it happens.

There's a very interesting, many-volume work [*Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*] by Erwin Goodenough on ancient Jewish symbols. It has come out that a very common feature of the earliest Jewish symbols is that whenever the Lord comes, he is always accompanied by two others. In Genesis 18 when the Lord appears, Abraham sees three men waiting in front of his tent. He knew that one was the Lord, and he said, "My Lord, I'm not worthy to have you here as my guest." The Lord comes as three. But here are the Twelve Apostles; in other words, we have a pattern here that is being followed, not just once. Verse 9: "And he said unto me: Thou rememberest the twelve apostles of the Lamb? Behold they are they who shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore, the twelve ministers of thy seed shall be judged of them; for ye are of the house of Israel. [See, the Twelve Apostles shall judge the twelve ministers or disciples of the Nephites; they are down on the list there too.] And these twelve ministers whom thou beholdest shall judge thy seed. . . . And I looked, and beheld three generations pass away in righteousness; . . . these are made white in the blood of the Lamb, because of their faith in him."

But the fourth generation went bad, as we know. In four or five thousand years of history here—including the Jaredites, which are much older, I believe, than that—there were only three or four generations of righteousness when the people were living as they should. This is an amazing thing. How can it possibly be that out of all the inhabitants of the earth only one little handful are righteous? In all that period of time only a few generations were fit. This is the oddest thing. I'm supposed to be getting [preparing] something now on the Atonement, and nobody knows anything about the Atonement. It's very interesting. How is it possible? Well, you ask a simple question: How is it possible for everybody in the world to go around in complete ignorance of the fact that the earth is a sphere? How can everybody in the world not know that we are in a galaxy which is part of a system of innumerable galaxies? Nobody knew that when I was a kid. I mean there are vitally important things that nobody in the world knows. Apparently, nobody misses them. The Lord doesn't seem to make them known. But don't be surprised if the Gospel has very few takers, if it is "only one of city and two of a tribe," as the Lord told his apostles. That's all you'll get. All the Lord does here is establish a cadre. That's what we have in the temple—people that do the work for all the rest of them. After all, the work of baptism that was revealed to John the Baptist was primarily for the dead because the unbaptized dead outnumber the living a thousand to one. The work has to be done for them. That's why the angel said to Zacharias when he was to become the father of John the Baptist, "He shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children." The fathers were already dead, and the work of John the Baptist was to baptize them. Then he said, "Those who sit in darkness shall see a great light." That's the work that is going to deliver them—the preaching to the spirits in prison.

So we have here the Twelve and the three generations that pass in righteousness. But it's a weary and sad story. Nobody seems to catch on here. The Book of Mormon is sad. It begins on a sad note and ends on a sad note, and we are in the middle. And yet it is the most joyful of documents. All the verses balance each other. As we noticed before, the "apocalypse of bliss" balances the "apocalypse of woe" throughout. If it's bad, it's also good. We'll get more of the good part; we should one of these times. I guess it's the rainy weather that makes one feel gloomy, isn't it? Note in verse 15 that they are equally wicked: "I looked and beheld the people of my seed gathered together in multitudes against the seed of my brethren; and they were gathered together in battle." If you read something like the ninth chapter of Moroni, you will see they are absolutely equal. He says that one is just as bad as the other, unless perhaps the Nephites are a little worse because they should be better. Mormon says the same thing, "Behold, among all the wickedness of the Lamanites it is not so great as among thy brethren." But remember what the Lord told Enoch. He said, "Wherefore, I can stretch forth mine hands and hold all the creations which I have made. . . . [this is a real shocker], and among all the workmanship of mine hands there has not been so great wickedness as among thy brethren" (Moses 7:36). So in worlds without number this is number one, the worst. Well, this means we are in a real test. If we can pass this one, we shoot right ahead to the top. That's really the impression that's given. We have been building up to this final test so that so much depends on it. It's win all or lose all on this one thing: Will you be able to behave yourself if you are given great authority and not start acting like Genghis Khan because you are the head of a committee or something like that? Can you be trusted? We will all be saved, but who will be safe? Who can be trusted? That's what the Lord is going to find out here, and very few can be. In Doctrine and Covenants 121:39 we are told, "We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion." It is in the nature of almost all men that as soon as they

get a little authority, as they think, they begin to exercise unrighteous dominion. That's in our nature. I was thinking about a Greek play; there's a lot about that subject.

So they were gathered together to battle. Then [in verse 16] there's the fountain of filthy water. He said it represented "the depths of hell. And the mists of darkness are the temptations of the devil." And the broad roads on which they are lost. Of course, there is the fear of everyone in the desert of getting lost because it's a terrible place to get lost, and there's no way to find yourself. It's a horrible place. That's the one thing that everybody feared because it was utterly waterless. Remember, it tells us where they turned east, and Joseph Smith said it was the nineteenth parallel—almost south-southeast there, taking them to the Empty Quarter. The whole trip took eight years because of the long stops. For example, they must have spent about a year at the Waters of Laman in the Valley of Lemuel. Notice verse 18: "And the large and spacious building [that's a Ghumdan, you see] . . . is vain imaginations and the pride of the children of men"—with their partying and their importance, etc. It's interesting that this is allegory, but it has a physical embodiment. It isn't all just allegory, just a symbol of something to be taken as an abstract and to be understood spiritually.

Incidentally, which is more specific—what is scientific or what is spiritual? You think of spirits as not being more actual, more real. We say science is, but that's not so. A scientific test is physical and tangible, but it's second hand. You can only interpret it second hand. It depends on your interpretation. With an atom chamber or a cyclotron, when the particle is cracked, little trails go off in all directions. But they don't mean anything until somebody interprets them. The first-hand information means nothing. It's second hand. You interpret it, and then you argue about what it means. But it's so in all the effects of gravity, whatever it is. But a spiritual experience is something that you feel in yourself. You experience it in yourself, so it is direct. You can't deny that. That's why you can't get away with denying the Holy Ghost. When we say "spiritual," it's a thing we never define at all. We never bother to define it. We use it a lot and kick it around a lot. We get away with murder because we say, "Well, this is a spiritual thing; we just observe it spiritually." You know what is spiritual: the spiritual is a direct experience. These things that the Book of Mormon talks about are the direct experience. As I said, all the speeches are passionate. They are trying to get in contact with you. That's why the Book of Mormon feels so intimate, and it converts people. They don't know why they are being reached because every man who talks in there is not only speaking from the heart but he is trying to reach somebody. He knows this is being directed to people in another time and another place, and he is going all out trying to reach them. So it reaches out, and there is this feeling of warm intimacy in every passage in the Book of Mormon. It's not cold and abstract. It not like history, even of the Old Testament. You feel the urgency and the personal concern. Everybody who writes in the Book of Mormon is passionate because he has a personal concern for the person he is writing to—and that's you. If it comes into your hands, you have been blessed with that.

He talks about the large and spacious building and "the pride of the children of men. And a great and terrible gulf divideth them." There it is again. It is a figure of speech, an image. Nothing could better describe it; there is a great and terrible gulf between two different ways of living. There is nothing in common between them at all. You can't breach it; there's this great gulf between them. If you are on the one side, there are very few people. The whole world is on one side now. I wonder if we can see anybody over on the other side calling to us? Clement of Rome was the first writer after the New Testament. He wrote about A.D. 85–95, in the first century. In the epistle called 1 Clement, he compares

himself to a man who is standing on a headland all alone. He sees a swimmer swimming out to sea and says, “You fool, come back before it’s too late [he’s talking about the Church]. The time will come when it will be too late to repent, when you can’t do it. Come back now.” Of course, all seven Apostolic Fathers have no hope at all. They all ring down the curtain on the ancient Church, but at a very early time. That’s a very important point that we are going to come to very soon here—that the curtain was rung down on the early Church already in the second century. The second century, instead of being the “age of faith” is known as the “age of heresy” because there were a hundred heresies. Everybody had his own church. Immediately it broke up when the Apostles went away. Well, we may get to that in a minute, but let’s go on and see what is happening here.

So there’s this great and terrible gulf. Verse 19: “And while the angel spake these words, I beheld and saw that the seed of my brethren did contend against my seed . . . and because of the pride of my seed.” That’s the promise. In 1 Nephi 2:23 he says, Remember, you have nothing to fear from the Lamanites at all as long as you behave yourself. They are there to stir you up unto remembrance. I want them breathing down your neck. You will never solve your questions by fighting them [paraphrased]. “Because of the pride of my seed”—they were the ones that brought it on themselves every time. Verse 20: “And it came to pass that I beheld, and saw the people of the seed of my brethren that they had overcome my seed.” Our side loses here. They are proud of their pride, incidentally. Then they [the Lamanites] gathered in multitudes and there were “wars and rumors of wars among them; and . . . I saw many generations pass away.” See, the Lamanites and the mixture of people that were left went right on fighting, as we are told in the Book of Mormon. In Moroni’s last words he said, They are still fighting; I have no idea when the war will end. It is going on indefinitely. They are fighting each other now [paraphrased]. Verse 22: “Behold these shall dwindle in unbelief.” And, of course, they did. Would God allow this in the promised land? I ask myself. “They became a dark, and loathsome, and a filthy people, full of idleness and all manner of abominations.” Notice, they became that way. It wasn’t a miraculous change overnight. It is never referred to in that sense. It’s a cultural thing. We will get much more on that, incidentally.

Now in 1 Nephi 13 of the Book of Mormon the panorama unfolds here. This is the worldwide view of it, the modern world. He beheld many nations and kingdoms. Verse 3: “These are the nations and kingdoms of the Gentiles. . . . I saw among the nations of the Gentiles the formation of a great church.” Now, what is this church? I just said that the great apostasy came in the second century; the scriptures were completely corrupted by then. This is long before the Roman [Catholic] church became the leading church. The Roman church was “small potatoes” at that time. It wasn’t until the fourth century that they took over. You must not identify this just with the Roman Catholic Church. People do because that’s a simplistic answer. But there [was] a lot going on in the world that we don’t know anything about. That’s what this chapter tells us, all the way through. Don’t oversimplify. Don’t try to figure it out, as far as that goes. If you could see behind the scenes in World War II the things that happened—if you were in a position to sneak around and take sly peeks at this and at that—you would see there was so much more going on than you would expect. It wasn’t at all the way I thought it would be. That wasn’t what it was. You would be amazed at what was going on.

Here’s what goes on; it tells us here. Verse 6: “I beheld this great and abominable church.” Revelation 8 [18] says that the abominable church is Babylon. He describes in chapter 18 the people who set their hearts on these things. Verse 8: “Behold the gold, and the silver, and silks, and scarlets, and fine-twined linen.” In the Book of Revelation John describes

this [see Revelation 18:12]. Remember, he [Lehi] says the book he saw was John. John is the only New Testament character [writer] mentioned in the Book of Mormon. But he describes these things in terms of a great department store. He goes down the departments—the linens, the fine things, and the slaves. Everything is for sale. It's quite a brilliant display, and these are the things that make Babylon. This is the "great and abominable." Of course, there was no Roman church in the time of John when he wrote those things. But all the high church people want these things, whether it's Greek, Armenian, Russian Orthodox—or the Bakkers, or people like Bob Schuller who build their crystal palaces and things like that. Then it mentions the many harlots. Well, they are all up to that, it would seem. He is talking about this sort of thing—the vanity of the world. What we have here, you see, is a complex. It's an ecumenical thing, and it certainly is here.

We have Columbus here. This is Columbus Day, so we can't pass him by, can we? Verse 11: "Behold the wrath of God is upon the seed of thy brethren." And what was that? Columbus. When the Europeans discovered America, that was the wrath of God. That was catching up with them. From then on the Indians go down and down and down until they reach absolute nadir. Then something happens to the Gentiles, he says. "And I looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles." He doesn't say a Gentile; he says "a man among the Gentiles." Years ago I happened to be back East. The old *Improvement Era* wanted an article on Columbus and Columbus Day. Through a friend of mine, Lucien Goldschmidt, I got to meet Madariaga, the great Spanish authority on Columbus. Then at Harvard there was Samuel Eliot Morison who wrote the great book, *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*. He is a yachtsman, and he gives a very careful nautical study of every aspect, everything that is available, on Columbus. So on October 12, Columbus Day, at 2:00 in the morning of a very bright, clear night with a brilliant moon, and the sea high with a good following wind (a glorious picture), a sailor in the mast sighted either St. Kitt or San Salvador, the outmost island (they call it various names) in the Caribbean. America was discovered, and this was the stroke of doom, "the wrath of God upon the seed of thy brethren."

I had lunch with him [Madariaga], and he has always believed that Columbus was a Jew for various reasons. He kept a journal, and he knew all the mysteries of the *Cabbala*. He always dated things by "the second house." Only Jews speak of the temple as the *bayit*, "the house of God." The second house would be the temple that stood at the time of Christ. Only a Jew would call it "the second house" or date things by the fall of the temple. His passion was to rebuild Jerusalem. The reason he wanted the money from the Indies was to rebuild the temple. That was his project; that's why he wanted the gold. What's more, he postponed the date of his sailing down the Tigris there until his three ships headed the armada of Jews fleeing from Spain. See, in 1492 Ferdinand and Isabella banished the Jews from Spain. No Jews were to be left there. The biggest thing was one big armada. They fled to various places in Europe, mostly the Netherlands, Russia, Sephardi, Ashkenazi, etc. Columbus postponed his going so that his ships could lead the parade of Jews back to the Holy Land. He wanted to lead them back to the temple. It's a very interesting thing we have here.

And, what's more, his trip was a miracle of navigation and speed. His friend de Castro, who is the best source for his life, said that he was as sure of finding what he was after as if he had it in his pocket; he never had the slightest doubt for a moment. Moreover, he crossed the ocean faster than I did twice, once in a Liberty ship and once in an old German freighter when it took me over thirty days to cross the Atlantic. He did better

than that. He moved with amazing skill at navigation. This is what Morison tells us. The speed of the ships was as good as a slow old freighter today. He went right along and hit it right on the button, just as if he had it in his pocket. So it was as if it had all been planned and had to do with the redemption of Israel. But no, they were to wait. Israel was not to be redeemed; the temple was not to be rebuilt at this time. They had to wait a long time. This was something else.

Verse 13: "I beheld the Spirit of God, that it wrought upon other Gentiles; and they went forth out of captivity, upon the many waters." Now here's another argument. He's talking, apparently, about the Pilgrim fathers that went out of captivity. The captivity was religious; they wanted religious freedom. But they weren't escaping from the Roman Catholic Church. They were escaping from other groups, from the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England and Calvinist stringency. On a mission, I worked among Roman Catholic villages, Lutheran villages, and Calvinistic villages. The Calvinistic villages were in the Rhine Plain. Mostly Catholics were in the Black Forest in the Odenwald, and the Lutherans were mixed in between. The best converts were from the Catholic villages, and the Lutherans were good, but the Calvinists were fiends. Still, after all those years, they were harder to talk to than anyone else. So you don't talk about any one church here. There will be other indications here of what we are talking about; it talks a lot about that here. It dwells on that, this type of church.

But let's go on. Verse 15: "And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the Gentiles, and they did prosper and obtain the land for their inheritance. . . . They were white, and exceedingly fair." And they humbled themselves. "And I beheld that their mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the waters, and upon the land also, to battle against them." Why would the righteous mother Gentiles want to battle against them? We are not talking about righteousness here. We are not talking about just the English settlers either. Remember, there were the French and the Spanish—the French and Indian War and the Spanish wars. All the wars of succession in Europe had their reflections on this continent. Remember, George Washington had to fight both the French and the British. "The wrath of God was upon all those that were gathered together against them to battle." They were delivered by the power of God, and they did prosper in the land.

A book was carried forth among them. This was the Bible. They had already had that. Notice verse 23: "Behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew. And I, Nephi, beheld it." It had the covenants of the Lord. This is the New Testament, but they had the Old Testament too. This is the new one from the mouth of a Jew. How do you best describe the New Testament? Well, as the words of the Savior, of course. But there's more than that. We have the epistles and the acts of the Apostles, and we have the revelations. They were all Jews. It comes forth from a Jewish source, the whole thing. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were written by those men, and they say that they are the authors. They claim to be. "This is the writing of Mark." "I, John," etc. Verse 23: "The book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, which contains the covenants of the Lord, . . . and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the plates of brass." In other words, it's the Bible. Their Old Testament isn't the same as Lehi's Old Testament because of the many changes. But it says that it's much like it.

Verse 24: "When it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew it contained the fulness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record." It was plain then, but as soon as it went forth it didn't take very long for it to be changed. Verse 26: "And after

they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that great and abominable church. . . . They have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.” Those were taken away long before the Roman Catholic Church took over in the fourth century. When were they taken away? In the terrible squabbles of the second and third century. They just fought it out; there was blood and everything else. It culminated in the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325 when the emperor had to call a council because everybody was killing everybody else. Well, we’ve written a lot about that. We don’t need to follow up on that here, but that is what was happening. It started in Alexandria with Philo; the professors started fighting. They preempted the gospels in the Bible. They took it to themselves. Remember, in Lehi’s day nobody had the book, but now everybody has it. They are all fighting about it, and they corrupt it. Of course, they do. Everybody interprets it his own way, but especially beginning with Philo at the time of Christ, they interpreted everything allegorically. None of this is to be taken literally; it is all spiritual, [according to them]. It’s all in an allegorical and philosophical sense. They fought about that, and this is the corruption we are talking about. They lost the main treasures of the book here.

So we have an ecumenical composite; all have the same teachings and practices. This is interesting. When you say, “There are but two churches,” you are right. There are just two doctrines; two organizations, organized accordingly; two sets of ordinances and the like. All the other churches have the same practices. They all preach that God is a mystery and unknowable—the mystery of the Trinity. They all do not accept the literal Resurrection. They believe that the Jews are out, that the temple will never be built. They have devised their own ordinances and their own ceremonies because they can’t get them out of the Bible anywhere. They have been borrowed from various sources—mostly from the old Imperial Cult of the Romans, but there are other sources. The latest standard work on that subject is Eisenhofer and Lechner, two Roman Catholic Germans who have written a big work on the source of Catholic ceremony, etc. It has three sources: The first is the Imperial Cult of Rome; the second is the rites of the Germanic tribes and nations in Europe, especially Aix-la-Chapelle at Aachen (most of the ceremonies actually came from the Court of Aachen); the third is from the tabernacle of the Jews—not from the temple, from the synagogue. This is where they got them, and they have built up a new body of ritual ordinance. They have a new body of doctrines, but they all share them. They invent ceremonies, and they all deny revelation. They are sneaking up on it now and beginning to claim it, but they all deny revelation. So this is just one world church, you might say. The ecumenical movement certainly would show that. It may be a good thing, as far as that goes.

Where are we now? Verse 29: “An exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them [because of the changes]. Nevertheless, thou beholdest that the Gentiles . . . have been lifted by the power of God above all other nations.” Here’s the promise in verse 30 here. (Remember, in 1830 the Indians were still the most numerous people on the continent; they were still a big handful.) “The Lord God will not suffer that the Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed which are among thy brethren [so Nephi’s seed are mixed with the seed of his brethren, and the Gentiles cannot destroy them; there is no such thing as a pure Lamanite; we see that all through the Book of Mormon]. Neither will he suffer that the Gentiles shall destroy the seed of thy brethren” (the Lamanites, or his seed mixed with them—the Nephites and others). In verse 32 we see that the Gentiles are in an “awful state of blindness.” They don’t get the point; they do not have it made in the promised land. How far does their

blindness go here? They have been “kept back by that abominable church, whose formation thou hast seen. Wherefore, saith the Lamb of God: I will be merciful unto the Gentiles, unto the visiting of the remnant of the house of Israel in great judgment.” One is the scourge of the other here. In verse 34 Lehi’s people are smitten by the hand of the Gentiles. Then after the Gentiles have taken over the land, they “stumble exceedingly, because of the most plain and precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church, which is the mother of harlots, saith the Lamb—I will be merciful unto the Gentiles in that day, insomuch that I will bring forth unto them, in mine own power, much of my gospel, which shall be plain and precious, saith the Lamb.”

Incidentally, here is a very important verse I’ll refer you to: 2 Nephi 10:16 should clear something up: “Wherefore, he that fighteth against Zion, both Jew and Gentile, both bond and free, both male and female, shall perish; for they are they who are the whore of all the earth; for they who are not for me are against me [there’s your principle of two churches; you’re either for or against], saith our God.” It’s not just one church, but whoever fights against Zion, whether they are Jew, Gentile, bond, free, male or female. It makes no difference. They are they who shall perish, and they are the whore of all the earth. The Gentiles will not remain in that awful state of blindness. They have been kept back, but “I will bring forth unto them . . . much of my gospel, which shall be plain and precious.” Not the fullness but much which is plain and precious is coming out. Verse 35: “After thy seed shall be destroyed, and dwindle in unbelief . . .” How can you dwindle after you have been destroyed? *Destrew* means “to break the structure down, to strew around, to scatter in all directions.” Remember, he says, “Jerusalem has been destroyed from time to time.” Then it has been reorganized from time to time. That doesn’t mean wiped out forever with every last person. To destroy is to scatter. “. . . and also the seed of thy brethren [they will be destroyed too, along with his], behold, these things shall be hid up, to come forth unto the Gentiles by the gift and power of the Lamb.” Of course, that is the Book of Mormon. Verse 37: “And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost. . . . I beheld the remnants of the seed of my brethren, and also the book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren.” Well, the Gentiles will give the Bible back to the descendants of Nephi.

Verse 39: “And after it had come forth unto them I beheld other books [Ah ha, there are other books after the Book of Mormon. What do they do? They confirm it. I would include the Dead Sea Scrolls among these], . . . which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the convincing of the Gentiles and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true.” The later records prove the earlier ones, not the other way around, though they confirm each other. The later books are discovered. Notice it says, “I beheld other books which came forth.” They are not proofs or demonstrations. They are revealed; they have been hidden to come forth.

Question: [The first part was not audible.] We don’t have all the records of the Twelve Apostles; we have a few of the Apostles. Answer: We don’t, of course. We have the records of the Twelve Apostles in the New Testament. But also there are these records that come forth—for example, the Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of Phillip. There are fourteen sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas which have been accepted and included in the

new revised version of the Bible. This wasn't discovered until 1950, and yet it is accepted as genuine sayings of Jesus that are coming forth. And, of course, one of the most important is the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles. Some very important things have come forth. This early Christian literature is coming out now. Some of it is very old, and you can check and control them against each other. With the Book of Mormon to go by, you have a pretty good rule. But there will be others come forth. As we said before, the Dead Sea Scrolls were not popular with the Jews or with the Christians, any more than the Book of Mormon is popular with anybody. Nobody goes nuts over the Book of Mormon, but they should. The texts of the New Testament are corrupt, and the manuscripts have to be restored. Verse 40: "... and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people [now it gets universal]... And they [these records] must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed [that's the Book of Mormon], as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; wherefore they both shall be established in one; for there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth. And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations, both unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last." First he came to the Jews during his mission in New Testament times. Then he went forth to the Gentiles. Now he is going to come to the Gentiles through the Book of Mormon and then to the Jews. You can interpret this various ways.

Then chapter 14, verse 1: "If the Gentiles shall hearken unto the Lamb of God in that day ... and harden not their hearts against the Lamb of God, they shall be numbered among the seed of thy father; yea, they shall be numbered among the house of Israel; and they shall be a blessed people upon the promised land forever." Well, that's the last thing most Gentiles want, to be numbered among them. In 1 Nephi 12:9 you see the situation. "Thou rememberest the twelve apostles of the Lamb? Behold they are they who shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore, the twelve ministers of thy seed shall be judged of them; for ye are of the house of Israel." What we have here when we say "the house of Israel" is that we are all of the same house, but we are not in the same room. There is Israel abroad and Israel here. There are twelve different tribes, and these tribes are quite distinct. Judah is just the fourth son, and the Jews are quite distinct from other tribes like Ephraim. They are quite distinct from the Ishmaelites too, though they are very much alike. What about the other tribes? Of course, we talk about the Ten Tribes and their coming back, etc., a thing that greatly intrigued the Jews in the Middle Ages.

Now we have "that great pit, which hath been digged for them by that great and abominable church." You notice that the great and abominable church is not capitalized. It's not one particular institution. I think that may be significant that the brethren left it that way. Why this in this case? Why would you dig a pit? Well, the whole Christian world has dug a pit for the Jews and Mormons and native peoples everywhere. They produce world wars, crusades, religious wars—the Crimean War, World War II, colonialism in the name of religion. There are very few wars that don't have religion as their basis, even our Civil War because the Bible says that you shouldn't have slaves. That was the issue that everybody got wrought up about. On the other hand, the Bible says that you shouldn't rob and take another man's property from him. Slaves are property, and it's a wicked thing to take them away. But you shouldn't have slaves. There are these conflicts. But wars like the Crimean War and the Crusades are purely religious wars. And in World War II there was the Austrian Empire—the land pirates against the sea pirates. But they are fighting each other all the time. See, France was a Catholic nation. Bavaria and Austria

were Catholic nations. They fought each other. The Austrians and the Italians have always been fighting each other, and yet they are both Catholic. So everybody fights everybody else in this world, and they are all the same religion. Satan has it very well set up.

Verse 3: “Yea, that great pit which hath been digged for the destruction of men shall be filled by those who digged it, unto their utter destruction, saith the Lamb of God [does he mean this is spiritual or physical destruction? He says both]; not the destruction of the soul, save it be the casting of it into that hell which hath no end [he asked for an explanation]. For behold, this is according to the captivity of the devil, and also according to the justice of God, upon all those who will work wickedness and abomination before him.” The “great and abominable” is not a label and a doctrine; it is the wickedness of Christian nations in this case. It does refer to them. Notice, these are the people that have the scriptures that proceed forth from the mouth of the Jew—the Bible. It’s the book that has been corrupted.

The Arabs talk about the *ahl kitāb*, “the people of the book,” which are the Jews, the Christians, and the Arabs. Their book, of course, is the Koran which is based on the Bible, but it’s something very different. It’s for them. But they [the Christians] go astray because of the precious things taken from the book. Well, that doesn’t lead the Confucians astray; that doesn’t lead the Hindus astray; that doesn’t lead the people of Zimbabwe astray or anything like that. When it says “great and abominable,” you see what it is talking about because that is the expression that John uses for the corrupted Christian world.

Then he goes on in verse 5: “Thou has beheld that if the Gentiles repent it shall be well with them.” Repent of what? Belonging to the wrong church? No. If they repent of their sins, they will be forgiven, and “whoso repenteth not must perish. Therefore, woe be unto the Gentiles if it so be that they harden their hearts against the Lamb of God [which, of course, they did against Joseph Smith after the Book of Mormon came out]. For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men . . . either to the convincing of them unto peace and life eternal, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts [again, the great and yawning gulf between them] and the blindness of their minds unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction. . . . He said unto me: Look, and behold that great and abominable church, which is the mother of abominations [he keeps rubbing it in, doesn’t he?] whose founder is the devil. And he said unto me: Behold there are save two churches only,” as we said before.

Incidentally, the Roman Catholic Church has very limited cultural influence. It reached its peak, I would say, in 1215 with the Lateran Council held by Innocent III. He was the most powerful, and that was when the church reached its maximum influence. That was the same year, exactly 1215, when King John had to sign the Magna Carta. Remember, King John was the son of Henry II, and it was Henry II who defied the church. He was the one who decided to install bishops. He broke the power of the Catholic Church in England until the affair with Becket. Then in 1174 he did penance and whipped himself for a while—just as earlier in 1070, in the time of Gregory VII, it was the powerful emperor Henry IV of the Holy Roman Empire. He went to Canossa and stood in the snow barefooted while the haughty Gregory VII stood on the balcony above him and looked down. He had won his victory over the emperor; he ruled the world. That was when the church reached its maximum extent. After that, the Reformation took over and it was equally balanced. Then there was the counter attack of the Counter Reformation. But it is

a very limited cultural influence. Up until the Middle Ages by far the largest Christian church was the Nestorian Church in Asia. At this time in 1215, all of Spain was Moslem; it wasn't Catholic at all. All of southern France was Catharian, and there were various kinds. The Vaudois and sects all over the place were not dependent on Rome. It had a very limited cultural influence actually, and you see the pope is a fine old man going around trying to get some unity and some reaction. Well, he has big crowds, etc, but in the world of unbelievers we live in today that's not a drop in the bucket. Again, we don't know what is going on. This is one thing we must remember. I could a tale unfold of some of the snooping I was doing unawares and unconsciously. I found out too much. This is an important thing. The name of Christianity became completely corrupt here. They were all fighting each other. They came in for easy plans of salvation and rationalized on morality and devised ordinances, as I said. They denied the Resurrection, and they wouldn't have revelation. That's all one church. They all believed exactly the same, and that's why they can join together today. And they are all given to ceremonies because they didn't have the old ordinances. They had to fill religious people with something.

In verse 12 notice that the numbers in the church of the Lamb were few; it never gets big. And the whore sat upon many waters. Well, you can sit on waters if you want; it's just an expression. But the [true] Church's dominions were small (let's hope so). They "did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God. . . . I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb . . . who were scattered upon all the face of the earth [so they are not all gathered in Zion, apparently]; and they were armed with righteousness [that's the only thing to be armed with; and, believe me, we are not armed with it now, are we? Far from it; we are armed with acquisitiveness and with great managerial skill, and things like that. That is not known as righteousness]. . . . I beheld that the wrath of God was poured out upon that great and abominable church, insomuch that there were wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth." That is certainly what we are getting today. There are at least forty-seven wars going on, and rumors of wars. We get the news about all the nations and kindreds. You notice the tribal, racial, and ethnic disagreements. There are so many ethnic disagreements going on now. In the newspaper the other day, I noticed that there are at least a dozen ethnic crises now—in the Soviet Union, the Far East, and everywhere. Everybody is breaking loose; everybody is fighting everybody. It's an amazing picture now. Just within the last two weeks, all of a sudden, all those nations have decided to become independent, whether they are on the Baltic or in the Caucasus or in Turkey. Wherever they are, everybody has decided to make trouble, so we have "wars and rumors of wars among all the nations and kindreds of the earth." And among the mother of abominations, the mother of harlots.

Verse 17: "At that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel." So that isn't the culmination when that comes. That just commences to lay the foundation, commences to prepare. Then he sees the man in the white robe, one of the Twelve Apostles. Verse 23: "At the time the book proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, the things which were written were plain and pure." They were at that time, but that was only in the first century. Remember, we have over eight thousand manuscripts of the New Testament, no two of them alike. And the oldest one is from the third century. There may be a fragment of a verse or two from here or there. Naturally, if we find an old one, like the Dead Sea Scrolls, it would probably be very much like what we have now. But all of our documents are copies of copies of copies. Nearly all of them come from the eighth and

ninth centuries. The ones we treasure so are fourth-century documents, the main ones. About thirty documents go into the Cambridge edition of the New Testament. They have thirty different texts—thirty different readings for verses, etc. But when it came out, it was plain and pure. We know now from the many documents that it became corrupted very soon, as I said. So you can't blame one great and abominable church for doing it because that one didn't come along until quite a while later.

Nephi was going to write some of these plain and pure things, but he was forbidden. We are not supposed to have that now. Why not? Notice verse 25: "But the things which thou shalt see hereafter thou shalt not write; for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should write them." And the apostle's name was John, the only one that is named here. So here we get a very interesting thing. They were written and "sealed up to come forth in their purity." They were hidden, and in the seventh section of the Doctrine and Covenants the most remarkable thing happens. Notice this: "Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, April 1829 [a year before the church was founded], when they inquired through the Urim and Thummim as to whether John, the beloved disciple, tarried in the flesh or had died." Now, what is this revelation? It's a translated version of a record made on parchment by John, and he hid it up by himself. Well, this is exactly what they did with the Dead Sea Scrolls; they hid them up in hundreds of caves. And John did the same thing. They are on papyrus, as you know. Most of the Dead Sea Scrolls are parchment. You notice that they are sewn together. John wrote a scroll on parchment, and he hid it up. Joseph Smith was reading it. He didn't have the scroll; he had it through the Urim and Thummim. It was revealed to him, you see. But this is how John did it, by sealing it up. Isn't it interesting that it takes the pains to point out that he wrote it on parchment. In other words, it wasn't a spiritual document. He literally wrote it down and he hid it, just as the scrolls were hidden. He buried it on purpose, as this says here. The Lord said of the apostle, "He shall write them. Thou shalt not write them, but he shall write them."

Verse 26: "And also others who have been, to them hath he shown all things, and they have written them [notice that others have done the same]; and they are sealed up to come forth in their purity." Now, the only way you can preserve a document in its purity is to bury it because as soon as you start copying, you start making mistakes. It always happens. You never have a pure document as long as it's in the hands of men. So if you are going to preserve a document over hundreds or thousands of years, you've got to bury it. That's the only way, so that nobody can lay hands on it. And this is what happens. They are buried and they are sealed, so they can't be changed and won't be dug up until the time of the Lord. Verse 28: "And behold, I, Nephi, am forbidden that I should write the remainder of the things which I saw and heard. . . . I have written but a small part of the things which I saw . . . while I was carried away in the spirit; and if all the things which I saw are not written, the things which I have written are true. And thus it is. Amen."

So he has given us a lead; he has given us a start here, and has given us some broad hints. You might say this whole fourteenth chapter is just a series of hints. But they are not to send us arguing in priesthood meeting and things like that. There's no point to that. You read them for yourself. Notice, he's cautious about it. He doesn't want to give us any more. The Lord forbade him to write any more. This is bad enough as it is, but these are things we are already perfectly aware of. So this is safe. When he wants to write more, the Lord forbids him. He is told that John will put them on parchment and seal them, and others will write them and seal them to come forth in their purity. So we can look forward to more documents, I suppose.

The time is up now, and we haven't gotten very far. Now, there are some really wonderful things. This is like walking through the sand here in verses [chapters] 13 and 14 if we attempt simplistic interpretations. If we attempt more sophisticated interpretations, we are in worse trouble than ever. Don't try it. But the Lord has put in here what we would say is "for the record." Notice that this whole thing is about recording—about John writing down, the Spirit speaking to him, and Nephi saying, "I can't write this; I would write a lot more." This all has to do with the record and the state of the record. It's a confused state of things, and it's a confused state of things today. But the Lord will clarify these things. You ask him for enlightenment; he will give it to you.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 14

1 Nephi 15–16

The Liahona and Murmurings in the Wilderness

We are on the fifteenth chapter. We have to move fast, but there are still some things that are important to know from 1 Nephi. We start out with the last place to look if we want to find information. It starts out, “I returned to the tent of my father.” He found his brethren disputing, and it wasn’t the first time in history. They wanted an answer to the question, but they never bothered to look. “They did not look unto the Lord as they ought,” he says in the third verse. Have you asked for it? Don’t expect blessings from the Lord unless you ask. So he says here, “They did not look unto the Lord as they ought.”

Verse 4: “I, Nephi, was grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, and also, because of the things which I had seen, and knew they must unavoidably come to pass . . . [he had seen certain things that must happen; notice that word *unavoidably* is a hard one, isn’t it? Isn’t it supposed to be all conditioned?] because of the great wickedness of the children of men.” Why unavoidably? Well, you know the unavoidable play is determined by the actors, as we said before. A man’s character is his fate. In the old comedy of Menander, and then taken over by Plautus and Terence, the whole plot was always determined by the actors. I mean if you have a rich old miser who has a beautiful daughter and an impoverished young man who is wooing her and a clever servant, you know exactly what is going to happen. All the characters were standard; they all wore standard colored wigs so people would know which one they were. The rascally servant wore a red wig, the daughter naturally was a blond, the old man was naturally bald, and the young man’s hair was black and curly. Of course, he had a friend. Shakespeare used that plot. Everybody uses that plot. But the point is that the play is unavoidably predictable once you set the characters up, and that’s so with all sorts of things.

The “ship of fools” is another famous theme. You put several characters together on a ship—or there’s the lifeboat theme. You know what’s going to happen if you put one type of guy and another guy alone in a lifeboat. There’s going to be real trouble with certain types, depending on the types. Or you put a number of different animals in a cage, and how they react depends on the type of animals they are. You could predict their reactions pretty well.

So he says here that these things must unavoidably happen. What is the situation he saw? Well, he says it was “because of the great wickedness of the children of men.” So this is “man who is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.” And he is worried sick about it. Notice, he says in verse 5, “I was overcome because of my afflictions.” It was just too much; they kept pouring it on. You notice, they blame him for everything. Again, it’s interesting that they have a character on which they can do that, and they take it out on him. That’s the theme of “Boots,” a theme that runs through all the old Norse literature and is very predominant there. Sir George Dasent wrote a book on it and collected the stories of Boots. Boots is a Cinderella story with the two sisters (like Laman and Lemuel, you see) taking it out on Cinderella because of hidden jealousy motives. But there was no reason to be jealous about Cinderella. Boots is, of course, the third son and the youngest.

He's called Boots because he has to clean everybody's shoes. He's made the butt of everything, and he has to wait on the other two. Of course, it turns out that he is the prince in the end and he triumphs. This is the Boots motif because he cleans the boots.

This is bound to happen. Then they used this excuse. They [Laman and Lemuel] said to him, "Behold, we cannot understand the words which our father hath spoken concerning the natural branches of the olive-tree, and also concerning the Gentiles." "And I said unto them: Have ye inquired of the Lord?" They said they hadn't tried because it wouldn't work if they did. So that's a self-fulfilling prophecy. It's like the old woman who prays for the hill to be removed from behind her house; she doesn't like it there. In the morning she gets up, looks out of the window, and says, "Hah, I knew it wouldn't move anyway." Well, that's her faith.

But don't make such a prize too cheap. He said to them, You don't just ask the Lord (paraphrased). Notice in verse 11 the things you have to do. First, don't harden your hearts (as they had). Make up your minds. Second, "ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive, with diligence in keeping my commandments, [then] surely these things shall be made known unto you." That's a routine very few people are willing to go through. Remember, in D&C 9:7-8 where the Lord tells Oliver Cowdery, You thought all you'd have to do was ask. No, you have to get the best answer you can yourself. Work it out in your own mind first to get the best solution you can. Do the best job you can on your own and then ask me [the Lord] if it is all right. If it's not all right, you will blank out on that subject; you will have a numbness of spirit. I'll let you know whether it is right or not [paraphrased]. So you have to do the work, and then you check with him. This is a nice way to do it. "Let him ask of God." You see how the gospel started out with Joseph Smith reading in James. "If any of you lack wisdom [what do you do?], let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering [doubting]." Well, that's something else if you are going to ask that way. I won't play then if I have to believe it already. St. Augustine wouldn't do that, you see. He starts out his *Confessions* by saying, "If I ask God whether he lives, then I assume that he does. Then I'm cheating; I shouldn't do that."

We have to hurry on here. Then they talk about the plasticity of the olive tree. That's referred to a great deal later on, so we will skip the olive tree right now and the things it does and the things it stands for. We'll go to the process that's working among the Gentiles. Verse 18: "Wherefore, our father hath not spoken of our seed alone, but also of all the house of Israel, pointing to the covenant which should be fulfilled in the latter days [those are the temple ordinances made now, and] the restoration of the Jews in the latter days. . . . Isaiah, who spake concerning the restoration of the Jews, or of the house of Israel; and after they were restored they should no more be confounded." (That means mixed up.) Then the brothers were pacified. Then they start asking about the tree. Verse 17 is very important. He wants the Gentiles to be in on it too. "What our father meaneth [is] that it will not come to pass until after they are scattered by the Gentiles; and he meaneth that it shall come by way of the Gentiles, that the Lord may show his power unto the Gentiles." The Lord is going to show his power to the Gentiles, too; they have to be in on the act. They are important to the theme. Nobody gets left out.

Then we come to the tree [verse 21], and it's explained briefly. You know what it is. The tree is the objective. It's the fruit, the light that saves you, the tree of life. And the iron rod is the means by which you get to it. You cling to that consistently. Hang on, keep walking, and don't let go. That's good. The river, which turns out to be filthy water, is the

alternative. If you don't make the effort to go to the tree, the water will catch you. If you don't hang to the iron rod, you'll get lost in the filthy water and swept away, as so many people were in those days. And there's the awful gulf between those on either side. That's the penalty if you don't make the effort. You'll end up on one side or the other. The penalty for making no effort at all, of course, is to be on the other side. That awful gulf is a real thing. You see, we don't compromise here. In this life nobody is on one side of the gulf or the other; nobody is safe home. You can always sin; everybody can. Nephi is going to make that very clear later on. On the other hand, nobody is completely damned because it's never too late to repent as long as you are in the flesh. So we are all in between now and making our choices one way or the other. The worst thing you can do is to assume that you have arrived on one side and your enemy is on the other side—that you're the "good guy" and he's the "bad guy." The whole Book of Mormon is to keep us in this "in-between state" where we are now. We are sort of balanced there. We find it harrowing and difficult. That's the whole thing; we are supposed to be enjoying the excitement of it.

Then we are told in verse 30 that a division is necessary. In verse 28 he talks about the "awful gulf, which separated the wicked from the tree of life, and also from the saints of God." It's between them, and that's the awful hell, etc. Verse 31: "And they said unto me: Doth this thing mean the torment of the body [this isn't just allegorical or spiritual; this thing is physical as well; you suffer physically in these things; you work mentally, but you also go through physical anguish and pain] in the days of probation [that's now], or doth it mean the final state of the soul after the death of the temporal body?" He says it means both, in the next verse. It represents both temporal and spiritual. There is no spiritual law that isn't temporal, and vice versa, "even the works which were done by the temporal body [right now] in their days of probation." These are the days when we are envied of the angels because we can choose between the one and the other. Their state is fixed for a time to come at least.

Then there is a final state when they are "brought to stand before God, to be judged of their works." If they are filthy, they will be filthy still. You can't just say, "I'm born again and that takes care of that." Verse 34: "There cannot any unclean thing enter into the kingdom of God; wherefore there must needs be a place of filthiness prepared for that which is filthy." So there are places for this and a final place to dwell. The wicked are rejected; that's it. Well, whether they have their chances or not, let's go on to the next verse where he continues to preach.

They say to Nephi, "Thou hast declared unto us hard things, more than we are able to [understand] bear." We don't like to admit this. Why should the struggle of life be so hard? Well, why should it not be hard when so much depends on it? The interesting thing we find out from Nephi very soon is that all preaching is to yourself. You are preaching to nobody but yourself. If I preach, I preach only to myself. You can see how that is here. Others may pick it up, as far as that goes. That's like teaching the point; that's all you do. You can't *teach* a person; that's not a transitive verb. You might *hit* a person or *see* a person, but you can't *teach* a person. What do you do when you teach a person? Well, the word for *teach* is *touch*, *tactile*, *didactic*. That's when you point to something. *Teach* is the same word as *touch*. It just means point the finger. All I can do is point. You look and then you see for yourself. I don't go directly from one person to another that way. So the teacher is just *didactic*. He teaches and points so others may pick it up. Nephi goes on preaching too, and later on he tells us in 2 Nephi that it's just himself he has been talking to all along anyway.

Verse 2: “I knew that I had spoken hard things against the wicked . . . [and that] the guilty taketh the truth to be hard.” If you were righteous, he says, you wouldn’t murmur; you would face the truth [paraphrased]. We hear a lot of this stuff today, don’t we. “They did humble themselves before the Lord; insomuch that I had joy and great hopes of them, that they would walk in the paths of righteousness.” They [the hopes] were to be dashed all right. So they went back to the tent in the settlement in the valley of Lemuel. The family had been living there a long time now. They got married there. Nephi took one of the daughters of Ishmael, and they all intermarried with the Arab family. Zoram married the eldest daughter of Ishmael. That shows you he was more advanced in age than some of the others. Then finally the time came to move. They had been there a long time, and the Lord ordered them to move. That night he got the commandment. The orders came through “that on the morrow he should take his journey into the wilderness.”

Now it is the *sirah*, as the Arabs say. I should have brought it along. The best parallel to Lehi in the wilderness is the *Sirat Beni Hilāl*. The *Beni Hilāl* were a tribe way back in pre-Islamic times who wandered clear from Central Asia way over to Morocco looking for a place to settle. They went by night so people wouldn’t see them, and they couldn’t build fires. They were constantly hiding, and they were suffering greatly for lack of food. It was the same as Lehi’s company. Remember, he tells us, “We didn’t build fires.” The Lord said, “I’ll be your light by night.” So [Nephi] said, “We didn’t cook our food; we ate raw food.” The *Beni Hilāl* tells you all those things. The title is *Sirat Beni Hilāl*. That means “the setting forth on the journey—the pulling up of stakes and getting going” because they were always going. In the books bearing the name of Abraham, the title is always *Lekh Lekha*. It means, “Get up and get going.” So Abraham is the one who gets up and gets going. He is always moving from place to place. He never settles; he never has a land of his own. He was the first Hebrew, which means “a person from the beyond, an uprooted person, a wandering person” as we are told in the book of Deuteronomy.

So they marry their wives, and he is ordered to move. Then he finds the Liahona in front of his tent. In 1961 I had an article in the *Ensign* [*The Improvement Era*] on this sort of thing. There are a lot of sources on this, but this new book had just come out. This writing of Professor Fahd really helps out here. Just a few notes from this to sum up here. A good deal is said about the Liahona in the Book of Mormon. We are not going to give it all here—just this summary.¹ First, the Liahona was a gift from God, and the manner of its delivery caused great astonishment. It was just found in front of his tent the next morning. Second, it was neither mechanical nor self-operating. It was not a mechanism but worked solely by the power of God and solely according to their faith. It wasn’t magic; a magic thing would work by itself. Third, it only worked in response to faith, diligence, and the heed of those who followed it. Fourth, there was something ordinary and familiar about it. It was called “the small means by which God worked.” It was not a mysterious, untouchable object. They called it “but a temporal thing.” It was so ordinary that there was a constant tendency of Lehi’s family simply to ignore it. They wouldn’t pay attention to it, whether it worked or not. According to Alma, their needless, years-long wanderings in the desert were because of the fact that they ignored it most of the time. Fifth, the working parts of the device were two spindles or pointers in a globe. On these, special writings would appear from time to time clarifying and amplifying the message of the pointers. (Remember, Lehi was terrified when he saw the writing on them that told him about these things.) The specific purpose of the traversing indicators was to point the

way they should go. The pointers were mounted in a brass sphere whose marvelous workmanship excited their wonder and admiration because instructions sometimes appeared on this ball too. The device was referred to descriptively as “a ball” functioning as an indicator, and in both senses it is called “a compass.” On occasion, it saved Lehi’s people from perishing by land and sea. We are told, “If they would but look on it, they might live.” And it was preserved for a wise purpose long after it had ceased to function; it was a museum piece. It had been prepared specifically to guide Lehi’s party to the Promised Land. It was a “type and a shadow,” he tells us, of man’s relationship to God during this earthly passage. We won’t go into Alma’s description here.

We will turn to Fahd’s new study of *belomancy*.² *Belos* is to throw anything—a ball etc. *Belomancy* is to divine or tell fortunes by throwing rods, sticks, jackstraws, or things like that. *Belomancy* is the practice of divination by shooting, tossing, shaking, or otherwise manipulating rods, darts, pointers, or other sticks—all originally derived from arrows. Over [thirty] years ago I wrote a long piece on “The Arrow, the Hunter, and the State,” in which I discussed the technique of arrow divination in the early time. It was read by every major anthropologist in the country, and they all approved it before it was published. It was a good article that came out in *Western Political Quarterly* way back in 1951; that was quite a while ago.³ Now Fahd has unearthed this evidence. He begins by pointing out that arrows used in divination were called *qidh* or *zalam*. *Zalam* is a common one. It’s a very interesting, ancient word which he practically discovered. The Arabs don’t put a *u* after the *q*. This arrow was called *qidh* or *zalam*. They didn’t have heads or feathers on them; they had been removed. They were just spindles, shafts, or pointers. Lane’s dictionary, which has many volumes, goes into the usual spiel about what a *zalam* (*azlām*) is. It means “divining.”

Quoting from Lane: “Arrows by means of which Arabs in the Time of Ignorance [that is before Islam] sought to know what was allotted to them: they were arrows upon which the Arabs in Time of Ignorance wrote ‘Command’ and ‘Prohibition’ [one of them said ‘go,’ and the other one said ‘start’] or upon some of which was written ‘My Lord hath commanded me’; and upon some ‘My Lord hath forbidden me’; or they were three arrows [he’s quoting from various Arabic writers here]; upon one of which was written, ‘My Lord hath commanded me’; [etc.] And the third was blank; and they put them in a receptacle, and took forth an arrow; and if the arrow upon which was ‘Command’ came forth, he went to accomplish the purpose; but if that upon which was ‘Prohibition’ came forth, he refrained; and if the blank came forth, they shuffled a second time. . . . [That was the joker, you see.] The *azlām* were arrows that belonged to the Kureysh.” It’s very interesting that in the Pearl of Great Price one of the figures representing the four tribes, under the couch there (the four quarters of the earth shown in Facsimile No. 2, Figure 6), represents the tribe of Kureysh. The Kureysh tribe was in existence at a very early time. It’s the oldest tribe, the tribe of Mohammed. [The arrows] belonged especially to the Kureysh “upon which were written, ‘He hath commanded,’ and ‘He hath forbidden,’ and ‘Do thou’ and ‘Do thou not’; they had been well shaped and made even, and placed in the Kaabeh [the holy shrine of Meccah] . . . and when a man desired to go on a journey, or marry, he came to the minister and said, ‘Take thou forth for me a *zalam*; and thereupon he would take it forth and look at it. . . . There were seven of the arrows thus called with the minister of Kaabeh, having marks upon them, and used for this purpose.”

Sometimes the man used two such arrows which he put into a sword case. When he desired to seek knowledge of what was allotted to him, he took forth one of them. But why arrows? Because, as we have shown elsewhere, the shooting of arrows is a universal form of divination, “as is evident in the prayers that the legendary heroes of the steppe—Finnish, Norse, Russian, Kazakh, Turkish, and Yakut—address to their three enchanted arrows.” When you shoot the arrow, you breathe a prayer on it; the Indians still do. It’s a miraculous thing. It will seek out what you want and show you the way to go. They use it in divination just as much as they do in hunting to show what you are supposed to do. That’s a very old background because the arrow possesses an uncanny power. It can kill at a distance and can give you a claim to the thing you shot at, if it has your marks on it.

The consultation of the arrows by one about to marry was the regular Jewish practice, too. The parties concerned would throw rods in the air, “reading their message by the manner of their fall; this, Gaster observes, is ‘tantamount’ to the shooting of arrows.” Other substitutes for shooting were shaking or drawing from a bag or quiver, “balancing on the finger, or spinning on a pivot.” Like this—which way does it point? Then we go into the New World version of this here: “the antetype . . . possibly of all the Indian dice games” is one in which the “arrows or darts are tossed . . . or shot . . . at an arrow tossed or shot to the ground so that they fall one across the other.” Say, that still survives in that dangerous game of long arrow, or something, where you throw the arrows and they are supposed to land in a ring. That’s supposed to be the old form of divinations, a murderous practice. Well, the Babylonians had the same thing, etc.

Then we go on [quoting from Dr. Nibley’s article]: All this shaking and tossing and shooting emphasizes the divinatory office of arrows as *pointers*, but along with that they also conveyed their message . . . by the *writing* that was on them. Fahd notes that “on arrows words were inscribed determining the object of the cleromantic consultation.” Whenever divination arrows are described, they are invariably found to have writing on them, like the Zuñi “word-painted arrows of destiny.” The arrow is used a great deal by the Indians with their painting on them and their symbols. They tell fortunes by them, of course. The Arabic proverb for “know thyself” is *abṣir waṣma qidḥika*, “Look at the mark upon your divination arrow.” A *wasma* is a mark you put on your camel. When they were made, they had their marks. It was a brand you put on your camel. It was a mark you put on your arrow so when you shot something, you could claim the thing that was shot because there was your mark. So it says, “Examine the mark on thy arrow.”

The other word in the proverb was *qidḥ*, defined by Lane as one of “two arrows used in *sortilege*.” The *qidḥ* is one of two arrows. The original, natural number of arrows used in divination seems to have been two. Even when the “magic three” were used, the third was usually a dud, a blank to which no lot was assigned except shake them again, try another fate. It’s the other two that do the work. There’s the Persian king with his *baresma*. The Jews draw the three boxwood lots to choose the scapegoat. But the Talmud says there were only two lots, and they were of boxwood or gold.

The reason for the two basic staves is apparent from their normal designation as “Command” and “Prohibition.” To this the priests at some shrines added a third arrow called the “Expectative”—“Wait and see!” (Let’s do it again). But the original arrangement was of *two* arrows designated advisability or inadvisability of a journey; they

were designated as “the *usfur* [Go ahead!] and the *ubqî* [Stay where you are!].” Our word *safari* comes from that; *usfur* means “proceed on the journey,” and the other, *ubqî*, means “stay put where you are.”

So you see from [Edward William] Lane it’s clear that the regular consultation of the arrows was [done] by those who were faced with travel problems. All the others were secondary. The patron of the caravans of the Hejaz from time immemorial was the archer god Abdal, “the lord of omens,” in his capacity as master of the arrows of divination. The inscriptions on the arrows themselves give top priority to travel: typical examples from various systems, which employ from two all the way to ten arrows, are “Go slow!” [drag your feet], “Speed up!” (*sāri*), “Water!” [that’s what you want; it just says *water* on it], “Stay where you are!” “Get moving!” or “You are in the clear.”

So it would be an obtuse reader who didn’t have spelled out for him the resemblance between the ancient arrow divination and the Liahona: two “spindles or pointers” bearing written instructions provide superhuman guidance for the travel in the desert. What more could you want? What is the relationship between them? I don’t know that we need to go into that at all, but we are dealing with a familiar thing here. On this the Book of Mormon is remarkably specific. Both Nephi and Alma go out of their way to insist that the Liahona did not work itself. It was not a magic thing, but worked only by the power of God. He used it to steer his ships, and he called it a *compass*. Well, it goes on and on. Incidentally, you can find that article in *The Improvement Era* for February 1961, page 87. But it’s an interesting thing that here we have Joseph Smith inventing the divination arrows of the Liahona.

And many people have dealt with the word *Liahona*. We had a teacher from Hebrew University here for a few years; in fact he bought a house in Provo. He was so fond of it he wanted to come and visit often. His name was Shunary. He never joined the Church, but the first thing that fascinated him was this name *Liahona*. He traced it back to the queen bee, the leader of bees swarming in the desert. When bees swarm, that’s *Liahona*. I took it from a different one.

Then this is an interesting thing too in the very next verse: “We did take seed of every kind.” Then it says they took their journey in “nearly a south-southeast direction [from that time forth] and we did pitch our tents again; and we did call the name of the place Shazer.” That’s an interesting one. We’ve got to put that one down, don’t we? *Shajar* is a clump of trees; it’s pronounced *shazer*, of course. It’s a group of trees in the desert. Well, naturally, the place they would park next would be where there were some trees, some water, etc. So they camped in a place call *Shazer*, “the trees” (lots going cheap). Here they went, as we said before. Joseph Smith said, “When they turned nearly straight east, it was at the nineteenth parallel.” Here’s the nineteenth. Of course, this would take them out to the Qara Mountains where you find trees. This is the standard shipbuilding place from ancient times in Arabia because they could find a special type of trees for ships—very good and very big. I have this book by the Hiltons here on that. So they came to Bountiful and they turned here.

I want to point this out here (this is Mecca near the coast, and this is Medina) because something happened along here. They were going in these mountains, and the mountains are considerable all the way. This is Saba down here. They cut clear of this because this was a rich kingdom at that time. We showed those skyscrapers. They knew about the

skyscrapers; they were down here. This is where Jasum and Shibam and all the great skyscraper cities were, down here in the Hadhramaut. So we have them going on. We may refer to this later.

Verse 14: “And we did go forth again in the wilderness, following the same direction, keeping in the most fertile parts of the wilderness, which were in the borders near the Red Sea.” We had those pictures of the underground rivers that flow along there and make more fertile parts of the wilderness, where you get the *rimth*. I don’t have one of those now. We can’t linger on the antiquities, but I think they give a very good backup to the lessons that follow. You could say, “The preaching was just Joseph Smith preaching, and an angel had nothing to do with it.” But when you get a record as full and as vivid as this, there’s something going on. Verse 16: “And we did follow the directions of the ball, which led us in the more fertile parts of the wilderness [near the Red Sea].”

His bow was made of fine steel, and he said, “I did break my bow.” In Palestine from time immemorial they only used composite bows. That’s why they considered it a miracle when Nephi made his bow. The composite bow has a handle of ivory or wood, and then it goes back like that. Well, in the drawings you see that it goes clear forward like this. Then you have to turn it way back to get plenty of draw on it. But it goes back like this when it is drawn like that (beautiful bow). And the metal parts were of bronze which doesn’t spring like steel, but steel is the best. Just in recent years it has been discovered that steel is as early known as anything at all—for obvious reasons. Steel is a mixture of iron and carbon. If you are using coal or wood or anything else and you have to get an awfully high temperature, you are going to get carbon mixed in with it. It won’t make inferior iron; sometimes it will make good steel. But anyway, we know they had it. We have those pictures of King Tut’s beautiful steel dagger from seven hundred years before. But they had steel bows, and they only used composite bows, which were metal. This part was bone, ivory, or wood. It wasn’t so demanding, you see. You could replace parts, etc. But he broke his steel bow, and that was bad. That meant that the family was going to starve because everybody depended on it.

Now Saxton Pope in his classical work called *Hunting with the Bow and Arrow* says the average bow is worth a hundred thousand shots. After that it loses its spring and you can’t use it anymore. Lehi [Nephi], who seemed to be a very capable fellow, must have been using his bow for years. It says that their bows had lost their springs, and that would happen. Notice in verse 21: “. . . the loss of my bow, and their bows having lost their springs.” As a result of this, they are very hungry. He returned without food and they suffered much. Now what happened? Now who is righteous? Who has a perfect faith? This is the nadir in their travels, you see. Verse 20: “And also my father began to murmur against the Lord his God [Lehi himself]; yea, and they were all exceedingly sorrowful, even that they did murmur against the Lord.” They were all murmuring against the Lord—not just Laman and Lemuel, but Lehi himself. We’ve got to watch these things. Verse 23: “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did make out of wood a bow, and out of a straight stick, an arrow; wherefore, I did arm myself with a bow and an arrow.” Then he asked the Liahona where he should go to find game, and he found it in the right place.

The reason I pointed out Medina there is that along the coast here there was a German baron called Julius Euting who wrote a classic work, and he hunted everywhere. The only place in Arabia where you can find very good hunting is in the mountains along here, especially Mount Jasum and Mount Azd. Well, this is very important because they are the

only places in Arabia where you can find nabî wood which is wood for bows. It makes excellent bows, but it is exceedingly rare. It's only found in the mountains right along here. This is where they would have been at that time, keeping in the mountains near the Red Sea. They came here and [their bows] lost their springs and all that. We don't know exactly where they were, but around the same area where you find the bow wood at Mount Jassum and Mount Azd, you also find very rich game—oryxes, mountain goats, everything you can imagine at the tops of the mountains. Of course, those creatures live up high. They don't live down in the desert, though the other day a Rocky Mountain sheep was seen in the hills just north of Mesquite of all places. I don't know whether it had gotten lost or not. So there was a place where he went to hunt. He says here that he made a bow out of wood, and out of a straight stick, an arrow. So he got the right wood and he got the arrow. That's where he would have had to get it. Then he asked where he should go to obtain it [the game]. Then his father looked on the ball and "he did fear and tremble exceedingly" because there was a new writing on them which was plain to read. So he went up into the top of the mountain—which is where you find this type of game, enough to feed the family—"according to the directions which were given upon the ball. . . . I did slay wild beasts, insomuch that I did obtain food for our families." How great was their joy when he stumbled into camp bearing this stuff, and "they did humble themselves before the Lord."

From that time they traveled nearly the same course. They kept that almost due east, slightly south, course. This is the way they did it. They would pitch their tents and tarry for a space of time. That's why it took them eight years. It was strenuous going, so they would tarry and rest. Verse 34: "Ishmael died, and was buried in the place which was called Nahom." The Arabic word *naḥama* means *to mourn*, so a place called *Nahom* would be the best place to bury him, wouldn't it?⁴ Then "the daughters of Ishmael did mourn exceedingly." And this is a characteristic of the Jews as well. (I left home the book I was going to read, for which I suppose you can be grateful.) But I assure you that it tells you in that book that whenever a person died among the ancient Arabs it was the daughters, and only the daughters, that had the privilege of mourning. Later on they hired professional male mourners, but in the early times that was unthinkable. It was the mothers and the daughters, but specifically the daughters, who mourned for the dead—both at the burial and at the funeral.

Then from mourning they went to murmuring. "You were to blame for all this" is what the daughters came around to. But you notice "that the daughters of Ishmael [following their Ishmael custom] did mourn exceedingly, because of the loss of their father." And, as I said, that reminded them of other things, and they murmured against Lehi for bringing this whole thing on them. "And thus they did murmur against my father, and also against me," he says in verse 36. They have it in for him too now. Laman and Lemuel are familiar with the practice of desert communities; everybody was. What we have in verses 36, 37, and 38 would come right out of the Dead Sea Scrolls, wouldn't it? This is the sort of thing they were doing. But we know from the Naḥal Ḥever, the caves there, that they were going back from very early times. Long before this fall of Jerusalem, people were fleeing to the caves and establishing communities in the wilderness to make straight His ways. After all, doesn't Isaiah say that? We will go into the wilderness, prepare a highway for the Lord, make straight his ways, etc.? That's what they were doing. This is what the people at Qumran said they were doing. And Nephi said in 1 Nephi 19:23, I read Isaiah to my people to compare them with us "that it might be for our profit and learning." I compared all the things in Isaiah with our own situation [paraphrased]. So this is one of those

recurrent scenarios. They are familiar with this going out in the desert to prepare when things are bad at Jerusalem.

Then they say, “Behold, let us slay our father, and also our brother Nephi [they are going pretty far], who has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, who are his elder brethren.” That’s what they couldn’t stand. The law of seniority is very strict among the Jews, and to give a firstborn second place to another was a grave offence. You might almost say that they were legally within their rights. I know some family cases that are very pointed on that. Laman and Lemuel say in verse 38, “He tells us these things, and he worketh many things by his cunning arts, that he may deceive our eyes, thinking, perhaps, that he may lead us away into some strange wilderness [some unoccupied patch of the desert to settle down and make their community where he can be the leader is the idea]; and after he has led us away, he has thought to make himself a king and a ruler over us, that he may do with us according to his will and pleasure. And after this manner did my brother Laman stir up their hearts to anger.” Now Laman leads it because he is the oldest and he felt that he should be the leader. He felt it all along. He is mortally offended by giving the job, not just to Lemuel, but at the time to the youngest son of all, Nephi, that he should be the leader.

So he [Laman] thinks it’s just like one of these where they go out into the desert and establish a community. You have “the Teacher of Righteousness,” and then there is “the Star” in the Dead Sea Scrolls. There’s also “the Teacher of the Lie” who leads another community, a wrong one. So these communities are always centered around a particularly strong leader. In the Book of Mormon you have Alma’s community and Ammon’s community, etc., around a particularly strong person.

Verse 39: “The voice of the Lord came and did speak many words unto them, and did chasten them exceedingly [well, how? It was through Lehi or Nephi] and after they were chastened by the voice of the Lord they did turn away their anger, and did repent of their sins.” What would make them do that? Well, it is obvious what happened. Nephi revealed their plot; he deflated Laman. Laman was the leader, and he was trying to stir them up. When he was exposed in what he was up to (even patricide and that sort of thing), then he had gone too far. Then he was definitely deflated. It was a very shameful thing which he proposed, when they thought it over. So they “did repent of their sins, insomuch that the Lord did bless us again with food, that we did not perish.”

Then we come to a very interesting statement here [at the beginning of chapter 17]: Again, they went nearly eastward and waded through much affliction. That “nearly eastward” meant the Rub^c al-Khālī, the worst desert in the world. It’s worse than the Sahara, as a matter of fact. There are some good spots in the Sahara, but the Rub^c al-Khālī has nothing. You can believe that they waded through much affliction going through there. Verse 2: “We did live upon raw meat in the wilderness.” They had to preserve it. It was dried, raw meat—the game he got in the mountains probably that they kept with them. But their women were strong, and they still had children. This is a noted phenomenon among Bedouin women. They do all the work. They pitch the tents, they make the fires, they do the cooking, they do everything. They are amazingly strong.

Here’s a reflection that is very important in the third verse. Nephi uses this teaching on a number of occasions, and he says here: “And if it so be that the children of men keep the commandments of God he doth nourish them, and strengthen them, and provide means

whereby they can accomplish the thing which he has commanded them; wherefore, he did provide means for us while we did sojourn in the wilderness.” We once had to memorize that passage where Nephi says, I will go and do what the Lord commandeth because he doesn’t command if you can’t do it [paraphrased]. But here it says if the Lord has given you commandments and you make the effort, he will be responsible and provide the means. So we can’t get out of things like the Word or Wisdom, or tithing, or even the Law of Consecration by saying, “Well, it’s not very workable now, so we’ll put it off for a while. It might work then. We’ll defer it to a later time.” The Lord says, “I will make it possible to do that thing if you will make a real effort.” We haven’t made a real effort on so many things.

Question: The term “sojourn in the wilderness,” is that any kind of unusual wording?

Answer: *Séjourner* means *to spend a day or two in a place*. The words they used are *bāta*, *yabîtu*; it’s a very interesting word too. It’s our word *bide*. So many of those words are the same as we have in English, but they don’t have them in any Germanic or Indo-European language. The Egyptians have them, we have them, the Hebrews have them—words like *bide*. Our word is *booth*; you *abide* in a *booth*. A booth is something you put up just to stay in for the night; it’s a temporary house thrown together because you *bide* there. In “Abide with Me, Tis Eventide,” you ask him to abide. It means just a temporary stay; it’s a *mansio*.

Question: Does that make sense to you in this context that they are *sojourning* in the wilderness?

Answer: Well, wherever you are not staying forever, you are sojourning. If you ever intend to move on, it’s just a sojourn. We are just sojourning here, as far as that goes. It means to stay for a while but not permanently. That’s something else. I hope we don’t have to sojourn in the celestial kingdom, but I’m glad we just have to sojourn here.

Notice [in verse 3]: “He did provide the means for us while we did sojourn in the wilderness.” I know people who have used so much clever and sophisticated math on their tithing as if the Lord couldn’t provide the means if they just went ahead and paid it. And here’s a key statement in the verse 4: “And we did sojourn for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness. And we did come to the land which we called Bountiful.” I showed these pictures before of the Qara Mountains. Here are some pictures of the woods in the distance. They are nice and flourishing where you don’t expect them. When Captain Bertram Thomas came out and discovered them from the desert side as recently as 1930, it completely bowled him over. Nobody expected anything like that would be there. All of a sudden there it is. We have some phenomena here like that. You come upon a thing that you never expected, like Havasu down in the Grand Canyon. Years ago there was nothing there. It was an Indian place, no camps or anything there. But when you came upon that, it was just staggering. It’s the same sort of thing here. Well, anyway there was the land Bountiful and the wild honey. “And we beheld the sea, which we called Irreantum, which, being interpreted, is many waters.” There’s a very important Egyptian writing that was read in all the temples every morning in which that name *Irreantum* was used for *the sea*. It’s a very interesting name, but we won’t go into it.

And they stayed in Bountiful for many days. They didn't know they were going to sail; they thought they had reached a happy land. Now, this was a place where they could really have a community. They could really get something going here—eight years away from anybody else. Nephi could really take over if that was his idea. Then came the thunderbolt: “The Lord spake unto me, saying: Thou shalt construct a ship.” What? *me* construct a ship? he says [paraphrased]. He didn't know anything about ships. Then he asked: “Whither shall I go that I may find ore to molten, that I may make tools to construct the ship after the manner which thou hast shown unto me?” There was no time to experiment; he went straight ahead with it. The Lord told him where he could find the ore because he couldn't waste time exploring. Then he made a bellows; he knew about that. Remember, how the boys admire the fine workmanship on the handle of Laban's sword. They are connoisseurs of precious things. They had precious things of gold, bronze, etc. (the Brass Plates). They were struck by the beautiful workmanship on that brass ball etc. As a rich merchant in the Orient, the one thing you would understand is the value of precious metals and good workmanship. They recognized it. You can't work with metals without a bellows, and he would certainly know about that and how to make it. They did it very well. Verse 12: “For the Lord had not hitherto suffered that we should make much fire, as we journeyed in the wilderness.” That was because it would give away their position. Remember, they were always moving. Until they got to the Rub^c al-Khālī, they were always moving through occupied territory and they were always trespassing. That's why the Arabs are always raiding and always at war. They are always killing each other, and they always have to have the *ghazw*. Our wordy *raze* comes from that. It's your sacred obligation to raid and plunder the camp of anybody whom naturally you consider is trespassing on your land, which they can show by tribal records was really their land a long time back. So this goes on forever. So you don't build much fire. This is made very clear by Doughty and other writers on the subject. Whenever you are traveling in any dubious territory, either by day or night, don't make fire because the Lord said, “I will be your light in the wilderness; and I will prepare the way before you, if it so be that ye shall keep my commandments” (verse 13). So you don't give yourself away by the smoke or by the light.

Time is up, but there is a book by the Hiltons [*In Search of Lehi's Trail*]. It tells us here what happened. In order to trace Lehi's trail, the challenge was given to Dr. Lynn Hilton and his wife Hope by the *Ensign* magazine. They asked him to do this, and they financed the tour. But they didn't have to because he opened a pump company in Cairo to sell mostly pumps to the Arabs over there. This was an excuse to get him into the country because it is all forbidden if you are not a Moslem. You can't go into Oman; that's all closed country. But as the head of a pump-selling outfit, which was in considerable demand among the Arabs and Sheiks, he could get himself into these lands and take this trip in search of Lehi's trail. He went to all that trouble just so he could trace Lehi's trail.⁵ We'll have to go now, but anyway he says here that he was asked to do that. “They traveled extensively in the Middle East and have a business interest there [that's the pump company]. We asked them to follow the steps of Lehi from Jerusalem to the land called Bountiful, if you can discover where it might have been.” Their adventures were published in [the *Ensign*] in 1976, beginning in October. They went and traveled, and they had some marvelous experiences. They followed right down along the coast and finally got to the place where they build boats. It's interesting that they build them now the way they have always built them. After all, we have very accurate pictures of boats, both Asiatic boats and Nile boats. For example, a famous ivory knife handle from the First Dynasty of Egypt shows a battle between those boats very vividly, and how they were made. Some

were made without using any nails at all by lashing them together with hemp, which you can get from those trees, incidentally. The other was made by metal. But, remember, he [Nephi] had a forge, and he had metals. He could have used nails and bolts to hold his ship together. But it was a new kind, and the men were very much impressed when they saw it because there is nothing that impresses a person like a well-made boat. We'll have to discuss that later, and we'll have to go faster than this too, won't we, before we get to the heavy stuff?

1. Taken from Brother Nibley's book *Since Cumorah*, CWHN 7 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988), 253–55.
2. Ibid., 255–59.
3. Reprinted in Hugh W. Nibley, *The Ancient State*, CWHN 10 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991), 1–32.
4. Cf. Warren and Michaela Aston, "The Place Which Was Called Nahom: The Validation of an Ancient Reference to Southern Arabia," FARMS paper, 1991.
5. Cf. Warren and Michaela Aston, "And We Called the Place Bountiful: The End of Lehi's Arabian Journey," FARMS paper, 1991.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 15
1 Nephi 17–19, 22
Toward a Promised Land

Now, we've got the seventeenth chapter, the seventh verse, when the Lord says, you will make a boat—"Thou shalt construct a ship." He didn't have time to scout around for the necessary metals. The Lord told him, I can tell you where to get them. We said they were adept in ores—where to find ores, and how to make the bellows.

We were talking about Lynn and Hope Hilton's book,¹ where they followed the supposed trail of Lehi down here, and they came to Jiddah which is on the coast, halfway down. That's the port of Mecca, where you go to Mecca, and he tells us that there is a branch of the Church of about 75 members in Jiddah (on the coast of Arabia) today—I didn't know that. And they make ships there and they make them at other places. There's one at Yenbu, one at Jiddah, and one at Salalah down in the south in the Qara Mountains—that's where they make ships. It's most marvelous the way they do it, as Brother Hilton tells us here (pp. 85–86):

We saw men carving planks by hand, shaping the keel and the bow with hand-operated drills in the same fashion as their fathers and grandfathers had done. There was no electric power nor any modern tools. Such machinery as power saws, band saws, electric drills, and pneumatic hammers were conspicuously absent; all we saw were hand-operated woodworking, and iron-working tools, and they all looked handmade as well. We saw an adz, a sharpened iron blade used to hew lumber to specific shapes. We observed local shipwrights using this tool to carve huge logs to the desired shapes for keels and ribs. We noted wooden and iron hammers and chisels used to skin off bark, clean up the tree limbs, and notch the ends so the logs would fit perpendicular to the keel. We observed axes used to rough out basic shapes from tree trunks or limbs before the adz finished each job to the exact shape desired.

He describes the hand-operated drill:

[It] was the most interesting tool. . . . A hardwood spindle had been turned on a hand-powered lathe, and a hardwood cap, or handle, was carved to fit over the spindle so the spindle would rotate freely inside the hammer. A wrought-iron bit or point . . . had been carefully hammered out with a blacksmith's forge [these things were just hammered out over the forge, and the tools were all made on the spot; they were made from native iron and they banged them out and made marvelous ships] (p. 86).

See, the Arab dhows sailed thousands of miles and can sail around the world without any trouble. Well, he says: "All of these tools described plus others we saw . . . were mentioned in the Old Testament long before Lehi's day" (p. 86). Then he lists the various passages in the Old Testament.

From other sources we learn of shipbuilding in this area at least a thousand years before Lehi's time. Drawings and sculptures convince us the style, shape, and size of present Arab dhows are [exactly like those they used to make. After thousands of years why should you change it if you have a good form that's efficient. They could make these things with their eyes closed]. . . . We marveled at the shipbuilder's skill. When they shaped each rib of their ship, they carefully chose a tree limb that bent naturally to the curve they wished and outlined the exact shape, chipping away with a small hand ax or adz. They preserved the natural bent of the wood, using their feet and toes to hold it as they worked. As we gazed out at the Red Sea, we wished that Nephi had included a few more details in his account [well, he doesn't need to] (p. 87).

As far as making the trip, we'll get to the journey here in a second. We talked about not making fire, etc. Now when his brothers saw he was going to build a ship, this was it. They thought, we really have him now; he'll make a complete fool of himself. Verse 18: "They did not believe that I could build a ship." Now you'll notice this. This is where all their pent-up frustrations came out. They rejoiced and they said, We knew you could not construct a ship, ha, ha, ha [paraphrased]. But notice, Nephi himself was bowled over. He first of all said, I don't know how to make ship. [The Lord said], I'll show thee. Verse 9: "And I said: Lord, whither shall I go that I may find ore to molten that I may make tools?" He didn't expect to make this journey—nobody did. They weren't going to cross the water. They hadn't dreamed of that, as we saw in the other verses on the preceding page. They thought they were going out into some strange wilderness where they would establish a community and Nephi would make himself king and ruler over them in the manner of the companions of the cave or of the various sectaries. This had been going on as we saw in the Nahal Hever for thousands of years, doing the usual things. They thought he was going to be another "the Star" or "the Teacher of Righteousness,"—the kinds of various teachers that lead these communities. The Teacher of Righteousness was the one up in Qumran. The Star was the name for the leader at Damascus, etc. So they never dreamed they would have to cross the water. This was something that really bowled them over.

So they rejoiced over him and thought, we have him now. You're just as bad as our father, they say in verse 20. Laman and Lemuel are interesting types, you notice—they're complicated characters. If you could find all the references to them, you would find that they have a case going for them, and they are typical. I was just reading something before I came here (I should have brought it along)—the famous Eldad ha-Dani and his search for the Ten Tribes of the ninth century, because he comes across this area and he talks about these people here in a very interesting way, about their temperament, etc.

"Thou art like unto our father. . . . [verse 21] Behold, these many years we have suffered in the wilderness." Now, would you say that they had a legitimate gripe? Well, from their point of view I think they certainly did. They said, And the worst of it is, we didn't leave a wicked Jerusalem. Those people were keeping the laws; they were religious. They were the official church. The people of Jerusalem were a righteous people; "they kept the statutes and judgments of the Lord and all of his commandments, according to the law of Moses; wherefore we know they are a righteous people; and our father hath judged them, and hath led us away" into this wilderness when we might have been enjoying ourselves all this time. What's the point of having all that wealth if we can't use it?

Then Nephi gives them a lecture on the past, of what happened and the necessity of being Rechabites—that they should be brought into bondage. Israel, if they didn't move, would be brought into bondage. And they hardened their hearts and blinded their minds. He [the Lord] would destroy them and He did lead them as the case may be. Now this is a very important statement he makes here, speaking in verse 33 of chapter 17: "Do ye suppose that the children of this land, who were in the land of promise [see, the whole land had been occupied by Arabs, Amorites, etc.—all related and all speaking closely related languages; closely related to Hebrew, too—the Ebla Tablets show that], who were driven out by our fathers, do you suppose that they were righteous?" If they were righteous, they would have been the chosen people, he says. Our fathers were chosen for that time, but they weren't righteous very long, he says. "Do you suppose that our fathers would have been more choice than they if they had been righteous? I say unto you, Nay." Then in the verse 35, "Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one [they could have been the chosen people—blood has nothing to do with it]; he that is righteous is favored of God." And who is righteous in the Book of Mormon? There's a very simple definition of righteousness in the Book of Mormon, as in the book of Ezekiel. He was righteous because he was repentant, and a person who is not repenting is a person who is not righteous. That's all there is to it, because we're all wicked and we all need to repent all the time. "Say nothing but repentance to this generation [See D&C 6:0]." The first word of the Lord to the Nephites was, This is my gospel that the Father calleth upon all men everywhere to repent [See 3 Nephi 11:32]. You have to do that. And as Ezekiel tells us, if a person has been righteous all his life but he's not repenting any more, he's wicked. Of course, he may have been wicked all of his life, and if he's repenting now, he's righteous. It makes no difference. So, always repent, always keep repenting. We'll see what repentance is later on; that's easy enough to get to.

And now we come to that very important doctrine of the promised land—the curse and the blessing. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, the *berākāh* is never mentioned without the *qelālāh*. The *berākāh* (the blessing) always goes with the *qelālāh* (the cursing). That is the penalty clause that goes with it. If you sign a contract, it gives you a big advantage. You're not free to break the contract. There's a penalty if you break it commensurate with the gain you would get if you kept it. There has to be a balance there. You have to be willing to run a risk in the same thing. If you're going to get the promised land and you're going to enjoy the benefits of it, you'd better watch out because if you don't live up to the terms of the contract, you're going to be "in the soup." And this is the doctrine here. The earth is adapted to man's pleasure and convenience. Verse 36: "Behold, the Lord hath created the earth that it should be inhabited; and he hath created his children that they should possess it [we're supposed to be here]. And he raiseth up a righteous nation, and destroyeth the nations of the wicked [he's not going to tolerate the abuse of the earth very long.] And he leadeth away the righteous into precious lands [gives them the best possible land and the wicked he gets rid of] . . . and curseth the land [the same land] unto them for their sakes." The land is precious—it is not to be abused. And he says he curses the land for their sake. The earth is his footstool, and there is a connection between heaven and earth. He rules "high in the heavens . . . and this earth is his footstool," he says in verse 39 here. So, this is the basic and fundamental principle of the promised land. They're going to a promised land, you see. This is the understanding on what they are going there for.

He [the Lord] brought them out of the land of Egypt, which wasn't their land, and they hardened their hearts (they always did), as 1 Nephi 17:42 notes also, "And they did harden

their hearts from time to time, and they did revile against Moses, and also against God,” and he led them forth to a land of promise. You notice, the environment does make a difference. I mean, the ambience we live in is conditioned by our own behavior. You’ll always find that. When a vile, greedy gang of people move into a place or settlement, it can become hideous. All the beauty of the frontier [was affected by this as you can see] in something like Mark Twain’s *Roughing It* (the descriptions of crossing the plains, etc.), or Orson Pratt’s [writings], or James Fenimore Cooper’s novel called *Home as Found*. The frontier villages of America within just a year or two became garbage dumps. It is shocking what they became. Mark Twain described all the stopping stations along the way when he crossed the country in a stagecoach. There were just accumulations of filth. It’s amazing—the environment reflects the people. So heaven is an ambience. It’s an environment as well as a state of mind as far as that goes, and so is hell. They’re going to create an environment, and this environment is very important. It reflects on us.

Verse 42: “They were led forth by his matchless power into the land of promise. And now, after all these things, the time has come that they have become wicked [the Jews—after all these things] nearly unto ripeness.” How much longer did they have to last? Three more years, wasn’t it. They [Nephi’s family] had been wandering for eight years, Nephi says, and Jerusalem was destroyed eleven years after they left. So they had three more years to go at Jerusalem—a winding up. And he tells them about Laman and Lemuel. He says, “Ye are murderers in your hearts and ye are like unto them” because you thought of murdering your father, and that’s not very good. And then he tells them, if you don’t hear one voice, you’ll have to hear the other. Notice, he tells us the same thing in the nineteenth chapter. He says, “Ye have seen an angel . . . and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but you were past feeling [notice you feel the voice]; wherefore [for that reason], he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder.” If they wouldn’t hear the gentle voice, they would get the thunder, and it knocked them out. It scared the daylights out of them. The same thing happens in the 1 Nephi 19:11: “For thus spake the prophet: The Lord God surely shall visit all the house of Israel at that day, some with his voice, because of their righteousness, unto their great joy and salvation, and others with the thunderings and the lightnings of his power” because they’re not righteous. You have your choice of the voice you’re going to hear. Will it be a good one, or will it be the other one? The voice of thunder will get you moving all right. And so you have the two voices here. Remember, the angel spoke with a voice of thunder, and the earth shook too at the same time.

Oh, Nephi’s passion here! He is really worked up in verse 47: “Behold, my soul is rent with anguish because of you. My frame has no strength [and then he’s filled with strength]. Touch me not, for I am filled with the power of God [now he really gets going, and he frightens them] . . . for God had commanded me that I should build a ship. And I said unto them: If God had commanded me to do all things I could do them.” And you know that people under stress do marvelous things. Once there was a giant bully of the frontier, the best wrestler there was going. He came and started making trouble in Nauvoo when Joseph Smith was walking in the street with Lyman Wight. Joseph said to Lyman, “You throw that man.” Well, Lyman Wight was an ordinary guy, and Joseph Smith said to him, “Just throw that man.” So Lyman Wight took him and threw him clear over his head. When he landed he nearly broke his neck. So if you have to do something, you can do it if you’re filled with the Spirit. And you know cases of women who have lifted cars when they’ve fallen on children and things like that—phenomenal strength under certain stress. Nephi felt that way. You’ve had that feeling when you could do almost anything. Besides that, Nephi was an overpowering person. Remember, he had a lot of practice with these

fellows, and they were confounded. They durst not do this lest he should wither them. They didn't know what would happen, "so powerful was the spirit of God."

Verse 53: "And . . . the Lord said unto me: Stretch forth thine hand again unto thy brethren, and they shall not wither before thee, but I will shock them, saith the Lord." So there's an electric force here. What is it? St. Elmo's Fire—something like that. He gives them a shock, and that's all; it's enough to give them a jolt. Well, we're talking about natural phenomena, but remember, in the 1820s when this was written, who knew anything about shocks of an electrical nature, etc.? They had Leyden jars, but that wasn't enough to shock you much. "It is the power of the Lord that has shaken us," they felt, and so they yielded to him. They go to the other extreme—they were about to worship him. (Now wait a minute—make sense here.) They've done that before; remember, when he was unbound when they were coming back from Jerusalem. They bowed down to him and begged his pardon—and here they're about to worship him. You notice, weak people always go to extremes. This is characteristic, but it's also characteristic of the Arabic nature to go to extremes. And this is so characteristic. Years ago, at the little Philadelphia Hotel down the hill in a ditch below Amman there, they were doing some digging and excavating around there. It was at the time Nasser was controlling things. We were staying upstairs with two other people, and we were the only Americans in Amman—or the only foreigners at all. At 3:00 o'clock in the morning came this howling mob. Well, I thought it was a Mohammedan festival, so I came out and congratulated them, etc., and went back to bed and went to sleep. In the morning they told me it was really a riot that was stirred up by the agents, and they had to send two tanks down from the palace to get rid of them. But the thing is the next morning I went out and the same guys were all digging on the excavations out there. We laughed and joked together, and I asked them if I could take a picture. They said, "Sure you can take a picture." They told me about their families, and we were the best of friends, just like that. They were going to tear down the hotel and burn us and everything else. Well, these things happen quite often, you know.

Another interesting thing happened at Amman. Mrs. Vestor's son had been a very close friend of Lawrence of Arabia. They were in charge of the American colony there at Jerusalem—which was in Jordan at that time—and he was getting along in years. But his brother was in charge of the water works at Amman, and of course there is no water in Amman. But after the war they got a big loan and they put some fancy apartment houses all over with toilets—high rises and everything in Amman. Then a mob went through the city and smashed every toilet in the city. He said, "It was a good thing because we didn't have a drop of water." This modern innovation was too much; they just wanted to smash them. So we went to Musa Bey Allaby farm. We had to stay there a week. That's the main reason we were there, to visit. It is right down on the Jordan, right at the mouth where it enters the Dead Sea. And just a week before a mob had come down from Jericho and killed 3,000 chickens—tore them all to bits. Why they did it, I don't know. But the people were very friendly there after that, though there were armed guards around everywhere. So these people do go to extremes. And remember the Zoramites in the Book of Mormon who were so wicked that they turned Alma's stomach? He couldn't stand them. Yet they were [appeared to be] the most righteous people; they were the most saintly people you could possibly imagine. They said, "We thank thee that we are not like other people. We thank thee that we are a blessed people." And yet he said he never in his life had seen such wickedness. Well, these things go together. Weak people go to extremes both of righteousness and of wickedness at the same time. That's the way they balance the books, you see. Well, we are neither one. We are neither righteous nor wicked all the way, so we

go between. So, they were about to worship him, and he said, Don't bother about me; "honor thy father and thy mother."

And then he showed them how to make the ship—how to work the timbers, etc., as we saw. It's very interesting. It's the natural way; they've been doing it for thousands of years. Of course, they knew about that much. He had seen it done, but doing it was something else. You have to be an expert. It's inherited, etc. After the manner which the Lord showed him, he made this ship. Then he went often to the mount to pray for instructions, and the Lord showed him great things. And when the brethren saw the ship was finished, they were really impressed. This first-class piece of work had more effect on them, I'm sure, than any sermons by Nephi. He had actually made a ship, and it was a functional ship. It must have been a beauty, and it must have been nice to look at, too. He said [in verse 4] "My brethren beheld that it was good, and that the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine [it was a beautifully built ship]; wherefore, they did humble themselves again before the Lord." That would convince them if nothing else would—that he produced this ship. And so they all went into the ship, everyone according to age (Jacob and Joseph having been born in the wilderness), and they were driven by the wind "for the space of many days."

Incidentally, they also traced the sea routes, and this is an important thing too. How would they get across? They had an awful lot of water to cross. Remember, they go from the coast here [explains locations on map]. This is the Qatar peninsula here. But this is where they go from. These are the Qara Mountains, you see, and this is Jiddah down here. This is the nineteenth parallel. They come down here, they go across here, and this is called Salalah today. And it's the place where you get the best ship-making wood. They tell us about this. In Salalah is where it grows wild. He [Hilton] described the Qara Mountains here as the place where they would have come out, if Joseph Smith was right about it. He says here, "In Salalah we confirmed the fact that the monsoons, which fill the Qara Mountains with life-giving moisture during the summer, also provide Salalah with a trade wind that could have taken the ship toward the Pacific" (p. 114), the trade winds which the Arabs discovered and used in ancient times in the sixth century. They go from the Northeast in the fall and winter, and then they come from the Southwest. This is the one they would follow in the spring and summer. And when they discovered the trades, they could go one way. They were prevailing winds; they kept going. All during the season they would take you this way from Malibar, from India, etc., and from the other half of the world they take you back again. So they could import the treasures of the Orient, and this is what Columbus was after, among other things.

The Hiltons tell us here the "Arab entrepreneurs were sailing their dhows all the way from the Arabian peninsula to China. Arab ships rode the monsoons to the Malibar Coast of India, then on to Ceylon in time to catch the summer monsoon (June to September) and speed across the often treacherous Bay of Bengal, past the Nicobar Islands, through the Malacca Straits, and into the South China Sea. From here they were able to make a quick, if risky, thirty-day run up the main trading station at Canton in China. The trip from the Arabian peninsula to China took approximately 120 days." Now once they emerged from the Malacca Straits into the open, they could go the southern route or they could go the northern route. The Jaredites went the northern route, and they [Lehi's family] probably went the southern. Sometimes blown completely off course, they "would end up in the Pacific 'where, the Chinese believed, the drain spout of the world's ocean sucked the unwary sailor into oblivion'" (pp. 114–15).

Cleland and Chapman, in their old classic history of California, listed quite a number of incidences in which oriental Chinese dhows were wrecked. On the Santa Barbara Islands many Chinese artifacts have been found from dhows that were wrecked. When you get caught in the Japan current, you get carried right along the great circle there, inside of land almost all the way. But they didn't go that way; they crossed the Pacific the other way, and then the reverse. It depends on which stream you get into. So, he says, all of these records date from at least 500 years after Lehi's party left Arabia (the records of the journeys), but he [Hilton] concludes here: "On the coast of Salalah, we believe that we found the end of Lehi's trail from Jerusalem to Bountiful. We discovered no contradictions, no absurdities in the record Lehi had left behind him. Nothing that we discovered in the volumes on geography and history contradicted that ancient prophet" (p. 115).

So they could get caught up and taken across, and that was that. You remember that they got caught in a typhoon or a hurricane. It lasted for days, and the ship nearly sank. They got caught in a hurricane, but I don't know what they would name it. Hurricane Sarah, or something like that. But it nearly wrecked the ship, and they had a terrible time. That was on the South Pacific, going across, where they have some beauties. And also touching at the islands is another thing, but we won't go into that. That's another record. So they sailed for the space of many days.

Now this is a character sketch. They liked to have parties; they were great party people, Laman and Lemuel, you know. Well, they say that. They enjoyed the rich things of Jerusalem, their friends, etc. They began "to make themselves merry, insomuch as they began to dance, and to sing, and to speak with much rudeness, yea, even that they did forget by what power they had been brought thither." Now, Joseph Smith says that rudeness is a sin. *Reverentia* (reverence) is reverence for anything—there is no reason for being rude. We must hold nobody or nothing in contempt. We must never do that because we don't know the values of things; we don't know how to evaluate at all. As the Romans say, "Everything must be *rite, recte, parem solemniter*—done ritually, rightly, and with proper solemnity." In Joseph Smith's famous address to the brethren he said, "You've been acting like a lot of children. We must be more serious minded about this thing. The things of God are of great import. O man, your mind must be stretched as far as eternity, and you must ponder these things in great seriousness and think about them [paraphrased]. It doesn't mean you have to be solemn all the time—nobody laughed more than Joseph Smith. But that's a different thing from vain and empty laughter. As we're told in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the hollow, silly laughter doesn't mean anything. Brigham Young gave a talk on that at the dedication of the Salt Lake Theatre. [That kind of laughter] is not good. Rudeness is a sinful sort of thing. It is treating the world disrespectfully."

Verse 10: "And I, Nephi, began to fear exceedingly lest the Lord should be angry with us [for the way we were behaving]. . . . Wherefore, I, Nephi, began to speak to them with much soberness [now this would make them just madder, wouldn't it?]; but behold they were angry with me." What do you expect by now, after all the lecturing they'd been getting from him? This is the last straw as far as they're concerned: "We will not that our younger brother shall be a ruler over us." So they tied him up with cords, and tight, so much that he couldn't move. And the compass ceased to work. Then came the typhoon, and they were driven back for three days. On the fourth day it looked as if they're going to founder, and were about to be "swallowed up in the depths of the sea," so they loosed

his hands. His wrists and ankles were terribly swollen. But you notice the sons of Ishmael had joined them.

As I said, I was just reading in Nathan Ha-Babli. In the ninth century he went to look for the Ten Tribes. They often did that, you know. The Jews sent out expeditions, and his was the most famous one. He talks about going down this coast here, and he says all up here is a mixture of Manasseh and Ephraim. He says the most notable thing about them is their ill nature and their dangerous short tempers. You stay away from them, he says. But they're mixed with the children of Ishmael, meaning the Arabs, the same mixture you get in the Book of Mormon. You get Ephraim, Manasseh, and Ishmael all mixed up around here. He says they're marvelous at tracking and finding things in the desert, and he says they also cultivate the Arabian horses. He says they're remarkable people. What they're doing down there, he doesn't know. Then he goes into various parts, into Africa and Central Asia—he gets around looking for the Ten Tribes. But down here he's got Book of Mormon people he's dealing with—that generic mixture. The sons of Ishmael breathed out threatenings against Nephi's parents. Then “they were brought down, yea, even on their sick beds.” I imagine with a typhoon in any kind of a boat you'd be on your sick bed most of the time; I know I would. It was a sad journey, though, as far as this goes. I love this mixture of metaphors here—it's very Oriental too. In verse 18 he says they were about “to lie low in the dust; yea, even they were near to be cast with sorrow into a watery grave.” That would be what Hamlet calls “muddy death,” wouldn't it? “Dragged the poor wretch and her melodious song down to muddy death.” (If you mix the water, the dust, and the watery grave, you're going to get mud—that's a joke.) The point is, we would not think of going down into the dust and a watery grave at the same time, but that's eloquent poetry. The contrast is a strong, skillful literary device—to put dust and water into contrast that way.

Verse 19: “My children did not soften the hearts of my brethren that they would loose me [that didn't work—then]. When they saw that they were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea they repented of the thing which they had done, insomuch that they loosed me.” Then he took the compass, and it worked, and he steered them back. And they landed with all these seeds and their preparations, etc. Remember, most of the plants in most of the countries of the world had been transplanted there in prehistoric (other) times. It's very interesting, of course, the geography of plants—where you find them and where you don't. Verse 23: “And it came to pass that . . . we did arrive at the promised land.” And they set out there. They were certainly seasoned explorers and survivors by this time. They could go through anything. He says here that as they journeyed in the wilderness they noticed all sorts of things. They knew what they could use and what they couldn't use. They were prepared for this sort of thing. They were literary people, but after eight years of practice they knew a good deal about surviving and didn't waste any time exploiting and exploring the land.

In chapter 19 he's talking about his writing on the plates, etc. In verse 10 he talks about the prophets Zenock and Neum, and the prophet Zenos. It's a very interesting thing. “He spake concerning the three days of darkness . . . unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea, more especially given unto those who are of the house of Israel.” Notice, he's much taken with the isles of the sea here. Notice right across the page in verse 16, “Yea, then will he remember the isles of the sea” again and “all the people who are of the house of Israel,” the same phrase. Verse 11: “The Lord God surely shall visit all the house of Israel at that day, some with his voice [again you see, either the thunderings or with his gentler voice]. . . . And all these things must surely come, saith the prophet Zenos.” Now, who

was Zenos, the prophet? We have a discourse on Zenos here which we won't spend much time with, but he's an interesting character, Zenos or Zenez. His name appears in both forms. Zenos looks like a Greek name, doesn't it? But it isn't; with an x it would be. Twelve times the Book of Mormon names the prophet Zenos. There's no mention of him in the Bible—we have no record of him anywhere, not until around 1906 when he was found. The people of Lehi had brought his writings from Jerusalem, and they were popular, for preachers living hundreds of years after expected people to remember passages of his words—Jacob and Alma. Now how could an important prophet like Zenos, if he ever existed, simply drop out of sight?

Well, in 1893, M. R. James published Greek and Latin versions of an ancient text² entitled "The Vision of Zenez, the Father of Gothoniel." It says that the father of Gothoniel, the Othniel of the Bible, is Kenaz, or Zenez. James translates the title, "The Vision of Kenaz," though the name which appears in the text is always Zenez. "Thus the Vision of Kenaz would help to attest the existence of prophetic spirit," quoting M. R. James here, "in the times of the Judges." So Zenos goes back to the time of the Judges; between the time of Moses and the time of Elijah was the time of the Judges. That's a very early time, and this was a prophet from the time of the Judges, and so naturally they would have him here—the things he inspired and talked about. Today this can be taken as definitely indicating that the Vision of Zenez is old and Jewish, and not, as James suggests among other possibilities, "merely a medieval attempt at imitating Old Testament prophecy." We know that's different today. The Zenos fragment begins telling how "once when the elders were seated together the holy indwelling spirit came to Zenez, and he took leave of his senses and began to prophesy." And then we go into the Book of Mormon Zenos who prophesies "in the midst of the congregations." That's the expression used here in the Book of Mormon, "in the midst of the congregations." Like the Old World Zenez, the Book of Mormon Zenos is conscious of being one of the line of prophets, all of whom have testified of the Messiah. Helaman tells us that in chapter 8, verse 19. "And after Zenez had spoken these things he awoke and his spirit returned to him [remember that we are talking about the newly discovered book of Zenez, 1893] and he remembered not what he had said and seen. Then Zenez went forth and preached to the people, saying: 'If such is to be the rest of the righteous after they have left this life [this shows that much of the vision is missing], it behooves them to die to the things of this corruptible world, that they may not behold its sins.' And after he had said these things, Zenez died and slept with his fathers."

But notice, he gave them a regular Book of Mormon sermon. It sounds like New Testament or Dead Sea Scrolls. He said, "If such is to be the rest of the righteous after they have left this life, it behooves them to die unto things of this corruptible world, that they may not behold its sins" before he died. So this Zenos is a real person. And the interesting thing about it, which comes in later, he prophesies about the vineyard. He compares Israel with a vineyard, which of course the fifth chapter of Jacob does. And Jacob says he's quoting Zenos when he tells it, so here we have a beautiful connection between Zenos and Zenez. This one is from *Since Cumorah*.

This is a marvelous thing. Look at this twelfth verse here. "And all these things must surely come, saith the prophet Zenos [way back there in the time of the Judges]. And the rocks of the earth must rend; and because of the groanings of the earth, many of the kings of the isles [that's an odd thing to say] of the sea shall be wrought upon by the spirit of God, to exclaim: The God of nature suffers." Who were the kings of the isles of the sea? Well, that's what the Egyptians refer to as the kings of the Cyclades or the islands of the

Aegean. They have a regular title (I've got it written down here). Well, it means "those who live around behind the islands." They use the same word for *island* that we do—the Old English word for island is *Bēeg*, and the Egyptian word is *ꜥw*, too. This is a phonetic sign, then three is the plural for anything. This is a picture of an island, beautifully drawn. It means "those who live behind the islands," and you could say the chiefs or the kings of the islands. Now these are the kings of the Mediterranean islands of Greece, the famous ones: Santorin, Thera, Crete, etc. And these were shaken by periodic earthquakes of great severity, as you know. The greatest catastrophe, for example, in historic times was around 1600 [B.C.] when the island of Thera just blew up—eight times as great an explosion as Krakatoa. They were absolutely immense. Was it in the time of Abraham? It may have been. But anyway, when this happens, what do the kings of the earth say?

Well, Plutarch tells us the story that on one occasion the king was sailing by. Well, this is a very important one in his writing called "On the cessation of the Oracles." Plutarch's trying to show that the ancient oracles have ceased. A famous sailor was sailing by one of the islands, and he heard a voice coming from the Temple of Pan. Pan is the great god of nature, as you know—Pan pipes and all this sort of thing. He heard this voice crying out with great lamentation, and all the air was filled with lamentation. "Great Pan is dead. The god of nature is dead." When these terrible things happen, this voice comes from the shrine of the island, "The god of nature is dead; the great Pan is dead."

And here: "The kings of the isles of the sea shall be wrought upon . . . to exclaim: The God of nature suffers." Now you won't find the god of nature in the Bible. You'll find it in the eighteenth century—it was very popular—and you'll find it in the Age of Reason. But in the Bible they don't talk about the god of nature. But who's talking about the god of nature? The kings of the isles of the sea. They're the ones that say, "The god of nature is dead" because of the upheaval. So here's a very interesting insight. And who says it? Not Lehi, not Nephi. It's Zenos who says it. They have the book, and so it goes way back to the times when the kings ruled around the islands—Cyprus and the others. This had such a classical ring to it. It's characteristically Mediterranean, of course—one of those little vignettes that are just thrown in for no extra charge, but really reminds you to check on things. In fact, you see, if this had been put in the mouth of Lehi, you could raise an eyebrow and say, "Not of that time; it must have been much earlier." Ah, yes, Zenos said it. He [Lehi] didn't say it.

Verse 13: "And as for those who are at Jerusalem, saith the prophet, they shall be scourged by all people because they crucify the God of Israel." They "have despised the Holy One of Israel." They will be hated among all nations as a result, despised for despising Him. "Yea, then will he remember the isles of the sea; yea, and all the [scattered] people who are of the house of Israel, will I gather in, saith the Lord, according to the words of the prophet Zenos, from the four quarters of the earth. Yea, and all the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord. . . . I speak unto all the House of Israel." Again, Nephi's great fervor and passion—notice his empathy here in verse 20: "I have great workings of the spirit, which doth weary me even that all my joints are weak, for those who are at Jerusalem; for had not the Lord been merciful, to show unto me concerning them, even as he had the prophets of old, I should have perished also."

And they knew these things concerning this because they were written on the Brass Plates. "I did read many things unto them" that they might know what had happened in the past. And then this important statement in verse 23: "And I did read many things

unto them that were written in the book of Moses; but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning.” And then what follows are two chapters quoted right from Isaiah, but not word for word. In this book I just read from we have a section on Isaiah. We won’t need to linger on it now.

Toward the close of his book, Nephi quotes two chapters (48 and 49) of Isaiah in full. This would indeed be a daring thing for a forger to do. Imagine, to include two whole pages, two whole chapters of the Bible in an attempt to fool the Bible-reading public. Well, you’re not going to get away with that. Everybody would recognize that for what it was, wouldn’t they, right off? If the author of the Book of Mormon was an imposter, his attempts to deceive are prodigiously artless here. But the Book of Mormon follows the language of the King James Bible only as far as the latter conveys the correct meaning of the original. So far is Nephi’s translation from being a slavish repetition of our Bible that there is hardly a single verse that is identical in the two translations. Most of the changes are minor, but they are there and they are important because we have the Septuagint to check them. And so we’ve given a number of sections the way they’re quoted in the Book of Mormon in Isaiah and in the Septuagint, and the Book of Mormon is closest to the Septuagint, which is actually over a thousand years older than the Hebrew text, the Masoretic text. That was until the first discovery came along with the Serek Scroll at Qumran was a complete text of Isaiah, a thousand years older than any Hebrew text of Isaiah known before. Then we could compare it and see how well it had survived and how well it has been copied. Miraculously well. There are 3,000 different readings, but they’re small readings—different punctuation, ways of expressing things, endings, etc., They are there; it’s not the same thing. It’s the same as the way it’s quoted here. Almost every verse has little changes in it. There are some verses that have some important changes, and they’re significant ones.

Notice: “I did liken all scriptures unto us that it might be for our profit and learning” because Isaiah’s talking to them as well as he’s talking to us. Remember, we talked about the recurrent scenario, and that’s what we have here—the key to the Book of Mormon. Their history is really our history. We are all taking the same standard test, talking the same terms, etc. The props change, the scene changes, the background changes, the sets and the technology change—but the issues are always the same. It’s a test. We’re all trying to qualify for the same job, the same future employment—to rule and reign in the House of Israel. So it applies to us just as much as it does to them. That’s why Isaiah is so alive today. He said he knew they were very treacherous. He just bawls Israel out, etc.

I’m going to skip these two chapters of Isaiah. Let’s come to chapter 22, when the brethren ask him what these things mean that Isaiah talks about. Notice they say in 1 Nephi 22:1, “What meaneth these things which ye have read?” Aren’t they just spiritual? We’re not going to be bound by them; these are just spiritual. This is always the way to weasel out of a situation. This is just spiritual. I’ll just pay a spiritual tithe; that’s the important thing. He says, No, they’re both. In the second verse he says, “by the spirit are all things made known unto the prophets, which shall come upon the children of men according to the flesh [it will be literal]. Wherefore, the things of which I have [spoken and] read are things pertaining to things both temporal and spiritual; for it appears that the house of Israel, sooner or later, will be scattered upon all the face of the earth, and also among all nations [notice a complicated ethnic picture too]. . . . And they are scattered to and fro on the islands of the sea.” As I was saying about Eldad ha-Dani, that includes the

Ten Tribes, you see. Well, they had already been scattered. They were scattered in the earlier times, 720 [B.C.] when Israel fell to the Assyrians. But then the rest of them are all scattered. They continue.

Verse 5: “And also concerning all those who shall hereafter be scattered and be confounded [confounded means mixed up together with other people], because of the Holy One of Israel; for against him will they harden their hearts; wherefore they shall be scattered with all nations and shall be hated of all men.” Well, you know what happened. You know about the Holocaust and how many times that sort of thing has happened. Two thousand years of that—no people ever had to suffer like that. Then they will be nursed by the Gentiles [verse 6] “Their daughters have been carried upon their shoulders” and given their support. It’s a very interesting thing. When it speaks of their daughters, he says they’re speaking of temporal things. Now the interesting thing is that these Jewish girls married princes, kings, and dukes all over. They’re such fascinating women, as you know. They’re marvelous. There’s something about not just a Jewish mama, but a Jewish girl. They have such intelligence, such verve, such dash, such industry. Well, you know the story of Sarah and the King of Persia, etc. It’s a story that’s widespread. You find this everywhere. There’s the story of Judith and Holofernes, a great classic on that subject. And you find in *The Merchant of Venice* that the beautiful daughter, Jessica, marries (what’s his name) one of the heroes of the play. He says “Jessica, look how the floor of heaven is paved over.” But she was a marvelous gal, you see. And Shylock goes through the streets saying, “Oh my daughter, my ducats, my daughter, my ducats.” Which does he miss the most? But their daughters had a great appeal, and so I think that maybe slipped in here.

Verse 6: “It meaneth us in the days to come [so there are specific references here], and also all our *brethren* who are of the house of Israel.” And there shall be “a mighty nation among the Gentiles upon the face of this land; and by them shall our seed be scattered. And after our seed is scattered the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles [it’s likened unto their being nourished by the Gentiles]. And [the Lord] is going to keep the promise to Abraham that “in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” And they can’t be blessed [without help] because they can’t save themselves. You remember, they’re supposed to be reduced to almost nothing at all. They will not survive at all, chapter 25 of Matthew says, “unless the time is cut short in righteousness.” There would be none of them left. They didn’t have a chance if the Lord didn’t intervene, and so he says they “cannot be blessed unless he shall make bare his arm in the eyes of the nations [He shall intervene with force in the eyes of the nations]. Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations.” This is what’s going on here. When everything is going downhill, men do not have control. They cannot reverse the trend—God must show his arm then. And then “he will bring them again out of captivity [no one knows who they are, notice] and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance [plural—not just Israel, the lands of their inheritance]; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness.” Who knows where they are? So don’t argue about where the Ten Tribes are.

As to the abominable church which has rule over the whole earth: Elsewhere it says that, and here it says, “the whore of all the earth.” Now no one church beguiles the whole world, the whole earth. This, as we’ve seen, is the collective, as far as that goes. Verse 14: “And every nation which shall war against thee, O house of Israel, shall be turned one against another [well, of course the Arabs fight each other, the European nations fight each other, everybody fights each other]. . . . All that fight against Zion shall be destroyed.” Now the point is, Zion is not an achievement. Zion is a project here, and there is no Zion. Zion is

not on the earth now. We do not have one heart and one mind and no poor among us. That's far from the case. And, there are those who oppose it. There are those who use the name of *Zion* as a sales gimmick, very commonly. Then there are those who are the most dedicated enemies of the Church—those who have kept the real literature going—from E. D. Howe and Chandler down to Fawn Brodie. They've not been Romanists, members of the Roman [Catholic] Church. The great opposition to the Church, the Missouri mobs etc., were all fundamentalists. Verse 14: "And all that fight against Zion shall be destroyed," the great and abominable and this raging hostility against the Church.

And then comes the first vision. Verse 16: "For the time soon cometh [after that] that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous. Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power [and we don't know why, but here he talks about something], even if it so be that the fullness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire." He doesn't refer to the sword at all in the Book of Mormon. How many times? About twenty—eight times he refers to the destruction, and it is always by fire, and in these terms. "Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire." What's that? A counter fire. What is it? Will the wicked destroy each other by fire and thus save the righteous? "Behold, my brethren, I say unto you these things must shortly come." Shortly after Nephi speaking? No. Shortly after the thing described in the verse 8 above here, where he says, "And after our seed is scattered, the Lord God will proceed to do a marvelous work among the Gentiles." Then, you see. Shortly after that time will come "fire, and a vapor of smoke must come; and it must needs be upon the face of this earth [see, we find no mention of the sword here; it's covered with a vapor of smoke]; and it cometh unto men according to the flesh [I'm not talking about a spiritual fire]. If it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel."

This is an unimaginable situation. How could any smoke cover the whole earth? What kind of a thing would that be? Wars were very well contained up until now; this is something else. And now the whole seas incarnadine are polluted. Verse 19: "For behold, the righteous shall not perish." Now this is the only possible defense. The righteous shall not perish. Repent! That's the guarantee. We don't know how it's going to be done, but the Lord says he will manage it. You just trust him and trust righteousness, and don't put your trust in the arm of flesh. Notice verse 22: "And the righteous need not fear, for they are those who shall not be confounded. But it is the kingdom of the devil." And then he talks about the four things that make our world, our day. The great abomination is a composite here, you see, when he talks about the church itself. "For the time speedily shall come that all churches." Notice the destruction includes not just one church but all churches. The great and abominable includes all churches that have this, the four things that we all set our hearts on today. Notice what they are: Gain and power and popularity and the lusts of the flesh. Those are the four things. That's your prime-time mix. These are our role models today, because they have these things, the things we like to watch. We like to see the wealth and the corruption and the crime and the violence, etc., because the things we covet are gain, first of all, and then power. The power gives the money, and the money gives the power. Then you have to be popular—that's an important thing, if you're going to go into business. Then, of course, you do it all, and you have your private life, which is not so private. It's terribly public, I guess. So, the kingdom of the devil. "They are those who must be consumed as stubble." There you are, that burning of stubble again. That makes me nervous.

Well, let's finish the book now. Verse 24: "The Holy One of Israel must reign in dominion, and might, and power, and great glory. And he gathered his children from the four quarters of the earth; and he numbereth his sheep, and they know him . . . and because of the righteousness of his people [the only thing that will save them—the righteousness of his people], Satan has no power; wherefore he cannot be loosed for the space of many years, for he hath no power over the hearts of the people [this is Satan's battleground, their hearts, and the one effective weapon against the forces of evil we talk about is righteousness; you don't go back and fight them, etc.]. . . . But, behold, all nations [this phrase occurs ninety times in the Book of Mormon, the importance of bringing all nations into play; it isn't just for one limited group, or one special tribe, or a chosen people, or church, or anything like that—or church] kindreds, tongues, and people shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel if it so be that they will repent." It doesn't say necessarily they are members of the church or anything like that, but they shall dwell and they shall be safe in the Holy One of Israel if they will repent—all nations. So the Church is not provincial and it's not ethnic.

Here also all the churches [are mentioned], and this has become very characteristic of all churches, hasn't it? This doesn't sound like a respectful way to talk about churches. But they're certainly after gain, they're certainly after power, and they certainly want to become popular because you don't get gain unless you're popular. That's your numbers, you see—people. And what do they do when they get rich? Invariably they become corrupt. We've seen that—not just the Bakkers but a lot of other people.

Well, I see the time is up now. We do the second book now, and he really breaks loose. The great book is the second book of Nephi. That is where we really get something, and so we don't want to rush these things.

1. Lynn M. and Hope Hilton, *In Search of Lehi's Trail* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976). Page numbers in parentheses refer to this book.
2. Hugh W. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, CWHN 7 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988), 286–90.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 16

2 Nephi 1–4

**“Encircled . . . in the Arms of His Love”:
Oneness with God and the Atonement**

It's a coincidence that the Sunday School lesson yesterday was on the fifth chapter of Alma, which is identical—has the same subject exactly—with the beginning of 2 Nephi. So we start out with 2 Nephi, and we really get into some pretty deep stuff. It begins with Lehi [he quotes from *The Odyssey* in Greek]. Remember, how *The Odyssey* begins with all of them going home. Well, we won't go into that, but this is the way *The Odyssey* opens. Jerusalem was destroyed, and Troy was destroyed. We're beginning a new story—a new epic, so to speak. We're starting in the New World now. We've shifted the whole scene, and it's a new act. Notice the fourth verse. Jerusalem is destroyed, so we can wipe that out and take that as finished now. And, on the other hand, “we have obtained a land of promise [now there is a fresh beginning] . . . which is choice above all other lands [now, no map is given here]; a land which the Lord God hath covenanted with me should be a land for the inheritance of my seed. Yea, the Lord hath covenanted this land unto me and to my children forever, and also all those who should be led out of the other countries by the hand of the Lord .” They're not the only people that are going to come here, obviously. There's only one condition to people being here, it tells us in verse 7: “Wherefore, this land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring.” And this is the only restriction of people coming here is that God is aware of their coming. You didn't have to be a Nephite or a Lamanite to come here now [in Lehi's time] or in ancient times. Every time we'd find something—anything you'd find out lying around that was pre-Columbian—always had to be Nephite or Lamanite. Well, that isn't so at all. All sorts of people were coming before and after—the only condition being that the Lord knew that they were coming, and he brought them here.

Verse 7: “This land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring. And if it so be that they shall serve him . . . they shall never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because of iniquity [see, but there is always a condition there—unless it's because of iniquity]; for if iniquity shall abound, cursed shall be the land for their sakes, but unto the righteous it shall be blessed forever. The blessing and the curse, the *berākāh* and the *qelālāh*, always go together. You never get the blessing without the curse. You might just as well say this promised land is a cursed land. The promise is a curse on the land. It says so here, and many times. It can be both at once, a blessed and a cursed—to the righteous, blessed; to the wicked, cursed. It's the same land, same place, and he says it was the same thing with the former inhabitants of the land. Remember, if they had been righteous, would our fathers have pushed them out? No, not at all, he says [paraphrased]. And so it's both at once. You don't have it made just because this is the promised land.

And then he talks about kings here, and this is an interesting thing, this next one. “And behold, it is wisdom that this land should be kept as yet from the knowledge of other nations [because otherwise kings would take it over]; for behold, many nations would overrun the land [if they wanted it], that there would be no place for an inheritance.” He

is going to tell us after this that it is going to be free of kings, and this is a very important thing. But remember, it was kings that claimed it, right from the first, as soon as they knew it was there. There's the Donation of Constantine in 324, the year before the Nicene Council. It was a forgery. It came out of Rheims which [had been] a forgery factory in the eighth and ninth centuries, and all of these forgeries came out. Well the Donation of Constantine was given after Columbus, of course. A line was drawn down the middle of the Atlantic, and everything west of that line belonged to the Holy Roman Emperor or the king of Franks. See, this fictitious document was granted by the pope. But the Donation of Constantine was used a lot later on—that everything in the New World belonged to the Frankish king or to the Holy Roman Emperor. Charlemagne was the ruler of the Franks—not at that time though.

Kings claimed it first right from the beginning. There were claims for the king of Spain, claims for the king of England, claims for the king of France. It was always the king that claimed it here. It was claimed for the Russians on the West Coast, and later claimed for the Japanese emperor. Everybody claimed it, always in the name of kings. This is an important thing, that they want to displace it that way. Of course, with the Dutch and the Portuguese it's the same thing. It was all in the name of the king. But the Lord said, no, that would not happen. It's the land of promise, that inasmuch as they behaved themselves, "they shall prosper . . . that they may possess this land unto themselves." Now again, is this selfish? Now they have it all to themselves (oh, goodie, goodie, it's just for us). No, not at all. He says, inasmuch as they keep the commandments, and you'll soon find out what the commandments mean—sharing and sharing equally. This is very important in the Book of Mormon. It brings that out all the time. That's the basic commandment, the one that Alma emphasizes so much.

Now notice in the tenth verse: "But behold, when the time cometh that they shall dwindle in unbelief [it doesn't say *if*, it says *when*; the Lord knew it was going to happen, and it did happen, of course], after they have received so great blessings from the hand of the Lord." This is the whole thing, you see; then they have to pay a heavier price than they ever would otherwise. Already in the second century, they were saying (the seven apostolic fathers all deal with this question), "God has invested so heavily in the church so far that he won't allow it to be taken away. The gospel can never be taken away because God has already started us out and given us his blessing. It's going to be eternal." But Clement, second Clement, Polycarp, and especially Ignatius of Antioch in his seven letters, say, "That's all the more dangerous. The more blessing we've received, the greater danger we're in." As Ignatius said, quoting the scripture, "For if the angels that kept not the first estate were cast down, how do you expect to be supported no matter what you do, after the blessings you have received?" You're under stricter obligation to behave than anybody else. And if you don't, you're in greater danger. And so all the apostolic fathers looked upon the future of the church as very bleak indeed. In fact, the curtain had rung down.

Verse 10: "Having all the commandments from the beginning, and having been brought by his infinite goodness into this precious land of promise—behold, I say if the day shall come that they will reject the Holy One of Israel, the true Messiah, their Redeemer and their God, behold, the judgments of him that is just shall rest upon them. Yea, he will bring other nations unto them, . . . and he will take away from them the lands of their possessions, and he will cause them to be scattered and smitten." How true that was. He's talking about the Nephites now, you see, and the Lamanites. The Lamanites are still losing. They're still losing ground, and astonishing things are happening now. Well, I

won't go into that. Where have people ever been scattered and smitten as much and as long as the Indians? There have been other scatterings and smittings, of course, the Jewish being the classical one. But as a whole people being constantly pressed down, never given a chance, just ground down to nothing. As it tells us later in the Book of Mormon, scattered and smitten—this is what happened. Believe me, they have been scattered, and they still are. They [business enterprises] are still trying to get the Hopis and Navajos fighting each other so they can get the very last of their lands. The oil companies and the uranium and timber people, and especially the coal [companies] want the Navajo mountain, their last possession. And the Book of Mormon is going to talk about that too later on. So it's "awake, rise from the dust."

Verse 13: "O that ye would awake; awake from a deep sleep." Those he is addressing are already in a deep, deep sleep, and they remain there. This is like a voice in a dream. Here in verse 14 is the hardest criticism against the Book of Mormon. They thought this just wiped it out because of this passage here: "Hear the words of a trembling parent, whose limbs ye must soon lay down in the cold and silent grave, from whence no traveler can return." You see, that's taken right out of *Hamlet*, nothing else. That isn't what Hamlet says at all. And, of course, the ordinary epithet for the world of the dead, both the Greek and Babylonian term, is *irsit la tari*, the land of no return. They always called it the land of no return. That was the regular title for it. We talk about that in the book, *Lehi in the Desert*, I think, or *Since Cumorah*. Shakespeare says,

who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
That undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

You see, he mixes all sorts of metaphors there starting right at the beginning:

To be or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? [But what he says here, you see, is]
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveler returns [that's the way he puts it].

Here [in verse 14] it doesn't say anything about a land. It says, "the cold and silent grave from whence no traveler can return. And this is the classic statement, as I said. The Babylonian name for it is the *irsit la tari*, the land of no return. He doesn't even call it the land; he just says it's "the grave from whence no traveler can return." You'd expect him to

say that, but you'd be surprised how that has been exploited. This absolutely proves the Book of Mormon is a fraud, that Joseph Smith got it out of *Hamlet* [people claim]. But it is not the quotation from *Hamlet* at all.

And now we come to a very interesting thing. The point of these chapters in 2 Nephi is that he's dealing with the Atonement, and this is a very important thing. I don't know whether to talk about it now or a little later, because he's going to get into it quite deeply here. But he says, "I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love." Now, this is an extremely common figure in Egyptian. If it sounds evangelic or something like that, don't fool yourself. This is standard. He says "And I desire that ye should remember to observe the statutes and judgments of the Lord." Note the formula of the Dead Sea Scrolls, always *mishpātîm* and *ḥuqqîm*, the statutes and judgments. That's a pair that always goes together, especially in the Dead Sea Scrolls—"the statutes and judgments of the Lord." You'll find them elsewhere. "This hath been the anxiety of my soul from the beginning." Nephi is worried, and he ends up in deep despair. And Jacob picks it up in even deeper despair, so things go down all the time. Notice what he says in verse 17: "I have feared . . . that ye be cut off and destroyed forever." Well, already we're getting the idea of the Atonement. "Encircled eternally in the arms of love," and the alternative is to be "cut off and destroyed forever."

As you should all know by now, the Atonement is *At-one-ment*. It is one of the few English words, like *forgiveness* and *righteousness*, that are theological, technical words—one of the very few that are used. It's only used once in the New Testament, which is in Romans 5:11, and, in the new Revised Standard Version of the Bible, used by most churches, it doesn't appear at all. They've changed it everywhere to *reconciliation*. So what is meant by *atonement*? It's a very important thing. Now, as I said, this happened to be the lesson yesterday [in the Gospel Doctrine class]. W. J. Wolf, in the most recent writing on the Atonement, says, "There's not a single New Testament document on the Atonement." Well, I'm not going to give you the Hebrew background. You'll find in the Hebrew background in the tenth chapter of the book of Hebrews, where the whole thing as carried out in the temple by the Jews is regarded as a similitude of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. That's the way Paul interpreted it, but that's not the way most people interpret it. There are other interpretations. As Wolf says here, "There is not a single New Testament document on the Atonement. There is simply a collection of images and metaphors from which subsequent tradition built. Tradition has tried to decide what parts of this picture should be taken literally and what parts metaphorically."

We have all sorts of things here. There are various words that are used for it, translated with it in the Bible and theological writings. There are half a dozen of them here; I'll refer to them presently. But he goes on and says, "Which parts are to be taken literally and which metaphorically?" What are we talking about, "the atoning blood of Christ"? To what degree does it atone and what do you mean by *atonement*? How can it *at-one* a thing? And this has developed extended rationale. It's personalized in Isaiah 53. "Images include the ransom, the buying free of the slave with emphasis on the costliness. This is called the commercial interpretation [you hear that too; you've sinned, and Christ will pay the price]. There is emphasis on forgiveness of sin as in Mark 14 and Matthew, and the image of the lamb developed by John. The main issue is whether the Atonement is the completion of the Old Testament sacrifice or if it's something independent and standing alone, which the Old Testament simply foreshadows," which, of course, is what we believe.

In 1930, there was quite a revolution caused by Aulen's book called *Christus Victor*. This caused a stir. "There are three main interpretations of atonement. One is the classical interpretation of the Greek fathers, which integrates incarnation, atonement, and resurrection. It uses the image of a military contest—onward Christian soldiers—the inevitable victory of Christ. We march behind and we are automatically saved." We win because we're the good guys, etc. And then there's Anselm's interpretation which is being renewed today in a famous work of his called *Cur Deus Homo, Why God Became Man*. This is satisfaction. This is medieval. The Lord's honor has been damaged, so the gallant knight has to go out and avenge the honor to the person above him, to his lord, of course. Sin has damaged the honor to God, and it has to be avenged. And Christ pays the satisfaction. There must be satisfaction—I mean the casting down of the gauntlet. There is the jousting in the field of honor, the trial—well, they used various trials and tests—the trial by ordeal to see who's guilty and who isn't. All these things are medieval. Anselm refers to all of them. It's Christ who pays the price, he fights the fight, he vindicates his Father's honor, etc. This is the part he adds to it, that Christ's death is undeserved, unnecessary, and superfluous; therefore, all that spare blood is to our advantage. You remember in Marlowe's *Faustus* he says, "See how Christ's blood streams through the firmament. One drop of it will save me, just one drop, O my Christ." The idea here is that one drop of Christ's blood is so precious that it will save all of us—we don't have to do a thing. That is Anselm, [interpretation that Christ's blood is] left over, along with the idea of satisfaction to be paid for God's honor, which is damaged by sin. The Roman Catholic catechism today defines sin as "any damage done to the glory of God." I wonder who can damage God's glory? You must be something if you can damage God's glory. You can't do it at all, detract from it in any way. Well, what is the sin then? As I said, there are these various interpretations. We've damaged ourselves; that's what it has done. Notice that what it's done is "cut off the destroyed forever." That's the alternative here.

But, what are the other interpretations? There is Calvin's interpretation, the Reformation theory, that Christ as a substitute endured God's punishment so we wouldn't have to endure it again. There's something to be said for all of these, you'll notice. When Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, remember there was a ram caught in the thicket, and the angel said, "Nay, lay not thy hand upon the lad—here is a substitute." You don't have to sacrifice Isaac; you have to sacrifice the ram. The rabbis tell us, the Talmud tells us, that the name of the ram was "Isaac." So this was Isaac, because in the rites of the tabernacle, later the temple, Aaron and his sons would place their hands upon the head of the ram, or the bullock, and transfer not only their guilt but their personalities to it, so to speak. Then when it was killed, they were killed. It was the equivalent or substitute sacrifice. Rosenberg has recently written a very interesting book on that. It's the idea of the substitute sacrifice, and Christ is substituted that way. This was the theory, and there is something to be said for it because the work of the temple is proxy all the way through—and we can't pay the price, certainly. You can't pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. Well, the Reformation theory includes that and the Protestants' "justification by faith." It's faith that will do it [according to them]. This dispenses with the Anselm's apparatus. Thousands of times I used to hear in Germany, "*Nur Glaube* (only faith). Faith alone will do it all." We are told, as James says, "Faith without works is dead." But faith dispenses with Anselm's rather elaborate medieval apparatus, and the Roman Catholics call the atonement "the apparatus that mediated salvation," just as they call the church "the factory which produces salvation." It's a great machine that does the work, and the institution is the impressive thing.

Then there are Hugo Grotius, the Dutchman, and Jonathan Edwards and the Puritans later on. That is the rectorial or governmental theory. It's all done in the public interest. Christ's death has a deterrent effect on sinners. So we have these various things. I think we have an interesting lesson in philology here. We may well refer to that—what the meaning of the word is. Strangely, the Book of Mormon gives us the most clear-cut connection between the ancient word *kappōret* and our Old English *at-one-ment* (atonement). The first thing to notice is that the word *atonement* is unique in touching all bases. The other words will cover part of it. For example, *reconciliation* is the commonest rendering of the word, which is *katallagē*. That means “changing back again to where you were.” It's the same thing as *teshûvah* in Hebrew. It means “a return,”—you return to where you were. But you can never come back; you can't go home again after you have sinned. That has to be washed away, so there is baptism. The idea is to return, but how can you return to a place if you never were there before? All throughout the doctrine of atonement, a pre-existence is assumed—returning to the presence of the Father, coming home again. *The Pearl*, the earliest Christian hymn, is beautiful on that particular subject. But the Greek word they used in Romans 5:11 is *katallagē*. There it is called *atonement*, meaning “made one of the Father again.” This is “made one” in a very special sense. In *reconciliation* you have a settlement or an understanding, but that doesn't make you *one*, you see. Then *redemption* is another common one. The price is paid (that's right) and it's got you off, but you don't even have to know the person who paid the price, let alone be one with him. The idea of *being one* goes beyond having the price paid. Then *salvation* means “you are safe home again,” but you are not one with anybody in particular. There is no specification of what sense this is to be taken. Then *teshûvah*, the Hebrew “returning, repentance.” But where is the oneness again?

Then there's the *kpr*. *Kippūr* is the Hebrew word. You all know about *Yom Kippur*. The root is *kpr*, and *kippūr* is the “act of atoning.” That's *hilaskesthai*, and it refers literally to the “covering of the Ark, covering of the mercy seat.” The *kappōret*, the thing that covers, is the *hilasterion*, where God appeared to forgive the sins of the people. It was the front curtain or the veil of the tabernacle. After the people had completed all the rites and ordinances of atonement, then the veil was parted and God (the Savior) was supposed to speak from the tabernacle and tell the people that their sins were forgiven and they were welcomed to his presence. That's this idea of being taken back into his embrace again, “encircled about eternally in the arms of his love” (2 Nephi 15).

As I said, the word *kpr* is very interesting, “to atone for.” The word is *kpr*, *kippūr*. We have had this before, of course. It's cognate with our word *cover*; it's pronounced *kfr*. So we have *cover*, but that is just the beginning of this very interesting word. It's the same in Aramaic; it's “to cover over your sins.” This is the way Jastrow's big two-volume lexicon explains it: It means “to arch over; to bend over; to cover; to pass over with the hand, especially the palm of the hand.” The word for *palm of the hand* in all Semitic languages is *kāp*. It means “to cover, hence to grasp by the hand; to wipe over, hence to cleanse, to expiate, to forgive, to renounce, to deny, to be found, to encircle.” All these in this one word. Well, this is nothing in Arabic. If you don't have fifty totally different meanings for a word, you think your language is impoverished. But here *embrace* is the idea; therefore, you cover a person. And this is a very interesting thing because here the Book of Mormon casts what I would say is a rather dazzling light on the subject. *Kāfaf* and

kāfar mean the same in Aramaic. I'll put the word *kafaf* up here. This is the Egyptian, *hpt*. This is the situation vividly set forth in the Book of Mormon.

I remember old Professor Popper. Imagine, in the years when I took Hebrew and Arabic at Berkeley, I was the only student taking those languages. Today, there are twenty teachers of both there. That's how things have changed since then. I was Popper's only student. A rabbi, he would grow quite eloquent on this particular subject of the *kafata* in Arabic. This was in the Arabic class. We've got it all down here, so let's turn to it. The Arabic is *kafata*, and the Egyptian word is *hpt*. They all go together. Notice that the ideogram is two arms embracing somebody, *hpt*. And, of course, you get the Coptic word from that, from which we get our word *caftan*. That is a long monk's robe with a hood that covers you completely; it goes completely over your head. That's *kafata*, and it's the same word as the Latin *capto*, which means "to embrace, to capture, to hug around." It's quite universal—our word *cover* and the rest. And the Jews go into various interpretations. As I said, it means all these things. The basic meaning is "to arch over; to bend over; to cover; therefore, to cover your sins, to wipe them out, to forget them; to pass over with the palm of the hand, hence to wipe over; to cleanse; to expiate; therefore, to forgive, to renounce, to deny, to be found." Then the basic meaning goes to *encircle* again, such as encircling a city, a town, a person, or anything else.

We'll go ahead to chapter 4 of 2 Nephi in which we have a vivid desert episode. Talk about one of those dazzling little vignettes, it's here. Nephi describes himself as running away from his enemies. He has been oppressed terribly. His big brothers have never stopped dogging him; they have been after him all the time. He has been given a rough time by everybody. The family sort of resents his being the leader anyway, being the youngest until his two brothers were born there [in the wilderness]. In verse 32 he says, "May the gates of hell be shut continually before me, because that my heart is broken and my spirit is contrite! O Lord, wilt thou not shut the gates of thy righteousness before me, that I may walk in the path of the low valley [now in a thing like the *Sirat Bani Hilāl*, a person escaping from his enemy always wanted to take the low, quick, straight path as far as he can get away from him—the easiest path to take and the surest to escape, not having to run up and down any hills or anything like that], that I may be strict in the plain road!" That means "sticking right to the path." That's the *derekh*, you see. At the end of the first Psalm: "The way of the wicked shall be lost in the sand." It goes that way. That my way may not be that way, "that I may be strict in the plain road [that I may stick to the proper path]! O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness!" This is an Arabic idyll. When a person is running away, he runs to the tent of any great sheikh he can find. He goes in and kneels down before the sheikh and says, "I am thy suppliant." The sheikh is then obligated to put his caftan over his *kātēf* which is the same word as *shoulder*—to put the hem of his garment over his shoulder and say, "*Ahlan wa-sahlan wa-marhaban*. This is your tent, this is your family." The Hebrew word *ōhel* for *tent* is the same as the Arabic word *ahl* for *family*. He says, "We'll make a place for you." Then the lord or the chief is under obligation to defend you against the enemies that are chasing you. You are now under his protection, and he will protect you. This is part of the medieval code.

This is what we have here. "O lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness!" He's running away and he wants the plain road so he can get away from his enemies and wants to be encircled with the robe of righteousness. "O Lord, wilt thou

make a way for mine escape before mine enemies! Wilt thou make my path straight before me! Wilt thou not place a stumbling block in my way.” A stumbling block is the Greek word *skandalon*; it’s anything you trip up on when you are running, what you bump your toe on. The Hebrew word is *eben mikshôl* [or *šûr mikshôl*] which means “the rock of stumbling, a stone of offense. Sometimes it’s called “a stumbling block” and sometimes “a rock of offense.” It’s anything that will trip you up when you are trying to go somewhere. You are making a nice thing of it, and all of sudden you fall flat on your face. That’s dangerous, you see. So he says, don’t let that happen to me. “But that thou wouldst clear my way before me, and hedge not up my way, but the ways of mine enemy [make his way hard].” I showed that picture from the time of Lehi of an Arab riding his camel, and it said he was escaping from his enemies. He was running for dear life. That’s what we have here. Notice how the image is: Make the way straight for me so I can get through. Then when I go to you, will you put the robe of your righteousness around me and I will be in your protection. My enemy, meanwhile, is blocked in the sand. He is wandering around and doesn’t know where he is going. He’s lost, he’s been blocked. But don’t put any stumbling block in my way so that I can escape. So we have these interesting situations here.

Now we will turn to Alma 5:33. This idea of being embraced is very strong in the Book of Mormon as an expression for the Atonement. Since that’s what the Sunday School lesson was yesterday, I happened to stumble on this. “Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men, for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith: Repent, and I will receive you.” This is the embrace; he is willing to take you. Notice, “Come unto me and ye shall partake of the fruit of the tree of life; yea, ye shall eat and drink [come into my camp] of the bread and the waters of life freely.” He will take you in when you are running away and he says his invitation and his arms are extended. And in 2 Nephi 1:15 we have it where he says, “But behold, the Lord hath redeemed my soul from hell; I have beheld his glory, and I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love.” That’s what got us started here. It’s the embrace he is in. We have this ideogram. And the opposite of that you will find in Alma 5:7. We notice that the opposite is the very same thing: “Behold, he changed their hearts. . . . Behold, they were in the midst of darkness; nevertheless, their souls were illuminated by the light of the everlasting word; yea, they were encircled about by the bands of death [that’s the other encircling; Satan can encircle you too], and the chains of hell, and an everlasting destruction did await them.” You get this same negative idea right here in verse 10: “And now I ask of you on what conditions are they saved? Yea, what grounds had they to hope for salvation? What is the cause of their being loosed from the bands of death, yea, and also the chains of hell?”

In the one you are bound tight to one person; in the other you are bound tight to another. And there is nothing ever mentioned about anything in between the two, which is a very interesting thing. The opposite of oneness is in Alma 5:25. This is the alternative to being embraced, to being taken into the family. “I say unto you, Nay; except ye make our Creator a liar from the beginning, or suppose that he is a liar from the beginning, ye cannot suppose that such can have place [remember, Nephi said to Zoram, ‘You come down to our father’s tent in the desert and you can have place with us;’ *marhaban* means ‘have a place with us,’ and here he uses that term again] in the kingdom of heaven; but they shall be cast out for they are the children of the kingdom of the devil.” The opposite is to be cast out or not included—thrown out of the house. Then notice verse 57 in the same chapter. (These are just at random.) “Come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things. The names of the wicked shall not be

mingled with the names of my people.” The idea is being cast out and cut off completely, and that’s what we are talking about here. We have a section on this in the Egyptian writing on embracing at the veil, for example. Remember, the *pārōket* is also the front veil of the tabernacle which the Lord parted to grant the people atonement after they had performed all the ordinances necessary on the Day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month. That was when he greeted them and claimed that he was one with them. So there is the emphasis on *at-one*. It’s this *oneness* that makes all the difference in the world, that you can’t get anywhere else. It’s good that this word survived and came right through in English, never questioned, as against the alternatives which are used today.

Here is a picture from the twenty-fifth dynasty. This would be the last king of the Taharkan Dynasty. They are the ones who gave us the *Shabako Stone*, so Shabako was the second king of the line. But it tells here what is going on. The king is being embraced by his father after obtaining all things. This shows embracing on both sides. Here, an embrace on one side and an embrace on the other side. This one is the heavy weight that was worn in the back of the *selkit* emblem. Now *selkit* is always represented as the *embrace*. Notice the ideogram here is the embracing. The two arms are embracing, and they are embracing the *djed* symbol, which represents the marrow in the bones. This is called “health and strength.” He says here, “I give thee all life and power.” This is a picture of the symbol for life—actually the umbilical cord, the navel. The other is *was*, which is always rendered as “power in the priesthood, authority to speak for priesthood, etc.” Also, this is the embrace. These are the symbols of embracing. The two fans protected the king when he went forth, according to Moet. They embraced him on either side. The kings always had those two fans called the *shuit* or the *khaibit*. This is the counterweight which hangs on the breast to impart breath and life. Here we have the process going on from a famous picture in the temple at Karnak where he is washed here and then clothed. He is anointed and then he is introduced into the presence of the king. Then the king is going to embrace him. The final step is this embrace. So there’s this idea of being one. You can’t be closer to a person than when you embrace.

A recently discovered, almost complete document is the *Apocryphon of John*, a very old Coptic fragment. In that is the story of John and Jesus when they were little kids. They are just little children and they meet for the first time in the house of Elizabeth. They rush to each other and embrace and they fuse into one person. Now this is a story that is picked up and used a lot later, but it shows the oneness of what the embrace is. It is an atonement of one-ment. To be taken back completely is something quite different than just to be forgiven, to be excused, to be bought off—all of those other things. This idea is to be taken back into the presence, and that’s why the Jews call it the *zākar*, the remembrance of the *teshûvāh*. “Returning to the place you remember” is what it is. As I said, the earliest Christian hymn, that marvelous Syriac hymn called *The Pearl*, talks about the person leaving his Heavenly Father and Mother, coming down and sinning in the world, and the struggle he has to get back and be greeted by the family again when he returns.

Notice these parallels. What have the Egyptians got to do with it? One of the most interesting explanations was given a hundred years ago by President Joseph F. Smith. He was ages ahead of scholarship, which is just catching up with him now. In 1888 President Joseph F. Smith said, “Undoubtedly the knowledge of this law and of other rites and ceremonies [talking about the Atonement] was carried by the posterity of Adam into all lands and continued with them, more or less pure, to the flood, and through Noah, who was a ‘preacher of righteousness,’ to those who succeeded him, spreading out into all

nations and countries.” The description of this process is given in the beginning of the book of Moses. It describes very clearly how this spread. All nations corrupted it everywhere, but they received it anyway. “What wonder, then, that we should find relics of Christianity, so to speak, among the heathens [it’s not surprising at all] and nations who know not Christ, and whose histories date back beyond the days of Moses, and even beyond the flood, independent of and apart from the records of the Bible.”¹ Of course, we can pick up fragments that look like the gospel all over, among the Indians, among the Maoris, and wherever you go. This has been a great thing in the spreading of the gospel. I could tell you a lot of stories about that.

There were parallels way back in 1856 when they discovered at Nippur the Babylonian story of the flood, and it looked just like the Genesis story of the flood. So everybody said, “Ah ha, this is the original story,” because the document was far older than any Hebrew documents we had. But it was only sixth century. It was only from the time of Assurbanipal, the last one. Since then a very interesting thing has happened. They said, “There must an older flood story than that.” Actually, the Old Testament was a much older version. That was discovered when World War I broke out. The University of Pennsylvania had a big fund; they were going back to look for the old tablets at Nippur. They were going to find the Sumerian version of the flood, but they couldn’t go because of the war. So alas, they had to stay home and look through the stuff they already had. The first thing they found was the Nippur Tablets that they were going to spend a couple of million bucks looking for. They were already there all the time. They never bother to see what they have; they want to go out and dig up other stuff. They like these jobs, etc. But anyway, which is the older version? Well, you’ll find it everywhere and in various stages of decay and interpretation.

They [scholars] say that this proves that “‘Christianity’ sprang from the heathen [because the heathen documents are older—well, they aren’t older now], it being found that they have many rites similar to those recorded in the Bible, etc. [That is only a vain and foolish attempt to show off superior scholarship] for if the heathen have doctrines and ceremonies resembling . . . those . . . in the Scriptures, it only proves . . . that these are the traditions that the fathers handed down, and that they will cleave to the children to the latest generation though they wander into darkness and perversion, until but a slight resemblance to their origin, which was divine, can be seen.” This is our argument in “The Genesis of the Written Word.”²

The argument is definitely on President Smith’s side, for as he observes, “The Bible account, being the most rational and indeed [the] only historical one, . . . we cannot but come to the conclusion that this is *not* the work of chance.” We are talking about atonement, and only the scriptures will explain why this is necessary. And the ancients don’t have atonement. See, there is no Egyptian word for *sin*. The whole idea is quite different there. And what do you do if you don’t have the Atonement? What is your view of life? The Greeks, etc. I sin, but all people do that. You can’t help that; everybody does that. Life is hard, so we all sin. What happens as a result of that? There is no atonement, no forgiveness, no hereafter. So the only alternative is the tragic view of life, and all the ancients have this terribly tragic view of life. You either have the Atonement, “come back home and be one,” or you are going to have this infinitely tragic view of life—we’re going nowhere. It’s absolutely basic in the Greek tragedies, for example. They do have redemption, forgiveness, and all those other things—but not the hereafter, the Atonement, the life eternal, etc. None of them have that. In the old Norse sagas, it is even more poignant. It’s terrible and tears you apart.

Well now, this is interesting too; we might as well mention it here. Here's an article by Isidore Levi. "The farther back we go in Israelite tradition, the more consistent and sensible the ordinances of the atonement become." The Jews are just as confused on it as anybody else. Notice, in all those definitions I gave, which word covers it? The only word that covers it is *atonement*, our English word, and there is no equivalent of that anywhere else. Nobody has that *at-one-ment* idea. They have the return; they have the *teshûvah*; they have *kpr*, "covering up;" they have forgiveness and all those. They are all partial. Quoting Rabbi Levi, "There was a teaching that the sacrifice of Isaac was the great atoning sacrifice of Israel [and this is commonly held]. The offering of Isaac was an atonement for Israel. Isaac offered himself as a free-will offering." That's what the *akedah* is; *akedah* means *the binding*. He offered himself to be bound. He wasn't forced to be, so he gave a free-will offering, as the Savior did. "The offering of Isaac is called the *akedah*, which means *the binding*, because Isaac submitted of his own free will to be bound and offered. It is even maintained that he was actually put to death on the occasion—that he was slain and burned on the altar." Remember, he brought the wood; he bore it on his own back. He was burned and reduced to ashes, and then on the spot the Lord resurrected him. It has to be the Resurrection; the Atonement has to be followed by the Resurrection. Otherwise, why are you atoned if you are just going to cease to exist from that moment on? That's why the ancients are left out in the cold. "It is even maintained that he was actually put to death on the occasion and then restored."

Now I'm quoting from the *Talmud*: "And Isaac received his spirit again while the angels joined in a chorus of praise. 'Praise be to the Eternal, thou who has given life to the dead.' " So a resurrection was celebrated by the death of Isaac. But, of course, Isaac wasn't put to death. There was a substitute for him—the ram in the thicket. He didn't complete the sacrifice at all. It too was only a similitude. "Though most of the Jewish teachers reject the resurrection on the spot idea," writes R. A. Rosenberg, "still, even for them, Isaac was the perfect sacrifice—the atonement offering that brings forgiveness of sin through the ages." It's an eternal sin offering, and the Jews say it must have been Isaac. "The trouble is, as everybody including the Jews themselves points out, that Isaac was not sacrificed, but a ram was offered in his stead—still looking forward to the great sacrifice to come. And the sacrifice of the ram was continued in the temple long after Abraham as a similitude to the great and last sacrifice until it actually took place." But it was carried on after [the sacrifice of the Savior].

Let me read the conclusion to what Wolf has to say about this. "Atonement as an expression of the mystery of God remains the reality at the core [it's the mystery of God]. Interpretations of the *how* and *why* of the process multiply as images and metaphors expand into theories and become, in turn, ancillary or dominant, only to dissolve and give way to other theories and changing cultural configurations which reappear later in new shapes and new relationships." It's constantly being processed in trying to grasp this idea of the Atonement, and it's going on all the time, he says. Well, there's no better handbook for grasping it than the Book of Mormon.

Now Lehi goes on with more imagery that is very interesting in 2 Nephi 1:16: "And I desire that ye should remember to observe the statutes and the judgments of the Lord . . . for I have feared, lest . . . ye be cut off and destroyed forever." See, there's the alternative. You are either embraced in his arms or you are cut off and encircled by the chains of death—the other thing that encircles you. Verse 19: "But behold, his will be done; for his ways are righteousness forever. [In spite of his despair, he says], "Inasmuch as ye shall keep

my commandments ye shall prosper in the land; but inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall be cut off from my presence.” That’s the cutting off. What can be closer to his presence than to be in his embrace and one with him. There’s that marvelous passage—the most beautiful in the Book of Mormon, I think. “The keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there” (2 Nephi 9:41). He will receive you personally, take your hand, and give you the signs and tokens himself when you come, as he did to the Nephites. Every one of them he received individually, even the children. One by one, he blessed them and received them. He called each person by name and identified himself to each one. This is what we do here in the rite of the Atonement in Israel. It’s very clear as a matter of fact. Exodus is where it is set forth in the Old Testament, and then in all the books of Moses you have the rite of the Atonement. It’s very important.

Verse 23: “Awake, my sons; put on the armor of righteousness.” The oldest manuscript of this comes from Spain. The *Lorica* means “the armor of righteousness.” It’s a famous poem, and philologically it’s a very strange thing. Norbert Wiener’s father, who was a professor of philology at Harvard for many years, wrote a book about this, *The Lorica*. It’s such a strange mixture of language and everything else. It describes the “armor of righteousness” as a whole thing. It seems to have been very ancient, both among the Hebrews and the Jews. He is talking about it here, and it is a natural defense, the *Lorica*—the armor of righteousness. “Shake off the chains with which ye are bound [there it is again] . . . and arise from the dust. Rebel no more against your brother. . . . Were it not for him, we must have perished with hunger in the wilderness.” He saved us; he brought us through. But [in verse 25] he is still afraid; he doesn’t think he is making much progress. “And I exceedingly fear and tremble because of you [he is not optimistic]. . . . He hath not sought for power nor authority over you, . . . and that which ye call anger was the truth, . . . but it was the Spirit of the Lord which was in him, which opened his mouth to utterance that he could not shut it. . . . And if ye will hearken unto him I leave unto you a blessing, yea, even my first blessing. But if ye will not hearken unto him I take away my first blessing.” This exhortation is to the whole family; he is going to give their separate blessings later. Notice, Zoram is a “fifth wheel;” he is another member. He has married the oldest daughter of Ishmael. Lehi says that Zoram is going to be a true friend to Nephi forever, like the Plataeans and the Athenians. Verse 31: “Thy seed shall be blessed with his seed, that they dwell in prosperity long upon the face of this land.”

Now he starts speaking to Jacob, his firstborn in the wilderness. Notice verse 2: “Thou knowest the greatness of God; and he shall consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain.” What does that mean? It means you will get credit for enduring. There is nothing you will go through that you won’t be thankful for and glad of later on. He will consecrate your afflictions for your gain. In verse 4 we see that the Book of Mormon is the handbook of the Atonement. This whole chapter is on the Atonement, and we are going to get a rather clear explanation of things. He starts out here, “For the Spirit is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. And the way is prepared from the fall of man, and salvation is free. And men are instructed sufficiently that they know good from evil.” This is the first basis, of course. The conscience is absolutely basic because you are not going to have any Atonement unless you have guilt feelings.

The final idea: Why do so few people know anything about the Atonement? We leave it up in the air—we don’t know what we are talking about. Why do so few know anything about the gospel, for that matter? But the point is, here is this thing which is the central point of the teachings of Jesus Christ—his atoning blood. The term is used over and over

[in the Book of Mormon]; it's dominant. It's a central theme, and yet, as we saw here, there is no agreement about it [in the world]. People are trying to figure out what it is. There is one very good explanation of that—something has been taken away. As I told you about Johanan Ben Zakkai, they didn't want the temple. They didn't want any of this. Remember, the main purpose of the temple was the carrying out of the sacrifices of the Atonement. That's what you find described in the books of Moses. The rabbis, who were teachers and not priests, were glad to get rid of it. Ben Zakkai took his school and went over in Jamnia and founded the first rabbinical school. They didn't want any of this, so these things were removed. As the Book of Mormon tells us, many precious things were removed. That's why people stumble. It's very obvious that the Atonement stands right there, and yet it's a vacuum. There's something missing. The explanation is very clearly given by Nephi at the first that many precious things have been removed; therefore, many stumble because of that. The Gentiles stumble, etc. It's obvious that has happened, but the Book of Mormon replaces that. It replaces those parts that have been removed, and that's why we need it—among other things. Precious things have been removed from the Bible.

1. Joseph F. Smith, in *JD* 15:325–26.
2. See Hugh W. Nibley, "Genesis of the Written Word," in *Temple and Cosmos*, CWHN 12 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992), 450–90.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 17

2 Nephi 2

The Law and the Atonement

We are on the second chapter of 2 Nephi, perhaps the hardest chapter in the book. It's about the Law of Moses. We have often said that the Nephites were living by the Law of Moses. We are repeatedly reassured that salvation does not come by the Law of Moses. Then why is there so much fuss about it? It leads you and guides you on the way. What has got me going here is that I've just been reading the classic work on the subject of the history of law by a Sinologist who is also a scientist, Joseph Needham. He goes to a great extent. He goes all over, using every conceivable definition of law—when the word first appeared in the East, in the West, here, there and everywhere. He decides that law is an idea that is limited to a very special type of culture and to a highly specialized organization of society—namely, where you have a great emperor or powerful king. He lays down the law. Without that there is no law; there's only custom and practice. They are what the anthropologists started calling *mores* at the beginning of the century. There's the way of doing things, so you do them a certain way. He makes a big fuss about that. Being a Sinologist, he makes a big thing about Confucius. He says, "Forget about the law; there's no law at all. You do the right thing. The princely man does so and so. There is the proper way." If Needham only realized it, all his work is just a quibble because we all have the same way. There's a famous Newtonian hymn from the eighteenth century. How does it go?

Praise the Lord, for he hath spoken
Worlds his sovereign word obeyed.
Laws that never shall be broken,
For their guidance he has made.

God has made laws for the worlds. This is from way back in the eighteenth century; it sounds like something from Orson Pratt or Brigham Young. For all the "worlds," you see, and this is Newton. Many people think he is the greatest scientist who ever lived, as far as genius is concerned. So God has made laws which we follow, and we praise the Lord. "For . . . guidance"—what does that mean? Well, the *guidance* is the *huda* of the Koran. Incidentally, he [Needham] never mentions that, and it is very important. People who live in the desert always want guidance, of course. He also forgets a lot of other things. Remember our friend Solon? At the beginning here he makes quite a difference between *ethos* and *nomos*. He wrote a work called the *Eunomia* that we quoted from about the wickedness of the people, their greed, and the injustice of their society. He called it the *Eunomia*, the "proper *nomia*," the proper following of the rule. *Nomos*, the same word as *name*, is "what has been declared;" whereas, the *ethos*, ethics, is just what people do. *Ethnoi* is the way it is translated in the New Testament. The *ethos*, the ethics, is just the customs and practices. We do things certain ways in our society; we wouldn't think of doing them another way. If you did a thing the wrong way—got on the wrong side of a horse—that would be outrageous, for example. Customs and everything we do are controlled by these laws that nobody laid down; they have never been declared. Of course, they break down in the city, and we have to have laws. Everything has to be written down. We have

become the most legalistic and the most litigious people in the world. The city of Salt Lake has more lawyers per cubic inch than any other city in America—it does, really. It has the highest percentage of lawyers. So we are stuck by the law. But the Book of Mormon tells us over and over again that the law is not going to save—of course, it isn't. It's for our guidance. It's that with Confucius. It's the Tao, the way you follow. It's just a quibble whether it's written down or not.

Our word *law* comes from *lag*, the old Scandinavian, Norse word. The idea is that you have to have a built-up empire and you have to have an emperor in charge doing it, he [Needham] says, because that came with the despots in the seventeenth century, and with the Chinese emperors. As soon as the emperor took over, then you would get the idea of law. But that's not so at all because the law is what is pronounced from the *logberg*. Once a year the whole community would come together. The remains of these still stand in Iceland. It's a circle, and they still have it in Switzerland. All the people would be summoned to a great assembly. From the top of the mountain, as Moses read the law, our Norse ancestors would read the law. As I said, it is still the law in Iceland. They recited it from memory if they knew it. That was the *godi* which pronounced it. *Godi* means "man speaking for God." The *godi* was the high priest. The king and the *godi* were often identical, but the high priest would pronounce it. Incidentally, our friend [Needham] had nothing to say about Egypt either, so he skipped a lot of things.

Well, the law is the guidance, and you have to have it to get there. But it is devised for our weakness. It caters to our weakness and we have to have it. It's not the goal—it's the way that gets you there. It's like the iron rod; you cling to the iron rod. We love iron rods, and think if we have an iron rod we already have it made. We just keep the iron rod, and that's our goal. The iron rod is just to get you to the temple. That is not supposed to be the temple. It's not supposed to be the object. You don't stick to the law all the time.

We have the Ten Commandments, the laws of Moses. Ah, yes, there is *the law* as far as this goes. But it is written for barbarians, as Paul tells us. The best clue to this whole thing, that matches these various chapters in the Book of Mormon, is the tenth chapter of Hebrews. It's beautifully expressed, and fortunately I brought that along. In chapter 2 here, it says the law is going to get you there. Now what are the Ten Commandments? Do you have to be told every day that you shouldn't kill? That you shouldn't lie? That you shouldn't commit adultery? That you shouldn't bear false witness? Do you have to be reminded of that? No, the time comes, the Lord says, when "the law is written in their hearts." Only a savage or a barbarian would have to be told over and over, "Now, you mustn't kill anybody today." But we still have to be reminded. We think if we've kept the law, then we are saved—that's all there is to it. But that's not it at all. That's where it begins. This is the least requirement. It starts out with the Word of Wisdom, for example. Do we have to tell people every day, "Well, don't go out and get drunk"? We don't have to be told that. Even with smoking now, people are warned; we don't have to go to the Word of Wisdom for that. Most of you would never think of doing those things. It wouldn't occur to you because, as it says when it is given to us in Doctrine and Covenants 89, this is adapted to the weakest of all Saints; this is the lowest requirement. This is the mere beginning—the least thing that can be expected of you. We start with the Word of Wisdom. It's the same thing with tithing.

Then we get to the Ten Commandments. The Lord was asked, what is the first and great commandment. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might,

mind, and strength” (D&C 59:5). “And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:39–40). Well, if you love the Lord with all your heart, might, mind and strength and if you love your fellowmen that much, you are not going to go out and murder, and you’re not going to go and steal. You don’t need any of the [other] commandments at all; those two obviously cover the whole thing because you will do what is right. As Isaiah and Jeremiah say, “The law is written in your heart.” You wouldn’t think of doing those things because it is part of you. But again, it’s just going to lead you where you are going to go; that’s the purpose of law. So Atonement is way up there. It’s a very interesting thing in the book of Hebrews because they are still living by the law. Paul had to tell about these things, and he talked in terms of the “bloody sacrifice” that was made. This would be done away with; it was just a type and a shadow of things to come. He told them, Don’t think in fulfilling that you have fulfilled the law. That’s not it at all; it looks forward to another sacrifice [paraphrased]. This is the passage where it talks about that great and last sacrifice—the sacrifice that will just have to be made once. Whether it will be made in other worlds [or not] is another thing, of course. That’s in the Newtonian hymn, “Other worlds, for their guidance.” But we have our guidance when we have this given for us. But, you notice, this puts the Atonement way out there. We are nowhere near that league until we have fulfilled all these things. As long as we are here, we are in a miserable condition of things. That’s what we are going to have here.

Now, let’s look at the main points as we go along here. In the 2 Nephi 2 we’ll start out with a very encouraging announcement in the fourth verse. This is a handbook of the Atonement. “The Spirit is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. And the way is prepared from the fall of man, and salvation is free.” The door is wide open. You can choose your own pace, and you can advance as you please. It’s going to be a very individual thing. And you begin on an upbeat note—the plan is made. There are various things that you might question. What can he possibly be talking about here when he says, “he shall consecrate thine afflictions for thy gain [verse 2]”? We mentioned that the last time. It means that you get credit for what you have endured. But then he says, “The Spirit is the same [you are always going to have the same Spirit], yesterday, today, and forever. And the way is prepared from the fall of man, and salvation is free.” So that’s the first note in this handbook of the Atonement—the gospel. The other world opens out to us. Then the next verse: “And men are instructed sufficiently that they know good from evil.” You will be able to judge for yourself. Without that, of course, you wouldn’t be able to get very far—that’s an important thing. So you don’t have to look at the fine print in the law all the time to find what is good and bad. That is a sign of decadence, intrigue, dishonesty, etc., when people have to write finer and finer print in the law, because you know what’s right yourself.

Brigham Young was so impatient with lawyers. He detested lawyers because they are not necessary. Any person with a little common sense would know what’s the right thing and what’s the wrong thing to do. (There are many stories told about Solomon on this subject.) But we know sufficiently good from evil; we don’t have to split hairs about it. You know when you are doing right and when you are doing wrong. “And the law is given unto men. And by the law no flesh is justified.” The law won’t justify you. A person might say, “I’m justified because I kept the law.” No, that won’t justify you all the way because there are various laws that are written in various ways, and lawyers can make it go any way they want to. They can show you are breaking the law or keeping the law. You are not going to be justified just by the law. A good example is the rich young man. He went to the Lord and asked, “What shall I do to become a follower of you?”

The Lord said, "Have you kept all the commandments?"

He said, "Yes, I have—I have kept them from my youth."

The Lord said, "No, there is one you haven't kept. You go and sell everything you have and share it with the poor." That's what you do; it's the law of consecration. That's the law that none of us can take. We get up to there and then we stop. We draw the line there. You are not going to be saved by the law unless you go all the way. Then it will deliver you on to a better world. Meanwhile, we are stuck with it. There's no appeal; from a sentence of the law, you don't get an appeal anyway. "Yea, by the temporal law they were cut off; and also, by the spiritual law they perish from that which is good, and become miserable forever." This is for lack of Atonement; you have to go beyond that. The point is that we are not capable of doing what is right. "Man is born to evil as the sparks fly upward."

I like Voltaire's story of Memnon, a man who wanted to be perfectly wise. Every morning he would get up and make a solemn resolve, a covenant, that he would never make any mistakes or do anything unwise that day. "We deceive ourselves in all our enterprises. That's what we are made for—that's our very nature. Every morning I make good resolutions, and all day long I just make an ass of myself." Just one blunder after another. You are not going to escape it as long as you are in the flesh. That's what this chapter is going to tell us again. You're not going to escape that. So here we're stuck with it, and just by keeping the law you are not going to be justified because the law is tailored to our own weaknesses and our own uses. That's what it is—the least we can do. Then after that you will be free, but this is the first requirement to sort of get us on the road. The *law* is called *the way*. It's very often called *the way*. There are the *two ways*—the way of righteousness and the way of darkness. In the Book of Mormon and everywhere in early Christianity, the doctrine of the two ways is very prominent.

Verse 7: "Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends [the set terms] of the law be answered." This is where you come in, you have to be able to accept this. Merely keeping the law isn't going to do it. You can keep the *set terms* and the *ends* and escape the sentences etc., but this is another thing entirely, you notice, a broken heart and a contrite spirit. A court can't test you on that or anything else like that. They can't look into your heart; they have to deal with facts, always with facts. Of course, this is silly. "Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth [this great gulf between us and reality], that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God." That is the question, you see. Standing up in the court and getting cleared by the judge or the jury is one thing. But standing in the presence of God who can see everything, every flaw and everything you have in you, that's another thing. We would rather have the rocks and the mountains cover us than have to do that. That's the worst torment we can have—worse than any hell. Anything but that, you see. [People might say], "Give us hell, we can enjoy hell, but don't let us have to do that." Well, that's true. That's the hardest thing we could do, to be so completely out of place. Hell is a place where you are out of place, where you don't want to be. But the worst thing about hell is that you belong there, that you are among your own kind, etc.

Well, he goes on here, "There is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah [how is this going to be

done?], who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise.” We cannot achieve it all; this is another thing here. This is a very important part of it if we are going to carry on. The whole thing is this other life we are concerned about. That’s what the gospel looks for. We have the rules for this life. People write books on “the happy life,” etc. They are just careerism, as far as that goes. Your career goes up, and then it comes down with a bump. And that’s that. Recently, in *Business Week* there were some interviews with top executives who had retired. They are broken men. You go into your office to clean out your desk and have everybody in the office snub you when the day before you were top man. They were all bowing on their knees and kowtowing, and then the next day they say, “Who’s this guy?” That’s too much for some people to take, and some of them commit suicide. I could name some that did that. They just couldn’t take that comedown, but everybody has to come down. You are not going anywhere here; that’s the whole point of our existence here. We’ve got to think in other terms. If life is to be endurable, we have to think in other terms.

As A. E. Housman wrote,

Men at whiles are sober,
And think by fits and starts.
And if they think, they fasten
Their hands upon their hearts.

If you could stay drunk, you could endure this life. But men at times are sober and then it is just too bad because you see the terror of it. But not if we have the gospel. This is the nice thing. The obvious idea that we are preparing for something better is very plain here. I read something on that yesterday; I’m not going to read it now though.

Verse 9: “Wherefore, he is the firstfruits unto God.” What does he mean by the *firstfruits*? That’s an image that the Jews all understood. It means the best you have—the best and most beloved. It is the prize. It couldn’t be anything less, you see. Nothing less than the supreme sacrifice could be made. You can’t settle for less here. “Inasmuch as he shall make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved. And because of the intercession for all, all men come unto God; wherefore, they stand in the presence of him, to be judged of him according to the truth and holiness which is in him.” Then after your resurrection, you still have “to be judged of him according to the truth and holiness which is in him.”

With the Lutherans, death erases everything. A person’s death is his own atonement. If that was the case, there would be no place for hell. We’d all be equal in the hereafter, which is not so, of course, no more than we were before [this earth life]. “Wherefore, the end of the law which the Holy One hath given, unto the inflicting of the punishment which is affixed, which punishment . . . is in opposition to that of the happiness.” Being bound by punishment rather than by your spontaneous good will is the opposite “of the happiness which is affixed, to answer the ends of the atonement.” Permanent happiness and exaltation is the end, the object of the Atonement. To answer that, you must have something better than that [law]. “For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things.” This is an important point. Why? Well, the first law of energy for one thing (Newton’s first law, actually) is that all motion is equal and opposite in direction. All motion is equal in force and opposite in direction. If you push in this direction, you are going to have an equal and opposite resistance in the other direction. It’s a natural law.

Without that [opposition in all things], we wouldn't have anything, "neither happiness nor misery, neither sense nor insensibility."

I have some interesting quotations here from the early church fathers on this subject. These were the earliest writers, and they make it rather clear. This was a popular doctrine before—the idea that there must be opposition in all things, the right and wrong. He says in verse 13 here, "And if ye shall say there is no law, ye shall also say there is no sin [to break it], ye shall also say there is no righteousness. And if there be no righteousness there be no happiness."

Why the price must be paid. You might call this the commercial view, which is also a biblical view, of the Atonement—that a price has to be paid. We have gone into a debt to God the Father, and we can never meet it. Somebody else has to pay it. If you say then that anything you do is all right, that there is no sin, then note the dead, bored, blank faces of people who believe that and practice it. There's the unconcerned libertine or the professional killer. He has to sear his conscience with a hot iron. If it makes no difference, as it says here, then you have nothing. It balances out to exactly zero and there's nothing here. As he says, there's no happiness or anything else. As soon as people say, "Well, I can do anything I want to do—it's perfectly clear that God is dead and all is permitted," then the whole structure of society collapses. Nobody is happy and it's pretty horrible. You see this all the time in your prime—time TV, etc. The scene becomes macabre, as a matter of fact, when it becomes absolutely amoral. There was a great amorality in the seventeenth century. With the sudden [scientific] enlightenment, they decided "God is dead, all is permitted." So they did all sorts of things. Of course, they were the most bored, disappointed, and fearful people in the world. You get that in Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann's "Tales of Hoffmann" and things like that. Oscar Wilde wrote about things like that—the jaded, you do anything you want. The best example I can think of is Septimius Severus, perhaps the most successful man that ever lived. From being a sergeant in the army, he became the emperor of Rome. He was the strongest of all the emperors, ruled over the most [territory], and was the mightiest. As Gibbon says, "He was the principal author of the decline of the Roman Empire" because he put the military in charge of everything. He had done everything and achieved everything, and on his death bed he said, "*Omnia fui et nil expedit*. I've been everything, and nothing is worth a damn."

The same thing happened with Diocletian. He was the greatest manager perhaps of ancient times. He managed an empire that was in complete disarray. He put it in "apple pie" order. It included the whole East and the whole West. It went from Asia all through Europe and Africa, and he put it in perfect order. Then in A.D. 303 he retired and built the palace at Spalato. It's an enormous building; the whole city is inside this palace. Everything is dedicated to trying to achieve immortality. He did everything. You find the walls are covered with victory wreaths to represent victory over death. He has a tomb exactly like Constantine's tomb, which has twelve columns all focusing the power of the apostles. But Diocletian was a great Christian persecutor; he didn't believe in that. This was twenty years before Constantine's rule. He had the twelve months, moons, concentrating power. His tomb was in the center to act like a burning glass. The life force was to enliven it. It's the greatest rigmarole you ever saw. My daughter's father-in-law is the architect who is restoring all this. I spent some time there. You can spend whole days wandering around the palace. Underneath the ground there is a complete duplicate of the palace above. Room for room, passage for passage, closet for closet, everything is exactly as above. He had the three levels. He always had these mystic ideas. The point is that these

men who reached the heights of success were absolutely haunted. They were bitter and disillusioned and everything else. So don't expect that [worldly success] to bring you happiness. That's a truism. I don't need to go on like this. You know perfectly well that that's the way it is, except a lot of people don't seem to know it. They talk about success and careers and all that sort of nonsense.

I was going to read here from the early church fathers. Irenaeus came from Ephesus in the early days and in the year A.D. 170 became bishop of Lyons in France. You notice that 170 is quite early, quite soon after the Apostles. He wrote a very interesting writing on this subject. He is answering the Gnostics here, but he doesn't give them an answer. He ends up by agreeing with them. The Gnostics had to invent their strange theology to explain the problem of evil. God is either evil because he permits evil to happen, or weak because he can't help it. They had various answers, and he had various answers. But it's this problem of good and evil he is talking about, and he calls it "the Ancient Law of Liberty." Then he very properly quotes Matthew 23:37: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" That's God speaking, I wanted you to, but you wouldn't. He gives them their freedom: they don't have to if they don't want to. He is not going to force them; that is what Irenaeus is telling you. He wrote, "God made man free from the beginning. . . . For God never uses force. . . . He placed in man the power of election even as in the angels. . . . Glory and honor, he says, to all who do good, and it is due them because they could have done evil [that's reasonable enough]. . . . Now if God made some men good and some bad simply by nature, there would be nothing praiseworthy in their virtue or blameworthy in their vice, for that being their nature they could not do otherwise. But since to all is given equally the power of doing good or bad exactly as they choose, they are rightly praised or blamed for what they do. . . . That is why the prophets *appeal* to men to do good and eschew evil." Then he explains, "God wants men to do good, but even the Gospel allows anyone who doesn't want to do good to do evil. To obey or disobey is in every man's power, . . . God forcing no man. . . . There is a godlike power of judgment in all men, making them envied by angels." The angels don't have as much liberty as we do because of their situation. I mean, in the presence of the Father before you come here, you are not going to have an impulse to commit gross sin. It's only down here that you can have a real chance to get tempted. This is the place for it. This earth is really the furnace of testing because [it makes you wonder] is anything right in it? He said that the angels envy us because we can have a chance to show just how much we can overcome and what we can be. So this is the ancient law of liberty.

A very old writing, one that has turned out to be far more valuable than anyone thought, is the *Clementine Recognitions*. Now it is very closely connected with the Dead Sea Scrolls to everybody's surprise. It goes right back to the beginnings of Christianity. It's a surprising document and very rich in lore from the early Church. It contains the famous debate between Peter and Simon Magus who thought he was a Christian. Remember, he wanted to run things. He had his own sect and thought he was greatly inspired. He had great ideas about himself and made a lot of trouble. He had this argument with Peter, and it's mentioned in Acts. Peter begins the discussion by invoking peace on the whole assembly (they are going to have a big debate) and expressing the desire that everything be peaceably and amicably discussed. This is the signal for the self-righteous Simon Magus to blow his top. He explodes with an indignant declaration that the champions of truth don't ask for peace since they are determined to "kick the stuffing" out of error. They will only call it peace when the opposition lies helpless before them. It is weakness and cowardice to ask for peace for the wrong as well as for the right side, says Simon Magus.

In reply Peter says to him, we must imagine this world as a vast plain [a *maydan* as it is in the Book of Mormon; remember, he sees the vast plain in a vision] in which two cities strive for mastery, each claiming the whole land as its own. The king of one city sends to the other proposing a peaceful solution, a discussion in which the matter might be discussed without killing anybody. He isn't weak, not at all. He has no intention of giving the other king a single blade of grass that doesn't belong to him. Now the other king can think of no other course than to take what is his by force, and that, says Peter, shows his cause is really a weak one.

Simon Magus then applies his old chestnut of the schools: Either God is vicious because he doesn't want to prevent evil, or weak because he cannot. We can't have evil, we can't tolerate evil, we can't put up with that at all, says Simon. That's his position. "Could not God have made us all good," he asks, "so that we could not be anything else but virtuous?"

That, of course, is what Augustine says, "*Misera necessitas, non posse non peccare*. O miserable necessity, not to be able not to sin." If God had only created us not able to sin, how much happier we would be. He says, "It's a miserable necessity; to be able to sin is a terrible thing." The way he puts it is even stronger, "not able not to sin." If we were not able to sin, then we could be happy. You can go around and around, but the point is the fact that we can sin is a terrible calamity [according to Augustine]. Well, it isn't a calamity at all, as Peter explains here, but Simon Magus thinks it is. And that's basic in Christian theology. That was St. Augustine I was quoting.

"Could not God have made us all good so that we could not be anything but virtuous?" That's exactly what you get here in 2 Nephi. To which Peter replies with a statement of the ancient law of liberty: "A foolish question," he says, "for if he made us unchangeably and immovably inclined to good, we would not really be good at all, since we couldn't be anything else; and it would be no merit on our part that we were good, nor could we be given credit for doing what we did by necessity of nature. How can you call any act good that is not performed intentionally? For this reason the world has existed through the ages [now here's the doctrine of pre-existence and probation—right out of the Book of Mormon again] so that the spirits destined to come here might fulfill their number, and here make their choice between the upper and the lower worlds." This is the time of probation; this is the time of proving, as we are often told in the Book of Mormon. This is the time to prepare; it is all preparation, and here is where you make your "choice between the upper and lower worlds, both of which are represented here [and they certainly are], so that when their bodies are resurrected, the blessed might go to eternal light and the unrighteous for their impure acts be wrapped in spiritual flame." That's an interesting statement, and, of course, you get the same thing in Hebrews 10.

Question: Where are you reading this from?

Answer: Well, you can go back to the *Patrologia* and get it, or you can get it from this book of mine. It's called *The World and the Prophets*, and it's on reserve. This is on pages 182–84.

Quoting again from Peter, "In this work every man is given a fair chance to show his real desires." To a question put to him in a later discussion, "Did not the Creator know that those he created would do evil?" Peter replied, "Certainly, he considered all the evil that

would be among those whom he created; but as one who knew there was no other way to achieve the purpose for which they were created, he went ahead.”

That is a theme of an interesting number of recently discovered early Christian documents, especially Coptic. They have been discovering them now since World War II; we are getting quite a library of them. When you find a very early Christian document has been discovered, it usually starts out with the heading “These Are the Secret Teachings of the Lord to the Apostles after the Resurrection.” Everybody claimed to have those teachings. They aren’t necessarily so, but the point is that He did give them secret teachings which are not contained in the Bible. We don’t know what he taught them. “Then their eyes were opened,” it says, “and they understood what he told them.” It claims to be that. These are teachings that were preserved. A Gnostic was a person who claimed to have that secret knowledge. It’s very well explained in Eusebius where he quotes Hegesippus, the earliest church historian. He said that as long as there was an apostle, a real eye witness authority through Christ, in that first generation, these people “lurked in dark corners” (as he put it). But as soon as the last witness died—as soon as the last apostle who could call their bluff had died—then they came out like bugs out of the woodwork. They came out everywhere and swarmed. All of sudden there were over a hundred different churches, each claiming that it had the original teaching of the Lord. That’s called the *gnosis*. It’s called *gnosis* twenty-seven times in the New Testament. That means *the knowledge*—the knowledge that you get of the gospel, a higher knowledge. These people all claimed to have it, and they are always referred to in the New Testament as Gnostics so-called (always hyphenated). They call themselves Gnostics, but that doesn’t mean they are. The point is that people knew this information existed. Anyone who claimed to have it could count on getting a following because they were looking for that when the lights went out. They were looking for that which was taken away.

This is typical. I was going to say that the Council in Heaven is quite a theme here, especially that Doctrine of the Abbatôn by Bishop Cyril of Alexandria. We won’t go into that. The accounts of the Council in Heaven are that when the creation was proposed, it was voted down because the Earth complained that she would be defiled. The people up there all decided that there would be too much suffering, too much wickedness, too much defilement in this world. There was a deadlock, and they didn’t know what to go on until one person volunteered and said, “I will pay the price; I will take the blame.” You know who that was. When he did that, the whole chorus broke out and “the morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy.” That was the famous Creation Hymn. See, our word *poem* comes from *Creation Hymn*. The poem was the original Creation Hymn, the hymn that was sung in the heavens to announce the glory of the creation—all the earliest poems are. The Greek *poiēma* means *creation*. It was the Creation Hymn. The muses first sang it together with the Greeks, etc. You have many references to that. They broke out in that hymn because it was the Lord that made it possible to go on with the creation, carry this out, and allow this to happen. Even in spite of all this wickedness and corruption, he would pay the price. Only one person could clean up that mess, and he would do it.

So it says here: He considered that evil that would be among those whom he created; but as one who knew there was no other way to achieve the purpose, he did not draw back or hesitate, nor was he afraid of what would happen [paraphrased]. Evil is forced on no one, he explains, it is only there for those who want it. No one comes under its sway, “save he who of his own free will deliberately subjects himself to it.” Then an interesting thing

happens. At this time Simon Magus loses his temper, and he starts to rave and to rant and to say how great he is. Peter's good faith in this law of liberty was put to the test then because Simon lost control of himself and started raving and antagonized and scandalized everybody there because he misbehaved so. Then the people wanted to mob Simon Magus because he had made so much trouble, etc. But Peter immediately stood up and opposed them. He said, Absolutely nothing doing. What are we talking about the law of liberty for if we can't let Simon do what he wants? [paraphrased]. He said, "We must bear wicked men with patience, Brethren, knowing that God, who could easily wipe them out, suffers them to carry on to the appointed day in which the deeds of all shall be judged. Wherefore should we not then suffer whom God suffers? Why do we not bear with fortitude of spirit the wrongs they commit against us, when he who can do all things does not avenge himself for the wrongs they do to him?"

This has always been the concern of despots. Speaking of Needham's book, when the emperors took over then they made the law. Anybody who did wrong would be killed, and that was all there was to it. Wrong was what they defined as wrong. This reached its supreme point in Theodosius in A.D. 395 with the Theodosian Code. He was the first emperor who went overboard [in being] Christian. He went farther than Constantine or anybody else. He made it a capital crime to own a Hebrew Bible, for example. That was responsible for a lot of wiping out of texts, as you can imagine. To possess any literature uncomplimentary of the Christians was a capital offence. So there was a great destruction of books and records and everything else under Theodosius. He wanted to make the world good. Well, wasn't that a commendable project as far as that goes? In every age it has been their purpose to prevent and punish trespasses against God. "I don't mind about myself, but it's against God that I mind." This is the theme that is always being used—those sins which shape the very foundation of the universe, according to established dogma.

You get some wonderful things—Donatus, or Lucifer of Cagliari wrote some marvelous things on that, or even the great John Chrysostom. You'd be surprised how far they go in insisting that everybody be righteous or else. Because all sin is wrong, any sin against God is absolutely wrong. When anyone does any wrong, death is much too good for him. Sin is wrong; therefore, all possible means should be taken to prevent men from sinning. Isn't that logical enough? What could be more logical? From the earliest to the latest times, kings have claimed to be what the Roman emperor called himself, the *virtutum rector*, "the rector in charge of virtue." From the days of the Republic, they'd had sumptuary laws. Then they had the officials to go around and correct people's morals. He [the emperor] was the *magnus parens mundi*. He was the *great parent of the world*, who was responsible for the world's morals. You say it's usurping divine authority, "Who are you to judge and put God's law at your disposal? You can use it to give you authority for anything you want to do." The kings of old always had an answer to that. They would say, "We are God's representatives on earth and whatever we do, after all, is in the name of virtue. We want everyone to be virtuous, and it is our business to see that everybody is virtuous." I'm quoting from somebody there, as a matter of fact. In this they were quite sincere.

Remember, that was Satan's plan. He didn't want to damn anybody. He wanted to make everybody virtuous. He didn't command Cain to sacrifice to the devil or anything like that. He said, "Sacrifice to the Lord." He wanted the gospel plan to go through as long as he was in charge, you see. He told Adam and Eve to do a thing that had been done in other worlds. They were expected to eat that fruit, as a matter of fact. But he got them to obey him. That was the whole point: they were taking orders from him. That's what he

wanted. He wants to run the whole thing. He will use any guise, any trick he can. As Joseph Smith said, "He will tell a thousand truths to put over one error." Then you see how that confounds everything. The thing is he wants to be in charge. Remember how he introduces himself at the beginning of the book of Moses. He says, "I am the only begotten; worship me." He stamps on the ground and rages and rants in a "five-star tizzy" because he wants to be worshipped. He wants to run things; that's his desire. He is ambitious, and his plan is to make everybody virtuous, not vicious. He was the model and archetype of those monarchs of old who insisted on banishing all sin by edict. Time and again the panegyrists hail this or that emperor for having abolished all sin and nonconformity from the world. God was against sin; very well, the emperor would see to it that nobody sinned. Emperors, sincere and devout men who gave themselves such names as Pius and Felix (titles later adopted by the popes), sent out their *agentes in rebus* (that isn't the name I was trying to think of; the other name goes way back to the old Republican times). Their business was to spy and teach virtue and morals, especially to the Christians (everybody knew about their immoral doctrines and secret orgies!). And they met with a rebuff. Minucius Felix wrote, "What a splendid sight to God when a Christian stands up to pain, when he holds his own against threats, tortures, and torments! When he smilingly faces the multitude screaming for his death and the grim preparations of the butcher, as he asserts his liberty against kings and princes, yielding it only to God, to whom it belongs!" It is not for kings or princes to judge whether a man's course is a godly one or not; it is for God alone. (Then we talk about the Constitution and other things that have to do with that.) God does not delegate to any man or institution the functions he has reserved for himself.

So let's go back to the Book of Mormon which is talking along these lines in the second chapter of 2 Nephi. First we had, the Spirit is the same, it's open, salvation is free. Then, you are instructed, you have sufficient knowledge, etc., to carry on so you can be judged. With that law of good and bad, of course, we can make laws, but we have to make them for everything we do. If the Spirit isn't in you and you don't know what's right, all the laws in the world aren't going to help. But as I said, we are very litigious, and we use it as a means of controlling wealth. But there is the Atonement which requires the "broken heart and contrite spirit" and then the Resurrection and standing in judgment.

And "there must needs be an opposition in all things." Otherwise, if this wasn't so, "all things must have vanished away." That's the *heat death*. Entropy or the *heat death* is referred to in 2 Nephi 9:7: "Wherefore, it must needs be an infinite atonement." How is it going to cover everything? Because of that good old second law—the law of entropy or the *heat death*—everything runs down. Heat can only move from a hotter to a cooler body, that's all. When it finally has distributed itself evenly, then there's nothing. Things must have vanished away, etc. It's the same thing here. The more complex materials always break down to the more simple. Well, by theory then, the more complex shouldn't have existed by now. They should have vanished long ago, but they haven't. This is a great puzzle to scientists today; they talk a lot about it. "Wherefore, the first judgment which came upon man must needs have remained to an endless duration." And this is what happened. He says, when you die you are dead—that's the normal thing. What is happening here is that a mind far greater than inert matter has intervened and is running things. But it has to take the intervention of something because in the normal situation of things this is what happened: "And if so, this flesh must have laid down to rot and to crumble to its mother earth, to rise no more." Well, that's entropy, that's real. It rots, it crumbles, it falls and reaches a dead level, and that's the end. Nothing rises anymore. But there is something that has interfered with the whole process. There are minds; there is

something greater than chance and inert matter. This is an important thing; it is quite an issue among scientists today. There's a new book out by a woman, Caroline Merchant, called *The Death of Nature*. It's a very interesting book. She's a biologist at Harvard.

We have something much better than that, of course, in the Atonement. So we go on, and this part is very nice. I like this an awful lot. Verse 15: "It must needs be that there was an opposition; even the forbidden fruit in opposition to the tree of life; the one being sweet and the other bitter. Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man that he should act for himself." And you are enticed by the one or the other, and you are enticed equally in either direction, as we are told in chapter 7 of Moroni. He says that, remember. The devil enticeth and inviteth in one direction. At the same time God inviteth and enticeth in the other, and you are pulled between orbits. Which way you go depends on you; you will decide which one you will follow. Neither one is overpowering or irresistible because if that was so then you wouldn't be responsible. You'd say, "It's stronger than I and I have to yield." But that's not so. But Satan here, this old rascal, is seeking the misery of all mankind. Well, somebody is doing an awfully good job [of that].

Verse 21: "And the days of the children of men were prolonged, according to the will of God, that they might repent while in the flesh." That's good, that gives me another day—hooray, hooray! I'll need it. We must repent, you see. This is very important. After all, if we are so completely involved in the things of this world, as we necessarily are, we are never clear unless we make our first step and repent and decide we prefer to move in another direction. Repentance is a file of intention to change your way, but you have to keep repenting. Remember, we talked about repentance before. And it's a state of probation. You always have a chance to repent; it's not too late. And "their time was lengthened" to give them more time to repent. This is the greatest thing you can have. Remember, as Irenaeus said, the angels don't have the capacity to repent. They don't have the choice. That makes us envious of the angels because we can always do better. We can repent and make the resolve. "For he gave commandment that all men must repent; for he showed unto all men that they were lost, because of the transgression of their parents."

Of course, with the Fall we are lost—that isn't just a myth. Everybody who has ever thought about the human race has come to that conclusion. Oh, the human race! Kitty Gaigai is a cat that reflects upon the foolishness and wickedness of men. Kitty Gaigai is always right. He sits on the roof and says, "The human race is nothing but a mess." Or, as the *Koran* says, "This world is just lost." It's nothing. We just mentioned that second law of thermodynamics. Everything is going to run down. We are fighting it all the time, and it beats us. You can't beat gravity. Look at me. I'm sagging at all points now because gravity is going to take over. That's what you do. Isn't it nice that there is something that intervenes? There's more to come, and that's what we have here. Verse 22: "And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end [see, there was no entropy at all there; they must have remained whatever they were]. And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good for they knew no sin." Just as we read from Irenaeus and from Peter.

So is passing the test enough? No, it isn't. We must repent continually. You never pay the full price because, of course, you can't—even from day to day. Atonement is absolutely necessary; repentance once is not enough. Just what is the mechanism of repentance? How is it done? How does atonement work? This is the thing that escapes

everybody. Let's see if it escapes us. Then we have the most famous passage in the Book of Mormon in verse 25: "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy." This is the bottom line, "that they might have joy." How do you define *joy*? Well, you can't define anything that is really important, can you? You have to be redeemed from the fall. "And the Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves [they can move in all directions]. . . . Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life through the great Mediator of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself. And now, my sons, I would that ye should look to the great Mediator, and hearken unto his great commandments [we have to have Him]. . . . And not choose eternal death, according to the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein [the will of the flesh and the laws of nature and running down, entropy], which giveth the spirit of the devil power to captivate, to bring you down to hell." Well, what about the spirit? It doesn't run down. Yes, but what is it? It is subject to the devil after that. This would be a terrible thing to have happen.

So that second chapter is a very hard one, actually. The third one is a genealogical chapter, which is an interesting one too. I see we are not going very fast, but I find out that other people aren't going much faster. So that is good. There's enough nourishment here. There's enough meat to keep us guessing.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 18

2 Nephi 3–8

Lehi's Family: Blessings and Conflict

Let's start with the third chapter of 2 Nephi. It's a genealogical chapter, and it has strange phenomena in it which occur in genealogy all the time. If you've done any work in genealogy, you know that certain names have a way of popping up all along, and certain relationships turn up where you don't expect them at all. Notice, in the first verse he compares Joseph as a lost child, the last-born in the wilderness. Well, Joseph was the "lost child." Remember, he was sold by his *brethren* into Egypt—dropped down a well, picked up by a caravan, and taken to Egypt. His *brethren* were all down on him, but he has a home. "And may the Lord consecrate also unto thee this land," he says in the second verse, so he will have a place to go. "And now, Joseph, my last-born, whom I have brought out of the wilderness of mine afflictions, may the Lord bless thee forever, for thy seed shall not utterly be destroyed." Always the survival of Nephites in the New World also. Then we have something of a survey here. He says, "I am a descendant of Joseph." Now it's this name *Joseph* that they play on, but this is a characteristic thing in genealogy, and Joseph is very special. But the fact that it should be the same Joseph, leading right down to Joseph Smith, should not surprise you.

In the first year of college we used to require everybody to read Henry Adams' *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres*, in which he shows how in 1066, the time of William the Conqueror, everybody was related—and they were. They had to be. With three million people living in France and England, within a few generations they would all be intermarried. This is the way it turns out. We have something like the *Assizes of Jerusalem*, that amazing document. When Jerusalem was taken in the First Crusade in 1095, they set up the kingdom of Jerusalem there. First it was Godfrey of Bouillon, who was the Duke of Lorraine. He died in 1100, and then his brother, Baldwin I, became the first king of Jerusalem. Then they had the line of Baldwins, etc. But the people you have at Jerusalem represent all the royal families of Europe. There in that crusade was Robert of Normandy, who was the son of William the Conqueror, to whom you are [probably] all related. All you have to do is just get one name in the nobility, and then you are related to all of them. That saves you a lot of work, you see. All you have to do is get one name; then you go down the line as if there was nobody but nobility living in Europe. But they are all related, and this is what happens with *Assizes of Jerusalem*. Anybody who got to be king of Jerusalem was king of all the world because he could relate himself to every royal family in the world. And it's very easy to hook up on that. My wife's genealogy has scads and scads of nobility around the Baltic. It is Estonian and Polish, and once you get into that you are into everything else. She's from the line of the Reverend Layton, and this we can trace back. Joseph Smith is from that line, Brigham Young is from that line, Heber C. Kimball is from that line, George Washington is from that line. They all come down. All of colonial America is related. Well, most of them came from certain parts of England, and they were very much intermarried. So you have this bedizening network of relationships—just a mesh that go together. That's a fascinating thing that happens here.

Then there was Raymond of Toulouse, who was the son of Philip I of France. The interesting thing is that all these people had very strange relationships with Jerusalem before. You may note that book that has caused such a sensation in Europe, called *Holy Grail, Holy Blood*, the Holy Grail meaning their genealogies. All these families are related. You notice that Toulouse was not Roman Catholic. Toulouse was the hotbed of the [Albigenses]. Then along with them there was the Sicilian family. Robert of Normandy also ruled in Sicily. So we get this Holy Grail stuff, but the *Assizes of Jerusalem* are supposed to be the constitution for the ruling of the world from Jerusalem. The court and kingdom would be there, so they set it up there. There was the most magnificent pageantry you can imagine. It was all show, but what a show! This was the Middle Ages at its peak. The pageantry, the processions, the gaudiness, the decorations—and all based around the temple. There were the Knights Templar and the Hospitalers, who gave hospitality to people coming to the temple. They were all mystically associated with the temple somehow or other. It was really something, but we won't get into that. I'm just showing you that this chapter here on genealogy might not be so cockeyed as it looks, the way these things keep coming out.

The spanning of time is a fascinating thing. I was just thinking about my grandchildren of whom I'm excessively fond. The last two, who are two and a half and three years old, are terribly smart. I like to go with these little nippers and walk along the canal. They see everything and talk about everything; it's wonderful. I hug them and kiss them and that's nice. I was treated the same way by my great grandfather, John Patrick Reed. He was born in 1825, and these children will probably be living in 2078, if they live as long as I have. So here I am intimately associating with people living over a span of 253 years. That's what our life spans cover. I have known people intimately 253 years apart. So you can jump over time in a very short period. You will find yourself related to all the Crusaders and everyone else. This family business is an amazing thing, but it isn't as exclusive and as snobbish as you think it is. We all have crooks in our families and everything else. Very interesting things turn up that you never expect. We had given up on the name *Nibley*, which turns up in odd places and times, until very recently. My cousin Preston was doing some serious work back in Scotland in a very favorite place of mine. For some reason I always felt fascinated by the name Elfinstone. It was the first place where the Norse landed when they came to northern Scotland. The whole lowlands of Scotland are Scandinavian, way back. Here is this town called Elfinstone, "the Stone of the Elfs." That sounds rather romantic. As it turns out, there were three mayors of Elfinstone in succession, all called *Hugh Nibley*. I had never seen my name anywhere before at all. Something was going on here; it gives you goose flesh.

When he talks about this *Joseph* business, you may well take it seriously. He talks about another Joseph and it goes on down the line. An important thing is that a great deal is said in this chapter about written records, a written connection. That's all you have. Notice here in verse 12: "Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together unto the confounding of false doctrines . . . in the latter days." That's the way it is turning out. Speaking of Moses, he says, "But I will write unto him my law, by the finger of mine own hand; and I will make a spokesman for him."

The primacy of writing is very interesting, but what do you find? Some of you may have seen that recent *National Geographic* on prehistoric man, tracing them back. There's not much in that, but the fact is that you will find writing is the oldest thing—the written

document, handing around the visible written document you find there. You will find these hand marks on caves, for example, which are individual marks of possession. A person would put his hands on the cave and then spray it with paint by blowing it from his mouth. You find the same thing in the caves of China, and in Spain, and in Australia. They did the same things on the walls there back to the most primitive times. But aside from that they put marks, definite symbols and marks. It's the *wasm* of the Arabs; you put your mark on something. It's your name and your identity. It identifies you with a cave or a piece of property, especially with an arrow. The first long anthropological article I published was on the arrow, hunting and the state. It's on the marking of arrows—the prehistoric way of establishing your identity, whatever you shot for the lands, etc. That's the crest you have in Scotland. Your crest is the pattern of colors and threads on your arrow so that you can identify it. Wherever you go it identifies you. It's the crest of your house, and you weave it opposite directions in your plaid. You wear it as a plaid and it identifies your house. They call it the crest, but it's your mark or identification. But this writing and marking of things is the oldest thing we have. It's very necessary. It establishes identity and it establishes control. So when we are talking about identity here and genealogy and passing over thousands of years, that is the written record which is very important.

Notice again in verse 18: "I will give unto him that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins." It's as if it were coming from the dust, and, of course, the value of the Dead Sea Scrolls is that they are written documents. The minute they were dug up, the kids in the caves there in Nahal Hever could read them. Just like that, though they were at least two thousand years old. "And they shall cry from the dust; yea, even repentance unto their *brethren*, even after many generations have gone by them. . . . Wherefore, because of this covenant thou art blessed; for thy seed shall not be destroyed, for they shall hearken unto the words of the book." This has to do with the bridging of time and space and also of humanity. As Brother Packer was talking about last night, we are "the human family." That is something unique. We do come from one ancestor, from one common source. That's an idea that's coming back. The biologists are bringing that back a lot. I don't mean about Adam, but they gave up long ago the idea that we have multiple origins. That has been dropped now by most biologists. We do come from just one ancestor, but that's another thing. What we are dealing with here is the big picture. We get a scope, a span, and a sweep here that's quite remarkable.

Then we have Lehi summing up with a patriarchal blessing. He blessed his sons and daughters. He spoke concerning Joseph in 2 Nephi 4:2, "For behold, he truly prophesied concerning all his seed. And the prophecies which he wrote, there are not many greater. And he prophesied concerning us, and our future generations." Notice in verse 3 that he doesn't bless Laman and Lemuel. He doesn't give them a blessing. He blesses their children because it is their children who survive and who are blessed. He calls Laman his first-born. "Behold, my sons, and my daughters, who are the sons and the daughters of my first-born, I would that ye should give ear unto my words." But it's not the first-born he is blessing, you will notice. It's like the way Isaac crossed his hands when he blessed Jacob and Esau. He reversed the blessing on Esau and wouldn't give it to him. It's the same thing with the blessing on Manasseh in the *Ascension of Isaiah*, a very old text that has been discovered. "I should leave a blessing upon you [he's not going to leave them without a blessing]. . . . Wherefore, if ye are cursed, behold, I leave my blessing upon you, that the cursing may be taken from you and be answered upon the heads of your parents. Wherefore, because of my blessing the Lord God will not suffer that ye shall perish; wherefore, he will be merciful unto you and unto your seed forever. . . . [Then] he caused

the sons and daughters of Lemuel to be brought before him” and gave them the same blessing. He gave the sons and daughters of the second son the same blessing as the other. Then he gave the sons of Ishmael the same blessing. Then he blessed Sam: “Blessed art thou, and thy seed; for thou shalt inherit the land like unto thy brother Nephi.” He had always been Nephi’s strongest support. Then Lehi died. After his death the old feud burst out anew worse than ever, you notice in verse 13. “Not many days after his death, Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael were angry with me because of the admonitions of the Lord.” They had been holding off out of respect for their father, probably.

Then Nephi says, “And upon these I write the things of my soul.” Here we get a very interesting character analysis of Nephi. He really pours it on here and shows a complex and difficult character. “I write the things of my soul, and many of the scriptures. . . . For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children.” That sounds like a verse out of the *Talmud*, doesn’t it? Then he goes on, “Nevertheless, notwithstanding the great goodness of the Lord, in showing me his great and marvelous works, my heart exclaimeth: O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities.” Well, what is he up to that is so sinful? You notice he is always under this steady pressure from his brethren. Now it has burst out anew, and it is very bad after Lehi’s death. He is just about ready to give up here. He says, “I am encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me.” What is he tempted to do? We soon find out here. To play a rough game is what he is tempted to do. He wants to hit back at Laman and Lemuel. He has a short temper; remember, he really lets fly at times. The dispatching of Laban wasn’t his idea, but he impulsively grabbed Zoram, held his mouth, and told him there was nothing to fear, instead of arguing with him properly. He said that he was large and strong. He could handle Zoram easily enough, and so he did. Then verse 19: “And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sins; nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted.”

What could his sins have been? What are sins? You can’t classify them. You can’t be like the sixteenth-century probabilists, like Molinos with the famous Catalog of Sins. They rated each sin according to a number with as much as three or four decimal places showing exactly which sin is worse than which other sin. You can’t do that, of course, because sin is a state of mind. Verse 23: “Behold, he hath heard my cry by day, and he hath given me knowledge by visions in the nighttime. And by day have I waxed bold in mighty prayer before him; yea, my voice have I sent up on high; and angels came down and ministered unto me.” Verse 25 is a very interesting ascension text here: “And upon the wings of his Spirit hath my body been carried away upon exceedingly high mountains [in the plural]. And mine eyes have beheld great things, yea, even too great for man; therefore, I was bidden that I should not write them.” What’s he talking about? Well, he says they are too great for us. What has been happening to him is out of our league. During eight years in the desert, he really had some experiences. “O then, if I have seen so great things, . . . why should my heart weep and my soul linger in the valley of sorrow [Why am I unhappy in that case? This is man’s condition he beautifully describes here], and my flesh waste away, and my strength slacken, because of mine afflictions?”

Well, he has had plenty of afflictions. After eight years he has had about more than he can stand, and they are about to break loose and go off by themselves. It’s because he has reached a peak here, as if he couldn’t take it any more. “And why should I yield to sin, because of my flesh? [Here is where the weakness comes.] Yea, why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my

soul?” This is a very nice thing. This is who you have to blame for your troubles. With eight years of tension, his passionate nature came out here. He was brooding and self-accusing. He hit back to the brethren. He was impulsive and also physical. So he came out with a confession here. His troubles affected his peace of mind. He just got mad and all upset. You can imagine losing sleep, tossing, and this sort of thing that happens to all of us. We shouldn’t be peeved about these things, but that’s the way we are. “Why am I angry because of mine enemy?” [Why blame him and get all upset because of my enemy? It’s all right to go my way if I have trouble, but why get mad at him?] Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin.” He calls that sin because it is. Sin is waste, the scriptures tell us. You are wasting time and energy with anger because it is not going to get you anywhere. Maybe righteous anger, but this is a brooding anger against his brothers that has been going on and on. “Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul [there’s the enemy]. Do not anger again because of mine enemies. Do not slacken my strength because of mine afflictions.”

He was ready to let up and not follow it through. He had been losing his resolve or something. But [he tells himself] don’t slacken strength because of afflictions; expect your afflictions. Then he keeps telling himself that he should rejoice and see the positive side. “Rejoice, O my heart, and cry unto the Lord, and say: O Lord, I will praise thee forever; yea, my soul will rejoice in thee, my God, and the rock of my salvation.” Then we come to this marvelous desert image—this little vignette of a person fleeing through the desert from his enemies and wanting the Lord to block up the way of those who are chasing him, going in and bowing down to the lord of the tent and asking the lord to place his robe around him for protection and to say, “I am your protector now.” He’s a member of the tribe, and the sheikh is bound to protect him as a member of the family then. When he says *ahlan*, that means both *family* and *tent*. The tent is yours, and *marhaban* means “have place.” We discussed that “have place” business before.

Verse 32: “May the gates of hell be shut continually before me, because that my heart is broken and my spirit is contrite! O Lord, wilt thou not shut the gates of thy righteousness before me, that I may walk in the path of the low valley [that’s the way to get through, the shortcut], that I may be strict in the plain road [that’s the *derekh*]? O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness! that’s what atonement is; when the Lord opens the flap and takes you into his tent, *kappōret*, he forgives the people; we talked about that before]. O Lord, wilt thou make a way for mine escape before mine enemies! Wilt thou make my path straight before me! Wilt thou not place a stumbling block in my way [that’s a *kashal*]—but that thou wouldst clear my way before me, and hedge not up my way, but the ways of mine enemy.” That’s what you want; that’s what the Arab prays for.

This next verse is a confession. “O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever. I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh; for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh.” Remember, he was a very powerful guy. He was their best hunter. He was the toughest character of them all, a mighty man physically. I won’t trust in the arm of flesh anymore, he says, “for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh.” This is sort of a confession, you see. And all force begets counterforce; you are not going to profit by that. “Yea, cursed is he that putteth his trust in man or maketh flesh his arm.” There’s your “peace through strength” sort of nonsense. “Yea, I will cry unto thee, my God, the rock of my righteousness [this is a rock in the desert; this is what David uses; he is quoting Psalms here when he flees from his enemies;

remember, David was in flight a good deal of the time, fleeing for his life with a small company and hiding out in the desert among the rocks]. Behold, my voice shall forever ascend up unto thee, my rock and mine everlasting God. Amen.” That’s a nice picture of Nephi there.

Then in chapter five comes the big break. “I, Nephi, did cry much unto the Lord my God, because of the anger of my brethren.” This is a cry to God, and what is the cause of it? The anger of his brothers. They just won’t let up; they are relentless and obsessed. Nephi is the enemy as far as they are concerned. They will never forgive him. “But behold, their anger did increase against me, insomuch that they did seek to take away my life.” When he called upon the Lord in this prayer that just went before, it didn’t cure them at all. Their anger only got worse until they finally sought to get rid of Nephi. Now, what’s he going to do? “Yea, they did murmur against me, saying: Our younger brother thinks to rule over us [when you have a small company together for years and years, you are always going to have short tempers and anger; there are many films and plays built on that particular theme; people just can’t abide each other after a while]; and we have had much trial because of him [he’s to blame]; wherefore, now let us slay him, that we may not be afflicted more because of his words [they are getting under our skin—we are not going to have any more]. For behold, we will not have him to be our ruler; for it belongs unto us, who are the elder brethren to rule over this people [naturally]. . . . And it came to pass that the Lord did warn me [it was time to get out now], that I, Nephi, should depart from them and flee into the wilderness, and all those who would go with me.”

Here we have another break; we have the Rechabites again. They are breaking off, and this is the beginning of the division between the Nephites and the Lamanites. He took his family, and he took Zoram and his family. So the Zoramites are Nephites henceforth. There are five families here. He took Sam, the elder brother and his family; and Jacob and Joseph, the two youngest brothers; and also his sisters and their families. That’s more than five families, isn’t it? They would be married to men from the outside. “And all those who would go with me.” That was another group. Anyone who was willing to go, regardless of family, etc. These little things escape you if you don’t notice them. You might say he went with just five families. No, there were five families, and some of his sisters’ families, too, and anybody else that wanted to join—any of those who believed in the warnings and revelations of God. They were out there on a warning anyway. Verse 7: “And we did take our tents and whatsoever things were possible for us, and did journey in the wilderness for the space of many days.” Well, this is where I came in, the old story again. “Nel mezzo del cammino di nostra vita.” Well, we’re in the middle of a journey all the time in the dark and dreary world, as Dante starts out.

They journeyed in the wilderness for many days. We don’t know how many *many* is. Book of Mormon geography is a waste of time. I wouldn’t touch it with a forty-foot pole. Never have; it’s not necessary. Some day we’ll get more information, I suppose. Everybody has tried their hand at it. I don’t know why; it doesn’t make any difference. So they journeyed in the wilderness for many days and pitched their tents. They had been doing this, and they set up a permanent camp and called the place Nephi after themselves. Well, we have a place in Utah called Nephi. We have a place called Brigham because who was the settler? Provo is named after Etienne Provost, a man who made his base here in the early days. But this was written [translated] before Provo ever was, back in the 1820s. “And all those who were with me did take upon them to call themselves the people of Nephi.” That’s natural enough—the Brighamites, the Josephites, the Smithites, etc. People always name themselves after the leaders, in Alexandria or anywhere else. The Platonists

and Aristotelians are ancient names which go back to their [leaders]. The followers of Plato called themselves Platonists.

They lived according to the law of Moses. The basic law is still the law of Moses. They are still living by the Old Testament. This really comes out in Alma. You will see more light cast on the Old Testament practices described in Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy than anywhere else. But they are living by the law of Moses. We know that salvation doesn't come by it. It just points their minds forward. We were told a number of times earlier that they brought all manner of seed over here. We know that it's very hard to find where all the crops in the world originally came from because they were planted by other people who moved in. It's easy to carry seeds with you, and people do all over the place. Did emmer wheat really originate in Palestine, or was it in northern Egypt in an earlier time? Barley is a common Babylonian measure, but you find barley all over Asia and in the New World too from the very beginning. Any seed will grow; the soil is very impartial here. So they planted the seeds, and you have all sorts of crops here, as corn went back to the Old World. And they raised flocks. That's an interesting thing, too, because there are flocks of various kinds. What would it be? Vicuñas or llamas or something like that? They are all in the sheep family, and they herd them today.

Verse 12: "And I, Nephi, had also brought the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass." They had the national treasures with them. And he took the sword of Laban and used it as a pattern to make more swords "lest by any means the people who were now called Lamanites [they were calling them Lamanites for the record; whether they called themselves Lamanites or not we don't know] should come upon us and destroy us." And they went to work and built many buildings. One of the first things they did was build a temple and constructed it "after the manner of the temple of Solomon." This is one of those points for which the Book of Mormon was often criticized. There was only one temple, and that was the temple at Jerusalem. You wouldn't build another temple, but we know that's not so. In 1925 the Elephantine Records were discovered from upper Egypt. The people who left Jerusalem at the time of Lehi went up the Nile to Elephantine to the first cataract. There was a large settlement of Jewish mercenaries there working for the king of Ethiopia at that time. They asked for permission to build a temple. They wrote letters to the temple committee, the high priest and the scribes, back in Jerusalem. We have a number of those letters asking for permission to build a temple. The permission was granted, and it was built after the manner of Solomon's temple. They didn't have those materials. It was a much cheaper and smaller building, but they did build it. Then later on under the influence of the same dynasty up north, Hōni, who was very famous and called "the circle drawer," went and built a model of the temple again at Heliopolis where the Jews could worship in Egypt. That's where most of them went when Jerusalem fell. Alexandria became the biggest Jewish city in the world, just as New York is today.

So Nephi built this temple. Naturally, he would use the pattern of Solomon's temple. But it wasn't built of so many precious things. They couldn't afford that. Solomon's temple was really a show, as you know. "For they were not to be found upon the land; wherefore, it could not be built like unto Solomon's temple. But the manner of the construction was like unto the temple of Solomon; and the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine." It was the best workmanship they could do.

They are building a temple in Portland, to my great surprise. A person from there who is on the building committee said that the workers are absolutely ecstatic. The workers who

are building it are not members of the Church. They are ecstatic because they are not only allowed, but they are instructed and ordered to use the costliest and best materials and the finest workmanship they possibly can. Now any other contractor in building is going to save money and cut corners. Look at the apartments springing up around Provo. They are tenements, firetraps. For a builder in this day and age to be told that he should use the best materials and, even though it's the costliest, the best workmanship you can possibly get—that's the sort of thing any real craftsman or artisan dreams of but gets very few chances at today. Today, of course, you've got to save money and have minimal expense. It has to be cost-effective and all the rest of it. But Nephi says here that the workmanship was exceedingly fine. They make a point of that on the temple, and it should be.

Now naturally they wanted to make Nephi their chief. He had been running things all along anyway, so why shouldn't he be the chief? They were desirous to have him king, but that was too much of a title for him. "I did for them according to that which was in my power," he said. They looked up to him as their king and leader.

Now this cursing. There's a great deal said about this race business in the Book of Mormon. It's very clear what it is—it's a cultural thing. It tells us here in verse 21, "Wherefore, as they were white, and exceedingly fair and delightsome." That doesn't mean they had complexions of milk, that they were pale white and ghostly. That's not healthy anyway. Nor does it mean that the others were coal black. Black is much too strong a word to use here, if you are using it literally. But, as I've said before, it applies just as much in *shāḥōr* and *lāḥān* as it does in Hebrew and Aramaic, and also in Arabic. Anything that's *abyaḍ* is good, delightful, pleasant; and everything that's *aswad* isn't. In the paintings, whether it's Greek vase paintings or wall paintings in Egypt, the people who live in the *bayt al-sha'ir*, "the houses of hair, out in the desert are always painted with dark complexions. The people who live in the *bayt al-hajar*, "the houses of stone," are always depicted with light complexions. The women never went out; they would paint their faces with white lead, as a matter of fact. It's a cultural thing. Of course, if you live that way, you become dark. Also, the camps of natives, Asiatics or anything like that, become garbage dumps. They live by hunting and plunder. They are not cultivating the soil and are not bound to work too much. So they become slovenly and dark in their manner. They become dirty, different, smelly and all that sort of thing. That's what it means by loathsome—dirty, smelly, not very well groomed or anything like that. This is a cursing. When you see a person who is white and exceedingly fair and delightsome, you are not going to see a platinum blond necessarily. Though you do find them. This is the thing that always bowled me over among the Hopis. Every tenth child is a blond, not an albino at all. They will have red hair and blue eyes. I thought, well it's an oddity—some missionary, some Scandinavians have intermarried with them. That wasn't it at all. These were all native Hopi kids, and every tenth one was a perfectly good blond, as blond as anybody you ever saw. And yet it was quite normal. Nobody was upset by it or anything like that.

One was "exceedingly fair and delightsome," and the other was a skin of blackness. As I said, *shāḥōr* is a skin of blackness, which means dark. A good source for that would be Morris Jastrow's *Aramaic Dictionary*. For the word *black*, it gives dark, unpleasant—everything sort of uncomplimentary. We don't need to linger on that. Here it is [in verse 23]; it says it's a cultural affair. If you mixed your seed with them, you got the same cursing. If you intermarry with them, you are sharing their culture, and you become just like them. In other words, it is not a racial thing because you can get it

yourself. “And because of their cursing which was upon them, they did become an idle people, full of mischief and subtlety, and did seek in the wilderness for beasts of prey.” Well, there are lots of races like that. All you have to do is watch Channel 26 and you can be introduced to all sorts of tribes like that. With this National Geographic Studies you see tribes like that everywhere. Not that they don’t have their virtues, and the Lamanites certainly did. But racial change isn’t necessary for this at all. After all, they are members of the same family; we know that.

Then this is the point [in verse 25]. As the Lord tells them back in 1 Nephi 2:23, right at the beginning of the book, I want them breathing down your neck. I’m going to keep the Lamanites there to keep you in line that they may stir you up to remembrance. You are never going to solve the Lamanite problem by trying to beat them with any weapons or anything you can do. That’s not how you solve things. I want those people giving you trouble [paraphrased]. Verse 25: “And the Lord God said unto me: They shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in remembrance of me; and inasmuch as they will not remember me, and hearken unto my words, they shall scourge them even unto destruction.” Here’s a promise: If your people do not obey me, the Lamanites are there to destroy you. They will scourge you until you are destroyed. That makes it very clear. Then Nephi consecrated Jacob to be a priest and teacher, so Jacob was not to be his successor in the government. They started appointing chiefs by the name of *Nephi*. They gave them that title, just as Julius Caesar’s successor was called *Caesar*, and ever after the person who held the title was called a *Caesar*, though it was a personal name originally.

Here’s an interesting thing: “And it came to pass that we lived after the manner of happiness.” Now, what on earth is the “manner of happiness”? There is a regime that assures happiness. And, of course, it’s a state of mind—that’s all it is. It’s a state of mind that goes with every way of life, whether you’re living in the desert or in the clouds. Wherever you are living, whether it’s in the city or in the country, there is a manner of happiness. If you are not happy, that means you are not living the right way. You are supposed to be happy. They were living after the manner of happiness. But you might say, “Egads, just these families living out in the sticks all by themselves. Weren’t they bored stiff? This is an interesting phenomenon—where you find boredom is not in such places but in the midst of the greatest civilizations. That’s where people get bored because they get replete. Look at the literature, particularly a lot of the novels of the French—Proust, for example. Or of the English, like the English murder mysteries. The nobility living in country houses and in London were absolutely bored stiff. But this is especially true of the Russian novels. Tolstoy has a novel called *Tverdiye Lyudi*, *Difficult People*. The classic situation is the rich Russian family before the Revolution. They had everything their way, and they just sat around and got bored until they started committing suicide and having duels and murders and everything else. This happens in the others, too. The French would always say, “Il n’y a rien de faire. There’s nothing to do.” The Russian slogan was “Chto delat’? Skuchnoi grustno! Boring, disgusting their life is.” They are the people that have everything, the rich land owners, etc. It’s the same thing with the Polish novels, though I haven’t read any of them for a long time. I used to read myself to sleep with Russian novels. They were good ones to put you to sleep because these people were so bored with their lives. In one story called “The Duel” by Lermontov, two house guests get so bored and disgusted they decide they will just have a duel and kill each other because there is nothing else to do. Boredom goes with civilization as much as anything. Just because these people are out there by themselves, they are not going to be bored insufferably, beyond endurance. Life in a monastery could be, but there again you have the idea of a few people shut up together. There’s no more enlightening and terrifying document than Robert

Browning's "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister." The last words are "Gr-r-r—you swine." They are jealous of each other and hate each other's guts. They are shut in together doing this pious routine all the time, year after year after year. That would really be boredom.

Well, what do you do not to be bored? What do you do to live after the manner of happiness? As Brother Packer told us, also from the Book of Mormon, "Wickedness never was happiness." You are not going to get it by kicking the gong around and indulging in this, that, and the other. That's a very interesting thing. My youngest son never graduated from high school. He was voted most likely to succeed, and he's a big wheel now, incidentally, but that's something else. For a while he danced with the San Francisco ballet, of all things. He tried everything. The boys in Haight Ashbury used to say, "Well, why don't you try the drugs? Why don't you try the sex?" He wouldn't do any of that. He had a simple answer to any of them. He would just look them in the eye and say, "Are you happy?" Usually, they would break out crying; they were utterly miserable. This is the point about going to these excesses. You are not going to find fun that way. You will quickly exhaust all the variety you can think of, and it becomes exceedingly depressing, as we know.

So we have a perfect right to the way of happiness. "Man is that he might have joy," and our whole idea here is a country where we can have "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But it doesn't tell you how to pursue it. You are not supposed to tell me, and I'm not supposed to tell you. But there are ways of pursuing happiness until your joy becomes uncontrollable, just absolutely wild. It's the love of the Lord; it's when the Lord blesses you. You will know and feel that. But, you don't know what happiness is until that happens, and it will. Here's the key right here in verse 32: "And if my people are pleased with the things of God they will be pleased with mine engravings which are upon these plates." So they're pleased with the things of God. That's enough to keep you happy all the time. There are some very interesting things. We have lots of pioneer journals and things like that about things that went on. My mother was born in Manti, and we have various family journals and the like. There was amazingly little feuding and trouble. There is now.

If you read Miss Marple, you know what happens in a little English village where everything seems to be so peaceful and quiet. There's where the murders and the dirty plots take place. Little English villages are establishments of many, many years. They are very ancient and established. People have been living there [a long time], and they are living rather shallow lives. The gospel means nothing to them. Their lives are formality, very formal. Tea, for example, is the one thing around which everything centers—the nice cup of tea. This is a formality. If we didn't have these formalities, we'd go crazy and fall apart. We have to do these little things. Max Taylor was the commander of the Hundred and First Airborne. He insisted that everybody in the division, no matter what the operation was, no matter what the circumstances were, shave every day. You had to; you'd be court-martialed if you didn't shave. Why should you shave every day, of all things, especially if you were stuck in one muddy, hot foxhole for seventy-seven days, as I was once next to Arnhem. That's a long time. But it was a morale thing; it kept you going. It was the only thing that kept your sanity. You had to do these little things. You had to shave and brush your teeth and all this sort of thing. If you did that, that was fine. Then you'd duck back awfully quick. This "living after the manner of happiness" is a remarkable statement, I do believe. We should pay more attention to things like that.

Now we get on to the sixth chapter and the words of Jacob. Jacob gets a word in here, and we have a book of Jacob. He was consecrated to be a priest by Nephi "unto whom ye look

as a king or a protector.” Nephi wouldn’t be appointed. He refused the office, but they looked upon him as a king and a protector. Jacob says [in verse 3], “Yea, mine anxiety is great for you.” He is worried. Remember, he is their spiritual leader now, and he is as worried as Nephi was. He says he is going to give them a view of things to come, and he quotes Isaiah—as Nephi had been quoting Isaiah more than anything else, just like the Dead Sea Scrolls are Isaiah far before anything else. Verse 9: “And he also has shown unto me that the Lord God . . . should manifest himself unto them in the flesh.” He has the future of the Jews here. This is a thing that is gone over in the Book of Mormon a number of times. I’m going to skip over these chapters in Isaiah here, just pointing out some things. Verse 12: “And blessed are the Gentiles . . . if it so be that they shall repent, and fight not against Zion, and do not unite themselves to that great and abominable church, they shall be saved.” Well, that’s a strange condition. All you have to do is not belong to a particular church. That should be very easy. That includes atheists and everything else. “For the people of the Lord are they who wait for him; for they still wait for the coming of the Messiah [and very few did]. The Messiah will come a second time then “in power and great glory, unto the destruction of their enemies.” He is giving them a preview of the comings of the Lord, as in the Hebrew prophets. Then he says, “And they that believe not in Him shall be destroyed, both by fire and by tempest, and by earthquakes, and by bloodshed, and by pestilence, and by famine. . . . For the Mighty God shall deliver his covenant people. For thus saith the Lord: I will contend with them that contendeth with thee—And I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine.” Well, he is quoting Isaiah here, and chapter 7 is just chapter 50 from Isaiah.

Incidentally, you compare these chapters with those in the King James Translation. They are not identical. There are various differences. I have a section in that book called *Since Cumorah* in which I compare various passages, and there are key differences—some rather important. The Book of Mormon follows the Septuagint rather than the Masoretic Text. The Masoretic Text is a thousand years later than the Septuagint, you see. The Septuagint is a thousand years earlier, and it isn’t Hebrew—it’s Greek. But it was translated by seventy-two (as the name shows) scholars from Jerusalem for the benefit of Ptolemy I of Egypt. They translated it at Alexandria. They knew a thousand years earlier what the Old Testament should sound like. Now, we have another text of Isaiah from the Dead Sea Scrolls which is a thousand years earlier than any Hebrew text of Isaiah. Now we can compare them and see what they are like. Again, the Isaiah in the Dead Sea Scrolls is closer to the Septuagint, and the Joseph Smith is closer to the Septuagint. So the King James Version is the one that strayed the farthest. It’s the latest actually. The differences are not drastic, but there are some important points in it. Well, that’s just in passing.

Let’s get to chapter 9 where he starts explaining it, then. Now we are really racing along here. “I have read these things that ye might know concerning the covenants of the Lord that he has covenanted with all the house of Israel—That he has spoken unto the Jews, by the mouth of his holy prophets, even from the beginning down . . . until the time comes that they shall be restored to the true church and fold of God; when they shall be gathered home to the lands [plural] of their inheritance, and shall be established in all their lands of promise [so it’s a wider movement than just the city of Jerusalem]. . . . I speak unto you these things that ye may rejoice, and lift up your heads forever, because of the blessings which the Lord God shall bestow upon your children. . . . I know that ye know that our flesh must waste away and die.” Now he comes to the subject of the Atonement and the Resurrection here. The important thing is not what happens to Jerusalem, or what happens to the nation or the church, for that matter—it’s what happens to you. I mean if the whole

thing is just going to pass away and go down into the dust and be forgotten forever. This is the one where he talks about the second law of thermodynamics, right here. He says, “Our flesh must waste away and die [well, it does do that]; nevertheless, in our bodies we shall see God.” Remember Job: “And though . . . worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.”

Luther translated that, because he didn’t like it, “Yet *without* the flesh I shall see God.” All you have to do is put another word in there—not *in the flesh*, change it to *without*. Well, you can do that if you want, but that’s not what the text said. Verse 5: Yes, I know that ye know that in the body he shall show himself unto those at Jerusalem, from whence we came [he promises the coming of Christ]. . . . For as death hath passed upon all men, to fulfill the merciful plan of the great Creator . . .” This word *plan* is used a lot. You can look up in Young’s Concordance or anywhere else and find that the word *plan* does not occur once in the Bible. It’s being used a great deal by preachers today, but it was never used in Joseph Smith’s day. But you see how it explains things; we can put up with an awful lot if we know it is according to plan. We can wait it out in that case. But the word *plan* is never found in the Bible. The rabbis didn’t like it, among other things. The idea of the plan is very important here, and this is the way things are supposed to be. But this requires a pre-existence and it requires a lot of other things. Atonement does. We talked about atonement, *teshûvāh* and *yeshûvāh*. *Yeshûvāh* is the “return to the place where you were before, return to God.” Well, if you weren’t there before, [you can’t go back]. That’s one word for *atonement* they use in the Old Testament. The other word means “going in and sitting down beside him.” It means “going in and sitting down with your Father in Heaven” when you are taken into the presence of the Most High. All those words have to do with going back home and being received again, and that’s what he is talking about here. This gives us great insight into the Atonement doctrine, especially later on when we get to Alma.

He says here in verse 6: “For as death hath passed upon all men [that’s true, but that’s part of the plan], to fulfil the merciful plan of the great Creator, there must needs be a power of resurrection.” There’s only one thing you can do if everything is going that way. That’s the natural course of things, so what can you do about it? There has to be a power. Somebody has to intervene. Well, is that conceivable? Of course, it’s conceivable with just the fact that we are here. Somebody intervened to get us here. We shouldn’t be here if we had just a mass of matter out there acting on itself this way and that way—accident, etc. It looks like Matthew’s work on the Newtonian apple, etc. There are some great studies done on that. The statistical probability of our not existing, of course, is a trillion to zero. I mean you’re not supposed to be here; we couldn’t be here by chance. A great biologist used to say, “There’s only one argument why we should be here. Everything is against us, and it’s absurd. We’re not here.” But it’s a fact we are here. That shows that somebody is spoiling the game. They are not playing the right scientific game. Well, this is the whole point here. There must be a power to intervene. Because he says that it is perfectly natural for things to die and stay dead. “And the resurrection must needs come unto man by reason of the fall [because we fell and spoiled everything]; and the fall came by reason of transgression; and because man became fallen they were cut off from the presence of the Lord.” That’s the opposite of *atonement*, at-one-ment. To be cut off, to be separated is not to be at one anymore. This is the opposite, and this is the penalty.

So what are you going to do about this being cut off? There must be an infinite atonement here, bringing together in one. Atonement is not just one in the presence of

the Father but the atonement of all things—the atonement of the flesh, bringing together things that were formally separated. That's what *at-one* is. *At-one* covers an awful lot of ground. Yesterday, I listed forty different words in the Bible that are the equivalent of *atonement*, and sometimes are translated as *atonement*. Forty different expressions all mean *atonement* in different ways. It all comes back to being at one. Good old *atonement* is the best word you can use. So it says here “an infinite atonement.” That is an unlimited capacity to recompose things that have broken down—to bring them back together as they were in their original state, restoring and integrating. There's what you get in oxidation/reduction. Everything in the room is not only being dragged down by gravity, but we're being oxidized. Everything is slowly being burned up. You can reverse that process by reduction—by adding your OH radical and taking care of that, but not all the way. But he is talking about a process of infinite capacity, an infinite at-one-ment, an infinite capacity to put things together again. It's going to have to be forever. He says without that “this corruption could not put on incorruption” because once a thing has rotted and crumbled and is corrupt, how is it possible you are going to put on incorruption unless there is an unlimited power to do that very thing.

Then this one really hits the gong: “Wherefore, the first judgment which came upon man must needs have remained to an endless duration. And if so, this flesh must have laid down to rot and to crumble to its mother earth, to rise no more.” Remember, you cannot reverse the process of entropy. It's the heat death. Things all wear down to a dead level, and you can't go anywhere after that because there's no place to go. That's the way it would be, he says, if somebody hadn't intervened and changed things. Then no wonder he breaks out and says how marvelous it is to know that there's something and that's not going to settle things. “O the wisdom of God, his mercy and grace! For behold, if the flesh should rise no more our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the Eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more.” Why? Because they have yielded. It's the spirits that yield to sin and went the way of the flesh. The spirit is guilty. The flesh is finished and passed away forever, but there's a guilty spirit. It's got itself into this jam; now, what's it going to do? Our spirits must be subject to the person who tempted them. It was the spirit that was tempted by Satan here. They become devils and angels to the devil. The time's up, so we will have to break it up now, but this ninth verse is another one of those remarkable concise summaries. It's shocking, but it's a good one. We'll continue the next time unless you would prefer a test. I don't know what we would be tested on. You can see that all we can do is write essays in this class, so let's make them good.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 19

2 Nephi 9

Jacob's Teachings on the Atonement and Judgment

Is there anyone here who doesn't have a Book of Mormon? You have to have a Book of Mormon. That's all we're here for is to study the Book of Mormon—not to listen to me, but to look at the text of the Book of Mormon closely and follow it carefully because it has a great deal to say. After all, this was hand—delivered by an angel. There's every evidence that it was, so let's look at it. We are in 2 Nephi 9:8. We mentioned the infinite atonement. I said that this was a concise summary, that this was a shocking verse. What is the justification for saying a thing like this? Well, all you have to do is look around you and see that it is true. Look what it is: "And our spirits must have become like unto him [notice there is nothing in between here; we must have crumbled and rotted, and then he says], and we become devils, angels to a devil [that's some choice], to be shut out from the presence of our God [that's the opposite of atonement], and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself. Notice that combination, *misery and lies*. What is the Lord full of? *Grace and truth*. What's the opposite of that? *Misery and lies*. The opposite of *grace* is *misery*, and the opposite of *truth* is *lies*. He [Satan] is the father of lies and misery. "Yea, to that being who beguiled our first parents, who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret works of darkness."

What's this *angel of light* business got to do with it? That's very important to put that in there. He "transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light." He is not a Halloween horror. He is among us; he is one of the boys. He is right in the system. In fact, the system is his. That's how he is able to form the secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret works or darkness that fill the world today. Remember, he told us when he lost his temper what he was going to do. He was going to take money and buy up the power and rule in a horrible way upon this earth, and that's what he has done. If you make a long list of all the major crimes and follies of our times—drugs, militarism, sex, everything else—can you name any one of them that doesn't have money behind it? He says, "You can have anything in this world for money, and I'm the one that has it." That's how he is able to gain this control. That's what he says he will do—buy up the authority, the power, kings and presidents, armies and navies—and he will rule that way. So he has a very powerful tool to use, and he is using it very effectively today. This is very clear today. Consider the elections. What wins elections now? Every expert will tell us it's money. That's the answer; that will get you into office. So everybody is going crazy building up these chests, etc. Isn't it silly. So here we are. Does this sound like an exaggeration, as it certainly sounded like not long ago? But it doesn't sound like it anymore. We are warming up; these are the last days. Then he is happy.

"O how great the goodness of our God, who prepareth a way for our escape from the grasp of this awful monster; yea, that monster, death and hell, which I call the death of the body, and also the death of the spirit."

“Many noble souls all caught like rats in a trap,” says Homer. Caught ahead of time, they haven’t got a chance to get out. That’s the way he describes life, and that’s why Goethe says that Homer teaches us that life on this earth is a hell. But this is the point—all these noble souls are trapped ahead of time, not a chance to get out when you are in this situation. It’s a great tragic situation. That’s the awful monster *death* and *hell*, and it’s a proper term. “And because of the way of deliverance of our God, the Holy One of Israel, this death, . . . which is the temporal, shall deliver up its dead; which death is the grave.” In verse 12 he talks about a spiritual death. The grave is the temporal death, and the resurrection has been taken care of by the atonement. You are going to be resurrected whether you want to or not. But the spiritual death, you can have that. That’s real hell, “which spiritual death is hell; wherefore, death and hell must deliver up their dead, and hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies, and [notice they are restored] the bodies and the spirits of men will be restored one to the other; and it is by the power of the resurrection of the Holy One of Israel.” The body will go on living and so will the spirit, and it will be a horrible thing if you are going to be living in a sewer forever and ever.

“O how great the plan of our God!” I mentioned last time that the [word] plan is not found in the Bible, yet it’s found forty-two times in the Book of Mormon, only two times in the Doctrine and Covenants and only two times in the Pearl of Great Price. It’s found forty-two times in the Book of Mormon and thirty-six times in the book of Alma. Whatever happened to the plan? How did it drop out of the Bible? As I said, it has become popular with ministers today because it is a very comforting doctrine. To know that everything is running according to plan is certainly reassuring. Otherwise, comes the problem. What is the meaning of it? Where is it going? It’s nothing. Life becomes absolutely a name without some sort of plan and purpose. What are we here for? The questions we hear all the time. But why was the plan ever thrown out by the church? Was it in there? It’s in the Book of Mormon. We have these things in the Book of Mormon that match the Old Testament all the way through. I was thinking of atonement, you see. In atonement the Book of Mormon matches the Old Testament but not the New Testament. Of course, the Old Testament came first, and it represents the old Hebrew doctrine of the atonement which is centered around the temple. It always talks of it in terms of the temple—of sacrifice and the shedding of blood, the tent, the embrace, and all the things that go with the rites of atonement among the Jews. The Nephites had these things. So this is what atonement is in their terms. And always the language in Nephi and Alma and all the others is the same imagery that is used in the Old Testament in describing the sacrifices of the temple. But the temple was lost, and the rabbis took over. They were learned men, but they were not priests. Then you had something else. They did away with the plan, which was disturbing. They did away with a premortal existence; they did away with the Council in Heaven. They did away with all sorts of things having to do with this plan. Why, when it was such a good thing? Because the philosophers at the School of Alexandria took it over, and in their place you have the doctrines of St. Augustine. This takes the place of the plan. It’s *praedestinatio ad damnationem*, *praedestinatio ad salvationem*. You are predestined to damnation or you are predestined to salvation. There’s nothing you can do about it because it’s the will of God. “It all depends on his will,” as we read in Dante. This is the thing. St. Thomas takes it a long way here. It’s the will of God, and that’s all you can do about it. It’s decided.

This predestination doctrine of St. Augustine was taken over by the Lutherans and by the Calvinists especially. What happens to you is because you were predestined that way. Of course, you didn’t live before you came here; you didn’t earn it or anything like that.

Origen tells us that in the early church they taught that you earned your position here before you came here. But that had to be out. All creation had to be instantaneously, simultaneously, and complete. Everything was completely there all at once, so you had no background or anything. You just find yourself here, and what's going to happen to you depends entirely on the will of God, whether you are damned or whether you are blessed. This doctrine takes its place, so they didn't need it [the plan] anymore. And they fought it. They not only didn't like all these elements of the plan, but they fought vigorously. You get that in something like those many volumes of Goodenough.

Then he goes on: "And the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal, and they are living souls, having a perfect knowledge like unto us in the flesh, save it be that our knowledge shall be perfect. Wherefore, we shall have a perfect knowledge of all our guilt, and our uncleanness [it is all stored away in us right now, for that matter; a good psychoanalyst could get most of it up without having to have a record book or any account of your wicked deeds; it's all stored right here, and you're going to take it with you], . . . and the righteous shall have a perfect knowledge of their enjoyment, and their righteousness . . . when all men shall have passed from this first death unto life, insomuch as they have become immortal, they must appear before the judgment-seat of the Holy One of Israel [that's going to be a time], . . . and they who are filthy shall be filthy still [don't think you will be automatically purified, he says]. . . . And they shall go away into everlasting fire, prepared for them; and their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever and has no end."

And what do you have to do to avoid this? "But, behold, the righteous, the saints of the Holy One of Israel, they who have believed in the Holy One of Israel, they who have endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame of it [You are expected to do that; after all, what is the purpose of money? It is to avoid these things—to avoid the crosses of the world and the shame of it], they shall inherit the kingdom of God, which was prepared [in the plan in the Council in Heaven] for them from the foundation of the world, and their joy shall be full forever." Now, that's a scriptural passage too. Why don't people believe that at the time the world was founded there was a plan prepared? There it is again, "according to the wisdom of the kingdom of God which was prepared from the foundation of the world."

Verse 21: "And he cometh into the world that he may save all men if they will hearken unto his voice [we come to a very interesting situation here about the reality of these things]; for behold, he suffereth the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam." He atones for the family of Adam. The question arises, how is it possible for anyone to suffer that much—to suffer the pains of everyone living, every living creature? Isn't there a limit to suffering? There is a limit to physical suffering. Let's consider two things: (1) How can you suffer for somebody else? and (2) How can you suffer for everybody and everything—men, women, and children, the whole family of Adam? How can one person suffer that much? Well, there are certainly limits to physical suffering. We have all had pain. At a certain point people pass out, but it's amazing what you can take. There's no problem there at all. If you have read Solzhenitsyn, you know what they have to suffer in Russian prison camps. There's a limit to that, but what about mental suffering? There is no limit to it at all, just as there is no limit to imagination, and no limit to comprehension, and no limit to empathy. There's no limit to what you can comprehend and take in. You know yourself that you can expand, and there's no limit to it. You can

imagine how it is with the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Son of God. His capacity for those things is very real. It tells us why he suffers—"for the sins and abominations of his people" it will tell us later on. It says he sweated [blood] from every pore, and it wasn't from the pain of nails or the cross of thorns. You might not have been aware of that. That physical suffering is great, but it's nothing compared to what he suffered. In Mosiah it talks about his sweating blood from every pore.

This was one of the great points of criticism of the Book of Mormon. They would say, "Well, the circulation of the blood wasn't known until the time of Harvey in the seventeenth century, so how can he be talking about sweating blood from every pore?" They made a big thing of that. But, of course, the word *pore* is an ancient word, Latin *porus*. You will find it in ancient works on medicine, in Galen and Hippocrates. They knew about pores and sweat. There were cases in which people did sweat blood. So it's not a point of knowing about the circulation of the blood or the cause for that; it's the fact that people did [sweat blood]. The thing is that he [the Savior] sweat blood at every pore so great was his anguish because of the wickedness and abominations of his people—not because he was in an uncomfortable situation at all. But it is possible to suffer like that. It's possible for God to suffer that much. Remember, there's no limit to what you could suffer. Of course, we know that physical suffering is a joke compared with mental anguish. Such a thing as schizophrenia is unspeakably worse than any physical pain you could possibly have.

This is what the Lord suffered, and I can see that it's possible for him to suffer that much, for every living creature. But how could it vicariously affect someone else? There are various theories about that—Abelard, for example. As you know, atonement means various things. But the fact is that if I am fully aware of his suffering for me, I should be terribly afflicted by that too. That should upset me terribly. That was one of the purposes of the Crucifixion, according to Anselm and especially to Abelard. He said that the thought of it fills us so with pity, anguish, and remorse that we repent when we think of that. It does affect us and change our lives unto repentance. "And he suffereth this that the resurrection might pass upon all men, that all might stand before him at the great and judgment day." That's the atonement again. "And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God [but ninety-nine percent of all men haven't been baptized, as he tells us next]. And if they will not repent and believe in his name, and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned." That is it because they have refused; they have despised it and turned it down. But if you have never heard about it, as verse 25 says here, that's another matter. As I said, at least ninety-nine percent haven't. "Wherefore, he has given a law; and where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment there is no condemnation." He has given the law, and they should not refuse it or they will be damned, etc. But the law is that there is no punishment and no condemnation if people haven't heard the law. "The mercies of the Holy One of Israel have claim upon them, because of the atonement [that frees them]; for they are delivered by the power of him. For the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them." That's what he is talking about here, and that's the vast majority of the human family. Of course, this the rationale for the temple work and everything behind it.

And this is another thing: the Jews very firmly believe in and the rabbis still teach atonement for the dead. What can you do for them? They say there are three things you can do for them: You can pray for them, you can give alms for them, and you can study

the scripture for them. That's the best you can do. But anciently, it all went back to the temple. It was in the time of the Maccabees that that was lost. It's a very interesting story. The temple was used for work for the dead, and it still survives in the *kaddish* which is the prayer for the dead. This is on the Day of Atonement. That's when you bring all things together and you have the *kaddish*, which is the prayer for the dead.

But here he is talking about those who have never had the chance because the law was not given to them. "They are restored to that God who gave them breath, which is the Holy One of Israel [that's fair enough]. But woe unto him that has the law given, yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us [we have them, he says], and that transgresseth them, and wasteth the days of his probation, for awful is his state!" Now what is sin? Sin is waste. That's all it is after all. It's the misdirection of life. You use your energies, your appetites, desires, and passions, your gifts, and everything else, and misdirect them and waste them. You have a limited time here. You are given your great chance, and you waste that. Can you think of any sin that isn't waste? Even the most vilely immoral things. What are they wasting? That's waste in a big way, you see. Sin always tears down and destroys. You always lose something by it—something you can't get back again. So you dig yourself in deeper and deeper with sin, and the whole thing is waste. It's waste and loss. You have misdirected all your energies, and that certainly is what sin is. And it's also a state of mind. An act that is virtuous in one situation can be wicked in another. But again there's the waste of your insight, your mental energy, and all the rest, and the misdirection of it.

Verse 28: "O that cunning plan of the evil one! [there's your plan again; he has his plan too, you see]. O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men!" This is an outburst of the wisdom literature. There is a lot being written today about Hebrew wisdom literature and Egyptian literature. They are being compared today for the first time in a big way. Everybody is writing about them. They always suspected that they were very much alike because Egyptian is full of Bible quotations. The Egyptologists wouldn't accept it. They thought that was impossible—that couldn't be. They explained it as pure coincidence. Well anyway, today it's the big thing that the wisdom literature of the Jews and the Egyptians is very much alike. They are things having to do with the folly of men—their teaching of wisdom and ways of getting along in the world, etc. There is also wisdom that breaks out into oration like this and becomes very eloquent: "O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! [They are hopeless.] When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves [it's a very interesting thing], wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish."

The Egyptians have an interesting word for *everything*. It's *nt-t ħwt-t* (I'll write it on the board; it's a very simple thing). *Nt-t* means *whatever is*, and *ħwt-t* is *whatever is not*. The word is *everything*. When I say *everything*, that means everything I know about and also everything I don't know about because that exists too. The part I don't know about is vastly larger than the part I do know about. So when I have the idea that I have covered a subject or that I know everything, [I'm mistaken]. To use the word *everything* is folly unless you use the other thing—what I know and what I don't know, everything which is there and also the stuff which is not there and we're not aware of. Reality includes two things, doesn't it? We say it only includes one. That's the principle of Descartes. He says it's necessary to assume that all you have is all there is, because otherwise you are not

going to be able to argue. You're not going to be able to form your syllogisms, etc. unless you assume that what you have is what's there. You can't put the other in your calculations. You can't use that, though some sophisticated mathematics does. You have to make allowance for what isn't there. But with the Egyptians whenever they said they knew something, there was also the part they didn't know. Always consider that, which is the greater part. We just know a little tiny bit. But these people suppose they know of themselves. Of course, their wisdom is foolishness.

As I said, this is out of this wisdom literature, which was available to all these people. "Wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish [it's not going to get them anywhere]. But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God [the other part they don't know]." Then all of a sudden he breaks out into this. He has been talking about the plan; notice in verse 28, "O that cunning plan . . ." Then all of sudden he says, "But wo unto the rich." As I said, this is money. This is the way it is done. He gives this long list of horrendous offenses here: the disobedient, the liar, the murderer, [those who commit] whoredoms and worship idols. But at the head of the list is the rich. He states as a general principle that because they are rich, they despise the poor. Otherwise, they wouldn't be rich; they would follow another course. This is what implements the other plan that he just talked about—that vain, cunning plan of the evil one. As he said, "I will take the treasures of the earth." He worked his plan out with Cain; he made his covenants with Cain. He had an atonement with Cain, and they become one. What did Cain do? He said, Now I am free—his property falls into my hands [paraphrased]. Money will make him free. "For because they are rich they despise the poor, and they persecute the meek, and their hearts are upon their treasures [otherwise, they wouldn't have them]; wherefore, their treasure is their god [you live by your portfolio or your Dow Jones rating; nobody cares about anything else anymore]. And behold, their treasure shall perish with them also [because it is temporal treasure it will perish]."

Question: How can we know when we are rich? Answer: Well, that's a very interesting thing. *Rich* was defined very well by Brigham Young and by Paul in 2 Timothy: "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. Who seeks for more falls into temptation and a snare." He uses the word [which means] *trapped in the rapids*, the same word that Sophocles uses in the same situation. They get caught in the rapids and swept along by many foolish desires, wishes, and lusts. They want more and more; there is no limit to what you can want. That's a proverb you will find all over the place. The Greek tragedies are full of it, etc. There's no limit to the greed of a person; the more they get, the more they want. These are well-known truisms. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." If you want more than that, you are in real trouble, he says, because you are. He says that this has brought many from the faith because they want more than that. They despise the poor and the meek. If you have more than you need, of course, you are rich. If you have less than you need, you are poor. There should be some sort of balance there. By definition [the rich] have more than they can possibly need or eat. And if you are poor, you have less than you need or should eat. The solution is obvious, isn't it? But we are not going to do that, no.

And their riches will perish also. We know classic examples of that. We have all seen *Citizen Kane*, that old classic—the sadness and the tragedy of it. He surrounds himself with all this junk—more and more and more to make him feel secure. And this was William Randolph Hearst; he did that. He had his great inherited wealth, and he also added to it with his newspapers, though he lost a lot of it. He went to San Simeon and started collecting this junk about him. He had one rule. Professor H. R. W. Smith used to go

down there to catalog his collection of Roman vases. He had a great collection of Roman vases, etc. Professor Smith would go down to catalog them and the like. Hearst insisted that under no circumstances should the word *death* ever be mentioned in his presence, as if he could avoid it. In fact, Huxley, not Julian Huxley but his brother, wrote a novel about it. (I'm really gone today, absolutely no good at all. That's happening too often now, isn't it? I have all these projects going at once.) Anyway, Aldous Huxley wrote this book, *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*. It's a novel about William Randolph Hearst, and it's very good. It's about a man whose doctor finally invented a nauseating cure to extend his life for a long time. It was the intestinal flora of a carp. He claimed if you ate that it would restore your hormones, etc. So he ate it, but death caught up with him finally. But it is sad that it has to come to the richest. You collect all your riches, and then you have the *dead hand* because you want to keep it in the family. It haunts the English families with all this stuff going down. They are trying to hang onto it, and it's so tragic. As I said, there's the *dead hand* in law. You keep this property after you are dead. You want to make sure that you have control of it after you are dead. Well, of course, that's perfectly silly, but that's an obsession with them. Their treasure will perish with them. That's all there is to it, and there's nothing you can do about it. Sorry about that.

Notice that they do not know themselves. They have a completely false self-image here; hence, the fine apparel and the rest. "And wo unto the deaf that will not hear [that is, when they can]; for they shall perish [they have the chance, you see]. Wo unto the blind that will not see; for they shall perish also. Wo unto the uncircumcised of heart, for a knowledge of their iniquities shall smite them at the last day." They will keep it with them—don't worry. They will know themselves then—"a knowledge of their iniquities shall smite them." It will catch up with them and really hit them then. But Freud tells us that it catches up with you right now; you can't escape from it. It will come out in all your neuroses, your rashes, your ulcers, and things like that. You will be a terribly miserable person because you cannot cover these things up. You know they are wrong, and you will know yourself then. "Wo unto the liar, for he shall be thrust down to hell. Wo unto the murderer who deliberately killeth, for he shall die [this list of offenders]. Wo unto them who commit whoredoms, for they shall be thrust down to hell. Yea, wo unto those that worship idols, for the devil of all devils delighteth in them. And, in fine [in short], wo unto all those who die in their sins; for they shall return to God, and behold his face, and remain in their sins [That's going to be pretty horrible, isn't it? Of course, there are ways out, but it is going to be an awful time]. O, my beloved brethren, remember the awfulness in transgressing against that Holy God [this is absolute, and here again], and also the awfulness of yielding to the enticings of that cunning one. Remember, to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life eternal."

There's this enticement, and what is his number one enticement? I don't need to tell you what that is. In Moroni 7:12 we read, "For the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually." So there's a constant drag, just like gravitation. It is working steadily, constantly, inviting and enticing to sin. On the other hand, in the next verse: "But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually." You have the two pulling in opposite directions there to decide which orbit you will go in. But it's up to you to decide which one you are going to take, isn't it? Is the force equal? If it was overpowering in either direction, you would have a good excuse. As I said last time, you would say it was too strong for you, and you couldn't resist it. Naturally, you wouldn't have a chance. But you are in the middle here, and you are being enticed and invited in one direction and enticed and invited in another. Of course, the one seems to have an overpowering drag now. It's like that poem by Clarence Day:

Might and right are always fighting
In our youth it seems exciting
Right is always nearly winning
Might can hardly keep from grinning.

No laughs, but I think that's a very funny poem. Well, we're back to 2 Nephi 9. So there are the enticings in either direction. And what is the enticement he [Satan] uses? You know the number one, the one thing we can't resist, the one thing you can't do anything without, the one thing you can do everything with, etc. I won't name the dirty word; we will just go on here. Notice here when he talks about repentance, they think "they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish" (verse 18). Now, repentance is knowing yourself, *gnōthi seauton*. The Greeks called it that—to know and recognize what you are. It's a painful process. The first step you make is to recognize your situation and what you really are—to face yourself. You are not going to repent unless you do that, and that is very painful. A very simple definition of repentance is *know thyself*. That was written above the doorway of the Shrine of Delphi, the holiest center of wisdom in the ancient world.

Verse 40: "Do not say that I have spoken hard things against you." How often do we preach these things today, but we don't like them? You notice that these are not smooth things. Remember, they asked Isaiah, "Speak to us smooth things; we will listen to you if you talk smooth things." You get this later in Abinadi and a lot of other prophets. We speak the things that we want to hear, but you don't need to hear those things. If the Bible only told us what we wanted to hear, we wouldn't need it. Yet those are the things we are willing to hear, and the other things we can smooth over very easily. We wouldn't need the words from the prophets if they were not hard to take. So the people said to Isaiah, "Speak to us smooth things." The false prophets are very glad to oblige. "I know that the words of truth are hard against all uncleanness; but the righteous fear them not, for they love the truth and are not shaken [a real test]."

Now, here's the other inscription from Delphi, *mēden agan, nothing in excess*. It means *follow the straight and narrow*. You don't go too far to this side or too far to that side. It means you must be strict in the low road, as he says in escaping from his enemies. Verse 41: "Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him [so you can stay on it all right; and here is one of my favorite verses from the Book of Mormon; this is really a beauty], and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there." What a comfort in that, to know there is no middle management. There are no officious clerks. This is one of the great resounding passages. He will take your hand personally, identify himself, and show you the signs and tokens—as he did when he came to the Nephites, one by one, even the children, and gave them each a personal blessing. Well, you may think that would take forever and ever, but you'd be surprised. There's plenty of time, etc. There are certain things that are not limited. I like to tell the story of John Hayes because he was my next door neighbor. He was registrar at BYU for forty years, and he knew the name and family history and personal tastes of every student who ever registered here. He was just an ordinary man, but he was interested in them. A person would come back twenty years later, and he would ask the most intimate things about them, "Did your father ever get over his gout?" or something like that. How is that possible for one person? If he had been there for another ten years, it would have been the same thing. Thousands and thousands of names and people—he just knew them, and that was that. He was the registrar, and he worked at

it. He wasn't chosen as registrar because he had that talent; he just developed it. It's a marvelous thing to be able to do things like that and know that there is no limit to some things. It's the same with the Lord; he knows you by name personally. He doesn't stand up on a balcony with a million people in front of him, wave his hand and say, "Bless you children," and that's it. It's all a very personal thing with the Messiah. That's why the Book of Mormon and the Bible speak so warmly of these things—that he is our Savior, etc. He has saved us and we are indebted to him. But it's the straight and narrow that leads to him.

That means no compromise. This is nature's fine tuning. As we mentioned before, that's what makes life possible in the universe—not going to the right or the left, keeping to the straight and narrow. Some say that's narrow minded; it's not narrow minded. That's the only thing that makes life possible, this fine tuning. If the earth were too far from or near to the sun, there would be no life. If it were too hot or too cold, no life. If it [the earth] turned too fast or too slow, no life. Everything has to be just right. The physicists tell us there are fifteen major constants that have to be finely tuned that way. When you get them all together, you get a world where people can live. But the chances are infinitesimally remote [of it happening by chance].

So here is the personal greeting we get: "And whoso knocketh [at the gate], to him will he open." Notice, he is the keeper of the gate, and if you knock at the gate he will give you that personal greeting. Incidentally, with the Atonement, as we were told, there was no other who could pay the price of sin. The Atonement makes the delegation of his authority impossible. He is not going to delegate it. He is the keeper of the gate, and he employs no servant there. We are talking about the Atonement when he greets you. This is the embrace we are talking about. That's the Jewish *kpr*, which is the embrace at the veil, the *kapporeth* of the tabernacle. The ark was inside. When the Lord receives Israel on the Day of Atonement, it says the Lord speaks from the tent and accepts the sacrifice and accepts Israel. But again, there is only one who can atone; no one else can do that. So, of course, he is not going to delegate. He has atoned for you, and he is not going to delegate to anybody else. Believe me, that is reassuring.

Notice, you knock and he will open. But what if you come to him wise, learned, rich, and puffed up because of your learning, your wisdom, and your riches? "They are they whom he despiseth" (verse 42). Now, this is the most terrifying verse in the Book of Mormon—the idea of God despising anything, since he loves all creatures and loves them completely. How could he despise them? Well, the word is *despicio*. The person at the gate looks down; the gatekeeper is always in the little thing with the person down below. The keeper is above the gate. That's the *gate of appearances*, where the family looks down, etc. In Egypt you have some beautiful things. Above the gate of the temple or the palace, there is a balcony. There's where the royal family goes, and when visitors come they look down on them. But *despicio* means to *look down on*. It says, "He will not open to them." He looks down and sees, and he will not open to them. The gate is kept closed. "Yea, they are they whom he despiseth." As I said, it's a terrible thing because this is self-deification. That's what it amounts to. I've heard this from various teachers, etc. They would say, "Look, God and all that stuff, that silly religion of yours . . ." So many of my friends believed not only that it was absurd and they wouldn't believe it, but they didn't believe I believed it. They didn't believe for a minute that I believed this stuff. Now, isn't that funny? That was self-deification. They would say, "Look, you've got it all wrong; I'll tell you how it is. I'll give you the answers. Now, that's deifying yourself in the field of knowledge, and that's what they do, actually."

You see Carl Sagan making a pronouncement denouncing Plato and any kind of religion, as he does. Then he looks up into the sky while a celestial chorus sings in the background, an aura of holy light plays around him, and the vastness of space is shown. Then you [are supposed to] know there is no God, but here is the greatest thing in the universe right here, and it's Carl Sagan. They build it up to look just like that. As I said, they have the cosmic background, the swelling music, the ethereal light, and all the rest of it so this guy can show that he is God. Well, you see, that's the sort of thing that God is going to despise. They think they can displace him, the nincompoops.

Verse 44: "O, my beloved brethren, remember my words. Behold, I take off my garments, and I shake them before you." Of course, that was the ancient custom. In the Oration on the Crown, Demosthenes talks about it when a person is banished from Athens. And Paul said to the Corinthians, "I thank God that I baptized none of you" (1 Corinthians 1:14). In Acts 18:6 he denounced the Corinthians. He said, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." I'm through with you. At the beginning of his letter to the Corinthians, he said, I testify that I am free of your blood this day [paraphrased]. Then he literally shook his garments before them to show that he was free of their blood and was going to leave them and go to the Gentiles. He was through with the Jewish community at Corinth. It's a dramatic gesture. On Mars Hill in Athens the chief priest would shake a scarlet robe when a person was banished, to shake him off and get rid of him. It's like shaking the dust off your feet from a rebellious town or a wicked people. That is used in Acts a good deal, shaking the dust off their feet. But Paul shakes his garments, and he does the same thing here. He says, "O, my beloved brethren, remember my words. Behold, I take off my garments, and I shake them before you [as I said, it's a very old custom that was full blown in Lehi's day]; I pray the God of my salvation that he view me with his all-searching eye [he wants to be tested]; wherefore, ye shall know at the last day, when all men shall be judged of their works, that the God of Israel did witness that I shook your iniquities from my soul, and that I stand with brightness before him, and am rid of your blood."

Notice, he can only advise them, and he cannot assume the guilt of another because he's not responsible. What is he doing, getting rid of his responsibility? Yes, he is free of their blood now. He can advise them, but he can't assume guilt for them. They are responsible for their own doing, so he leaves them now and says this—showing again that things are not going too well with the Nephites. Verse 45: "O, my beloved brethren, turn away from your sins; shake off the chains [notice this tie where they tie words together here] of him that would bind you fast [you shake that; I'm shaking my garments; now you do a bit of shaking too]; come unto that God who is the rock of your salvation [but you must do this yourself, you notice—you shake off the chains]. Prepare your souls for that glorious day [he ends on an upbeat here] . . . that ye may not remember your awful guilt in perfectness [you need no accuser; you will remember your guilt all right], and be constrained to exclaim: Holy, holy are thy judgments, O Lord God Almighty—but I know my guilt." You will have to admit that God's judgments are just. This is what you will have to say, "I know my guilt." Notice, it is all individual. As the scripture says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." You can't justify your dirty work by the fact that everybody is doing it. And so we have here, "I know my guilt; I transgressed thy law, and my transgressions are mine; and the devil hath obtained me, that I am a prey to his awful misery." That's the saddest thing about him, of course, that he is utterly miserable and wants others to be miserable like him. You might say, "That's absurd, isn't it? Why should anyone want to be miserable? Well, you tell me. That's what we see all around us, nothing but people who make themselves miserable. Why do they need to do this?"

In verse 47 he says he is talking about real things: “But behold, my brethren, is it expedient that I should awake you to an awful reality of these things?” You think that we are just talking a lot of old-fashioned tribal mumbo-jumbo or something like that. Not a bit of it, he says. And this is where we all fall down; we don’t really accept the reality of things. We don’t take them seriously enough. And again, Jacob is not popular, we get from this. They don’t like him to preach this way. Later in the book of Jacob he really bears down on them even more. He says, If you were holy, I would speak unto you of holiness. But as you are not holy and you look upon me as a teacher, you asked for it [paraphrased]. Then he is back to this again, “Come, my brethren, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money.” See, he keeps digging them on that because, as we learn at the beginning of the book of Jacob, they started finding an awful lot of rich minerals around here. They started hoarding the stuff and getting very class conscious about it, etc. And remember, this is very characteristic of barbarians—to load yourself with all you can, women of central Asia, etc. I have lived in communities where the women wear all the money, all the family fortune, right around their necks—all these heavy, massive gold and silver coins. It’s both for display and because it’s in the family.

The idea that people are interested in collecting vast wealth doesn’t come with civilization at all; that’s a barbaric trait. The barbarians live by looting and plunder, as you know. They take their wagons along, and the ruler is able to rule because he is like Scyld Skeffing was at the beginning of *Beowulf*. He was a good king because he gave out many gold rings and many gifts. He bought his followers that way; that’s the way you do. He would go and loot with his men, and then he would reward them by sharing the loot among them. If you go way back to Homer, you find the same thing. The great rivalry and bitterness among the great lords of Troy that wrecked everything was because one person was jealous of another’s “mead of honor.” He got more than the other did when they divided up the swag. These people were just looters; that’s what they were doing. They were pirates and were always jealous of the “mead of honor” and arguing. Achilles calls Agamemnon a “greedy dog face” because he didn’t get enough. “Nothing ever satisfies you. You always grab the most. Whenever there’s a division, you are right there to grab. When the battle is on, I’m the one who does the work.” That’s the way they were all talking and thinking. This is the sort of thing that was happening in Jacob’s community. They were dividing it up, and it gets pretty nasty as we get into the book of Jacob. Don’t do that, he says. Verse 51: “Come unto the Holy One of Israel, and feast upon that which perisheth not [no money].”

Verse 52: “Behold, my beloved brethren, remember the words of your God; pray unto him continually by day, and give thanks unto his holy name by night.” Is this the Arabic *fatra*? The *fatra* is a prayer that you never stop uttering, day and night. If a Moslem does any rhythmic work, if he saws, he has to say *Allah*, Allah, the name of God with every stroke. Or hammering, or walking. They do an awful lot of walking in the desert. *Allah*, *Allah*, etc., is the *fatra*, the unceasing prayer. But this is talking about a normal way. We do things constantly. It means *constantly* and *regularly* when you do it continually. You say, “He fasted continually, or he studied continually, or he exercised continually. Or he was a man who smiled continually.” That doesn’t mean he never stopped in his sleep or anything like that. It means on a regular, reliable, constant basis. That’s what we do when we “pray unto him continually by day and give thanks to his holy name by night [your prayers in the day and your prayers at night]. Let your hearts rejoice.” There’s no reason why this can’t be fun, he says. There’s no reason why we shouldn’t enjoy this. He ends on an encouraging note here. In spite of all this, he tries to be cheerful. Verse 53: “He has

promised unto us that our seed shall not utterly be destroyed, according to the flesh [that's the best he can do], but that he would preserve them; and in future generations they shall become a righteous branch unto the house of Israel [that's good news].

Chapter 10, verse 1: "And now I, Jacob, speak unto you again . . . concerning this righteous branch of which I have spoken." This is a prophetic one. This goes for the land of promise. First, there is a review of what's to happen in Israel. The author of this book could have picked up this part easy enough from the Bible. But then when we get to verse 9, he starts prophesying into the future. Since that was 150 years ago [when the Book of Mormon was published], we can start checking up on that and see if that's the direction that has gone in. So he says in verse 2: "Many of our children shall perish in the flesh because of unbelief [that happens, but] our children shall be restored. . . . It must needs be expedient that Christ . . . should come among the Jews, among those who are the more wicked part of the world; and they shall crucify him [as I said, he could have got that elsewhere]. . . . But because of priestcrafts and iniquities, they at Jerusalem will stiffen their necks against him, that he be crucified [the gospel doesn't have a chance anywhere it seems]. Wherefore, because of their iniquities, destructions, famines, pestilences, and bloodshed shall come upon them; and they who shall not be destroyed shall be scattered among all nations." Of course, that was the great destruction of A.D. 70 and 130 when it was capital punishment for a Jew to be found in Jerusalem. The destruction was massive, as we can see from the Dead Sea Scrolls and from Josephus. The rest were scattered among all nations, and they are much more widely scattered than we think. I remember when I was studying with Professor Popper as his only pupil, in came a person from central China. In those days people didn't get back into inmost Asia. He came in and we were all excited to meet him. He came in Professor Popper's office, and he was a Jew who belonged to a community of Jews out there in central Asia—lost tribes or something like that, nobody had ever heard about. But they are scattered in places where you don't expect them. He said, "Yes, we have lots of Jews out there, and they are scattered all over out there on the plains.

Verse 7: "But behold, thus saith the Lord God: When the day cometh that they shall believe in me, that I am Christ, then have I covenanted with their fathers that they shall be restored in the flesh, upon the earth. And it shall come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion." Then the gathering—of course, this is important. This is the standard pattern we had before in this tenth chapter. "Yea, the kings of the Gentiles shall be nursing fathers unto them. "Which they have been all through the ages, whether they wanted to be or not, consciously or not. Remember, we talked about the various royal families that you find in the Assizes of Jerusalem, for example, that ruled the world—all related to each other throughout Europe, etc. They were all heavily intermarried with Jews, especially Jewish women, who had an irresistible appeal to the kings, princes, and dukes of Europe. And their main ministers of finance were smart Jews they depended on, like Abravanel who financed Columbus, Joseph C. Oppenheimer who financed the Duke of Saxony, and other important men. They could be thrown out on a moment's notice; they had no rights and no defense at all. But they were mingled in everywhere. For 700 years they were not only in France but in Toulouse which we mentioned last time. Toulouse was practically a Jewish enclave. It became Moslem and the Moslems were very tolerant for a while. It became the Kingdom of Toulouse with a Jewish center, mostly of those who had fled from Jerusalem when it was destroyed at the time of Christ. In southern France you will find them all along there in the Vaudois, etc.

When I was on a mission a very interesting thing happened. I went up to practically a lost village in the Black Forest. It was called Pinache. The French name attracted me, so I went up and tracted. They immediately gobbled up the gospel. I noticed in the cemetery that they all had French names. Well, they were Waldenses who had been driven out in the seventeenth century. They had come there and settled, lived by themselves, and married among themselves. They taught these things, and they were just waiting for the gospel. It was a remarkable thing. Immediately, a man came all the way down to Durlac so he could come to meeting and see what was going on. But these little enclaves are scattered everywhere that we don't know about. When he says the Jews are scattered everywhere, he really means it. On the isles of the sea, you see their features everywhere and things like that which you don't expect. Well, the time is more than up now, and we had better scamper.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 20

2 Nephi 25

The Jews and Jerusalem

We have come to those chapters where he talks about Isaiah. We are not going to read all the Isaiah chapters. They take up a good deal of the book of 2 Nephi. He gives his explanation in chapter 25, and that's what interests us. Let's start at chapter 25 where he gives his explanation of Isaiah which is very important for understanding these things. "Isaiah spake many things which were hard for many of my people to understand." Isaiah himself often mentions the fact that the people ask him to speak smooth things. They want to hear smooth things. I am not going to teach you smooth things, he says. If I just gave you the smooth things you want, you wouldn't need them [paraphrased]. If the scriptures told us only what we wanted to hear, of course we wouldn't need them.

You notice it all changed under the rabbis; the interpretations became different. Isaiah is much too literal [for them], etc. Then, of course, they accepted the University abstractions and became more philosophical and intellectual in the interpretation of everything. That happened after the fall of the temple. But the temple hadn't fallen in Lehi's day. He said that it was hard for many of his people to understand, and he is talking about his own people now. They had an even harder time because they didn't know "the manner of prophesying among the Jews." Now, prophecy is a special idiom. There are various ways [of prophesying] that he is going to tell us about. He [Isaiah] has the special type; he does not follow the established lines of prophecy which have to do with chants and incantations. They had to have a special meter and be pronounced in a certain rhythm, depending on where you find it. That's what the oracle is. Like the Norns, where their oracle is, they speak in *runes*; they speak in rhymes. When you are inspired, you are swept away. This was supposed to be a sign of inspiration to speak in that inspiration language.

In a Greek tragedy, for example, which is a religious play, the common people speak in the Attic dialect—whereas the choruses, which are inspired, speak in Doric, an old archaic language. And the Egyptians always write in two colors, as you know. They have the rubric which is their commentary. That's what you put in, the rubric; that's men speaking. The black is the *mdw ntr*, the divine words, the inspired words, the words of God. They have to be written in a different type of ink, so you have sort of a stereo effect. You see two worlds when you see an Egyptian manuscript. The *red* is humans speaking, and the *black* is divine inspiration speaking.

Here he talks about that language. Notice, he says the Jews had this kind [of prophecy] like the witch of Endor, resembling the witches in *Macbeth*, who speak in rhymes, as you know.

Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine—
Peace!—the charm's wound up.

That sort of hocus-pocus—and notice he refers to it here in verse 2: “For I, Nephi, have not taught them many things concerning the manner of the Jews; for their works were works of darkness, and their doings were doings of abominations.” That’s the sort of thing.

Tell me, you secret black and midnight hags,
What is it you do?

He calls Satan the “fiend that lies like truth.” These are the witches in *Macbeth* that come out.

But ’tis strange:
And oftentimes to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths;
Win us with honest trifles, to betray us
In deepest consequence.

They win us with honest trifles telling our fortunes. “The instruments of darkness,” says Shakespeare. And this says, “For their works were works of darkness.” I don’t prophesy that way, he says. That’s the way the Jews wanted it, and I’m not going to give it to them that way, he says.

“I write that they may know the judgments of God, that they come upon all nations, according to the word which he hath spoken.” This is a prophetic section we are going into. He is going to prophesy what is going to happen—not only up to the time when the Book of Mormon is revealed, but thereafter. So we can check on that part. Verse 4: “For because the words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy. But I give unto you a prophecy, according to the spirit which is in me; [notice this] wherefore I shall prophesy according to the plainness which hath been with me from the time that I came out from Jerusalem with my father.” He doesn’t use rhymes and that manner. He is going to do as Prospero did when he gave up his magical prophecy, etc.

But this rough magic
I here adjure: and, when I have required
Some heavenly music,—which even now I do,—
To work mine end upon their senses, that
This airy charm is for, I’ll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I’ll drown my book.

He was getting rid of all his works of darkness. Prospero was a great magician and wizard. And, of course, Teiresias comes out right at the beginning of *Oedipus Rex* when he first appears. He stares right straight at the audience, and he says this. He is not talking to people on the stage. It’s Sophocles speaking here as the priest, you see. Sophocles was a priest. “All of you know nothing,” he says. Then he gives his charms which throw everybody into convulsion fits. Well, that bothers Oedipus, who kicks him out. But you notice Nephi says, “I shall prophesy according to . . . plainness. . . . Yea, and my soul delighteth in the words of Isaiah. . . . I know that the Jews do understand the things of the prophets, and there is none other people that understand [them—only the Jews

understand that particular idiom that they talk in]. . . . But behold, I, Nephi, have not taught my children after the manner of the Jews [the Jews had strayed; they left just before Jerusalem was destroyed]; but behold, I, of myself, have dwelt at Jerusalem, wherefore I know concerning the regions round about.” (See, he has the cultural background; he knows the setting and how they do it.)

The Jewish influence [is evident among the Indians], everything has been lost in the Eastern United States. The most civilized and advanced Indians were in the Mississippi Valley and the Eastern United States—more advanced and civilized even than those in the Southwest who built cities, the Pueblos. They are called that because they are city Indians. For example, the early founding fathers—Jefferson, Franklin, and Washington—were not only very fond of and close to the Indians, they were often visited by them. They would often come and visit Washington, the “Great White Father,” and live and talk with him. Those men were all convinced that those people [the Indians] were that close to the [Jews]. The Hopi says this: “Hopi this way; Pomonah that way. We’re like this.” Well, they’re not that way anymore. They [the founding fathers] were very impressed, but that’s all gone now—we don’t know. But the Hebrew connections used to be found. There’s a very interesting book here. I suppose I should put it on reserve. It was written in 1820, before the Book of Mormon. It’s Boudinot’s *A Star in the West*. He gives the accounts of all the earliest contacts between the people living on the coast and the Indians living east of the Appalachians and in the Mississippi Valley before the white man ever came to them. It includes accounts by the first people to go in there, men like Abraham Wood that went in and settled with the Indians. The Indians were very Jewish, they said. Everything gave that strong impression; whereas, other people, like the Navajos, show a strong Mongol background. But they are very mixed up; we mentioned that before. The Book of Mormon has a lot to say about that too.

He is talking to his audience now in verse 7: “But behold, I proceed with mine own prophecy, according to my plainness. . . . Wherefore, they are of worth unto the children of men, and he that supposeth that they are not, unto them will I speak particularly, and confine the words unto mine own people [if you say these prophecies are not important, I’m speaking to you, he says, and I’m speaking to my own people]; for I know that they shall be of great worth unto them in the last days.” In the last days they shall understand them. Wo to the generation that does understand them because it will be the last days.

In the old 1957 priesthood manual called “An Approach to the Book of Mormon,” which is on reserve here, I put questions after every lesson. They asked me to put in questions, so I did that. One of the questions was “Wo to the generation that understands the Book of Mormon.” Boy, did that get the phone ringing off the hook. They were all asking, “Didn’t you mean, ‘Wo to the generation that does *not* understand the Book of Mormon?’ ” Well, don’t fool yourself. When I was a kid, my generation didn’t understand it at all. We took it as a romance and this sort of thing; we tried to get interest in the Hill Cumorah. It seemed overdrawn and too extravagant. [We thought:] Nations don’t actually wipe each other out completely the way the Jaredites did, or disappear completely the way the Nephites did, or end in everlasting war the way the Lamanites did, etc. Things like that don’t happen. People aren’t that cruel, and they’re not that excessively wicked. And such terrible upheavals of nature don’t happen. By that time, however, there had been such things as Krakatoa, and people decided that pretty big things did happen. It was the Victorian idea of a slow, gradual, steady, natural development of everything with nothing much to worry about. What a different picture now! When you understand the Book of Mormon, you know what it is talking about and

you recognize it. And when you recognize what was going on is going on in your world, it's time to beware. Look out! Of course, the Book of Mormon is for us and for the generation that understands it.

Now, here comes a very important passage. He is talking about Jerusalem. The Book of Mormon has a lot to say about Jerusalem as the central city that gets destroyed and then is rebuilt again. Verse 9: "And as one generation hath been destroyed among the Jews because of iniquity, even so have they been destroyed from generation to generation according to their iniquities [destruction doesn't mean wiped out to the last man; it means *destruo—destructured, broken, shattered, scattered*, etc.] and never hath any of them been destroyed save it were foretold them by the prophets of the Lord [they were warned and they paid no attention, of course]. Wherefore, it hath been told them concerning the destruction which should come upon them, immediately after my father left Jerusalem [587 is the date given to it now; the date was moved around a lot, but that's where it has finally settled—just 13 years after they left Jerusalem. It was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar in 597, and then he went back again. He had put Zedekiah on the throne, and Zedekiah tried a revolution. Then back he came and really destroyed it the second time]; nevertheless, they hardened their hearts [and wouldn't listen]; and according to my prophecy they have been destroyed . . . [but] they shall return again . . . [this is the situation when they return:] they shall have wars, and rumors of wars [boy, have they had that, and do they have it]." Then it says they will crucify the Lord. This is talking about the wars at the time of the Romans and between them, after the Old Testament times, second temple. Then it tells about the Lord after he has risen from the dead and manifested himself unto his people, "unto as many as will believe on his name." That's an important limitation, as we will see. Verse 15: "Wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered among all nations [well, this had all happened; anybody could know that in Joseph Smith's day, but now it goes on and tells us a few things]. . . . And after they have been scattered, and the Lord God hath scourged them by other nations . . . until they shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God, and the atonement, which is infinite for all mankind . . . [he talks about the atonement here—then]. And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men [the reestablishing of Jerusalem].

Now, this is a question I've never talked about in the class before, but since I've done a lot of work on it, I might as well cash in on it someday finally. I went into it in considerable detail, and it was reprinted in Jerusalem as a sort of pamphlet book. It's from the ninth volume of the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, and this is just the last part of the article. It's a long article on Christian Jerusalem. This is about the restoration and reformation of Jerusalem—coming back to Jerusalem after 1830 and what has happened there. It has been a very interesting thing. The great reformers, especially Luther and Calvin, mildly condemned pilgrimages. "You should not go to Jerusalem," they said, but they didn't do it very roughly. First let me read what President John Taylor said about that. This is something from the *Journal of Discourses*. I don't know what volume; I'll have to find out. This is one I just happened to come upon. It's a loose one; unfortunately, I don't have the following page. I shouldn't even bother with it now except that it's very much to the point. He says, "I remember some time ago having a conversation with Baron Rothschild, a Jew." A Jew to be sure. Who is Baron Rothschild? Founder of the Rothschild banking family, the richest man in the world in the nineteenth century. He was the one that financed World War I for the English; he was everything. He was French originally, and the Rothschilds are still going. They make wine, and they are still fabulously rich.

There's a classic Jewish joke about him. A Jew in New York was weeping when he read a notice in the paper. Someone asked, "What are you weeping for, Isaac?"

He said, "Well, Baron Rothschild died."

"Well, what are you weeping for? He was no relation of yours."

"That's just why I'm weeping."

Anyway, President Taylor said, "I was showing him the temple here." Baron Rothschild was visiting Salt Lake City, and he said, "Elder Taylor, what do you mean by this temple? What is the object of it? Why are you building it?"¹

Said I, "Your fathers had among them prophets who revealed to them the mind and will of God, and we have among us prophets who reveal to us the mind and will of God as they did. One of your prophets said, 'The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple. But who may abide the day of his coming, for he shall sit as a refiner's fire and a purifier of silver.' Sir, will you point to me a place on the face of this earth where God has a temple?"

"I do not know of any."

"Do you remember the words of your prophet that I have just quoted?"

"Yes, I know the prophet said that, but I do not know of any temple anywhere. Do you consider that this is that temple?"

"Oh, no Sir, not at all—this is not."

"Well, what is this temple for?"

"The Lord has told us to build this temple so that we may administer therein baptisms for our dead [which I explained to him] and also to perform some of the sacred matrimonial alliances and covenants that we believe in that are rejected by the world generally, but are among the purest, most exalting and ennobling principles that God has ever revealed to man."

"Well then, this is not our temple," said Baron Rothschild.

"No, but," said I, "you will build a temple, for the Lord has shown us, among other things, that the Jews have quite a role to perform in the latter days—that all the things spoken of by your old prophets will be fulfilled, that you will be gathered to the old Jerusalem."

That's where the page ends, so we will resume with the article.² But the point is that the Jews are going to have their own show, and we have ours. We don't interfere with them or seek to counsel them. They are doing their own. Here I said, the great reformers condemned pilgrimages to Jerusalem, just as all the fathers of the fourth century condemned pilgrimages to Jerusalem. They didn't like it because it looked like bad faith in Rome if you had to go to Jerusalem to be inspired. Rome was supposed to be the center, and they tried to stop it but it never worked because people would be drawn to Jerusalem. It's an irresistible magnet and has always been. As Rousseau says, they were determined

adversaries of pilgrimages, but they imitated them in their old Hebrew aspect. In his works, Luther says he can conceive of honest pilgrimages of the old type, and he is impressed by the unique holiness of Jerusalem. Calvin's objection to pilgrimages was primarily to the physical impossibility of gathering the saints at Jerusalem. He wrote in his work called *The Minor Prophets*, "It's impossible to have the city of Jerusalem be built. For one thing, as it's described in the Bible, the New Jerusalem will be fifteen miles long. Now, what city could ever be fifteen miles long?" He wasn't born in Los Angeles, was he? It's a small city today that isn't at least fifteen miles long. But that was his objection; it was a physical one. He said, "No city would be big enough to hold all the people that would have to go back to Jerusalem. That couldn't be possible." Well, they had very small cities in those days.

"This was necessary to counteract the tendency to apocalyptic excitement and deference to the Jews attendant upon the Reformation's intensive preoccupation with the Bible . . ." People like Reuchlin, for example, in getting deep into the Old Testament, committed the people to more serious study and more sympathetic study of the Jews. And I quote quite a number of passages from Luther and Calvin here in which they have this great respect, but they have to hold it down—we mustn't give too much credit to the Jews. They are through, their temple fell, they are gone. The only way they can possibly be saved or do anything else is to be converted again. This was the belief. If they were ever to go back to Jerusalem, it could only be as converted Christians. But there was the tendency to sympathize with them, and both Luther and Calvin tried to check it, "as various group of enthusiasts took to building their own local New Jerusalems."

Throughout Europe, with the Reformation, everybody started building his own New Jerusalem—there are all sorts of versions of it—or preparing to migrate to Palestine for the task. The Mennonites, for example, and the Anabaptists in Munster were going to build their own Jerusalem, their own Zion. There were Zions and Jerusalems springing up all over the place with various cults. Then there were some of them prepared to migrate to Palestine to rebuild the Jerusalem. They were to be the pilgrims back there. John Evelyn's famous diary is about that. He tells you all about going back to Jerusalem. And George Fox, who wrote *The Book of Martyrs*, tells in his journal about his intention of going back—that the Christians should go back and rebuild Jerusalem. This was the project all throughout the seventeenth century. Most of them were writing in the seventeenth century, "building their own local New Jerusalems or preparing to migrate to Palestine for the task; such groups flourished down through the 19th century."

I think especially of Jung Stilling. I will put him in here because he was a remarkable person. He lived in southern Germany, in Bavaria. He believed that they should get together and go and build the New Jerusalem—they should go settle Zion again. He was granted a million acres in Bessarabia by Czar Alexander III who was an idealist. As people got in their covered wagons and started moving toward the east (the Bessarabia is on the coast of the Black Sea), halfway there, he had a vision in a dream. He said, "No, we are making a mistake. The building of Zion is not going to be moving in this direction. It's going to come later, and it will move in the other direction. It's going to be toward the West, and it will be led by a man who bears my name, *Jung*. This was a very interesting vision he had. So they gave it up and went back because the real settling was to be in the West and led by a man called *Jung*. But Jung Stilling was a remarkable man.

Incidentally, Professor Edward Benz, has written about that, and it's very interesting. He has written interestingly about the Mormons too. I mean he is very sympathetic and has

visited us here. There is Christian Hofman and Johann Lange and the Jerusalem Friends of the Temple. These are various movements of people going back to Jerusalem and trying to rebuild it in the nineteenth century.

Back in 1620 in the seventeenth century, James I threw Sir Henry Finch into jail because he called for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and take complete temporal dominion over the whole world. This plan had considerable influence for over three hundred years, the plan of Sir Henry Finch for which he was imprisoned. The Protestant James I jailed him because that looked like heresy. Everybody gets interested in rebuilding Jerusalem, first with the Reformation and then in the nineteenth century. The Protestants talked about the older pilgrimages as mummery. They [the participants] were superstitious and very interesting; I have some marvelous accounts of them. But they had their own ecstatic brand of dramatization. The Roman Catholics saw the real thing in every object they saw. For example, they were always collecting nails and wood from the original cross all over the place. Well, it was like the Shroud of Turin, which the [Catholic] church has now admitted is from the fourteenth century. They would put on display such things as the farthing that the woman lost in the parable of the Lord, where he said the woman searches the house for the lost penny and finds it. Well, the lost penny was on display in Jerusalem; you could see the penny the woman lost. It was just a parable, but the Catholics made everything very literal that way and identified all the archaeological remains of the very objects mentioned in the Bible—they had everything.

The Protestants were no less zealous. They detected proof of the scriptures in every type of object observed in the Holy Land. George Fox, who was a Quaker, insisted, "We cannot own no other, neither outward Jerusalem." Yet they risked life and limb to reach the physical Jerusalem. It's funny. They denied that they were affected by the superstition at all—they weren't going to go back on pilgrimages. This hadn't happened for centuries, of course. That was the presager about getting back to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple. Yet they risked life and limb to reach the physical Jerusalem and purchase a famous work called Purchas's *Pilgrim* (It's several volumes; we have it here. I hope you've all read it.) He said, "To ascribe sanctity to the place is Jewish." That's wrong [according to him], yet he was a pilgrim; he insisted on going there. "And others who poured contempt on the holy places and rites were transported at the sight when they saw one." There are some good examples here.

Edward Robinson was the first person to make any scientific study of Palestine at all. Before that it was fantastic; nobody knew what it was like at all. So Joseph Smith couldn't have picked up anything before 1840, like their Orientalism which we will mention later. This is typical: Edward, being very scientific, met with some of the elders of his church. He says he was "overwhelmed by the coincidence of time, place, and number when twelve American missionaries met in the large upper room in Jerusalem." They met in Jerusalem, and there's something to that. The same symbolism as the Lord meeting in the upper chamber with the Twelve. He would have nothing to do with any superstition or anything like that, but when it happened to him, he sees there is something very special there. Philip Schaff edited the Schaff-Herzog *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, the big Presbyterian classic which we refer to. It's a good one. He said he abhors the superstition and mummery of pilgrimage, but he went and immersed himself ten times in the Jordan. He said, "I almost imagined I was miraculously delivered from rheumatism." You see, Professor Schaff is free of superstition, but he allowed himself to be dunked ten times (why ten times?) in the Jordan and almost imagined that he was miraculously delivered from rheumatism.

So people are always playing with this; they can't leave Jerusalem alone. For one thing it is quite romantic; you understand that. We get that with Chateaubriand. His much publicized visit to Jerusalem in 1806 started Orientalism. He describes it in his famous literature. He visited Jerusalem and wrote up Palestine, giving it this glamour and Orientalism, this the Scheherazade picture that lasted for a hundred years. They didn't have any real idea of what it was like. It has been evident ever since. Everybody over-romanticizes and over-glamorizes it, though some things can't be over-glamorized. But he combined religious, literary, and intellectual interests and established a romantic appeal of the Holy Land that has lasted almost through the century. This is a very interesting thing. Bassand, who has done a very thorough work on Chateaubriand in the Holy Land that was published quite recently, said, "All the French travelers to Jerusalem between 1800 and 1850 represent a completely fantastic idea of the Orient." Everybody followed along with that. Remember, the Book of Mormon was written twenty years before 1850, but everybody was strapped with that. Nobody could see the real Orient. It's the real Orient you get in the Book of Mormon, not any of the glamorous Orientalism that people were putting into romances in the manner of Chateaubriand.

In 1830 Mohammed Ali became the ruler of Islam. He was the most powerful man in Egypt and reformed everything. He opened Palestine to outside travel. "When Jerusalem was thrown open to the West in the 1830s by Mohammed Ali, European and American missionaries hastened to the spot with ambitious projects of converting the Jews, with an eye to the fulfillment of prophecy and the ultimate restoration of [Jerusalem] the Holy City." In 1835 church missions to the Jews were set up in Jerusalem; there were many of them. And there's a classic study of this by Toynbee. You all know Arnold Toynbee, but he is not the "big noise" he was a few years ago. He wrote *A Study of History* [twelve volumes]. He was a Cambridge man. One person who knew him very well is Arthur Henry King, a close friend of Toynbee. He said that he wasn't a phony, but very near. But he has an interesting thing to say. His grandparents were those that participated in this missionary movement to Jerusalem. They were going to go back and refound Jerusalem as a Christian Jerusalem of the Millennium. That was their idea. He said that the only people that weren't sensibly moving in the direction of Jerusalem were the poor deluded Mormons who thought they should go west and have their own Zion while they left it to the Jews to refound Jerusalem. They [the Mormons] thought the Jews would found Jerusalem again. Of course, they turned out to be right. It was the Jews who resettled Jerusalem—not all these many efforts that were very expensive, fabulously financed, etc., by people like Rothschild to go back. But, of course, his money had a lot to do with Zionism—Herzl and the rest.

So they hastened and they were going to set up their missions there, as I said. Toynbee actually scolds the Mormons for doing a silly thing, not the sensible thing. They went in the wrong direction to found Zion and left it to the Jews to reestablish Jerusalem. "Even the ill-starred Anglo-Lutheran Bishopric of 1841 had that in view." A very interesting thing happened in 1841. The Episcopalians and the Lutherans were competing for it, and they got together and said that they would make a common bishopric. They appointed a converted Polish Jew to be bishop of Jerusalem in the United Episcopal and Lutheran Church in Jerusalem. Later on the Kaiser gave them the land. What dominates Jerusalem in all the pictures is that big tower, the highest point. Well, that's the Lutheran Church that Kaiser Wilhelm II built in Jerusalem as a Lutheran. He comes a little later; this is just the generation before. It was Gladstone and Bunsen who put their heads together for this. Bunsen was the German prime minister, and Gladstone was the English prime minister under Victoria. They decided to put an end to the squabbling and to make a common

cause. It was they who selected the new bishop of Jerusalem, who was a converted Polish Jew. Well, that flopped; it didn't work at all. John Henry Newman denounced it passionately in his *Apology* later on as a plan of base concession to the Jews and the Protestants. He was the great Catholic convert. (The Newman clubs you find at universities all over the country represent the Catholic students there.) Newman really fought it because the Catholic Church has always fought the return to Jerusalem. He "indicated the stand of the Roman Church, which in 1847 appointed a resident patriarch for Jerusalem." They decided to catch up, so in 1847 the Catholic Church appointed a resident patriarch of Jerusalem.

"This move," says Moret, "counterbalances as much as possible the influence of Russian schismatics and German Protestants." Everybody was out for grabs now. The Catholic writer, Moret, calls them the "Russian schismatics." This move [by the Catholics] counterbalances attempts of the Russians and German Protestants at getting the holy places. So in 1847 the Catholics set up their own official to preside there. They called him the "resident patriarch."

The mounting rivalry became terrible then. It became ferocious and ended very soon in a horrible thing that happened. In 1553 Francis I, the flamboyant king and rival of Henry VIII, signed the *Capitulations* which gave France the right, under the Franciscans, to protect the holy places of Jerusalem. It was the privilege of France to protect the holy places and to take over. Then it became a political plum a little later. It was renewed in 1740. Then to advance her interests in the Orient, Napoleon III (Napoleon the Little) decided to really go in and occupy. He claimed on the basis of the *Capitulations* of Francis I in 1553 and in 1740 that France had exclusive right to protect the holy places in Jerusalem. Well, the Russian pilgrimages had always been the most ardent. They had been coming there since the tenth century. They were the most fervid pilgrims, and the Russians weren't going to let that happen at all. This brought on the Crimean War between France and Russia in 1854 and caused the death and misery of millions. It was because of the vanity of Louis Napoleon. It was to oblige his Catholic constituents [though he was an atheist] to reactivate French claims to holy places which France had long neglected and the Russians long cherished. What he called "the foolish affair of the holy places" brought about the terrible Crimean War and its portentous chain of disasters and calamities.

"In the second half of the nineteenth century the major powers and churches were stimulated by mutual rivalry to seek commanding positions at Jerusalem through the founding of eleemosynary institutions over which they retained control." Now they were going to try not to protect the holy places but to found eleemosynary institutions, like hospitals going way back to the Crusades. There were the Hospitalers and the Templars who were to protect the pilgrims to the temple. It was a long tradition. So everybody started founding their hospitals, libraries, and schools—the things that we found where we want to get a foothold. They were charitable, eleemosynary institutions, but they were backed by the major powers. Then they went there in a big way and started pushing each other. The government retained control over the institutions. Somebody would fund or finance a school, but the government would retain it. They started moving in on each other. "Beyond the hard facts of geometry and economics, the religious significance of the city continued to exert steady pressure on the policies of all the great powers."

Remember Queen Eugenie, the wife of Napoleon III? (We don't have the Eugenie hats anymore.) Napoleon III sent Maximilian over to become king of Mexico and lost that.

But Eugenie had a grand project. She said, "Let all the crowned heads of Europe pitch in and make a charitable contribution and we will have one big, common, charitable fund [like a United Fund] in Palestine to take care of everything." She had this idealist plan that fell through. The French government saw in the pilgrimages the force to be utilized in penetration of the Orient; even the Anticlerical Party supported them accordingly. It was to meet the growing power of France and Russia, which established a Jerusalem bishopric, that the Protestants of England and Germany were appealed to for support "in the name of national interest and prestige."

So everybody was getting into the act—Russia, England, France, Germany. If you were a great power you had to be involved, and that was ever since the *Assizes of Jerusalem*. Remember, we went back to Baldwin of Jerusalem. They were all intermarried back then and involved in the Kingdom of Jerusalem until it fell to Saladin. (The notes are longer than the text; that's why I jump back and forth here.)

Now, the story of the German Kaiser Wilhelm II. He said when he was a little kid, his Aunt Louisa gave him a beautiful wooden model of the New Jerusalem. It was one where you put together blocks with golden domes, houses, walls, and everything. You could build it, and it was a big thing. He used to play with it by the hours. Of course, this fascinated him—Jerusalem with its golden domes and its towers and its churches and everything. It was a model Jerusalem on a grand scale for a kid to play with. This set his heart on it. Then in 1898 [Theodor] Herzl, the founder of Zionism, recognized Wilhelm II (the World War I Kaiser) as an emperor of peace, making a great entry into his eternal city. The Kaiser went to Jerusalem and dressed up in a complete suit of white armor. He got on a white charger and entered through the Jaffa gate in all magnificence to liberate Jerusalem, with all the idealism from when he was a little kid. He always dreamed of the time when he would come as Lohengrin on a white charger (very Wagnerian), dressed completely in white armor. It was very typical of the German Kaiser entering to deliver Jerusalem. Kaiser Wilhelm II was a very pious man, incidentally, and he dreamed of converting the Jews. So he was right in with Herzl there, who was the Zionist. What spoiled it all, according to Herzl, was the arrogance of his staff. Of course, there is nothing more arrogant than a Prussian Junker. Wilhelm's staff was all composed of Prussian Junkers. They spoiled the whole thing, and this led to World War I. There was unspeakable arrogance.

But he did do this. He was the one who built that tall church. Whenever you see a picture of Jerusalem at a distance, you always see that big tower sticking up. That's the Lutheran church, the tower that sticks up. That made the Catholics mad, but he appeased them. There were a lot of Catholics in the empire, after all, so he gave them the "Dormition." That was the oldest house in Jerusalem, supposedly surviving from the time of Christ, the house of John Mark's mother. That was greatly prized, and he gave that to the Catholics. The Catholics got the "Dormition," and the Lutherans got the big church on the top of the hill. He promoted Protestant unity by the dedication of the great Jerusalem church and the patronage of Palestinian Zionism, which was thwarted by his advisors.

Then there was the taking of Jerusalem by Allenby in 1917. You all remember that if you've read *Lawrence of Arabia*. "The Seven Pillars of Wisdom" talks about this. "The taking of Jerusalem by Allenby in 1917 was hailed throughout the Christian world as the fulfillment of prophecy, and deplored by the Moslems as a typical Crusade against their holy city." That was the famous General Allenby. We really hailed this in the Church. I remember that my parents and everyone was quite exhilarated about it. This showed that

prophecy was going to be fulfilled, and it was a very important step. Then came the Balfour Declaration that the Jews would have the right to return to Jerusalem. Then Zionism thought they had a green light, but they had an awful lot of trouble.

“World War II was followed by increasing interest in Jerusalem as a center of ecumenical Christianity.” Here’s an interesting thing: In 1928, for example, there was a Jerusalem meeting which recalled, not inaptly, the period of the great ecumenical council. They started this ecumenical movement already in 1928 by a meeting of many churches in Jerusalem. This gave impetus for the creation of an International Committee on the Christian Approach to the Jews; it was founded at that time. Then the YMCA International Prayer Week was started at Jerusalem in 1951. Everybody wanted to get into the act. Then the Grand Mufti wanted to get into it, and he was really something. He was going to stop the Jews. In 1955, he gave a tea inviting all the Christians and was going to unite all the religions, except the Jews. Then there was a world conference of Pentecostal organizations. They held their great meeting in 1960 at Jerusalem. They were all expressive of the idea: “We want to go back and be the refounders of Jerusalem. We’ve got to unite and keep Jerusalem Christian.”

The “old religious and national rivalries of long standing and great variety, continued to flourish.” This is astonishingly set forth. John of Wurzburg from the Middle Ages still survives in Jerusalem. American Jesuits from Baghdad and Presbyterian ministers grouped around the American University of Beirut, where I spent some time. “They multiplied schools and attracted students by the assurance of employment in Yankee enterprise,” says a resentful French observer. Today the Benedictine Order seeks recruits in all countries, particularly in the United States, for work in Jerusalem. The Catholics decided to throw themselves into it.

But in 1948, after the Jewish war, President Truman recognized Jerusalem, and he sent his representative, J. G. McDonald, to go back to Jerusalem and give them our blessing. He had a conversation with the pope on the way, and the pope didn’t like it at all. This will never do, he said. In the same year the Vatican, to counter that, appealed for the growth of Jerusalem as a universal Christian religious, cultural, and educational center—everything to keep the Jews out. Make it universally Christian. The Catholics were willing to concede that. The mixture of culture and religious interest is apparent in the pilgrimages of the holy year 1950—the Baptist pilgrimage of 2500 members in 1955, and “the arrival of ever increasing numbers of interdenominational and study groups.” The scholarly emphasis is seen in the founding of auxiliary residences for the Pontifical Biblical Institute at Jerusalem and amusingly demonstrated by the impeccable good taste, we are told, of the Bishop of New York, who notes that World Wars I and II both began as crusades but quickly dropped the illusion. So let’s stop making a crusade here, he says.

Then we go on and get a more sophisticated air here: “Even the old and vexing problem of the priority of Jerusalem, “mother of Churches,” over other Christian bishoprics is now approached in a spirit of mutual concession with respect for the autonomy of various bishoprics in Jerusalem. This liberal attitude may be a response to what is regarded by some Christian circles as the Jewish challenge to the basic Christian thesis that only Christians can possess a New Jerusalem.”

There are very interesting writings on this. The Christians are beginning to yield ground on this. One of them writing here says, “By the dramatic entry of Israel, the Christian tradition of the Holy Land has been violently disrupted.” Israel spoiled everything by just

coming in and taking it over. This is Bishop Blythe who “takes comfort in the thought that Israel is fulfilling scriptures in many ways, even unconsciously.” One writer says, “But they were generally alarmed by the idea that the Jews should come back to Jerusalem.” He says he is just nonplussed—it shouldn’t happen. “That’s not the way prophecy was supposed to be at all,” he says. He goes into quite a tizzy about that.

“While the great powers for over a century cautiously sought to exploit the energies of Zionism and its sympathizers . . .” Way back in 1838 Shaftesbury got Palmerston to appoint a British vice consul in Jerusalem charged with protection of the Jews generally. So way back in 1838 the British wanted to get in on the ground floor and protect Jews coming back to Palestine. And remember, that was just the year after Orson Hyde had blessed the land for the return of the Jews—the year after, Shaftesbury and Palmerston set up the British vice consul in Jerusalem for the protection of Jews generally.

In 1840 they sought cooperation with the Russian Dekabrists, with the Polish liberationists, and with the French statesmen as part of a widespread liberation movement. The Anglo-Lutheran bishopric of the following year (1841, we mentioned that) was denounced by Newman because it made implicit concessions to the Jews in Palestine who evinced a deep interest in Zionism and arranged for Herzl’s audience with the Kaiser which became so sensational. Zionism became a question with which European politics must reckon. “It is now openly conceded that the Jews might indeed rebuild the city, though only as potential Christians [if they become Christians, that’s fine]. Though some Christians are even willing to waive that proviso,” including Albright, etc. Chateaubriand, way back in his day, found the Jewish community in Jerusalem to be the “only wholly admirable and miraculous phenomenon in the city.” The Jews had settled there and were holding their own against the Moslems. But “the fundamental thesis is so firmly rooted that the progress of Israel is commonly viewed not as a refutation of it but as a baffling and disturbing paradox.” It just should not happen [according to them].

You may remember Charles Malik who was in the United Nations and President Reagan’s representative years ago, way back in the beginning? He had such influence. (He has spoken here at BYU a number of times.) He and the World Council of Churches make this official statement: “The continued existence of the Jewish people which does not acknowledge Christ is a divine mystery.” Well, there you are. “It is a mystery and a wonderful phenomenon,” says Berdayev, “refuting the materialistic and positivistic criterion of history,” as does Mr. Toynbee’s theory of history, to his annoyance.

Well, that’s the way it goes in Jerusalem. I see the time is up. The point is we are right in the middle of this coming back to Jerusalem now; it is never settled. The pope said to McDonald, “The Catholic Church can never concede that the Jews should go back because it is against prophecy.” The prophecy was, of course, that the New Jerusalem should be built by people who accepted Christ, so that must be Christians. So this thing has gone on all the time. I have just been reading about these happenings since the Book of Mormon came out—most of them that is.

1. This conversation is taken from “How God’s Purposes Are Fulfilled, Etc.,” in *JD* 18:199.
2. Brother Nibley quotes and paraphrases from “Jerusalem: In Christianity,” in *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 16 vols. (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1972), 9:1568–75, and also from his notes on this subject.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 21

2 Nephi 25–28

Nephi's Prophecy of Our Times

Now, Nephi is in his prophetic vein, and he is going to take us all the way. We are on 2 Nephi 25. Here we go in verse 18: "Wherefore, he shall bring forth his words unto them, which words shall judge them at the last day." The purpose of these words is the "convincing them of the true Messiah, . . . for there should not any come, save it should be a false Messiah which should deceive the people." There were many false Messiahs that came forward. Robert Eisler collected [information about] quite a number of them. The most famous of those was Sabbatai Zevi in 1648. What was the treaty in that year? Of course, it ended the Thirty Years War. At that time [Bohdan] Chmielnicki, a leader of the Cossacks, revolted against the Polish crown and swept over the land, selecting the Jews as his special victims. There were terrible pogroms all over Europe, especially in Poland, and the Jews became very discouraged. "This must be the end of time," they thought, and they hoped for a Messiah. This fellow, a young Turkish Jew who was born in Saloniki, emerged as the Messiah. All the Jews in Europe and elsewhere got all excited about him. His headquarters were in Cyprus, and everyone decided this was the Messiah. Then all of a sudden he got converted to Islam; he became a Moslem. Well, you can imagine the effect that would have on the Jews. That just cast them down completely. But the day was saved in 1700 by Baal-Shem. He was wandering around among all the communities in Europe, etc., preaching the *Hasidic* doctrine (he was a *Hasidic* Jew; a *Hasid* means "a saint, sacred"), which was one of God's love and tolerance and that "everything is going to be all right." It was a very uplifting doctrine—purely spiritual, nothing but peace, etc. Such people as Martin Buber and Arnold Zweig were *Hasidic* in that sense.

Some years ago Abraham Kaplan from Israel—who teaches at Tel Aviv now, I think—was here. He has been here a number of times. He's the great Jewish authority on the temple; we've had some wonderful discussions with him on the temple. He was here, and he was a *Hasidic* Jew, preaching this gentleness, etc. But the last time he was here, he had changed completely. He was a real *Hasidic* Jew then. That means "going back to the old literalism." All the Jews that ever joined the Church were *Hasidic* Jews, including my great grandfather. They believed these things in a literal sense; they didn't make them abstract and allegorical the way the rabbis do. It's very interesting that *Hasidism* reverted again to this doctrine. [Some Jews said,] "Don't put your faith in anything physical or literal or anything like that. We just have to exercise what love and patience we can." It was a great doctrine, but Kaplan finds much punch now in *Hasidic* Judaism, apparently.

As I said, there were many false Messiahs, and the Jews got all excited about them because they had missed the real one. Verse 19: "His name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God." That, of course, is a translation meaning "Jesus—the Savior" and "Christ—the Messiah, the Anointed One." It's a very interesting thing—only the early parts of the Book of Mormon refer to the *Messiah*. It's here that he starts referring to *Christ*. He calls him *Christ* from here on, but earlier he's always called the *Messiah*, which means the same thing, of course—the *Anointed One*. Then it tells about coming out of the land of Egypt, etc. "And gave unto Moses power that he should heal the nations after they have been

bitten by the poisonous serpents, if they would cast their eyes unto the serpent which he did raise up before them, and also gave him power that he should smite the rock and the water should come forth.” Can someone please explain to us how he could heal them by the serpent if they had been made mortally ill by the bite of a serpent? Remember, we are told in Exodus that the serpents came in great numbers and bit the people. Moses raised a brazen serpent on a staff, and whoever looked at the serpent would be healed. So by the curse the curse is removed. What is the point of that? And what do they mean by “washed white in the blood of the Lamb”? Why would the blood of the Lamb wash you white? It’s the same ambivalent meaning there. It’s explained in the Book of Mormon and nowhere else what these things mean.

The serpent, of course, is the most ambivalent of emblems. You know what the *caduceus* is, the emblem of doctors. Some of your parents are doctors, or you’re going to be doctors. You know the *caduceus* is the two serpents intertwined, which is the sign of the healer. Aesculapius founded it, but it was originally the staff of Hermes. There were two serpents copulating on a staff. He picked it up and made it his symbol. The one stands for life and the other for death. There are always the two serpents. To this day in the Greek Orthodox Church, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Serbian Church, the staff of the archbishop, head of the church, always consists of a cross with two serpents entwined on it. There are two serpents facing each other on the cross. It’s a strange thing; they go back like this and face each other. All the episcopal staves and patriarchal staves of the Orient and the old eastern churches have the two serpents. One is life and the other is death, and you must have both—this opposition in all things. It’s very clear among the Hopis in the snake dance. They won’t let you go there anymore, will they? This year they shut it to the public. But it’s very clearly explained by them, and this is an Egyptian formula too. You must pass through the serpent. In this earth we must pass through the serpent; we go to the lowest stage. They don’t like those serpents or anything like them but they have to live with them. They have to accept them, and they have to recognize their own weakness.

Remember, Joseph Smith in Zion’s Camp lifting the serpent up and saying, “Unless men can get along with each other, the beasts will be their enemies.” That’s a teaching from the *Talmud* too. But the two serpents are the serpents that oppose each other and they represent both parts of life. We have to have life, and we have to have death. On this earth the two go together. The bite of the serpent ends it, but by the serpent are we saved. Obviously, the reason the Egyptians take it as a symbol of resurrection is that it sheds its skin and becomes really new and shiny every year. It leaves its old skin behind. Everything is left behind and out it comes like a new creature, reborn. It’s one of the most striking symbols of rebirth. The others, like the frog (they used the tadpoles) and the caterpillars, change their nature while maintaining their identity from a cocoon to a caterpillar to a beautiful butterfly. They change their nature and their appearance; whereas, the snake gets reborn and stays himself, keeping his same appearance. Anyway, the ambivalence of the serpent is very ancient, and it’s a symbol that was understood by the ancients. But a thing like that seems so contradictory to us; it’s not so, though.

Now notice all this emphasis on writing in verse 21. “Wherefore, for this cause hath the Lord God promised unto me that these things which I write shall be kept and preserved and handed down unto my seed, from generation to generation, that the promise may be fulfilled unto Joseph, that his seed should never perish as long as the earth should stand [why is it necessary to preserve the seed?]. . . . These things shall go from generation to generation as long as the earth shall stand; and they shall go according to the will and pleasure of God; and the nations who shall possess them shall be judged of them according

to the words which are written [the importance of writing all the time; we will be judged by them]. For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ.” The Dead Sea Scrolls show this. When I was at Claremont, I taught Junior Humanities at Scripps College alternately with Edgar Goodspeed who had retired from the University of Chicago. He was the grand old man of New Testament studies. Back in those days, he insisted that the Jews didn’t write a word because they were illiterate. The New Testament was written in Greek because ordinary Jews didn’t write Hebrew or anything like that. Then he died conveniently and the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. I would teach the class on Thursday, and he would take it on Tuesday. Professor Goodspeed said that the Jews didn’t write at that time. Well, they certainly did write; they wrote all over the place. They couldn’t stop writing. They had an obsession with writing, as the Dead Sea Scrolls show. They had a *scribendi cacoethes*, as the Greeks called it—they couldn’t stop writing. But they do write everything. After all, how did the law come down? The Lord wrote it, supposedly, with his own finger on the tablets and handed them to Moses. Just like Moroni had painfully written it with his fingers and handed the plates to Joseph Smith later on. It’s a strange thing, this handing down.

It’s the greatest invention that ever was. As Galileo says, “Compared with writing, any other invention pales in significance.” It goes far beyond television or anything like that because it can preserve over any limit of time and space (so simple, just something to scratch with and something to scratch on) not only what people did, but what they thought—their most subtle emotions and everything. Homer can still make us weep, and you can get all excited about Egyptian texts after all that span of years. It will always be there. But, of course, it wasn’t an invention. We read about that before, didn’t we, in “The Genesis of the Written Word?”¹ This emphasis on writing is so important for the Book of Mormon because it is a book. It goes by that title, “the book.”

Notice verse 24: “We keep the law of Moses, and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ, until the law shall be fulfilled.” Professor Frank Cross of Harvard, who has been here quite a number of times, gave the Dead Sea Scrolls people the name “The Church of Anticipation.” As Norman Golb has shown now, the Dead Sea Scrolls people were always looking forward. They sound like Christians, but they are not Christians—they’re Jews. Since they always looked forward, he called it “The Church of Anticipation.” Everything was anticipating the Christian church. That’s exactly what we have here. He says, it points our minds forward. We are anticipating what’s to come. That’s why we keep the law of Moses—in anticipation of other things to be revealed. That’s exactly what happens in the *Serekh Scroll*, for example. “For, for this end was the law given.” But it is really Christ, the Messiah. The whole thing has to do with him. This comes right in the right place here. To what do they look forward? To one thing, to Christ. They are obsessed with that. He says, “And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies; . . . we speak concerning the law that our children may know the deadness of the law.” Why would you teach the law if it was just to teach the deadness? Well, the law is the iron rod; the law is the Liahona. Remember when Mormon showed it to his son when he was ten years old. There was the Liahona. It was kept among the national treasures, but it didn’t work anymore. Once it had performed its function of leading them through the desert, then it became excess baggage. It’s the same thing with the iron rod. When you reach [the end of] the iron rod, you have to let go. The rod is not the goal. It will take you where you are going, but when you are there you let go. It was to be guidance. Remember that verse by Newton:

Praise the Lord, for he has spoken

Worlds [notice plural] his mighty word obeyed.
Laws that never shall be broken
For their guidance he has made.

The laws are for our guidance; they are to lead us where we are going. They are the head or the guide through the desert—the *hudā*, as the Arabs call it.

Verse 27: “Wherefore, we speak concerning the law that our children may know the deadness of the law; and they, by knowing the deadness of the law, may look forward unto that life which is in Christ, and know for what end the law was given.” It’s guidance—it’s to lead us there. But remember, it becomes the obsession. After the temple was destroyed, what could they do except discuss the law? They went on, and that’s why we have the *Talmud*, the *Mishnah*, and all that. It’s all discussion of the law. That’s what the *Talmud* does, discusses the law, and boy do they split hairs! When is it day and when is it night? The new day begins at a certain time, and it’s important to determine when it happens. It’s when you can distinguish between two strings, a black string and a white string. Well, how black and how white? How long do those strings have to be? At what distance do they have to be? It says “at arm’s length.” At whose arm’s length? At the arm’s length of a man six feet tall. So it goes. You are splitting hairs and trying to find out exactly what is what. This is the “letter of the law,” but it’s the only thing they were left with after they rejected the Messiah. Notice, they hardened their hearts against him when the law ought to be done away. They became hard, like hardening arteries. You get hardened and set in your ways, and you will not be receptive anymore. The thought has to be fluid. That’s the expression we use for that sort of thing. The law is “sufficient to teach any man the right way.” Notice, verse 30 is important: “Ye must keep the performances and ordinances of God until the law shall be fulfilled which was given unto Moses.” The ordinances and performances aren’t going to save you, but you must keep them because they point your mind forward until the law shall be fulfilled. They will keep you on the path. It’s a discipline, and that discipline is important—the law having no particular effect or virtue in itself.

Old Leopold von Anhalt-Dessau, predecessor of Fredrick the Great, built up the Prussian Army and made it the great machine that it was. And how did he do it? He introduced the *Manual of Arms*, a perfectly useless ornamental display—port arms, present arms, etc. You go through this rigmarole, and then you march stiffly and artificially with a *passo romano*, the goose step. Why do you do it? Well, it made the army. It wasn’t necessary, but it was a discipline. It got men acting together and taking orders. It put some form into things. Before then, when people went to war, such as the Thirty Years War, the armies would drag along dragging guns, like Napoleon’s army coming back from Moscow. Old Leopold, who died of an apoplectic stroke when he heard that his thirteenth child was learning to read (that’s the kind of a guy he was). “Old gun powder face,” as Macaulay calls him, built the army doing these purely artificial things. As I mentioned before, we had to shave every day in the Hundred and First. That had to be done; that was all there was to it. But it had an effect.

We’re going on here; we have to get to the prophecy of our times. After Christ came generations would pass away. Then the proud that do wickedly shall burn and be as stubble. Notice that complete consumption in verse 4. Then one of those emotional outbursts of Nephi in verse 7: “O the pain, and the anguish of my soul for the loss of the slain of my people! [he sees it all]. For I, Nephi, have seen it, and it well nigh consumeth

me before the presence of the Lord; but I must cry unto my God: Thy ways are just [it's almost more than he can stand]. But behold, the righteous that hearken unto the words of the prophets . . . shall not perish." It's interesting that every time it mentions this being consumed as stubble, [the righteous are mentioned]. That means by fire and completely—overburn. That's what it is. After the field has been cut, then you burn it over. That's the great overburn of the stubble. But the righteous are told they shall not perish. We are not told how; we have to leave that up to the Lord. The only concern with you is to be righteous; this is the point. Verse 9: "But the Son of righteousness shall appear unto them; and he shall heal them, and they shall have peace with him, until three generations shall have passed away."

This is a paradox again. Why is the gospel there? Why all this trouble? If this is the plan of salvation for the whole human race, why has it had so few takers? I mean it not only hasn't been popular, [almost] everyone has just ignored it. Well, that's what happened in the Old Testament. They didn't keep the law. That's what the prophets storm about. That's what Moses says in his farewell, "You have never kept the law at all." With the Lord it was the same way; even his disciples left him at the end. He stood alone. He must "tred the wine press alone." Of course, nobody else could do that. But he was not well received, as you know. Well, what's the whole idea of giving something like this? John tells us right at the beginning, "the light shines in the dark, and the dark comprehends it not." He came to his own, and his own received him not. But to as many as received him he gave power to become the sons of God. You can receive him if you are willing, and he will give you power to become the sons [and daughters] of God. So that is a big thing, you see, if you could bring that off. So it is not contradicting that eternal life in the presence of God and the angels is not bought so cheaply. Few are going to take it [the gospel], but it's got to be here. Some aren't qualified at all, and this is the way it is. They have been very favored. Then he speaks about himself. They will have peace, but after three generations they will reject him. Verse 10: "And when these things have passed away a speedy destruction cometh unto my people. . . . When the Spirit ceaseth to strive with man then cometh speedy destruction, and this grieveth my soul." That's *atē* when the Spirit will no longer strive with them. And he says, "My spirit will not always strive with man."

Verse 12: "It must needs be that the Gentiles be convinced also that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God; and that he manifesteth himself unto all those who believe in him, by the power of the Holy Ghost; yea, unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, working mighty miracles, signs, and wonders, among the children of men according to their faith." He will be received according to the faith to receive him. It will be done according to your faith. "But behold, I prophesy unto you concerning the last days [now this should interest us from here on] when the Lord God shall bring these things forth unto the children of men [this is our time]. After my seed and the seed of my brethren shall have dwindled in unbelief, and shall have been smitten by the Gentiles; yea, after the Lord God shall have camped against them round about [The Indians were pretty strong at this time in the 1820s. They occupied most of the country, and they had received the horse and become very warlike and effective. There were whole great nations, but this shows us the Indians completely ground down, just reduced to where there is almost nothing left before the tide is going to turn here.] . . . and after they shall have been brought down low in the dust, even that they are not, yet the words of the righteous shall be written [he's talking about the record], and the prayers of the faithful shall be heard, and all those who have dwindled in unbelief shall not be forgotten. For those who shall be destroyed shall speak unto them out of the ground, and their speech shall be low out of the dust [we

mentioned the Nahal Hever caves, etc.]. . . . They shall write the things which shall be done among them [there are the Dead Sea Scrolls, among other things]. . . . And it shall come to pass, that those who have dwindled in unbelief shall be smitten by the hand of the Gentiles [now it's the Gentiles' turn]. And the Gentiles are lifted up in the pride of their eyes, and have stumbled [notice, he is using the present tense], because of the greatness of their stumbling block, that they have built up many churches."

It's an interesting thing that in Greek historical accounts you only use the present tense for future or past because as you talk about it, it is happening. You only use the present tense in historical narrative. They just stick to the present, and he is doing the same thing here. Of course, this is 2500 years ahead of him. He says, "And the Gentiles *are* lifted up in the pride of their eyes, and have stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block, that they have built up many churches [the 'great and abominable' is a composite]; nevertheless, they put down the power and miracles of God, and preach up unto themselves their own wisdom and their own learning [notice the two things], that they may get gain and grind upon the face of the poor [positivism and materialism become the main trends in Christian studies]. And there are many churches [he told us before that there was one church—that's the big composite that covers everything] built up which cause envyings, and strifes, and malice." Of course, they are always competitive, but that happens within every church. All churches are full of envyings, strife and malice—including ours (you know that), in some wards, not everywhere. But that happens because it's human nature.

"And there are also secret combinations [this gets more serious, you see], even as in times of old, according to the combinations of the devil, for he is the founder of all these things; yea, the founder of murder, and works of darkness; yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever." We immediately think of the Mafia here and things like this—secret combinations and works of darkness. The foundation is murder. That's what the Mafia sells. The product that brings the Mafia its biggest income is murder. Amazing business, isn't it? Of course, it's the same with the military, with arms makers and things like that. You can make quite a list of the Mahan principle, "I am master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain." You can convert life into property. They do it all over the place; it's always done. We won't go into that now.

Verse 23: "I say unto you that the Lord God worketh not in darkness." This is interesting because of the militant orders that rose after the time of the Crusades. They were very secret. I'm talking about the Templars and the others. They degenerated into the schlerafian and fraternities and things like that. They have been all over the place, and some of them have been quite militant and full of mischief. "For he loveth the world, even that he layeth down his own life that he may draw all men unto him. Wherefore, he commandeth none that they shall not partake of his salvation [of course, the Church is not exclusive]. Behold, doth he cry unto any saying: Depart from me? Behold, I say unto you, Nay. . . . Behold hath he commanded any that they should depart out of the synagogues, or out of the houses of worship? [Notice, he recognizes them. Corruption and cynicism should not turn us away from religion itself. We start out with that. That's what we have to have, and then which direction you take is up to you to decide.] Behold, I say unto you, Nay. Hath he commanded any that they should not partake of his salvation? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but he hath given it free for all men; and he hath commanded his people that they should persuade [so we have to work on it] all men to

repentance.” That is the first thing. That is the message of the missionary, “Speak nothing but repentance to this generation,” because that’s what we have to have. That’s what we need to do from day to day and always, all the days of our lives, as the ninth chapter of Nephi says. He has lengthened our days just to give us a better chance to repent. And no one has less need to repent than another because the greater your virtues the greater the responsibility you have for the things you haven’t done, etc. I mean if you know more than someone else, you have a greater responsibility than someone who knows less, so you have to repent just as much if not more than he does that you are not studying enough, that you are not doing enough.

Verse 28: “All men are privileged the one like unto the other, and none are forbidden.” Notice right across the page there, if you have this edition, in the end of the last verse of this chapter he says, “And he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile.” Did any of you see that remarkable thing on [Escalante] and Dominguez yesterday? They were the first to visit this valley here in 1776. It showed photographs of Indians like the Paiutes. The Paiutes are very interesting. They were bearded Indians; they weren’t like the other Indians. Indians don’t have heavy beards, but these had beards and very European features. There are strange things that turn up among these Indians, like the blonds among the Hopis, etc. But that’s getting off the track here, a little bit.

Verse 29: “He commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion.” That’s very interesting when he says, “They seek not the welfare of Zion.” He’s talking about somebody who is in Zion in that case who sets himself up for a light and wants to get gain and praise. Well, I know lots of businessmen and others who have had a free ride on the Church. It’s sad. But you’ll find that in every church, too. We might as well be frank about these things. How do we deal with these people? The next verse makes it clear. You should have charity; you don’t judge them at all. Of course not. “The Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing [so this is how we deal with these things: we have charity and love, and without that you are nothing]. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the laborer in Zion to perish.” Notice, he is talking about Zion here. If they had charity, they wouldn’t suffer the laborer in Zion to perish. Then he really hits it hard: “But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish [laboring in Zion; wow, we’d better watch it here]. And again, the Lord God hath commanded that men should not murder; that they should not lie; that they should not steal.” Notice the list of things. Here we have the real prime-time TV show. This is the best hours of the evening when you see murder, stealing, envy, malice, contention, and whoredoms. They make the program. That is the rich mix that makes the big selling TV program today that will go over everything. Then he invites all “to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white.” Notice, he moves between these things. He sees the evil and gets right to the heart of it and then says, but you must forgive; you must tolerate these things; we are all being tested together; the Lord wants everybody to have a chance, etc.

Then he really warms up in the next chapter: “But, behold, in the last days, or in the days of the Gentiles [notice, the last days are called ‘the days of the Gentiles’; they certainly haven’t been the days of the Jews]—yea, behold all the nations of the Gentiles and also

the Jews, both those who shall come upon this land and those who shall be upon other lands [that's all of us], yea, even upon all the lands of the earth, behold, they will be drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations [this is the way they are]. . . . And all the nations that fight against Zion . . ." We'll see who Zion is if you turn to 2 Nephi 28:21. You don't identify yourself with that to establish your virtue. "All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell [if they do that]." There's too much of that, you see. But notice it's the *theatromania*. This third verse is marvelous, and of course, it's quoted from the prophet. "And all the nations that fight against Zion, and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision; yea, it shall be unto them, even as unto a hungry man which dreameth, and behold he eateth but he awaketh and his soul is empty; or like unto a thirsty man which dreameth, and behold he drinketh but he awaketh and behold he is faint, and his soul hath appetite; yea, even so shall the multitude of all the nations be that fight against Mount Zion."

Notice the state of mind you are in: You think you have it made. This is the delusion of drugs, or the delusion of wealth and plenty, or whatever it is. But you notice we are in a sort of dream state now. The wildest things happen. People feel no outrage at the most terrible crimes that are committed in our midst, etc. But the whole thing is like a dream. It's what the ancients called *theatromania*. I still have an article I've got to write on *theatromania*. As you can see, it means *theatre mania*. The appearance or the show is everything—a mania for the theatre, for spectacles and sights. Everybody becomes a spectator, a watcher. So the heroes of our time are people like DeNiro, etc., whom we regard as giants of the arts. They can't play anything, they can't dance, they can't perform really. Everybody can act, more or less, as far as that goes. I have a couple of kids in the business. But he's talking about the unreal world we live in. It's quite unreal; you know that. Of course, this was recognized already in the nineteenth century. In Grillparzer's famous play *Der Traum: Ein Leben* [*A Dream Is Life*] things aren't really real. The same thing was so in Rome. That's why the ancients called it *theatromania*. People spent all their time at the games and shows. Athletics became everything with them. They had these enormous colosseums and stadiums. We still use their words for that. We still have the same sort of games, and they get rougher and rougher and more violent, just for violence's sake—like tag wrestling, roller derbies, demolition derbies, and such cultural events as those. What a society! Well, that's it—it's not real. We think we've got it, you see. We dream of a night vision; we dream like a hungry man. How often you are hearing today that the American dream has gone down the drain. It was too much of a dream—all this prosperity, etc. It could be. And what has happened? As I said, to top it all off is the final thing where you can take a pill or a shot and it will really put you into nirvana or some happy state. But it is all unreal, and when you awaken it's a coming around and killing yourself that's a terrible thing.

In this example of prophetic language that follows here, I think Brother Sperry was right. It moves freely "as the spirit listeth" and is addressed to spiritually receptive audiences at various times and places and parties. Time and space swim together, sort of, in this prophetic language. As it says, you have to have the same spirit to follow it. But notice here in verse 4: "Ye shall be drunken but not with wine, ye shall stagger but not with strong drink [well, they have plenty of strong drink, too]. For behold, the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep." Everybody has slowed down; nobody seemed to know anything today of what's going on. All you had to do is listen to these political debates to see them missing one ball after another. Somebody would throw a fast

one, and the other guy would miss it entirely. Nobody is sharp on the uptake anymore. Everybody wanders around and generalizes and avoids issues, etc. It's wild.

Verse 5: "For behold, the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers, and the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity." It uses the very interesting old Hebrew word *kāfar*. He has taken them from you; he has covered them. We are out of touch with reality; we definitely are. On TV we have Disneyland. If you want my idea of hell, it would be Disneyland. That is hell as far as I'm concerned. Everything is artificial in it; nothing is real. You begin to have illusions and begin to feel sick. Well, we don't go into that. It would be poor advertising for Orange County.

Verse 6: "The Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book [now this isn't the Book of Mormon he is talking about; this is another book apparently], and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered. And behold the book shall be sealed; and in the book shall be a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof." The Book of Mormon doesn't go from the beginning of the world to the end, but the sealed part does. This is just a small part. The big part was sealed (the big plates), and this is what he is talking about. "Wherefore, because of the things which are sealed up, the things which are sealed shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness and abominations of the people. Wherefore the book shall be kept from them." They do get the Book of Mormon, but not the sealed words. Notice verse 10 talking about the man to whom the book is delivered: "But the words which are sealed he shall not deliver, neither shall he deliver the book. For the book shall be sealed by the power of God, and the revelation which was sealed shall be kept in the book until the own due time of the Lord, that they may come forth; for behold, they reveal all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof." The book of Moses comes nearest to that, but the book of Moses is a very small book. That's not the one that is sealed. It's another thing, and it's every bit as remarkable as the Book of Mormon. Well, the book "shall be read upon the house tops" when it comes, and "all things shall be revealed" then. "The book shall be hid from the eyes of the world."

Then it talks about three witnesses because there are always three witnesses. It doesn't have to be the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon. The scripture says, "In the mouths of three witnesses shall all things be established." This one has three witnesses too. This in verse 15 could refer to the case of Charles Anthon when Martin Harris took the plates [the translation] to him. Why did he take it to Charles Anthon? In 1830 [1828] Charles Anthon couldn't read Egyptian; nobody could. He claimed he recognized the signs, etc. and could read them, but he said, "How can I read a sealed book?" Well, Martin Harris had to take them to the most learned man, and he was. Charles Anthon was without any doubt the best classical scholar—the best antiquarian in the country, one of the very best in the world. He produced a magnificent and masterful dictionary of antiquities. It was so they could never say to Joseph Smith after that, "Oh yes, you gave a translation of it. You had the characters and the plates, but you never took them to a real scholar. You never got a top opinion on it, did you?" He did have Harris take it to the best scholar in the world, and he got his opinion on it. He said that he couldn't read a sealed book. Then he said, "Bring them back and I will read them to you." He got huffy about it. Of course, he couldn't read them. He was bluffing; that's why he got so huffy. But we couldn't say that the world wasn't given a chance [to give an opinion] in that case because, as it says in the verse 20 here: "The learned shall not read them. . . . Touch not the things which are sealed

[that's very particular here]. . . . Then shalt thou seal up the book again, and hide it up unto me, that I may preserve the words which thou hast not read, until I shall see fit in mine own wisdom to reveal all things unto the children of men." This is the way it happens, and this is why in verse 25: "Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men." Is this the situation today? We certainly draw near to him with our lips, but have we removed our hearts far from him? Not everybody. No, there are people in the world whose hearts are set because of their sufferings. And if they fear God because of the precepts of men, that's better than nothing. But he says he's got to bring forth "a marvelous work and a wonder."

Notice here in verse 27: "And their works are in the dark; and they say: Who seeth us, and who knoweth us?" Did you ever hear about insider trading? There's big money in that, but this is the whole thing. I mean all these takeovers, favorable or unfavorable. Anyway, they have to be done secretly. All of a sudden you find your company taken over, and you didn't know about it. You may have a billion-dollar company. There's a hostile takeover, and what can you do about it? These things are all done in the dark; they are arranged by officers in certain places. "Who seeth us, and who knoweth us?"

Here's prophecy again in verse 28: "And Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field; and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest." It's interesting that they pick Lebanon for the big ecological change because Lebanon is the great paradox. Lebanon is the richest; that's the old Phoenician country, and they still call themselves Phoenician. We had a Lebanese girl here not long ago. She became furious if you said she spoke Arabic, which, of course, it was. She said, "No, we speak Phoenician." And they do have a lot of words that are different in Beirut, etc., but look what a mess! Was there ever such complete jumble? It's a stew that's stirring all the time—all sorts of them fighting each other. Lebanon is in a state of complete chaos, and it has been that way for some years now, hasn't it? [laughs] When there's nobody there, it will become a fruitful field. They are replanting those. I mean that area is becoming reforested again. It's a fruitful field, but when they build in Lebanon they build on terraces—terrific terraces that go up thousands of feet. They are very good at cultivating them. But that Lebanon should be the center of violent change, both natural and social, is an interesting thing because it still is. The Israelis are daily bombing over in Lebanon, in Sidon and across the border in the Bekaa Valley or somewhere like that.

Verse 31: "For assuredly as the Lord liveth they shall see that the terrible one is brought to naught, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off." So let's not watch for iniquity. There are four things you must never do. Joseph Smith separately discusses four things. The first, of course, is "to aspire." Satan aspired, and that was his undoing. Never aspire and never be ambitious. You don't aspire in this world if you're going to get anything you want in the next. Never accuse. Of course, Satan is "the accuser." The word *diabolus* from which the name *devil* comes means *accuser*. He is called "the accuser of his brethren" in the scriptures. Adam said to Satan, "I will not bring a railing accusation against thee. Let God judge between me and thee." Adam would not accuse Satan after what Satan had done to him, you see. So we don't accuse anybody, no matter how guilty they are. Then you do not contend. The first thing the Lord says to the Nephites is there shall be no more contentions among you as there have been. This is my gospel that there shall be no contentions. All contention shall cease, for contention is not of me, but all contention is of the devil who stirreth up the children of men to anger to bloodshed and things like that [paraphrased]. So we never contend and never coerce, if

that's the case. And those are the four things that everybody wants to do today. Everybody is aspiring to high office, and everybody accuses in order to get it. Everybody contends; it's a very contentious world we live in, a competitive world. And we back it all up in the end; the bottom line is force. We have to have the force, coercion. We have all four things.

We'll move along here. The prophecies are continuing in chapter 28. The churches which are built up contend one with another. I like verse 4: "And they shall contend one with another, . . . and they teach with their learning, and deny the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance." Learning will always be inadequate. To do that the usual thing is to deny the Holy Ghost. It's vanity. In denying that they deny the power of God. "Behold, hearken ye unto my precept; if they shall say there is a miracle wrought by the hand of the Lord, believe it not; for this day he is not a God of miracles; he hath done his work. Yea, and there shall be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die; and it shall be well with us. And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God [they want it both ways in other words]—he will justify in committing a little sin [because it's human nature; we do it, of course]; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor." Notice, these are legal and business stratagems that are taught here at BYU as commendable, and practiced. I know people who practice them and think it's great to pull off a fast one. We had a big wheel from the East last year giving talks on sales strategies, which are defined by the dictionary as "deception practiced on an enemy." That's what it is. It's supposed to be legal if you practice it on an enemy. But when you use strategy against a customer, you are trying to deceive. The guy is your enemy because he is resisting you. You are trying to overcome him. He is trying to give you as little as he can, and you are trying to get as much as you can. You have to look at him as one who has to be approached with strategy, with all sorts of tricks and devices. It's not necessary really, but it's the world we live in. This is a better commentary than you could ask for. "Dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die [it's very interesting; a little later on this is the teaching of Korihor]; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God."

"Tomorrow we die" means "live it up like there was no tomorrow." But if there is, well, "God will beat us with a few stripes. . . . Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner [in this sort of manner. This isn't an article of faith or anything; this is the type of doctrine that will be taught], false and vain and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark [they have Swiss accounts, you see—that's works in the dark; then someone pays for it] And the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them. Yea, they have all gone out of the way; they have become corrupted." Then we read in verse 14: "They have all gone astray save it be a few, who are the humble followers of Christ; nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men." Because of the pride, the false teachers, the false doctrines of the churches, they rob the poor for their fine sanctuaries and their fine clothing. In Mormon 8:39 it takes this right home to us today. This is quite explicit there, "Why do you 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?" We studiously notice them not.

Notice in verse 15 that these are the three vanities: the wise, the learned, and the rich—those who are clever, those who know so much, and those who have it. They "are

puffed up in the pride of their hearts, and all those who preach false doctrines, and all those who commit whoredoms.” We think this means nothing anymore. All you have to do is look at the Sunday paper and you see [these things. You read that people] have been living together for the last three years. These are well known, popular, beloved figures of screen and television. The whoredoms have become part of our way of life today. It’s very common, and I’m not fooling you, am I? They live that way. “Wo unto them that turn aside the just for a thing of naught [ah, the technicalities of the law] and revile against that which is good, and say that it is of no worth! For the day shall come that the Lord God will speedily visit the inhabitants of the earth; and in that day that they are fully ripe in iniquity they shall perish.” He’s giving us a lot of rope; you notice that. When they are fully ripe, they will take care of themselves. That’s *atē* again—when you reach the point of no return, when you are fully ripe. “But behold, that great and abominable church, the whore of all the earth, must tumble to the earth, and great must be the fall thereof.” Then we go back to 2 Nephi 10:16 where he says that all those who fight against Zion are the “great and abominable.” Who is Zion? Well, don’t flatter yourself on that because we come right to that now. Verse 20: “For behold, at that day shall he [Satan] rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good.” All you have to do is name a few buzz words, and people get absolutely furious. Now here is Zion: “And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion [who claims to be Zion?]; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.” Notice that this trick has been carefully arranged, this equation here—“he leadeth them carefully down to hell.”

You notice that prosperity, like life itself, is a blessing. But it’s not a sign of blessedness, as Wilford Woodruff and John Taylor said. When the Church started being prosperous in their days, they started warning the Saints, “Don’t mistake prosperity for virtue.” You seem to think because the Lord blesses the Nephites when they are good for just three generations that if you’re rich that means you’re good. At least you’re smart. If you’re so smart, why aren’t you rich? Last year there were about 2800 new millionaires made every month. There are well over a million now. Do you have to be a genius to be in that group? How many great composers do we have? How many great poets do we have? Have many great painters do we have? People count them on the fingers of one hand, and yet we have literally millions of millionaires. This is a sign of the greatness of achievement. “Yea, Zion prospereth [notice the emphasis on *prospereth*], all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell. And behold, others he flattereth away, and telleth them there is no hell; and he saith unto them: I am no devil, for there is none.” This is a very common belief that there is no devil, he’s not personal, etc. You make people feel good and you’ll win in our society. You’ll sell your product. There’s this terrible competition.

This is an example of the depth of our civilization: The battle of the century this week is between McDonalds and Burger King. Burger King spent 200 million dollars on an advertising campaign that went right into the hole because the words in a five-word sentence weren’t arranged just quite right. So they lost 200 million dollars. They have a huge plant on Madison Avenue to turn out five or six words as a slogan. Whereas McDonalds spent 900 million, nearly a billion dollars, and came up with a family formula. They’re in it big now, but they spent nearly a billion dollars just to get an image. Well, aren’t you supposed to be your own image? To flatter them and make them feel good is what McDonalds did. The whole purpose of the thrust of Burger King (you see, I

study these things very carefully) was that McDonalds is for kids, but we are for grown-up people. But everybody wants to be kids in our society, so McDonalds won hands down on that. We've never grown up. It always shows them as the adolescent—eternal youth.

Verse 23: "Yea, they are grasped with death, and hell; and death, and hell, and the devil, and all that have been seized therewith must stand before the throne of God, and be judged according to their works, from whence they must go into the place prepared for them, even a lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment [notice, that is a metaphor]. Therefore, wo be unto him that is at ease in Zion! [I try to make myself as uncomfortable as possible]. Wo be unto him that crieth: All is well!" But he is going to win. He is going to win if he says all is well. He'll win every time, you'll notice. Don't criticize. "Yea, wo be unto him that saith: We have received, and we need no more!" How many returned missionaries say they've now done their work? They've received their testimony; now they can settle down to business? You hear this sort of thing. My son that I mentioned, who was in the ballet in San Francisco, was first counselor in the bishopric in a ward there. They had a very rich man in the ward, and he said what he liked about the Church was that it was just like a cafeteria. With the gospel you could go through and take just the things you wanted and leave the rest. This is what you like; it's the same thing. He was at ease in Zion; he liked it. They say they have received and need no more. See, I'll accept the Word of Wisdom, but this I won't take. Tithing is a bit too steep; I'll interpret that. And so you say, "Well, I've received and I don't need anymore. I've got the gospel, and it's wonderful."

Well, with this faith-promoting talk let's finish the chapter here. Verse 29: "Wo be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough! For behold, thus saith the Lord God [he says I'm going to continue to give it]: I will give unto the children of men line upon line [the scriptures], precept upon precept, here a little and there a little." Of course, he goes on; God doesn't cease at all. It's funny that we have thousands of volumes adding to the gospel's teachings. That's what the councils of the churches do. They reinterpret. That just means they are adding elements that are missing, and they have to be supplied by their wit and wisdom. As the late Cardinal "what's his name" said, "Men can add to the gospel, but God may not." He has spoken his final word, he can't, but we can add to it all we want by reinterpreting, etc. "For unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have." That's so in any art or science, any study you are doing. If you say you have enough, "I've got my terminal degree and that's it," you're not going anywhere then.

Verse 31: "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm, or shall hearken unto the precepts of men [the experts in other words. Notice this government military business; they put their trust in man and maketh flesh their arm]. . . . Wo be unto the Gentiles, saith the Lord God of Hosts! . . . They will deny me; nevertheless, I will be merciful unto them . . . if they will repent and come unto me." If they will repent, it will be all right with them. So that's that happy chapter.

It's a prophetic book, and it's full of all sorts of things. I've been finding many things about the early practices of the Hebrew atonement rites, which were the whole purpose of the temple anciently. That's what it was for, the sacrifice of the atonement. I find more in the Book of Mormon than in the Old Testament. It's just amazing the customs that emerge. You bring them up with the *Talmud* and the *Mishnah*, and you see that the Book

of Mormon knows what it's talking about. Whether I do or not, the Book of Mormon does. That's why I stick to the text. You'll notice that.

1. See Hugh W. Nibley, "Genesis of the Written Word," in *Temple and Cosmos*, CWHN 12 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992), 450–90.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 22
2 Nephi 29–31
Scripture and Canon

We are on 2 Nephi 29. He [the Lord] is talking about when he sets his hand again in these last days the second time to recover his people. “I would remember your seed [too],” he says. There are no “God’s privileged people,” as we read in 1 Nephi 17:35. He loves one as much as the other. He starts bringing his words again in verse 3: “And because my words shall hiss forth” (a very interesting word). “*Has mippenāyw kōl hā-āretz*. Let all the earth be silent in his presence.” There’s *hiss* and *hush*. Of course, it means “go forth in a quiet, unassuming way.” It won’t be like a trumpet on a mountaintop. Notice how the Book of Mormon was introduced. It wasn’t highly publicized. It wasn’t in all the papers; they didn’t announce a great book coming forth, etc. All the advertising was done by the enemy for quite a long time. As soon as Joseph got the plates, it started a scandal. The *Painesville Telegraph* and some other newspapers started talking about it and started publicizing it all over the place long before he had ever produced it. How you would panic if you had promised to produce a book. It [the newspaper] said “gold plates” and told that story, and people were waiting for it to come out: “All right, wise guy, where’s the book?” He had to produce it. He produced it on the line, and it was all there. Then they said, “Oh, well, it’s nothing.” They wouldn’t even read the book. It got publicity all right, but it hissed forth out of the dust. It’s a good word, isn’t it? The word is whispered around; it just gets around that way. The Lord doesn’t trumpet it forth, and the angel doesn’t come to the whole human race. Because of that, when they start finding out about it, “many of the Gentiles shall say: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible. [Notice in verse 6] Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. Have ye obtained a Bible save it were by the Jews?”

You see the name of R. H. Charles a lot. He is the most eminent editor of ancient Christian and Jewish texts. It was in the early part of the century—1911–15, around there—that R. H. Charles [published] his two great volumes that are indispensable, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*. They are vast works, and everybody has them on reserve. He says this about it after reviewing all the church Fathers, especially those of the fourth century. He says this was the position all of them took: “God had, according to the official teachers of the church, spoken His last and final word,” and the policy of the doctors, “so far as lay in their power, made the revival of such prophecy impossible.”¹ So, you see, God has spoken his last and final word, and the revival of such prophecy was absolutely out of the question. That is the official position of the churches from the third century on.

This is [paraphrased] from someone else: The theory of complete, finished, and absolute scriptures was simply a door banged in the face of future prophets by the doctors. In a recent, important study by the Dutch scholar Van Unnik, he shows that until the third century the Christians had no objection whatever to the idea that someone might still add revelations to the writings of the Gospel. There was originally no moral objection or mystic principle barring the production of more scriptures wherever God would see fit to

reveal them. God can reveal them if he wants to. Remember, the curse on the end of John is just referring to that book of Revelation itself. If any *man* shall add to it, he shall be accursed, of course. Men have no right to add to the scriptures, but God has. Men have done all the adding. We have many, many volumes over there in the library which men have added. They have added interpretations, and we are changing things all the time.

Now we are quoting R. H. Charles again: It was only when “the church believed that the time of Revelation and therefore also the time of bringing forth new holy scriptures had come to an end with the Apostolic Age,” that the expectation of more holy writings was discouraged and condemned. After that it was to the interest of scholars to cry out in alarm anytime anybody suggested an addition. This was the great blasphemy of the Book of Mormon because it was more scripture. We have the scripture. Blasphemy! How can you add to the Bible? [they said]. It’s a terrible thing [if] God has spoken his last words. There are three sources of revelation in the Roman Catholic Church: scripture, tradition, and reason. Reason is philosophy and interpretation; you are adding to the scripture when you start that. You have your books of legends. They accepted fourteen books of the Apocrypha that the Protestants didn’t accept. The Protestants go even further: “We believe . . . that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments alone.”

This is from H. Denzinger. The *Enchiridion Symbolorum* is the official Roman Catholic statement on the subject here. It quotes the Council of Trent in 1546, etc. “No other source of [public] revelation exists except canonical books and the apostolic tradition.” The Protestants go even further; now we are quoting the Protestant source, Chandler. So an eminent Protestant divine declares today: “I boldly assert, therefore, that God does not speak today because of the supreme character of His revelation of Himself made once for all in His Christ. . . . We must . . . recognize His voice in his *final written word*.” So he boldly asserts that Christ does not speak today; it is his written word. You can imagine the catch to that. Just as science says that evidence speaks for itself. Well, how do you interpret it? That’s the whole thing.

One of the standard canons of the New Testament is the *Vincentian Canon*. Vincent of Lerinum is the author of it, and he says, “Although the canon of the Scripture is complete . . .” Our word *cane* comes from *canon*. A *cane* is a *rule*, a yardstick by which you measure a thing. It’s a Semitic word. There’s the cane that grows by the brook, the canebrakes, etc. From that you cut one off and make a cane, and use a cane to walk with. That’s the measuring stick. *Canon* is a universal word; it’s actually Semitic. The *canon* is the measurement of the scriptures. See, a yardstick only goes this far and no farther. This will measure the scriptures. You’re not supposed to add anything at either end; it’s absolutely out of the question. If you discover something much earlier, forget it. If subsequent revelations have been given, forget them. They don’t come in. Just within the canon of the scriptures is what we accept and nothing else. Nothing earlier, although we may discover some wonderful things. And nothing later, although there may be some wonderful revelations. We have a set canon, and you can see why it’s absolutely necessary because if we don’t have a canon, something might be missing. Anytime we want to interpret a scripture, we’ll say, “Well, we’re not sure of that. There may have been something else, or there may yet be something else to come.” This made the Doctors of the church very uncertain. They couldn’t come to any conclusions in the councils of the church. In a meeting they might say, “Well, is any verse of the Bible absolutely final? If it

is not final, how can we hold people to it? We may find that it has to be changed.” That’s a main issue of the councils.

So Vincent of Lerinum says, “Although the canon of the scriptures is complete ‘and of itself is sufficient and more than sufficient for all things,’ yet tradition is needed for a proper *understanding* of the Scripture.” Tradition is adding something to them if the scriptures can’t speak for themselves. He said they speak for themselves, but they have to have tradition to explain them. Already we are questioning the vaunted self-sufficiency of the holy page to convey its own message; yet, as I just said, the churchmen dare not change their position lest they lower the bars to revelation. But how can they presume to add their comments and explanations to the Bible, supplying that information without which, they assure us, the holy writ cannot be understood, and at the same time insist that they are adding nothing, but simply letting the book speak for itself? Like the scientists they are not letting the evidence alone at all; they are officiously helping it to say what they think it should say. But how, short of revelation, will we ever know the real word of God?

Now, that’s a question that greatly exercised St. Hilary in the fourth century; he is very important on this subject. “We are quite aware,” he says, “that most people think the mere sound of the words or the letters are enough,” but, of course, that won’t do: *Scripturae enim non sunt in legendo, sed in intelligendo*—The scriptures don’t consist of what you read, but what you understand. If they’re not intelligent, it doesn’t mean a thing just reading the sounds. But how can our weak intellects, our *humana imbecillitas*—helpless humanity, ever be sure of understanding aright what we are reading? Only by revelation, is Hilary’s sensible conclusion. Yet they have all ruled revelation out, you see. Now the fat’s in the fire. How is he going to get out of that? Well, he deftly snatches the fat out of the fire by defining revelation as the reading of the scripture “not as men interpret it, but as it is” [oh, that’s all right then; you can do it], with no private human opinions allowed to color or distort it, and “no human interpretation stepping an inch beyond the bounds of what is divinely constituted.”

First he says that merely reading it won’t tell us what it says; you’ve got to understand it. But how do you understand it by sticking exactly to what it says when you read it? This is exactly the same thing with the Baconian canon in science. Bacon said, “All you have to do is observe and nature will tell you the story.” Have no opinions of your own; keep an open mind. Observe and you will find out absolutely what is going on. But, as Darwin says, “How odd it is that anyone should ever think he can get anywhere in science without being for or against something.” You have to take an adversarial position. You come up with a hypothesis, and you have to have good representatives on both sides. Otherwise, you can’t test it. You’ll never know whether your hypothesis will hold up or not unless it is challenged and challenged vigorously. You have to hear both sides. The adversarial thing works that way. But he said, our fatal weakness lies in our inability to interpret the word of God. So Hilary would just do away with all interpretations and “read the word of God as it is.” Well, how would he interpret it? He was good enough to tell us that too: our “revelation” should be founded on right reason, good historical knowledge, and a sense of correct doctrine. Now, anybody can cultivate that, you see. That has nothing to do with revelation. He said this is what revelation consists of: right reason, good historical knowledge, and a sense of correct doctrine. Well, that’s all right, but they’ve never been able to solve that problem of how to enjoy inspired guidance while renouncing all claim to revelation (I have some good articles on that). “The Word of God,” writes E. C. Blackman, “is in the words of the Bible, but it is not to be identified with them . . . but

interpreted out of them. . . . The Bible is not itself a revelation but is the record of revelation.”

Interpreted, but how? Well might the Catholics challenge the Protestants with this argument. This is a Catholic cardinal: “The Bible is a difficult book; it is full of dark places and apparent inconsistencies. How do you Protestants think you can manage without the authoritative guidance of the Church [they are going to use authority as the answer] when you come to interpret it and to build doctrine upon it?”

To which the proper answer is, “How do you Catholics think you have solved the difficult problem of interpretation simply by agreeing (after centuries of hot debate) on *who* is to do the interpreting, without the vaguest idea of how he is to do it, apart from the normal fallible processes of human intelligence?” For Catholic theologians often repeat St. Augustine’s lament that “men of the most outstanding piety and wisdom very often disagree in their interpretation of the Scriptures.”

So how can you have a definite thing to follow, unless you have revelation? It goes on and on here: Thomas Aquinas insisted that the Bible is “the only sure and binding authority. But one uses the authority of canonical scripture properly and in arguing from necessity. . . . For our faith rests upon the revelation given to the apostles and prophets who wrote the canonical books, but *not* upon revelation, if such there were, given to other teachers.” That’s Thomas Aquinas, and you could say he is the last word here. Notice, it rests upon revelation given to the apostles and prophets, but nobody else. Nobody else receives revelation except the ancient apostles and prophets. It goes on and on here, but you see what the idea is. They do say, “A Bible! a Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible.” They get quite worked up about it.

Of course, this leads directly to the Jews. He says, you have your Bible from the Jews, both the Old and the New Testament. (Remember what Viola says when she takes her hat off in *Twelfth Night*, “Shall I remove the mask? Is it well done? Ghastly.” It’s a big hat though.) We have the Bible from the Jews. He says in verse 4: You have it “from the Jews, mine ancient covenant people. And what thank they the Jews for the Bible which they receive from them? . . . Do they remember the travails, and the labors, and the pains of the Jews [He puts in a marvelous plug for the Jews because he is a Jew. He says, ‘I’m a Jew myself.’ But he is of Manasseh which is a very different thing; he’s not of the tribe of Judah], and their diligence unto me, in bringing forth salvation unto the Gentiles?”

Notice this: At all times the Jews have a saying, which is a very true saying, I think. You will find the best people and the worst people in the world among the Jews and the Latter-day Saints. It’s true, of course. You will find the greatest geniuses, the most self-sacrificing, the most noble spirits among them—and also the most vicious, the most depraved, the ones who produce the greatest mischief in the world. That would be a long story if we went into it. You find them both, so you can’t make a sweeping statement and say that all Jews are good or bad, or all Mormons or Gentiles or anybody else are good or bad. That’s a thing you absolutely can’t do. The Jews have always had this genius. When they go into something, they really go into it. I once spent eight months in a camp consisting entirely of Berlin and Viennese Jews, and they hated each others’ guts. Oh, it was awful—the rivalry, the jealousy, the ferocity! And oh boy, the way they would work at it! Every one was a genius, and it was really something. It was at Camp Ritchie where Camp David is today, a very secret camp all under the ground with all these passages, etc. It was a military compound, a very secret thing with hundreds of Viennese and Berlin

Jews. They were there, of course, because they were not only anti-Nazi but they spoke German. And they [the Jews] are the most wonderful people you ever met in your life. You can have the most fun with them; there's never a dull moment. We used to give parties where we would have the whole symphony orchestra. My mother used to throw these parties; she was really out for culture. We would have all these Jewish musicians there, and it was more fun than a picnic. Of course, my dad is half Jewish. All the clowning that goes on. It's the same thing in Hollywood, as you know. You have these wonderful characters, these great ones, and then you have these lousy, slimy, awful Jews that make Hollywood what it is. Marvelous people, the Jews! You have to hand it to them because they go all the way. Whatever they do, they do all the way.

It's like what Eduard Meyer says of Omar, the uncle of Muhammad. He compares him with Brigham Young. He says, "When he hit he hit, and when he laughed he laughed, and what he did he did with vigor and power." He said that Brigham Young was the one man in the New World [that could be compared to him]. This was Edward Meyer writing about the origins of Islam and Mormonism. He gives a wonderful comparison of them. He said Brigham Young was a man who didn't do things by halves. He didn't dawdle around. It disgusted him when people did do things by half. Any sloppy work bothered him. His daughter, Emma Lucy, was at dinner one night at Apostle Bowen's house, and she told a story about Brigham Young [that happened] when she was nine years old. There was a stable out behind the Lion House. One day Brigham went out to inspect things, and one of the saddles had fallen off the peg and had been trampled in the manure and the dirt on the floor of the stable. He was furious. He called all the help together and gave them such a dressing down as you have never heard. Then he stomped into the house, went into his office, and banged the door. Little Emma Lucy went and listened at the door at what was going on inside. She heard him yelling, "Down on your knees, Brigham. Get down on your knees." He had to apologize because he had lost his temper with the help in the stable. He went all the way, you see. He lost his temper with the help, and he shouldn't have done that. So he rebuked himself. He went into his room to pray, "Get down on your knees, Brigham." It's a wonderful story. That's the kind of man he was.

It's the same thing with the Jews; they go all the way. That's why it's talking about them here. He describes their weaknesses beautifully here. Remember, when they are too smart for their britches and always looking beyond the mark. They want to make an intellectual problem of everything. No, that's Jacob who tells about that. We're soon going to get to it because he was Nephi's brother. Verse 4: "... the travails, and the labors, and the pains of the Jews, and their diligence unto me, in bringing forth salvation unto the Gentiles?" You might say, "Well, they didn't do it willingly; that wasn't their objective." Yes, it was. There were great and righteous men among them. There have always been holy men among the Jews, as there always have been in the world. All churches have had very good, holy, righteous people, but not very many. But the Jews have made special effort because they had to. Remember, George Albert Smith, Sr., used to say, "We came out here of our own free will because they made us." It's the same thing with the Jews. They did all these wonderful things because they were forced to do them.

Verse 5: "O ye Gentiles, have ye remembered the Jews, mine ancient covenant people? Nay; but ye have cursed them, and have hated them, and have not sought to recover them. But behold, I will return all these things upon your own heads; for I the Lord have not forgotten my people. Thou fool, that shall say: A Bible, we have got a Bible, and we need no more Bible. Have ye obtained a Bible save it were by the Jews?" It's interesting that not only the New Testament was all written by Jews, but the Old Testament too was

what gave them the Bible. Remember Jerome? The Latin Bible is Jerome's Bible. Reuchlin with the Reformation was the first one to really get into the Hebrew Bible. It was the Hebrew and Jerome's and Luther's Bible [that influenced the King James]. Jerome lived fifteen years in Bethlehem. He worked among the Jews all that time. He gave us the Latin Vulgate, the standard Roman Catholic Bible. He lived right among the Jews when he wrote it, all those many years in Bethlehem. Reuchlin and Luther were busily studying Hebrew. It's from them we get our King James Bible more than anyone else. The King James Bible translators relied quite heavily on Luther's Bible. They depended a lot on Luther. In order to do this, of course, Reuchlin and the others became ardent Hebraists. They worked with the Jews, etc.

Verse 7: "Know ye not that there are more nations than one? [That's an important thing.] Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men [now it's going to get universal; there's no reason for being snooty about it and because you're Jews start pushing people off the sidewalk], and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea." You've never seen such arrogance in the world. The way they are behaving toward the Palestinians now isn't very nice. After all, there are complaints. The Lord told them, "Remember that you were a stranger in Egypt." You were roughed up and you didn't like it, so remember other people the same way. This is another important thing in verse 8: "Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word?" Some of these apocryphal writings, these writings that were discovered later, belong to the Bible. There are works in the Bible that shouldn't be there, and some writings that are not in there should be there. That's a big problem today. It was at the Council of Dordrecht in 1670 in which the Protestants all got together and ruled that they would not have anything to do with these apocryphal writings. There was just the Bible, just that particular text, and nothing else. Well, who determined the canon of the Bible and set the limits to it? This was all done by committees that claimed no revelation whatever, no inspiration whatever. There are many books and many writings they left out. Who gave them authority to leave them out? Who gave them authority to say what should be left in and what shouldn't? They didn't claim it. As wise men they would argue about it on literary and philosophical grounds, etc. But the Synod of Dordrecht in the Netherlands decided that they would reject entirely what they called "the miserable Apocrypha." Of course, the miserable Apocrypha has some very important writings in it. The *Book of Enoch* is there. These things are very highly respected now. The two most respected of all are the book of Abraham and the *Book of Enoch*. Of course, these are the very two that Joseph Smith gave us. He gave us the book of Abraham, and in chapters 6–8 of the book of Moses he gave us the *Book of Enoch*. They are of great importance now. With the Dead Sea Scrolls you have the *Genesis Apocryphon*, Abraham's activity in Egypt, etc. These things line up very well, not only with Jewish tradition but with the Bible itself. And they are older versions.

Verse 8: "Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? [He does.] Wherefore, I speak the same words unto one nation like unto another [now, this is interesting—the gospel will be given as far as they will take it; we are going to see how it goes]. And when the two nations shall run together the testimony of the two nations shall run together also." Of course, this is the test, as the Indians say. This is the same one that the Arabs use, too. I can remember telling John Wilson, the Egyptologist, about this. He was quite surprised because the Egyptians have the same idea of running side by side. It means the same thing, and there's a hieroglyph for it. I'll think of it in a second. When two run side by side, they go this way, so they say, "Mormons and Hopis like this."

Verse 9: “And because that I have spoken one word ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another [the expanding gospel]; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be until the end of man, neither from that time henceforth and forever.” Can’t God go on doing his own work and adding if he wants to, saying what he wants? The Gospel of John ends that way. Remember, he says, “I think if all the deeds of Christ were written the whole world wouldn’t contain the books.” Well, he must have done an awful lot of things, but all the words of Jesus Christ can be read in half an hour now, as we have them in the New Testament. I’m sure he spoke marvelous things more than that. Of course, now when you find a very early document, it will almost always have the title “The Words of Jesus Christ Spoken to the Apostles in Secret after the Resurrection.” These are the really important teachings of the forty-day ministry.

Now we have a really interesting picture of what is going forth here. Verse 11: “For I command all men, both in the east, and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that they shall write the words which I speak unto them.” In other words God has not neglected the world just because we have these little people, the Jews. They didn’t accept it; they were a stiff-necked people, always looking beyond the mark, etc. As I said, there are always righteous people here and there. It’s interesting. We are going to have real trouble now, aren’t we, if this really happens? “For out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works, according to that which is written.” There is yet a great deal more to discover, but you have a sort of cat’s cradle, as Teilhard de Chardin, the great Jesuit paleontologist, says. One connects with the other. This one connects with that one, and before you know you just have a mass of interconnections between these various documents if they are all saying the same thing. Well, we have a library here. It wouldn’t take you so long as you might think to read through the nearly four million books in our library. They are there but nobody reads them, as you know. A few of them we read, but you don’t need to read [all of] them. A few books comprise everything all the others have to say. In science it’s very easy. If you are reading the latest book on planetary astronomy, for example, you don’t have to go back and read books written in the 1920s and 1930s on the subject. It supersedes all of them; it includes all of them right there. I was just reading a very interesting work by Joseph Needham last night on this subject. That takes care of that.

Literary works are different. They don’t stand on each other’s shoulders. You have to read through them all, but they are all talking about the same thing. One of the great works covers an awful lot of ground, as you know. But now we have a nice conclusion to that. If all these books do come out and if we are finding out all these things—all these records that people left and their teachings, etc.—how can we possibly handle it? Well, I’m absolutely amazed at what the computer can do; there [seems to be] nothing it can’t do. Just as the Lord brought forth things like radio and telegraph for spreading the word—rapid transit and the like, and missionaries buzzing all over in a matter of hours in jet planes. All these things are to the advantage of spreading the gospel. I’m sure there’s no reason why we can’t have computer techniques that would handle all these masses of material and show how they do all share common doctrine—how they run together in one and are united in one without confusion. He says every man will be “judged according to that which is written.”

Verse 12: “For behold, I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth and they shall write it.” Well, that’s every nation, not just

civilized nations. We have records taken by visitors to all the tribes of the Indians. There's a lot that gets lost there, but they all write their record. They all leave their record in various forms, whether it's in account books, or in law books, or in journals, or whatever it is. You know President Kimball was so great on this idea of journals, etc. It turns out that they really are important; it's a funny thing. I mean even though your journal doesn't say anything and it's terribly boring, there's a purpose for keeping it, if only to keep you on your toes. We have the Greek contribution here, the *Septuagint*. The oldest and best version of the Old Testament that we have is by the Greeks; they handed it down to us. And there are the Hermetic writings, although we never search them anymore. Well, anyway they have each other's words. Verse 13: "The Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews; and the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel; and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews [this mesh is interwoven here]. And it shall come to pass that my people, which are of the house of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions."

You notice this is working toward one particular objective, this getting together. I can remember when there were large parts of Africa that were undiscovered; it was "darkest Africa." It wasn't until 1917 that Nicholas Rarisch made the first trips into Central Asia. That was followed in the 1920s by Steindorff. Nicholas Rarisch came and drew pictures, etc. of trails to innermost Asia. Nobody had been there before. Central Asia was a blank on the map, and Central Africa was a blank on the map. And Perry didn't get to the North Pole after all. Scott reached the South Pole, and then for a long time nobody did. And the islands of the sea were practically unexplored. I mean that was the end of the world. You had to take long trips to get to them, and very few people went to them. They were exotic. Well, there is nothing exotic anymore. It's all being brought together into one—into one tight community as a matter of fact. It's altogether too snug for comfort when we get all the overpopulation. He [Nephi] is talking about this gathering process. First they connect with each other. Then they "shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions [notice it's plural]; and my word also shall be gathered in one."

You notice all this gathering in one. That's the meaning which we noted before of *atonement*, *at-one-ment*. There are various levels at which things can be joined and brought together at one. Of course, the *Atonement* is in the world to come when we become one with the Father and the Son, as we read in those chapters of John where it is so marvelously set forth. This is a cultural phenomenon. Heaven itself is a culture. It's an ambience, an environment. All "the house of Israel shall be gathered home to the lands of their possessions [plural]; and my word also shall be gathered in one." There's all this gathering in one. They are mixed blood already; it doesn't mean one race or anything like that. But a culture is a unit, after all. What is the perfect mirror of a culture? It's a language. This is proven in the case of language because you have words for things you see and use and talk about. You don't have words for things you don't [have experience with], so the language will reflect a particular way of life in all its details, food and everything else. But customs, habits, ways of thought are expressed in language. We have these distinctive cultures, and you gather a culture together in one. I'm sure that Zion is a culture. Remember the way the city of Zion is described—totally different, totally alien to the type of world we have today. But it's described very vividly in the book of Moses. They were of one heart and one mind, and they had to be taken away. It tells us in Genesis that Zion was taken away and it's going to come down again. But it's another ambience, another world entirely. We are supposed to have it here; that's what we are supposed to build up here, you know—"for the building up of Zion."

I think Plato is right; there is such a thing as an ideal culture. He said he had it in his mind. You know what it is, and when it is right you recognize it. When something is wrong you recognize it. He used the *kalos k'agathos*, "the good, true, and beautiful." You recognize what should be, but we don't have it. How do you know that? And we all agree on it too. That's *anamnesis*; remember it in the back of our minds from another life. We know what is right. When we see a properly constructed object, it pleases us immediately. We don't have to analyze it because we have a dim memory of it. It's an act of recognition. When you see anything good, true, or beautiful, you embrace it eagerly because that's what you have been looking for. It's an act of recognition when you see it. Here we are suffering from nostalgia; we are far from home here. There's a poem by Zinzendorf that I like to quote on that, "When I think of it, there comes such a yearning from all the mountaintops that I just have to break down and cry." I'm away from home, and we feel that. "So what is it we are missing?" Plato asked. There must be something behind it. I suppose you all know Wordsworth's ode "Intimations of Immortality." It's not "The World Is Too Much with Us." That's another Wordsworth poem, but that's a good one anyway. [Brother Nibley tried to quote it from memory.]

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

To remember these things, you have to rewrite them practically and think, "What would I say if I were saying that?" This describes it. We have to suppress these memories [of a previous life] because they are the strongest, most vivid experiences we have had. We're not satisfied with the situation here, but we have to put up with it. So we say, "Let's forget about it; let's settle down to the light of common day which is common-sense, everyday life." But this is not the real world; this is a false world. This is as phony as it can be, everything about it. But we're not willing to accept the other; yet we would be if we only knew, if we put it together. We do feel as aliens here: "I'm a stranger, I'm a pilgrim," etc. There's a great deal of that in literature. As I said, Plato was the one that really developed it.

We are going to have this Zion where they will be gathered together unto the lands of their possessions. When Zion and all this comes it's going to be a different culture. There is such a thing as a culture, which means all our ways of life—our food, our tastes, our

thoughts, our beliefs, our humor, and everything else—fit together in one particular whole which is expressed in language. Some cultures are greater than others. Notice what the Greeks were able to do because of Plato's idealism. They were able to get the first prize in everything. There's not a field of human endeavor in which they didn't come first and were the best. It's just astounding because they had that conviction that this wasn't the real world. This obsession of Plato is *anamnesis*, which means "remembering again, thinking back again." They were always looking for the *kalos k'agathos*, "the good, the true, the beautiful." That is it.

He [Nephi] has been talking about the wonderful things [promised] to the Jews, Israel etc. But don't let Israel get the big head, he tells us in the first verse of the next chapter. "For I, Nephi, would not suffer that ye should suppose that ye are more righteous than the Gentiles shall be. For behold, except ye shall keep the commandments of God ye shall all likewise perish [what is more]; and because of the words which have been spoken ye need not suppose that the Gentiles are utterly destroyed. For behold, I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord." All they have to do is repent, and that's it. Ezekiel makes that perfectly clear. Chapter 18 of Ezekiel is a wonderful treatment on this. You're righteous if you repent. No matter how bad you have been, you are righteous. You are the chosen people. And if you don't repent, now matter how good you may have been until now, then you are the lost. So if the Gentiles repent, they are the covenant people. "And as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be cast off [the opposite of *atonement* is to be cast off]; for the Lord covenanteth with none save it be with them that repent [that is the basic principle of covenant] and believe in his Son, who is the Holy One of Israel."

Now here is the work of the Gentiles. Verse 3: "For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed [he is talking about the Bible here]. . . . And the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. . . . And then shall they rejoice [he is talking about his people]; . . . and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes [Is he talking about real scales? No, of course he isn't. I say this because of the rest of the sentence]; and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white [*white* has been changed to *pure* in recent editions] and a delightful people." Does that mean literally [white] any more than the scales fall? *White* means delightful if you consider the various meanings of *white*. Next he says that the Jews "shall also become a delightful people." Were the Jews black? This is using *white* and *delightful* in the broadest sense, as against the *dark* and *uncivilized*.

Verse 8: "And . . . the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth." His people everywhere. He will work among them all to bring his people back. Who are they? Those who will repent. Those are his people. "And with righteousness shall the Lord God judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth." What does it mean by that? Well, the poor are the ones that don't get the breaks; all the judgments pass against them. He shall judge the poor correctly and righteously with equity and fairness. He will be the advocate of the meek "and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth [He pleads in their behalf and reproves their oppressors]. And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." This fierce rebuke is a deadly sentence. It's very interesting that the word for *sentence*, a sentence of

condemnation in a court, in Hebrew and in English is the very same thing as a *sentence of utterance or speech*.

There's a famous book called *What Is a Sentence?* In fact Alan Gardiner, the great Egyptologist, in his big Egyptological Grammar wrote so much on the subject "What is a sentence?" A sentence is a complete thing. A sentence in the court is one thing. That's a *mishpāt*, a judgment. Gardiner gives this example: I say the word *rain*, and that's a sentence. Does it have a subject and a verb? It does, of course. It depends entirely on how it is said. If I look out the window and say, "Rain," it means that "it's raining again—how disgusting." Or I might say, "Rain," meaning "don't tell me it's raining." You can complete the sentence depending on how you hear it. There are some interesting things in the Book of Mormon about the difference between the spoken and the written word—these subtleties. You might say, "Rain," and be incredulous; "it doesn't rain here in Egypt." You can go on and get all sorts of sentences. Just by saying the word *rain*, you have your whole sentence; you don't have to say anything more.

Verse 9: "And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." The rod of his mouth will pronounce the sentence. The mouth and the lips are the speech; that's the sentence. And he will cause a great division among the people so he can destroy the wicked by fire. Then this is the famous passage of paradise. This from verse 12 on is certainly another culture, isn't it? We see paintings of it which seem ideal. This is one of the favorite themes, of course, of early Puritanism and Protestantism. There are some quaint, primitive paintings showing the lion and the lamb lying down together. Some of the early American primitives depict this situation. "And then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb; and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them [this is another ecology entirely; now we hunt all these creatures]. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den [he is just quoting the prophet here]. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain [not hunting season]; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

It's interesting that all the presidents of the Church, some of them very fervidly, have condemned hunting. They [some people] pay absolutely no attention when it comes to things like that. President Joseph F. Smith and both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young never hunted. Here they were living in the wild west with all this game around, and they never hunted. Well, that's not human, but it wasn't right for a man of the priesthood to go out and slay the creatures unless it was for necessity. Then nature gladly contributes. There have been plenty of young couples I've known here at BYU that couldn't get through the winter without their deer. That's all right. Section 49 of the Doctrine and Covenants makes that perfectly clear: "The beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and that which cometh of the earth, is ordained for the use of man for food and for raiment, and that he might have in abundance. . . . And wo be unto man that sheddeth blood or that wasteth flesh and hath no need" (D&C 49:19, 21). If you need it, fine—that's what the Lord has put it there for.

Verse 15: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. . . . All things shall be made known unto the children of men." What things? Well, all things, including these. He

goes on: "There is nothing secret save it shall be revealed [it's revealing the secrets he's talking about here]; there is no work of darkness save it shall be made manifest in the light; and there is nothing which is sealed upon the earth save it shall be loosed." In other words we are talking in this verse about the [fact that] through centuries and centuries people have been bound up by custom and usage—the "dead hand" laws and things like that which keep people locked into a system very close and tight. Whether it's feudal or the legal system, the whole thing will be loosed. As he says, it will be let go. Everything that is sealed upon earth shall be loosed; all earthly seals shall be broken. All contracts don't apply anymore after death, and they don't apply after the Millennium anymore either because they are worldly. They are works of expedience, mostly of greed. These works of darkness and these secret things of the establishment shall be exploded and blown sky high. Why does it exist? It exists to accommodate men's vices actually, so that won't happen [anymore]. "Wherefore, all things which have been revealed unto the children of men shall at that day be revealed; and Satan [notice that's who he's talking about] shall have power over the hearts of the children of men no more, for a long time." So this is the end of Nephi's prophesy. Nephi has been prophesying all along here. Now he is going to talk concerning the doctrine of Christ, and this becomes very important.

Quoting from 2 Nephi 31:3: "For my soul delighteth in plainness." He doesn't want to get us confused. We are told that he speaks to all men everywhere. Well, what about the islands of the sea? Does he speak to them the same way he speaks to us? "For he speaketh unto men according to their language, unto their understanding. He gives them as much as they can take and in their own idiom. Nephi saw the mission of John the Baptist here. Then the question immediately arises, Why the need for baptizing? Verse 5: "If the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water, to fulfil all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water! And now, I would ask of you, my beloved brethren, wherein the Lamb of God did fulfil all righteousness in being baptized by water? Know ye not that he was holy?" Notice that this is a very interesting thing. In every lexicon, the word *qādôsh* meaning *holy* in Hebrew is translated in this sense. What does *qādôsh* mean? It means "set apart," "not of this race." It means "essentially alien or different." Of course, *holy* means that. But, of course, it's the Greek *hagios*, the same as our word *hedge*. *Holy* is to be on the other side of a fence or hedge. *Qadosh* means "cut off or separated"—the road is cut. And a *sanctum* is a fence around a holy place. *Sanctum* means "to set apart" and "divide by a fence." All our words for *holy* have that meaning. It always means "set apart and not belonging to the ordinary world." That's what it is; it belongs to another world. If it's *sanctum*, if it's *qādôsh*, if it's *holy*, if it's *hagios*, it means that it is "set apart." That's what we have here, see.

The story of John the Baptist is a classic example here. Robert Eisler has written massively on that particular subject. Josephus, who writes about John the Baptist, never found out his name. He didn't know his name because when he came and taught the people, they asked him, "Who are you?" They thought he was Enoch come again. He told them, "I am Enos, I am the man." That was the only answer he would give them, so they said, "A wild man has come among us." Remember, John the Baptist let his hair grow long, walked about in a camel skin robe, and lived on wild locust (grasshoppers) and honey. He was a wild man, and he scared people. Remember in the book of Moses what people say about Enoch? "There is a strange thing in the land; a wild man has come among us." When John the Baptist came among the people, they said, "It is Enoch come again." We learn from Josephus that this spread throughout the whole area because he was a wild man, a

strange man—not belonging to their nature at all. He was a different sort of person. As I said, he was a rather frightening person. “A wild man has come among us.” You notice that means he was *holy*. Here he is talking about Christ being holy. Verse 7: “Know ye not that he was holy? But notwithstanding he being holy, he sheweth unto the children of men that, according to the flesh he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments [he did the things he did as a demonstration, especially in the baptism here]. . . . It sheweth unto the children of men the straitness of the path, and the narrowness of the gate, by which they should enter, he having set the example before them.” He said, “Follow me.” He is the leader, the director, the *paralemtor* that we read lots about. These things come out now in these early documents, especially the Coptic documents that weren’t there before. The *paralemtor* is the one who accompanies you through the temple and makes sure that you perform all the ordinances correctly, that you know what you are doing, that you don’t blunder and use the wrong words, etc. And Jesus is the *paralemtor* for all of us (cf. John 14:3).

Verse 10: “And he said unto the children of men: Follow thou me. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father? [so he leads us to the Father]. And the Father said: Repent ye, repent ye, and be baptized in the name of my Beloved Son. And also, the voice of the Son came unto me, saying: He that is baptized in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto me; wherefore, follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me do.” He is the great example who says, “Follow me and do what I do.” The Son does only what he has seen the Father do, so he says, You do whatever you see me do; I do whatever I see the Father do [paraphrased].

There’s your atonement again. When the time comes, we will all be together and you can live in his presence. That’s what we are coming back for. Verse 13: “If ye shall follow the Son . . . witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ by baptism [that’s what you do to show that you are following the Son; that’s the example, a simple enough and easy example he set, the least we can do]—yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word, behold, . . . yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; and then can ye speak with the tongue of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel.” Then you will be transformed if you want to be. You’ll cross that bridge when you get to it, but first you must do this and be baptized this way, witnessing to the Father when you go down into the water—this tangible connection we have here. “After ye have repented of your sins, and witnessed unto the Father that ye are willing to keep my commandments, by the baptism of water, and have received the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost,” you can speak with a new tongue. You are an alien yourself now. I said that the language was a model of the culture, a perfect mirror. So after you have gone through all this, then you will find yourself in this alien culture. Then you “can speak with a new tongue, yea, even with the tongue of angels, and after this [you can’t deny me; you’ve seen it now] should deny me, it would have been better for you that ye had not known me [at all].” So this takes us to a different culture, and then we must endure to the end.

Let’s go on here to the end of this chapter. Verse 18: “And then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life [there’s always this image of the path; this is the way we are to follow]; yea, ye have entered in by the gate. . . . After ye have gotten into this strait and narrow path, I would ask if all is done? . . . Nay.” You’ve just begun to do things. You have to be born again, and then “ye must press forward with a steadfastness

in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.” Of course, that is the goal; that’s what we are after. That is the [answer] to the terrible question, Is this all there is? If you go through these things, you will find out. But if you don’t, don’t come complaining to me that there’s nothing but darkness ahead. Notice the final statement in this chapter where he says, “And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end.” That’s *at-one-ment*; that’s *atonement*. When you are at one, then you are one. This is the thing that John brings out so beautifully.

Now we come to a very interesting question in the next chapter. I see we have been going slowly here, and the time is up. But we should be able to get through Jacob this semester. And Enos is wonderful; it’s only three pages. I think we can get through the short books to Mosiah.

1. Hugh W. Nibley, *The World and the Prophets, CWHN 3* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1987), 278–81. Brother Nibley quotes and paraphrases several times from this book.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 23
2 Nephi 32–33; Jacob 1–2
Rejecting the Word of God

Do you all know about FARMS, the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies? It's a clearinghouse that has been going for some years now. If you have any question you want to ask about the gospel, you just call FARMS and they will give you all the literature you want on the subject. That's what they are for. Somebody just called me last night and asked a question. He gave me a lot of trouble, so I just said, "See FARMS about it." That's what you do. It was about the problem of Jehovah—is Jehovah God? and that sort of thing. So all I did was just go to FARMS. They have more stuff on file than you can shake a stick at. We'll pass around this thing that tells you what FARMS is. It will save you a lot of questions. For example, if I ask you an essay question, all you have to do is go ask FARMS, and they will supply you with all the information you need on it. They really will; they've got everything. Stephen Ricks is the new head of it, and he is "one smart cookie." It's down on the corner of Eighth North and University on the top floor of the old dorms. They have all this stuff on file, hundreds and hundreds of essays, books, and anything you want to deal with these subjects. They have archaeological and statistical information and everything else. You will find it quite useful to go to FARMS for information.

It's about time to begin now. We are on 2 Nephi 32, and are things going downhill fast. Here's the first generation that has already gone bad, and Nephi is just terribly depressed. He ends on a down note, and then his brother Jacob takes it up. From then on he makes a real plunge. Year before last, I asked for the final examination: "If you were to be funded for the rest of your life and your life was to be extended for a thousand years with everything you needed, what would you do? What would your plan of operation be? How would you spend a thousand years?" You talk about eternity but don't know what to do for the next thousand years. They were just nonplussed and didn't know what they would do, so why do we need eternal life? We don't know what it is. This chapter deals with that question. It's a very good answer. Actually, the question is an academic one, as this will show here in chapter 32: "And now, behold, my beloved brethren, I suppose that ye ponder somewhat in your hearts concerning that which ye should do after ye have entered in by the way." Notice we don't ponder anymore; pondering is against the rules. After you've got on the path of salvation, what do you do next? What are you going to do for a thousand years? One person said, "Well, I'd drive my Porsche." Another one said, "Well, I'd live it up for a thousand years." They couldn't think of anything to do; it was very interesting. That is a very provocative question because you are going to be stuck with eternity whether you want it or not. We cannot die, the Book of Mormon tells us, and it's true. "Do ye not remember that I said unto you that after ye had received the Holy Ghost ye [for one thing] could speak with the tongue of angels?"

Well, that means you are out of your present league. When you start speaking with the tongue of angels, it's something else. It's like going to a new math. When you are in grade school, you think as you get more advanced in math you will just be adding bigger and bigger figures, subtracting and multiplying bigger and bigger figures. That's all math

does. But then you suddenly discover that there is a totally different kind of math you'd never heard of before, where you don't have big figures at all. You just have letters some of the time, and sometimes you have figures so small you can't even think of them. So it goes. Then you go to another type. It's the same thing here. When you start talking with the tongue of angels, you will be in another league. We'll talk about that when we get to it, he says. Meanwhile we've got to fulfill our capacities here. So this is the answer, he says. "Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do." You can't anticipate. As Paul says, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him [1 Corinthians 2:9]." You can't even imagine it or guess what it is like for those who love God and are going to go on.

He says here that the words of Christ will tell you all things that you have to do. You can't anticipate until you get there, and we haven't got there at all. Then it tells us in verse 5: "I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost [if you go about it the right way], it will show unto you all things what ye should do." Then there won't be anything to worry about. But there's always more to come. But what is the trouble? Why is a question like that a poser? We should ask this question, incidentally. He says in verse 4: "Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock." You don't ask and you don't knock. "Ask and you will receive; knock and it will be opened unto you," but you have to ask first. You have to make the first move, as Abraham did. It tells us in the book of Abraham, "Thy servant hath sought thee diligently; now he hath found thee." You have to get off dead center because that is your responsibility. That's why you are here [on earth] now.

Then enter by the right way. You have been given the commandments; you know what to do if you follow them, he says. If you receive the Holy Ghost, "it will show unto you all things what ye should do." But there is always more to come. Notice he tells us in verse 6 that there will be no more doctrine given until after the Lord comes. So there's enough for you to live by now. They were living by the law of Moses. But when we speak by the tongue of angels, we will no longer be limited by the ambience in which we find ourselves. As I said, we will go on to a higher math then. But, of course, we should ask questions, and that's one thing we don't do. People say, "Don't ask questions; don't rock the boat." There are questions we should ask. Verse 6: "And when he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh, the things which he shall say unto you shall ye observe to do." You will cross that bridge when you get to it.

Now, what's wrong? Notice verse 7 here: "And now I, Nephi, cannot say more; the Spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn [he says, 'People can't take any more than this; I'd not only be wasting my time, but I would be putting them in jeopardy'] because of the unbelief, and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiffneckedness of men [this is wisdom literature; Nephi is distressed]; for they will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can be." This is all very true, you know. The most difficult scientific problems are really elementary. It's their simplicity that stops people cold. It's always something extremely simple and naive that gets the Nobel Prize—it's a surprising thing. Once it's given to people they say, "Well, we knew that all along." No they didn't. You know the story of Columbus and the egg, don't you? Well, when Columbus got back they were giving a dinner in his honor. They said, "Well, anybody could have done that. All you had to do was just go sailing. It was quite possible, no problem at all. So he said, "Can any of

you make an egg stand on end?" They passed it around and tried it, but nobody could do it. Columbus took the egg and gave it a slight tap; then it stood on its end. They said, "Oh yes, anybody can do that."

He said, "Yes, anybody can do that after you have been shown what to do." It's the same way with discovering America; anybody can do it once it has been done.

This is the same thing. They won't search knowledge, not even "when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can [possibly] be. And it grieveth me that I must speak concerning this thing."

And we blame God for this. Maybe I should ask some questions here. Let's do this; here's a question. How would you answer this question? In my day, which was many years ago, it was very popular for everybody to be atheists. It was considered very smart, like H. L. Mencken, etc. The foundation of atheism is this argument: It's only reasonable to judge the character of God by the type of world he created. Well, that's fair enough. So we have this nature red in tooth and claw. What kind of a God would do that?

Oh Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd—Man's Forgiveness give—and take!
O Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin
Beset the Road I was to wander in.
Wilt thou not with Predestined Evil round
Enmesh, and then impute my Fall to sin!

Fitzgerald, *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*

God put all these stumbling blocks and temptations in my way, and when I trip up he says, "Ha, you sinned." He set the trap, and then he said I sinned. These arguments were considered unanswerable, and they are without the gospel, of course. One of Tom Ingersoll's favorite arguments (he was a famous atheist) was, "Why does God permit it to rain on the ocean? Just waste all that good water. Would God do that? A wise God?" In ancient times Horace wrote a famous ode on this particular subject, called "The Mensamoria." It is poem in which you find all the fault you possibly can with this world and say, "Who is responsible for this mess?" You can take it in a cynical, smart aleck way, like Woody Allen. They say, "Well, God is just an underachiever, that's all. He's not bad." So we get "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." Hamlet talks about it, and everybody talks about it.

When I was on a mission in Germany, it was less than ten years after World War I. I started out in a dismal manufacturing town where a year before they'd had the worst explosion in history that wiped out the town. It was a terrible thing. That's where they made all the powder during World War I. They were secretly making it already, less than ten years after World War I, against all the laws. They had a terrible explosion and wiped everything out. Every door we went to everyone had just one answer, "There is no God! He would never allow these things to happen." I roomed with an old woman called Mrs. Bauer, and she said, "No, there can be no God." She had a boy seventeen years old. He went to war and was killed. "Would God permit that to happen? *Nur ein Bursch!* How could that happen?" she said. Does anybody have an answer to that? All Europe was

disillusioned, you see, and they still are disillusioned. In the Second World War, where I was more active, there were hundreds and hundreds of prisoners of war coming in. We picked them up with all their stuff on them. They would come in and gladly surrender, right in the field there. That's where you are supposed to catch them, and they will tell you anything. In the First World War they all carried Bibles with them. The Kaiser handed out Bibles to everybody and a tract called "Talks with Jesus," etc. He was a very religious man. Everybody on both sides was quite religious. But in the Second World War, hardly a Bible. There were all sorts of lucky charms (the swastika was a charm) and rabbits' feet. They had those by the hundreds. Once in a while you might find a Bible from some peasant kid, but that was it. Nobody took Bibles anymore. They took lucky charms and things like that. Well, what about this? Why would God ever allow these things to happen?

Well, we are being told here, and the Bible tells us what kind of a world it is. Do we need to be told? Think of some of the passages from there. This world is a place of evil; it is supposed to be. But without the gospel there is no answer. See, it's not God who is being tested here; it is men who are being tested here. That's the kind of world it is, but men alone make it a cruel world. They invent the "work ethic" and the "iron law of wages" and things like that to oppress their fellowmen. It's all their doing, and life is unfair. They say that's a proper answer. When you've robbed somebody you say, "Well that's true, you got a dirty deal, but life is unfair." You're supposed to take that as a proper answer. Or they can quote Ecclesiastes. But we just read in 2 Nephi 9:18, "They who have endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame of it, they shall inherit the kingdom of God which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and their joy shall be full forever." This is a place of crosses and shame. Have no illusions. The world is a shameful place; it is to be despised. It's a rotten world. So you say, "Why go on living then?" This is the question. Well, why do you go on living? We should ask somebody that. Well, for the best possible reason—for eternal life. This is the big chance. You are really getting a chance here for atonement, getting back to the *one* again. God has lengthened the days of our probation, so don't throw away this precious gift. Of course, it's got to be a rough test—the tougher the better, as far as that goes. Do we have nothing to live for down here? We have everything to live for. All our hopes and everything is centered here because here is the trial, and as Paul says, and there is the crown. You fight the good fight, and you run the good race. Look what he had been through. He talks about his stripes and his imprisonments. That's what it's like. His life was hell here. If there is no resurrection from the dead, "we are of all men most miserable"; we have been the biggest suckers in the world, he said, if there isn't. He went through all that, but everybody has to have dirty deals anyway. Why not make the best of it? he said. If there is no resurrection—"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Corinthians 15:19). But as it is, he said, I know there is a crown laid up for me. I know the real world is hereafter [paraphrased]. This is not the real world; this is a fake. Everybody knows it's a fraud. It's as phoney as it can be, and it's getting more that way all the time. We are living in a TV world now where everything is imagination and make-believe.

We get this very strong with Nephi on this downbeat here. He's distressed and feeling the same way about it. Then he tells you what to do. They will not search knowledge; now what are you supposed to do? Verse 8: "I perceive that ye ponder still in your hearts; and it grieveth me that I must speak concerning this thing. For if ye would hearken unto the Spirit which teacheth a man to pray ye would know that ye must pray." There's nothing more destructive, as you know, than a mental block—a block of any kind in which you grind to a halt. [It could be] caused by drugs. It's guilt feelings that cause those mental blocks, and that's what keeps you from praying. It's a block just like the heavens are brass.

As good old Freud has shown us, all these mental blocks come from feelings, conscious or unconscious. There are subconscious feelings of guilt when sin is catching up with you, and you feel unworthy to pray. Satan doesn't want you to pray, and it mounts up. The more you need it, the more inclined you are not to do it, not to suffer it. "For if ye would hearken unto the Spirit which teacheth a man to pray ye would know that ye must pray; for the evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray." There is that evil spirit. It's the guilt that is in you, and it says, "Don't pray." It's not only embarrassing, it humiliating because in prayer, of course, you face reality. You are alone, and you are not going to put anything over on the Lord. There's nothing more destructive than these mental blocks because of the guilt that's in us. By praying, this frees us up. This frees the mind and thaws it out. Jacob uses the word *hardened* a lot. But this causes a thaw and causes things to flow again when you once start praying, maybe with a flow of tears. In public prayer, congregational prayer, we concentrate our minds on a single object. We are all thinking together there, and this concentration is a very important thing. But in private prayer when you are alone, that frees the mind and lets you go. You're not putting anything over on the Lord. Verse 9: "I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul [which is the optimum voice]." If you don't do these things, what do you do? If you are not interested in this, there are comfortable cliches and platitudes, routine sermons, and superficial research. We can have those things.

In the next chapter he says, "Neither am I mighty in writing, like unto speaking; for when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost, the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men." Should we have speech writers if we claim to be inspired? Brigham Young never wrote a note, nothing. It was all strictly "from the cuff." He just swung from the shoulder and delivered. Although he'd had only had eleven days of school, he delivered in this marvelous, vigorous, forthright, direct, and powerful prose. He was a great master of prose style, but he never took a note or anticipated what he was going to say.

Verse 2: "They cast many things away which are written and esteem them as things of naught." People aren't going to take them seriously. These things are written, but people don't really pay much attention to them. We read fast. We go through and we're not very careful about it. Notice verse 3: You may not think it is important, "but I, Nephi, have written what I have written, and I esteem it as of great worth, and especially unto my people, For I pray continually for them by day, and mine eyes water my pillow by night, because of them." These idiots—they won't pay any attention at all. He can't sleep. The poor man is sick about it. This is his farewell, and it's not a happy one. "And the words which I have written in weakness will be made strong unto them." Notice he lists five things he wishes to achieve in his writings in verses 4 and 5: "For it persuadeth them to do good; it maketh known unto them of their fathers; and it speaketh of Jesus, and persuadeth them to believe in him, and to endure to the end, which is life eternal." That's what we want, you see. You wouldn't have anything to endure at all if this was the kind of world people wanted God to make it, the perfect world—a thing that upset St. Augustine so much. "And it speaketh harshly against sin, according to the plainness of the truth; wherefore, no man [who's against sin] will be angry at the words which I have written save he shall be of the spirit of the devil."

Then he ends on a charitable note. He wants to end on an upbeat here, but he is having an awfully hard time doing it. Verse 7: “I have charity for my people, and great faith in Christ that I shall meet many souls spotless at his judgment-seat. [Secondly] I have charity for the Jew [because I am a Jew, too]. . . . I mean them from whence I came. I also have charity for the Gentiles. But behold, for none of these can I hope except they shall be reconciled unto Christ, and enter into the narrow gate, and walk in the strait path which leads to life” and endure to the end. This is one of the objections people always have: It’s always so narrow-minded and so demeaning. Why is it so narrow? Why do so few get through the door? Why is it so limited? Well, to be on target. Here in this world we are on a vast, wide, almost endless plain. We can wander anywhere we want here, and we are prone to wander and go into all sorts of things. With this field to wander in, we can show whether [or not] we have the sense to go in the right direction. You will choose what your heart desires when it’s left entirely up to you. You will gravitate in the direction in which you really want to go. It will expose you as you really are.

So here we are, and he says you must keep on the strait and narrow; you must go that way. This will answer all your questions. Of course they are terrible; we tell you that all the time. You can get out of it by going straight ahead. Keep in mind, as Mosiah says . . . (We haven’t come to Mosiah yet, so we won’t quote that—that’s illegal). But Nephi says in verse 11: “and you and I shall stand face to face before his bar [and I think that is true—I have reason for believing that’s literally so]. . . . I speak unto you as the voice of one crying from the dust: Farewell until that great day shall come. And you that will not partake of the goodness of God [he ends on a negative note after all], and respect the words of the Jews [the scriptures], and also my words, and the words which shall proceed forth out of the mouth of the Lamb of God, behold, I bid you an everlasting farewell [these words are all joined into one], for these words shall condemn you at the last day. For what I seal on earth, shall be brought against you at the judgment bar; for thus hath the Lord commanded me, and I must obey.” Can you imagine a sadder ending than that? He was of a cheerful disposition—terribly optimistic, as you know. He was always dragging the family through dirty situations. But here he says, “For thus hath the Lord commanded me, and I must obey. Amen.”

His brother Jacob carries on at this point, and then proceeds to take a real plunge. He goes down [in his warnings]. Jacob doesn’t have very much hope for what is going on here. This is very sad. This is an important point in verse 2: “And he [Nephi] gave me, Jacob, a commandment that I should write upon these plates [the small plates] a few of the things which I considered to be most precious,” and touch just lightly on historical things. So the Book of Mormon is not a history. Don’t expect the book to explain the New World in ancient times; that’s not its purpose. It’s no handbook of archaeology. You can find out an immense lot reading between the lines when we get to the battles and migrations. Meanwhile, this is what you look for. He says he is just supposed to write these things. The history is in other books which are to be had, but not at this time. This is what he’s supposed to put in. This is a tractate; he is not going to write a history, but a tractate.

Verse 4: “And if there were preaching which was sacred, or revelation which was great, or prophesying, that I should engraven the heads [just the principle parts; *heads* is the right word—the *rā’ shîm*, the *kephalaia*; that means the ‘main points’ of a chapter; in Hebrew, Greek, and other languages, the word for that was *head*; it’s the principal themes of preaching, revelation, and prophecy—just the most important things] of them upon these plates . . . for Christ’s sake, and for the sake of our people. For because of faith and great

anxiety, it truly had been made manifest unto us concerning our people, what things should happen unto them [so it is prophetic too, but he is full of anxiety]. And we also had many revelations, and the spirit of much prophecy [the authors are also directed] . . . we labored diligently among our people, that we might persuade them to come unto Christ.” This is his writing. It’s *protreptic*; it’s a *suasoria*. That’s a type of writing that’s devoted to persuading somebody to do something. *Protreptic* is to enjoin somebody; a *suasoria* is to change your way of life, your behavior. It’s an appeal, and that’s what Jacob is here. He said, Our situation is the same as the children of Israel in the wilderness; we are always that way too. Notice: “. . . as in the provocation in the days of temptation while the children of Israel were in the wilderness.” It’s admonitory, it’s warning—and we are still in the wilderness. We are not out of the woods, so to speak. “Wherefore, we would to God that we could persuade all men not to rebel against God [that’s the least you can ask for; that’s the dominant theme; so why so negative?] . . . but that all men would believe in Christ, and view his death, and suffer his cross and bear the shame of the world.”

There it is. You say this is a lousy world. Well, somebody beat you to that. You didn’t discover that. They [the atheists] regarded it as something rather brilliant to discover that the world which God created was not a perfect world. They said, “Ah ha, there’s no God, after all.” Everybody was talking that up when I was a kid, as I said. “Suffer his cross and bear the shame of the world.” That’s what we are supposed to do. Is this what we are here for, suffering and shame? Well, look around you. You have a marvelous chance for going through that program, and I can’t think of any other you’re going to have to go through. It’s rather bad, isn’t it? [But the important thing] is how we take it, and you can have nothing but fun, as Mosiah says. I was going to quote him: I would that ye should always keep in remembrance the greatness and goodness of God and your own nothingness. If you do this you shall always feel to rejoice [paraphrased] (Mosiah 4:11–12.) Now, I’m gladly willing to accept my nothingness. That helps a great deal, you know. As for rejoicing, I find it’s rather fun. I think it’s rather pleasant to rejoice. Think of yourself as nothing. You’ll have no problems then, will you?

That son I was talking about who was in the San Francisco Ballet is now managing a huge enterprise in Guam, a Japanese consortium of hotels and things. All of a sudden he is the top dog there, and he says it is hell. He never wanted to do that; he wanted to be on the stage. He said that eighty-five percent of the trouble he has with managing is just smoothing out troubles between people—feuds, lies, plots, and jealousies. Everybody is doing it. He said, “When things go smoothly just seventy percent of the time is spent taking care of those things, but the rest of the time that’s all management is.” My daughter and son-in-law are going to China next week for a week. They have a very interesting project there. They suggested it to Harvard, and within two days it was not only approved but funded. So they are going to Peking for just a week and then come back here again. The project is neat—it’s set up beautifully. There’s a mainland Chinese who is a member of the Church and runs a large factory there. He has divided the work force into three equal parts. One is directed by a Japanese, one by a Maoist Chinese, and one by our own culture. They have totally different philosophies, totally different approaches. How does the management work? How do they compare? Well, John has done a great deal of work on that. His thesis was on management in Japan, what they have there. So he was just the man for the job. But the whole problem is that people are making a hell for themselves wherever you go. There are all these feudings and fights that go on in the office. No matter what office you go to, you’re going to find the trouble—church offices or any other. I mentioned that before; it’s not as bad as some places. Maybe I’m stone blind (can you be stone blind?), but the place I find this least of

all is at BYU. I find no feuding at all here. Maybe I'm just absolutely dense and don't notice it or something like that. It may be going on all the time. But at a place like Berkeley, or Claremont, or Scripps College, or Pomona College—those little colleges—ooh, the nasty sniping. It's like a novel by Agatha Christie. You go to an innocent little village and this is where you find the hatreds and the boiling revenge and all these plots and plans going on. What a world we live in! So we must bear the crosses and shame, but you'll have fun while you are here and much better things after.

Nephi anointed a man to be king and ruler over them. They wanted a monarchy. The people "loved Nephi exceedingly;" he was their great protector, their defense, and their welfare. That's what a king is supposed to do—to provide victory and prosperity—and Nephi did that. "Wherefore, the people were desirous to retain in remembrance his name." So they started choosing kings, and his brother was not his successor. Jacob was not the next king; the next king bore the name "second Nephi" and then "third Nephi," etc. It was the same thing with Caesar. Julius Caesar founded the empire, and everyone after him was a Caesar, including the Kaiser of Germany and the Czar of Russia. Those are just the word *Caesar*. The personal name of one man becomes a title. It was the same thing in ancient Libya; it was the Battus and Arcesilas. They became kings. Also, it runs in royal families to preserve certain names as great favorites, if a king is very popular. For hundreds of years it's very easy to remember the kings of Denmark because it was always Christian Frederick. That just goes on and on and there's nobody else. That helps. Who was king then? "It was either Christian or Frederick," you say and you are safe. So they had a second Nephi and a third Nephi, and that was the custom anciently.

Now notice in verses 13 and 14 that the difference between Lamanites and Nephites is a purely political one, purely political. "Now the people which were not Lamanites were Nephites; nevertheless, they were called Nephites." That's what they really were. Notice the seven tribes; anciently, the pattern of seven tribes is a very well established one. I think you will find it in Sombart and others where they talk about the seven tribes and why they are. You can see various connections, seven planets and things like that. Anciently, the established pattern was seven tribes. Here they had seven tribes really within the Nephites. "They were called Nephites, Jacobites, Josephites, Zoramites, Lamanites, Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites." They kept some of their ethnic marks, I suppose. This is a very complicated racial picture, you see. Who was called a "Nephite" or a "Lamanite" depended entirely on his politics. Now he says, "But I, Jacob, shall not hereafter distinguish them by these names, but I shall call them Lamanites that seek to destroy the people of Nephi [whose policy was anti-Nephite—they were Lamanites. There was plenty of Nephite blood among them, but they were the same family, after all. What do we mean by "Nephite blood?" They were brothers], and those who are friendly to Nephi I shall call Nephites, or the people of Nephi [those reigning in his stead] according to the reigns of the kings." That's what they were. Those who are friendly to Nephi are Nephites and vice versa; it's a complicated picture from here on.

Already in the reign of the second Nephi people began to grow hard in their hearts. Well, according to the first Nephi, they were hard in their hearts already. But here [in verse 15] he says they began to grow hard in their hearts. Now see what the situation is. Here we have people rattling around like peas in a bag. We have histories of people who went into vast, empty spaces, but they weren't necessarily empty. There are continual hints of the former inhabitants of the land and other people around. But as Jacob told us, My brother told me to pay no attention to that sort of thing; that's not the history we are interested in [paraphrased]. And in the same way, he is not interested in political issues; he just

grouped them all under two names and let it go at that, Nephites and Lamanites, not making any distinctions. It's the same way here. He doesn't go into any of the political or military complications of the wandering. He closes his book with a very eloquent statement: "We being a lonesome and a solemn people . . . we did mourn out our days." Of course, there have been plenty of lonesome and solemn peoples in the past that are being discovered. This was like Eldad ha-Dani, the Danite Jew of the ninth century. He traveled all over looking for lost colonies of Jews. In Asia and Africa he would find lost colonies wandering, etc. You do find them. Remember, it's only today that the earth is so jam-packed full of people. Back in those days, there was plenty of room to move around in. You weren't running into people everywhere you went. Just imagine a community living very much to itself. As I said, is it boring to live by yourself? Well, it's in the big city where you really get bored, isn't it? People get bored to distraction. But you can be happy wherever you are.

The people were having a hard time, but aah, they discovered gold and silver and they went crazy. They had a gold rush here. [back to verse 15] "The people of Nephi . . . began to grow hard in their hearts, and indulge themselves somewhat in wicked practices." We know about pioneer communities, like the first settlers of Australia. Well, we think of frontier community as a rough, primitive society. The regular fixtures in the saloon were the ladies of the evening, and the morals were very loose. This is part of the frontier picture. Everybody kicking the gong around and wild. Life is cheap, and the liquor flows. There are no great moral standards here. He said that they were already desiring many wives and concubines. They felt like kids out of school, I suppose; they can do anything they want now. Verse 16: "Yea, and they also began to search much gold and silver, and began to be lifted up somewhat in pride. Wherefore I, Jacob, gave unto them these words as I taught them in the temple, having first obtained mine errand from the Lord. For I, Jacob, and my brother Joseph had been consecrated priests and teachers of this people, by the hand of Nephi [so they weren't to be the kings. Second Nephi was the king, but they were priests and teachers and had been consecrated by their brother Nephi]. And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking upon us the responsibility [that's what the priests had to do to rid themselves of the blood on their garments; we are getting back to the Atonement rites of ancient Israel], answering the sins of the people upon our own heads if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments; otherwise . . . we would not be found spotless at the last day." (On the great day of Yom Kippur when everybody's garments were to turn white.)

These are teachings in terms of the rite of the Atonement which was familiar to these people. He talks about it in the next chapter: "I, Jacob, according to the responsibility which I am under to God, to magnify mine office with soberness, and that I might rid my garments of your sins, I come up into the temple." Well, in the temple on Yom Kippur that's what the priest did. You had to rid your garments. Now here he is feeling terrible, he says. Verse 3: "I have hitherto been diligent in the office of my calling; but I this day am weighed down with much more desire and anxiety for the welfare of your souls than I have hitherto been [things are getting worse than they have been]. For behold, as yet, ye have been obedient unto the word of the Lord, which I have given unto you." But your thoughts "are beginning to labor in sins. [And this] causeth me to shrink with shame before the presence of my Maker, that I must testify unto you concerning the wickedness of your hearts. And also it grieveth me that I must use so much boldness of speech concerning you, before your wives and your children, many of whose feelings are exceedingly tender and chaste and delicate before God [the word we would use today is

sensitive; in Joseph Smith's day they'd say *delicate*; they are very sensitive to these things]; . . . they have come up hither to hear the pleasing word of God, yea, the word which healeth the wounded soul."

A *consolatio*, a *consolation*; they wanted to be cheered up. We find out pretty soon that the women were overworked. They were practically captives and were under strain while their husbands gallivanted around collecting the gold, etc. Their children suffered accordingly, and they came to the temple to hear the consoling word of God and to be comforted. But what do they have to hear? he says. They have to hear this talk that is terrible. He said that it made him ashamed of himself. But he said that he had received from God a "strict commandment." It was not his idea. This meant that things were very bad. It's more than mere folly that's going on here. He received a strict commandment from God "to admonish you according to your crimes [he doesn't call them *sins* and *follies*; he says 'your crimes'], to enlarge the wounds of those who are already wounded, instead of consoling and healing their wounds . . . to pierce their souls and wound their delicate [sensitive] minds. But, notwithstanding the greatness of the task, I must do according to the strict commands of God, and tell you concerning your wickedness and abominations." I must tell you what God commanded me to tell you; I have no choice, he says, because I am "under the glance of the piercing eye of the Almighty God." I can't get away from it; I must carry this out.

This is like pulling teeth; he hates it. Boy, does he hate it, but he has to go through with it here. He must declare the word. Verse 12: "And now behold, my brethren, this is the word which I declare unto you [he starts out with the number one sin in the Book of Mormon], that many of you have begun to search for gold [there has been a gold rush], and for silver . . . in the which this land, which is a land of promise unto you and to your seed, doth abound most plentifully [they found rich mineral deposits, and when that happens the community goes mad; that's what happened here]. And the hand of providence hath smiled upon you most pleasingly, that you have obtained many riches." Incidentally, twice yesterday I came across that expression. I hadn't seen it for a long time. "The hand of providence" is used quite often. This mixing of metaphors is very interesting. Do you know the word *hand* occurs over 1,600 times in the Bible? The *hand* is used in every possible connection—the power, the authority, the way a thing is done, etc. It's the most used word in the Bible probably. Anyway, this is the word. "And because some of you have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren ye are lifted up in the pride of your hearts, and wear stiff necks and high heads because of the costliness of your apparel, and persecute your brethren because ye suppose that ye are better than they [this is a strange thing. God doesn't justify that; he condemns you]. . . . He can pierce you, and with one glance of his eye he can smite you to the dust! O that he would rid you from this iniquity and abomination. Think of your brethren like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you." To be rich is all right; you can all be rich together. But the rich don't like that, you see.

I have a quotation from R. L. Heilbrunner, and I'm going to read it to you here. This is relevant. R. L. Heilbrunner is perhaps the most eminent economic historian writing today. This is what he said in 1976 about our business civilization. He said, "No other civilization has permitted the calculus of self-interest so to dominate its culture. It has transmogrified greed and Philistinism into social virtue and subordinated all values to commercial values. Thus the business civilization combines liberty and selfishness, egalitarianism and extremes of wealth and poverty, vulgarity and democracy, creativity and waste, respect for the unique and autonomous individual and wage slavery, the

conquest of space and the destruction of the environment.” So what the Book of Mormon says here is relevant to our condition, according to Brother Heilbronner in an interesting book published in New York in 1967 by Norton.

Then Jacob goes on here in verse 18. This is a favorite passage. Latter-day Saints love this, because this gives you a hand. This frees you up to seek for riches all you want to: “But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God.” [People say,] “Well, I’ve gone on my mission that takes care of that; now I can seek for riches.” I’ve heard that plenty of times. It’s idealistic at first but not after. “And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches if ye seek them [you’re not supposed to seek them, but if you insist on doing it you can seek them under one condition]; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted.” That’s the justification. Is this the profit motive? Either stop with verses 13–16 or do it this way. The others are unacceptable. But he says if you must seek [for riches] this is the way you do it. It’s a very interesting thing here. As I said, this is a favorite. Notice he says it shall be “for the intent to do good.” A person might say, “Yes, I intend when I get my second million to do that.” There was something in here about a doctor whose brother is fabulously rich. He asked him, “When do think you’ll have enough? Do you think you have enough?”

“No, no I’ll never have enough. The more I get the more I want,” he said. “I have to have more. Someday I’ll start doing good with it, but I must get more.” This was the way it was going, you see. So they like that passage, “with the intent to do good.” [They say], “I’ll seek riches but I intend to do good with it, so that’s all right. Maybe I won’t live that long, but I have a good intention.” That’s a favorite. It’s like raising money for charity. A recent piece came out in the *Wall Street Journal* that showed those who contribute to the poor. Over ninety percent are [those with] middle and lower-middle class incomes. They are the ones who contribute. The rich contribute almost nothing at all. Once in a while it will be a library or a gymnasium because it’s a monument to his name. If I’ve made a lot of “dough” and the time comes for me to “cash in,” I can’t take it with me. Is my life wasted? No, not if it will be remembered forever in the John Doe Library. So that’s the only gift you are going to get out of them. This article is a very interesting one, incidentally. It’s surprising how very little the rich do give to the poor. That’s why they are rich, after all. We have Nibley Park in Salt Lake City, because my grandfather liked to play golf. We have Nibley Park in Glendale [California], which my father gave to the city. All the oak trees have died there, withered by smog in southern California. They rob with one hand and give with the other; there are plenty of sharp deals, believe me! This is talking about those people, so I’m justified in talking about them. Verse 20: “Ye were proud in your hearts, of the things which God hath given you.” Isn’t it a funny thing that people become proud of getting gold? That’s a surprising thing. Why is finding metal something to make you proud? Or something to make you rich? It’s not useful for many things. Gold is used industrially, and silver is used in a number of things. But they are not by any means as valuable as copper and aluminum and things like that. It’s a very interesting thing with gold throughout the world at all times. And, as you know, nowhere did they load it on and regard it as more sacred than in ancient Middle America. The Indians in all the Americas regarded gold as sacred. The greatest of all lyric poets was Pindar. In his first and greatest ode he asks himself, “With what shall I compare the Olympic games? The Corinthian games or the Isthmian games? Which are the best?” Then he compares all the best things in the world, and his opening lines are, “The best thing on earth is water, but gold is a glowing, flashing fire to which all hearts turn.” It’s gold which is irresistible—there’s a spiritual quality in shining, glorious gold, the mere

color of gold itself. The words *glory* and *gold* are connected very closely. The *gl* sound means “to glitter, the gleam, to glow, to glisten”—all those *gl* words. There’s the golden city and Jerusalem, the golden. See, they’re sacred whether you’re religious or anything else. The savages love gold more than anything else, and you can see why. Not just because it’s the most enduring. It won’t react to anything. The best plates you can get are gold plates. But it has this fascination. It’s the golden glory, so we associate it with heaven—the glorious throne, the golden cities, the golden gates, the golden rule, and things like that. Gold is our thing, so if you get a lot of gold you’re really in there. You can’t do anything with it. But you have it and that’s great.

Then he goes on speaking of this greed in verse 20: “Ye were proud in your hearts, of the things which God hath given you, what say ye of it?” Incidentally, he gave them this advice: If you seek wealth, you shall do it for this purpose. Does anybody in the Book of Mormon seek it for that purpose at all? Amulek, a very good man, didn’t—not for a minute. So that’s the way this goes. Did anybody take this advice? They did not. I see all these passages in the Book of Mormon I marked where the people couldn’t do it. They immediately turned to the other way. They would hang on so long. Verse 21: “Do ye not suppose that such things are abominable unto him who created all flesh? [he hasn’t mentioned chastity yet; he’s going to get to that now]. And the one being is as precious in his sight as the other [this is impossible for us to get through our heads; it’s hard to take that any other person is just as important to God as you are. That’s one of the hardest things in the world to swallow, especially when you have an authoritarian structure; it’s harder to swallow, isn’t it?] . . . and for the selfsame end hath he created them, that they should keep his commandments and glorify him forever.” To glorify him is to share in his glory. Remember Moses 1:39: “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” To get us in it with him. That’s the atonement to bring us back to him. That is his work and his glory and what he gives to others. The Son glories with him the same way. So you are able to glorify him forever. How can you glorify God? By doing what he tells you and sharing the glory with him. He wants you there.

Now he must speak unto them concerning “a grosser crime.” *Gross* is a good word because it is gross. You see, he is talking about sex here. Verse 23: “For they seek to excuse themselves in committing whoredoms, because of the things which were written concerning David and Solomon his son.” The scriptures give people excuses for all sorts of things. These are the two most legendary characters, not only in religious history, but in any history. David is the great romantic hero of legend. Solomon is the most voluptuous and the most luxurious of all rulers. They built him up to be that. So we get Solomon, the voluptuary, and David, the romantic. It’s in that sense in which they were taken by the Jews, rather than in their priestly and sacred callings. Remember, Solomon went astray—he got off the track. In the same way, the best David could say was, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,” because he did things he shouldn’t have done. Remember the story of Bathsheba and what he did to Uriah, the Hittite soldier. He killed him so he could marry his wife. That was David’s doing, so don’t try to justify yourself by David and Solomon, he says. Verse 24: “Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord.” He doesn’t like the concubine system at all. Then the Lord says that he hasn’t led them out of Jerusalem to go on with that same sort of thing. Verse 25: “Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a righteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph.” I took you away from all that, and “I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of

old.” Being taken off that track is one of the blessings of the promised land. Now what’s going to happen because of these whoredoms and abominations he talks about? The Lord will curse the land [verse 29]; the promised land will be cursed for their sakes. Immorality cancels all promises here. Notice the male chauvinism in verses 30 and 31. “For behold, I, the Lord, have seen the sorrow, and heard the mourning of the daughters of [Israel] . . . because of the wickedness and abominations of their husbands. . . . For they shall not lead away captive the daughters of my people [the women are practically prisoners; they have a very male oriented, chauvinistic society; the women have to do all the cooking and set up the tepee and everything else] . . . for they shall not commit whoredoms, like unto them of old, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

Custom will not make it mandatory. And there are places where people say, “It has always been the custom, so we do it.” Like *Fastnachten* up and down the whole length of the Rhine. During that one night you can do anything you want; that’s *Fastnacht*. You dress up and disguise yourself so you won’t be responsible. You won’t be recognized the next day. It goes back to Roman times. They say, “Well, that’s what we have always done.” They do it, and it’s a wild time. (I see the time is up for this grim tale.)

The gloomy piece this morning with it brings,
The sun for sorrow will not show his head
Go hence and have more talk of these sad things
Some shall be pardoned and some punished.

(Source unknown)

That’s a verse I like. It’s very appropriate this morning, so I can use it. Verse 35: “Behold, ye have done greater iniquities than the Lamanites, our brethren. Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives, and lost the confidence of your children [they had wrecked the family], because of your bad examples before them; . . . And because of the strictness of the word of God, which cometh down against you, many hearts died, pierced with deep wounds.” Notice that the word of God had specifically forbidden it, and because of that it was even more painful on the women and the children. The gospel had always taught them that you shouldn’t do those things. The disruption of LDS families is doubly tragic, and it does happen too. “Many hearts died, pierced with deep wounds” knowing of these lusts. The word of God is strict, and breaking it compounds the disaster. The time is up now. Are we going to get anything cheerful out of Jacob? We shall see what we have to expect here. But I wish it wasn’t so close to home. It’s beginning to make me uncomfortable. I think it’s time we changed to the Doctrine and Covenants, isn’t it? So we can get out of these things and feel better.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 24

Jacob 3–4

Filthiness and the Atonement

We're on the book of Jacob. I've decided that more than any book in the Book of Mormon this has the ring of absolute truth, historical and everything else. When they first arrived there, you'll notice, the first thing they did was go scrambling after gold and silver because there was a lot in the mountains. That happened, of course, in Utah within the first year. By the second year everybody was going out in all directions looking for gold and silver. All sorts of projects were launched, and Brigham Young had his hands full just trying to keep a few home. Everybody was looking for it. Along with that in the second year, 1849, the returning members of the Mormon Battalion discovered gold in Sutter's Mill. It was Mormons who discovered the gold that brought on the Gold Rush. Sam Brannan, who came around the horn bringing a host of Saints to go to Utah, became the richest man in California. He was a very influential man. He wanted them to move on [to California], but Brigham was against that and fought it. What happened?

As we read in Mark Twain's *Roughing It*, etc., what about these mining towns? What kind of places were they? Well, everything was up for grabs. Everybody was competitive. There were two or three murders in Virginia City or Carson City every day. Naturally, we have the stock theme that Hollywood picks up—the house full of beautiful ladies and absolutely no morals at all because these guys are out making themselves rich. They are independent. They shoot each other, and it becomes a hell. Nothing could be worse than the mining cities in Nevada during the sixties. That's the sort of thing we have here [in the book of Jacob]. Mark Twain, who edited a newspaper in Nevada at that time, saw this in the background of the Book of Mormon [and thought] this was where Joseph Smith got it—forgetting that the Book of Mormon was written twenty years earlier than the Gold Rush was heard of. But this is the sort of thing that comes along.

Right across the street from my sumptuous manse is a green house where old Sister Buckley used to live. The second mountain south of Y mountain, the high one, is called Buckley Mountain. Her husband was Buckley, and Brigham Young told him that if he ever worked on Sunday he would never strike any gold or silver at all. He was looking for silver. He went up and dug in Rock Canyon with his sons. They would go up every Sunday and work all day long from dawn to dark. Sister Buckley told this story years ago, and we talked a lot about it. They put tracks down Rock Canyon and those big mines with all those tailings up there that are now being sealed up because they are dangerous. An enormous lot of work went on up there. There are huge tailings from three different mines up in Rock Canyon. "They worked for over twenty years," she said. They would come down dog tired every Sunday night for twenty years, and they never found a bit of silver. They never found anything at all, though at the time on Little Mountain, just south of here at the foot of Timp, one person came back with a hat full of nuggets from the streams that had washed them into a little depression there. That caused a big excitement in American Fork, and everybody went up looking for gold there. The same sort of thing happens in the book of Jacob here.

The poor people are trying to hang on and hold to some shred of morality and sanity. Jacob is encouraging them in chapter 3. He tells the pure in heart to look to God, hang on, and do the best they can. "Look unto God with firmness of mind, and pray unto him with exceeding faith, and he will console you in your afflictions." They were obviously having a rough time. Good people do. They did in Nevada mining towns, just as Suffragettes did in American towns when they got beaten up and everything else. They wanted the women's vote. And also the prohibitionists in their time. People that try to be conscientious minorities in some societies have a very rough time. You know that. But he told them not to be silly. Being pure, you have your faith to "console you in your afflictions. . . . O all ye that are pure in heart, lift up your heads and receive the pleasing word of God, and feast upon his love; for ye may, if your minds are firm, forever." But your minds had better be firm; don't go off the deep end with all sorts of wild propositions, visionary nonsense and things like that. You'll know the real thing when it is there. The firm mind goes along with this faith and this way of life. It isn't enough to do things that are easy.

Then he talks about two types of filthiness. They are very important because along with this is the attitude toward the Indians that many people in Utah have had. The most violently racist person I ever knew was a senior missionary companion of mine from southern Utah. He became a very rich sheep man later on. But boy did he hate Indians. He couldn't stand them, and he lived among them. They are very genial people down there in Orderville. It's crazy, but this was the idea. They became awful snobs here, and a mutual resentment was building up. They knew already that Laman and Lemuel hated Nephi, and that tradition was handed on to their children, as he is going to tell us here. There was that prejudice, but now in reply the Nephites are building up their prejudice. It's just as bad and even worse, he says. Verse 3: "But, wo, wo, unto you that are not pure in heart, that are filthy this day before God [notice he uses the word *filthy* here; he uses it in the next verse, and then he uses it right across the page there in verse 9, but in different senses]; for except ye repent the land is cursed for your sakes [they were the ones who were to be so blessed]; and the Lamanites, which are not filthy like unto you, nevertheless they are cursed with a sore cursing, shall scourge you even unto destruction." That was the prophecy that was made to Nephi, of course, and he got it from Nephi too, I suppose. This is turning the tables, isn't it? The Lamanites are bad enough. They are cursed with a sore cursing, but just because they are bad people doesn't make you good people. My friend's enemy is my enemy, etc. If you are an enemy to the wicked, that must make you righteous [they supposed]. But it's the wicked that destroy the wicked. Remember, the Lord said, "The wicked shall destroy the wicked." That's the way it is going to happen. No other people ever go to war with each other except those that are both wicked—both sides are wicked. The Lamanites shall "scourge you even unto destruction [that's strong stuff, and they'd better do something about it]. And the time speedily cometh that except ye repent they shall possess the land of your inheritance [you were meant to inherit this land, but they will get it if you don't repent; we find out at the end that they didn't], and the Lord God will lead away the righteous out from among you." That's the principle—God leads out the righteous to precious lands. If a certain land won't contain them anymore, he leads them away somewhere else. There's this constant motion—Israel in the wilderness, always wandering, always being led. That was Abraham, of course, *Lekh Lekhā*, always wandering from one place to another. "Behold, the Lamanites your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness." See, they are filthy in that sense; there's a difference between the *foedus* and *spurcus*. It's a very interesting thing. I once made a study for H. R. W. Smith's class in Latin epigraphy. He was the editor of the great *Corpus*

Vasorum, and I did this term paper on the Roman graffiti from Herculaneum and Pompeii—thousands of graffiti in which naughty boys wrote the dirtiest things they could think of on the walls everywhere. But the things that are approved and even encouraged by the eminent Dr. Ruth are thrown at people as the worst thing. The worst thing you could ever say to a Roman in the most depraved period of their history, which was plenty depraved, was to call him *spurcus*, to call him nasty or immoral—having uncontrolled appetites. Pure hedonism is what it is; if it feels good, that's that. There was a lot of that then, but they were ashamed of it. It was under cover. You read a great deal about homosexuality then, but again, they hid it. For a person to admit that would be the last thing in the world. It's a very interesting thing. How our morals would be worse than those of the decadent Romans is pretty alarming.

But being *foedus* is just being dirty, not being properly washed, not bathing often enough. E. R. Bevan, a classical scholar, wrote a very good study way back in the 1920s on the Roman passion for bathing. See, because of their morals they felt dirty, and they thought they would be clean if they bathed all the time. The emperor Caligula, a very immoral man, bathed eight times a day. You see the two kinds of dirtiness. He thought he could be clean with that. You may notice the great emphasis on cleanness in the soap operas. They talk everlastingly about cleaning substances, cleaning, being in the shower, and being washed—this soap and that cleanser and the thing that makes you whitest, etc., as if that could make you white. “All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand,” says Lady MacBeth. “Out, damned spot,” etc. Then MacBeth says,

Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

The Romans had this passion for bathing, and we see some disturbing signs around here of the same sort of thing. We are too close to the ancient world in the moments before its collapse. Verse 5: “Behold, the Lamanites your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness [you think you are more righteous because of that, but that won't do], . . . for they have not forgotten the commandment of the Lord . . . that they should have save it were one wife, and concubines they should have none [a concubine was considered legal], and there should not be whoredoms committed among them.” We don't even call them whoredoms anymore. We just call it “living with your companion or your lady friend” or something like that. It's daily news, and it's on the TV all the time—who's with whom, etc. Nobody even considers that it is necessary to be married anymore. You can be if you want; that's nice. But you'll break up very soon if you do, so why bother? Do it the other way. That has become general practice, just like the Nephites here. But the Lamanites don't do that, not whoredoms. Verse 6: “And now, this commandment they observe to keep; wherefore, because of this observance . . . the Lord God will not destroy them, but will be merciful unto them; and one day they shall become a blessed people [they will be rewarded for that]. Behold, their husbands love their wives, . . . [they love their children]. . . . How much better are you than they in the sight of your great Creator?” Notice, that he uses filthiness in two different ways. He says, Your filthiness and their filthiness is not the same. In verse 5 he says, You hate them because of their filthiness [paraphrased], but in verse 9 he says it differently. It's the same thing here [in verse 8] with whiteness. You can use it in two different senses. “How much better are you than they [and] . . . their skins will be whiter than yours [using this white in the moral sense of the meaning of white].

Verse 9: “Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, which is the word of God, that ye revile no more against them [he is saying, ‘No more of this racism; this is no good at all that you think you are superior because of their lower culture] because of the darkness [he doesn’t call it *blackness*; it’s dark because their way of life has turned it dark; that’s the proper word to use; if you go out and live like them, you’ll become dark, too] of their skins; neither shall ye revile against them because of their filthiness; but ye shall remember your own filthiness [see, there are the two kinds of filthiness; you say they don’t wash enough; I say you wash too much], and remember that their filthiness came because of their fathers [they inherited this tradition; they’ve stuck to it and it has made them worse]. Wherefore, ye shall remember your children . . . [keep the next generation in mind]. . . . And also, remember that ye may, because of your filthiness, bring your children unto destruction [your filthiness will bring destruction on them just as sure as anything], and their sins be heaped upon your heads at the last day. O my brethren, hearken unto my words; arouse the faculties of your souls.” You have to make an effort; it’s exactly like a drugged sleep that you get into. You get deeper and deeper, and it takes you right out of this world. To be wakened up is going to take an awful lot of black coffee, walking back and forth, and shaking your shoulders. This awakening isn’t gentle. It’s rude, decisive, and urgent, but it must be done, he says. You’ve got to wake up to this. “Arouse the faculties of your souls; shake yourselves that ye may awake from the slumber of death; and loose yourselves from the pains of hell that ye may not become angels to the devil [to be captive], to be cast into that lake of fire and brimstone which is the second death.” Do we make any effort there? Then this is what he is talking about. Verse 12: “And now I, Jacob, spake many more things unto the people of Nephi, warning them against fornication and lasciviousness [that’s the general hedonism of our time; anything goes, you see], and every kind of sin, telling them the awful consequences of them.” It isn’t as light as you think. [Hedonism] invites instant yielding. To any temptation at all you are supposed to yield, and there’s the jaded, hypocritical taste. He talked about the morals here because that was a very important issue. These are the commandments of God here. Then the larger plates deal with the wars and contentions and reigns of kings. We go into them; that’s the usual history. They are called the “plates of Joseph,” and they were made by the hand of Nephi.

Now we have this marvelous fourth chapter which introduces us to the fifth chapter. Chapter 4 is the ongoing doctrine of the Atonement. First he talks about the plates by which they are handing it down. They are handing their tradition down on these plates. He talks a lot about them here. They take them very seriously because this is the only way they can do it. “(And I cannot write but a little of my words, because of the difficulty of engraving our words upon plates).” The *Copper Scroll* shows that very nicely here, where it is talking about John Allegro’s book on copper plates. He said, “‘The business of writing on such plates was hard and distasteful work. The scribe, not without reason, appears to have tired toward the end [we think of Jacob here], and the last lines of writing were badly formed and rather small. One can almost hear his sigh of relief as he pushed out the last two words in the middle of the final line.’ How clearly this recalls protests and exclamations of our Book of Mormon writers where Jacob says, ‘I cannot write but little of my words because of the difficulty of engraving our words upon plates.’ Mormon says, ‘I would write it also if I had room on the plates, but I have not.’ Writing on the plates requires a cramped and abbreviated script [Moroni explains that you have to have another script], and Allegro also notes that writing on copper plates actually produces a new kind of writing that is peculiarly difficult to read, characterized by mixing forms of letters, ignoring proper space between words, running over from one line to the next in the middle of a word, and general neglect of vowels. He says, ‘The greater deficiency lies in

ourselves; we simply do not possess sufficiently comprehensive, technical Hebrew vocabulary to deal with a text of this kind.’ ”

So it’s a good thing we don’t have the gold plates. We would be fighting tooth and nail through the generations about them and never come to an agreement. They would cause nothing but trouble. Better still, you have an inspired translation here, and you can go by that. And, as Emma Smith said, whenever Joseph came to a proper name, he would spell it out. He would see it in his mind and spell it out. He would not try to pronounce it. Here an illiterate man was talking to an illiterate scribe, Oliver Cowdery. If he tried to pronounce those names, and then Oliver Cowdery was supposed to write them down phonetically, you would never recognize any of them. It’s very fortunate that they have been spelled out for us because you can recognize their Oriental structure very plainly here. But in this fourth chapter he talks about the engraving and the words. Verse 2: “But whatsoever things we write upon anything save it be upon plates must perish and vanish away.” That’s true—there are many things that perish. [They had] stone, paper, and parchment. Of course, they had tapa made of bark and things like that. Gold is the one thing that lasts, but gold plates are not cheap.

The Mandaean go clear back to the Dead Sea Scrolls people. They moved up to the north of Mesopotamia and then down, and they are the people that live in the swamps today. There are just a couple of thousand of them left. They have preserved their records from early Christian times, and they had to preserve them on lead plates. Mrs. [Ethel] Drower has been able to get hold of some of those plates. She went down to live with [the Mandaean] and studied [their records]. Remember they are the marsh Arabs that live on floating islands and build these magnificent buildings of nothing but reeds. They have nothing but reeds to build with, and they do these marvelous things down there. They are Baptists and passionate baptizers with their rites. They put great emphasis on the garment—on the sash, the cap, the apron, and all those things. They say they came from the Jordan in the early days of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and there are many connections between them. It’s surprising that so many of their writings would be in Coptic of all things. But Coptic is Egyptian. What are they doing down there at Basra with all this stuff [writing]? So lead plates don’t perish, and gold plates don’t perish. If they are on stone or baked clay, that’s good. If it is on stone or clay it will last as long as some fossils will last. It’s a matter of millions of years then. It will just go on and on forever and never wear out if it is fossilized. But there are ways of preserving these things.

He [Jacob] says, “but we can write a few words upon plates, which will give our children . . . a small degree of knowledge concerning us, or concerning their fathers [this shows his concern for future generations]. Now in this thing we do rejoice; and we labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates [it’s a big thing], hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive them [a sad story, but it’s a happy story too] with thankful hearts, and look upon them that they may learn with joy and not with sorrow [the Book of Mormon is a sad and sorrowful book, but it is written for our joy], neither with contempt, concerning their first parents. For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ.” Now here we get the continuing line. There has always been an alert cadre, a bridging of time; I think the Baptists call it “a trail of blood” (something like that). The doctrine of atonement is *at-one-ment* in many ways. It’s a good word, you see—bringing things at one. The body and the spirit are brought at one in the resurrection. Four chapters of John talk a great deal about in what sense the Father and the Son are one, and may the apostles be one with them “even as we are one.” And may those whom they convert also be one with them. There’s this idea of everything

at one and bringing everything together. That's the whole idea of the temple, of course; that's what a temple is. The Babylonian word for it is *markas shemaiemu eršiti*. It is the "knot point," the bringing together point of all the heavens and the earth. It's halfway between heaven and earth. It's *Midgard* and it's at the center of all horizontal distances, so the sign of it is the quadrate circle with the four points of the compass on it. That's what *templum* (Latin for *temple*) is. In Latin *temple* is a *template* in which you locate yourself in the universe. You make your circle; it's the *quadrata*. You divide it into the four parts—north, south, east, and west. One is called the *decumanus*; the other is called the *cardo*. The *haruspex*, for example, judges things by the flight of birds. How can you know the direction of birds' flight and the significance unless it is with reference to some plot or plan? We get this in Egypt too. He sits with his back to the central stone, right at the center, and faces due south. Then he is able to take his bearings and know the significance either of the motion of the stars, or the flight of birds, or whatever it is he is watching. We have here this bringing together of all things. Remember, "a gathering together of all things," and that includes the records. In the Salt Lake Temple, until there were too many for it to hold them, all the records of the past were kept there. All our genealogy was kept in the basement of the temple because the whole thing looks toward the past, the present, and the future. We are doing work for those who lived before us, and the whole thing looks toward the eternities and the things which are going beyond [the world].

Here he ties everything together. I had completely ignored this fourth chapter [of Jacob] in all this stuff I have been doing on atonement, and it's the best ongoing description I have seen of the Atonement anywhere. This holds the whole tradition together from the earliest times. So he says here in verse 4: This is why we have written these things, to tie all these things together and have this ongoing atonement, a perennial order of things. "For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ [see, it will show the future children that they knew], and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming [it's going to tie them together here]; and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but [now he is taking it back] also all the holy prophets which were before us. Behold, they believed in Christ and worshiped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his name." Then he takes it back to the law of Moses. We are talking about atonement. The atonement was the celebration, and he is going to refer to it throughout this chapter of the great celebration of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, when the offerings and the firstfruits were brought, etc., as we are told in the book of Mosiah. But here, it's particularly good. "And for this intent we keep the law of Moses, it pointing our souls to him [so they go clear back to the law of Moses because it points them forward; now we are getting this connection; they are the link between all these things, and it goes on]; and for this cause it is sanctified unto us for righteousness [if we do it we will be blessed; then it takes it clear back to Abraham, long before Moses], even as it was accounted unto Abraham in the wilderness to be obedient unto the commands of God in offering up his son Isaac." The Jews still think that the sacrifice of Isaac was the atonement, but it didn't take place; Isaac was not sacrificed. A ram, which they say had the name of *Isaac*, was to take his place. The vicarious work, the proxy, is the important thing. When the Lord saw that Abraham was willing to go through with it, the Lord wouldn't let him do it. Abraham was demonstrating to himself, you see. "Lay not they hand upon the lad for now I know." He was determined to be faithful, but he didn't have to go through with it because a sacrifice had already been provided. It was the ram in the thicket, and the ram was sacrificed instead as a similitude of the One who would be sacrificed for all of us. So Isaac didn't have to be sacrificed; He [the Savior] was to be sacrificed instead. This is the Atoning Sacrifice that he is referring to

here. This was celebrated by the Jews on the Day of Atonement. They called it the *Atonement*, the *Kippur*, and the *kāfar* is *to atone*.

I was quoting a very interesting study on the subject by a Jewish scholar named Rosenberg. Here it is. Jacob tells us here that Abraham's sacrifice "is a similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son." That was Isaac. When they say that Isaac was the atoning sacrifice for the world, that's not so because he wasn't sacrificed. That was only a similitude for what was to come because it was repeated again in the temple every year. They went through this on the Day of Atonement. In verse 6 he says, "Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy." Notice the presence of living prophets doesn't supersede the teachings of the others. Remember when the Lord came to the Nephites. At the end of the gospel of Mark, he tells that the Lord opened the scriptures to them, and then their eyes were opened. After the Resurrection, the Lord explained the scriptures to them, and then their eyes were opened. We are not given the sermon he gave to them on that occasion, and that's very important. That's why any very early writing from the church that's discovered now is almost sure to bear a title something like "The Secret Teachings that Jesus Gave the Apostles after the Resurrection." Then they went forth. Before that, they had scattered—gone home, gone fishing, etc. They didn't know—the Resurrection hadn't really registered on them yet until He started appearing. Remember, when John and the women went and reported the Resurrection, the apostles didn't want to believe them. They said, "You're crazy."

So this is the similitude here. "Wherefore, we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy [we are carrying on; we are right in the tradition. But you have to have the record too, beginning with Moses and the prophets. Jacob explained the scriptures though he is right with them himself]; and having all these witnesses we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can command in the name of Jesus." Notice we have a very peculiar community here. Those that really kept on are in the full flood of the tradition that the Jews had lost at this time. The temple was destroyed shortly after Lehi left Jerusalem. And this is a very interesting thing: The *kapporeth*, the tent, the Holy of Holies were never restored. The second temple didn't have them at all. People don't realize that, but Jastrow and others have written about that particular subject. We read a good deal about that in the *Talmud*. "We truly can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea." Notice he is using hyperbole here about the trees, the mountains, and the waves of the sea. Notice in verse 18 at the end of this chapter, he apologizes for having gone a little too far and got too excited about it. "I will unfold this mystery unto you; if I do not, by any means, get shaken from my firmness in the Spirit, and stumble because of my overanxiety for you." He is overanxious; he is pouring it on here. But these are more than figures of speech, you know. In what sense do we control the elements? A mountain climber thinks he subdues a mountain or something like that. This great fervor comes with the big picture they have here. Notice, he gets excited because here they are living out by themselves, etc. How far does power go? He says if you have faith enough you would be amazed what can happen. Then he sees the whole natural world as entering into cooperation with this in verse 8, which I had overlooked, incidentally. "Behold great and marvelous are the works of the Lord [then he goes into a special nature documentary here]. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God."

Then he starts talking about the bottom line, which is power. Back up in verse 7 he says: "The Lord God showeth us our weakness that we may know that it is by his grace, and his great condescensions unto the children of men, that we have power to do these things." Well, to what extent did they do them? I guess you have subdued a mountain if you cut off the top of it and put a temple on it, or something like that. These are figures of speech, and he says he is carried away. And after all, if you can "plow through the seas," as the ancient poets used to say, you have "conquered Neptune." You have conquered the sea; you are stronger than it is. You have defied the elements. But we really don't at all. Just to take a ship across the water isn't to conquer the water. We dump garbage in them, and they are getting pretty well conquered now. But that's another thing. Verse 9: "For behold, by the power of his word man came upon the face of the earth [as we read in Moses 1:4, 38, he gave the command and the work was done; we are talking about the Council in Heaven, etc.], which earth was created by the power of his word [there's *power* again]. Wherefore, if God being able to speak and the world was, and to speak and man was created, O then, why not able to command the earth, or the workmanship of his hands upon the face of it, according to his will and pleasure?" See, he is talking about the whole natural world and everything else in it.

Remember, matter and particles are, as Heisenberg showed, completely impartial. They'll do anything you want them to do. They won't make any moral objections or fight back. If you know the rules for controlling them, you are the one who's in charge. They are very easy to push around, actually, you find out in many cases. There's creation by the power of your word. There's that marvelous *Shabako Text* of the Egyptians. The concept of his mind became his word, and then this was carried out. It's possible, you see. That's what we do; we control the elements. We control physical things, and they don't put up any resistance at all once we know the way to approach them. You can handle wood very nicely, very carefully, if you know what to do with it. I have a son who can make wood do absolutely anything, but you have to know how to work with it. You have to understand grain and quality. He can name any wood that ever was, etc. Then nature will obey you. It will obey your thoughts and the workmanship of your hands. It will obey your works. But that goes to other things, of course, now that we are using nuclear physics. We are getting into particles, but we're having an awful time controlling them. This nuclear waste, for example. Nobody has the vaguest idea how to get rid of the nuclear waste. It's ghastly and frightening. It's going to swamp the earth in a short time. So we don't have the elements within our power, but if we had the knowledge we would have. God has the knowledge. It's not so surprising. Long before this world was it was decided that this should be done, and we are in on it. We are being tested somehow or other.

Verse 10: "Wherefore, brethren, seek not to counsel the Lord [he knows the answers, and you don't. I like this passage here; I remember we once had to learn it], but to take counsel from his hand [ask him how to do it; don't try to do it yourself, wise guy. You'll get into a lot of trouble. The mad scientist ends up in the soup, you know]. For behold, ye yourselves know that he counseleth in wisdom, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works." He will tell you only what is wise, what is just, and what is merciful. What more do you want? That covers everything. Do men counsel in wisdom, and justice, and mercy? Over in the Eyring Building, their prize display is Farnsworth's display of inventing the television, a great accomplishment. It says, "The processes by which such an invention is achieved." It begins, "First of all, you ask the question, 'Is there a market for it?'" Well, this is a very interesting thing. That's not the first question. You should start out by asking, "Will it do more harm than good?" But, of course, how can you tell whether it will do more harm than good? We could have a nice debate—"Has television

done more harm than good so far?” It has the capacity for doing great good, but what mischief it’s done. It has crippled our minds and made us idiots, walking around in sort of a daydream all the time, living imaginary lives and the like waiting for the next soap to come on. [Some people] wouldn’t miss it for the world. Remember, when the second moon landing was broadcast, a flood of complaints came in. Here’s man landing on the moon, his greatest achievement for ages. The stations were just flooded with complaints, “You cut off our favorite soap opera.” You cut off our favorite science fiction to see somebody really landing on the moon. This is an example of how we don’t take things seriously anymore. Jacob says we should take our counsel from God; he knows about these things. He has not only wisdom, but he has justice and mercy. He knows what the long—term effects of things will be.

Verse 11: “Wherefore, beloved brethren, be reconciled unto him through the atonement of Christ, his Only Begotten Son.” As I said, the word for *atonement* today is translated in the Revised Standard Version as *reconciliation*. They don’t use *atonement* anymore in the Revised Standard text. But *reconciliation* means the same thing, you see. *Concilio* is a *seating together* in a *council*. Our word *council* comes from that. *Reconciliation* is to be called back to the council and sit down again. You are called to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—to return. Every term, every translation, every equivalent of *atonement* has the idea of *coming back*. *Redemption* means you will be *bought back again*. You must have been with him before if he buys you back again, after the Fall. *Resurrection* is to *rise up again*. After you have been in the flesh before, then you rise up again but now in a resurrected body. It all has to do with the return to a former state. You can’t get along without the preexistence here, which comes in very strongly.

Well, what happened to the preexistence? I told you about how St. Augustine fought with that subject. If you can’t have *preexistence*, you must have *predestination*. That’s what St. Augustine went for, so we will put *predestination* down on the board. (St. Augustine died in A.D. 425) That was accepted until the ninth century when it was challenged by Hincmar, the abbot of Fulda [Reims]. Then there was this big fight. He wanted to soften infant damnation. St. Augustine hated the doctrine of infant damnation, but he said you can’t get along without it. [According to him] infants that are born into this world have the original sin, so unless they are baptized they are damned. The only explanation he could find for that was a “gentle damnation.” It didn’t please him, and it never pleased anybody.

Then there are the doctrines that go along with that—God gives us supporting grace, etc. But there is a virtue in the Lord’s dealing with us in the predestination. It sounds cruel to be predestined. We mentioned before that [according to this doctrine] you are predestined to be damned or predestined for salvation, and there’s nothing you can do about it. It’s in the will of God entirely. But, he says this is the softening of it. (What is the word he uses for it? On Monday morning I’m no good at all.) You don’t know which one you are; that’s the whole point. You have the satisfaction of not knowing. There is a good chance that you may not be damned, but you don’t know. That’s the whole thing. You may be damned, but He decides it. Then along came Raban Maurus, and he tried to soften damnation. In fact, he wanted to get rid of predestination, but he was opposed. In the second half of the ninth century, from 848 on, there was a lively interchange of debates, exchange letters, and literary combat. It ended with an all-out victory for predestination. Every major split, every major breaking off of a new church from the original was always on the basis of predestination because people didn’t like it. Later on Luther and Melancthon made a joint statement on the subject of predestination. But

there was no escaping it—that man was damned and that he had no capacity of his own to do good, none whatever. You were damned or you were blessed, and there was nothing you could do about it. Melanchthon didn't like that, so he started to soften it. There was a break between the two, and Luther won that round. Then along came John Calvin and the extremists. He was all for damnation. He had a double damnation. There were various interpretations. Zwingli, who was a Swiss, opposed that. In fact, he said, "This goes altogether too far." Then there was a showdown, and the Consensus of Geneva in 1550 decided that predestination should win. That led to more trouble.

In the north there was the Arminian controversy, the Dutch Reformed Church, etc. Arminius wanted to do away with the doctrine; he didn't like it. But when the first Prince of Orange was heir to the throne, he came to Holland and decided for the Calvinist side. This was the famous Arminian showdown in 1618–19. We ought to write down the Arminian Controversy because this was a strong one. This is why we are having trouble in South Africa today, because of the Arminian Controversy. The Prince of Orange decided for the Calvinistic side, and Barneveldt and the great Hugo Grotius were put in jail because they were the humanists and they didn't like this doctrine. Well, nobody liked the doctrine, as far as that goes, but they had no alternative. They couldn't do anything about it; they had nothing to take its place. Here an infant is born who has never existed before. He has to come in with the original sin. He is sinful and wicked, so that's that. As I said, infant damnation drove people wild. Then there were other splits after that. But the reason for the trouble in South Africa is that it was a very close decision. The Dutch Humanists were very strong at that time. It was Jacobus Arminius, and people like Grotius and the great Barneveldt against the Prince of Orange and the Calvinist party. The Calvinist party won, and because of the fighting and contention which went on for years, the feeling was very strong. They built up this idea and philosophy that you are absolutely right or wrong, absolutely damned or absolutely blessed. Everything was black and white, which is what you get with the stubborn Dutch in South Africa today. They will not make concessions and this sort of thing. We are stuck with that because of a vote in 1619 at the Council of Dordrecht they decided for the strict Calvinistic, absolute damnation or absolute blessedness. We are the good guys; you are the bad guys—absolutely good or absolutely bad, black and white. We are still having trouble because of that.

That was the reason why in 1741 John Wesley and George Whitefield split. They worked together. Neither of them wanted to leave the Church of England, but again it was the problem of predestination that arose. St. Augustine's idea of predestination was accepted, and it had its effect on society. It makes people cruel, as a matter of fact, if they think of somebody as damned. Augustine's idea that you would never know who was blessed and who was damned had softened that part of it. "We know we're the blessed and you're the damned." But Whitefield wanted to temper it again. In 1741 there was a break in the Methodist Council. Wesley became the standard, and Whitefield went off to America on tours and gave 18,000 speeches, etc. But they have always split on this subject of predestination. Why? Nobody likes it. It's not a good doctrine, but the only alternative is preexistence. For Aristotle that was a no-no. That's why they got rid of it. I mean preexistence was an absolutely solid doctrine in the early Christian writings; the earliest fathers were full of it. But later on they got rid of it because Aristotle said, "There can't be another world; there can't be other intelligent beings. We are the only ones that are possible." So there we go.

But this is very important to be reconciled. Reconciliation is coming back. These words from the Latin that begin with *re* always imply *going back to a former state, returning*

home again. And, of course, the Hebrew word for it is *teshûvâh* and then *yeshûvâh*. The *teshûvâh* is *return home*; the *yeshûvâh* is *sit down when you get home*. We repeatedly have the formula in the Book of Mormon, “Will you have place with us?” Come in and have place to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Then he goes on here in verse 11: “Wherefore, beloved brethren, be reconciled unto him through the atonement of Christ [it’s the Atonement that reconciles you; it’s the *at-one-ment* that brings you back home to sit down in the company of the whole family. Joseph Smith couldn’t have known this. You see, all this comes in beautifully], his Only Begotten Son [the Son of the family; the Son and the Father are completely reconciled, and we are to be reconciled to them], and ye may obtain a resurrection [there it is, a rising again], according to the power of the resurrection [the power that will raise you again] which is in Christ, and be presented as the first-fruits of Christ unto God [it was on the Day of Atonement that the Jews had to bring their first fruits, and they had to make an offering of the best thing they owned; it had to be the best of the first fruits, which was a symbol of the atonement of the Father who “so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son,” just as Abraham was willing to do the same thing, and every Jew had to do the same. Everyone had to bring his sin offering on the Day of Atonement, and they were the first fruits. So notice how nicely all these things tie together in the old temple economy], having faith, and obtained a good hope of glory in him before he manifesteth himself in the flesh.” The atonement always anticipated the Messiah, preceded by Elijah, etc., and it was the first fruits brought in on the Day of Atonement. So this all hangs together beautifully.

Verse 12: “And now, beloved, marvel not that I tell you these things; for why not speak of the atonement of Christ [that’s what he is talking about], and attain to a perfect knowledge of him, as to attain to the knowledge of a resurrection and the world to come?” Notice, there are two stages. The Atonement accomplishes two things; it accomplishes the Resurrection, and then it accomplishes the second resurrection, the second life or eternal life to come with the judgment. To accomplish our early career is a major gain, the first one, “as to attain to the knowledge of a resurrection.” Then to get back into the eternal order of things—that’s the important thing. That’s why you have to be baptized, etc., and that’s why we have to face the judgement to get back on track again after we have come here. Well, why did we offer to come here? Why did we throw the whole thing away? Everything was running smoothly, and then interrupted it with this ghastly life. The scriptures don’t say nice things about this life at all. Here we have no abiding kingdom, etc. “While you are here, fear and tremble,” said Paul to the Corinthians. It’s because we return with greatly enhanced knowledge and experience. Before we can proceed on the way, there are a few things we have to learn. There’s a particularly nasty kind of evil that we had never become acquainted with before we came here. As Irenaeus and Origen, the two earliest Christian fathers, both tell us, “They taught that in the early church, but we don’t teach it anymore.” So we have the Resurrection and the world to come.

Then he says: “For the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not.” This is a major issue in science today. What is real? This is the whole thing. He has been talking about this which is all very spiritual. But, like John, he is going to make the whole thing real. You cannot make it spiritual in John. He makes the thing quite tangible. Remember, he starts out (first letter of John), We tell you what we have seen, what we have felt with our hands, what we have heard with our ears. I’m not just making this up [paraphrased]. Then he repeats that again and again. “This is what we have actually seen of Jesus Christ.” Notice in verse 13 that the Spirit “speaketh of things as they really are [he wants to be literal

about this], and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly for the salvation of our souls. But behold, we are not witnesses alone in these things; for God also spake them unto prophets of old.”

But the Jews didn’t want to take it that way. They didn’t want to take it literally. They were too wise, he says, and the next stage is exactly what you suppose would be there. “But behold, the Jews were a stiffnecked people; and they despised the words of plainness, and killed the prophets. . . . Wherefore, because of their blindness, which blindness came by looking beyond the mark [always being too smart], they must needs fall; for God hath taken away his plainness from them. They don’t want to settle for a plain doctrine. You notice that your Jewish friends are always arguing; Woody Allen is typical. He shows you that sort of thing. He is always fretting, always arguing, always psychoanalyzing himself, never settling for any particular answer. Well, it’s good to have an inquiring mind. There’s nothing more exhilarating than to live among those people, but it drives you nuts. They have been doing the same thing all these years, just like reading the *Talmud* all the time. It’s great, but, as Jacob says, “God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they cannot understand because they desired it [they like this sophisticated talk and all that Woody Allen chatter]. And because they desired it God hath done it, that they may stumble [and, of course, there’s a great deal of stumbling], . . . that by the stumbling of the Jews they will reject the stone upon which they might build and have safe foundation.”

Again, Jacob knows the traditions here, you see. That’s the *eben shetiyyāh*, the foundation stone upon which the world must be founded. There’s a great deal of legend and speculation about the *eben shetiyyāh*. The problem is what is the world founded on. One thing stands on another and another on another, but in the end what do you stand on? It’s the stone of foundation, the *eben shetiyyāh*. It’s related to our word *sit*, the stone of sitting on, the stone of establishments. Both *sit* and *stand* are related to it. Verse 16: “But behold, according to the scriptures, this stone shall become the great, and the last, and the only sure foundation, upon which the Jews can build. And now, my beloved, how is it possible that these, after having rejected the sure foundation, can ever build upon it, that it may become the head of their corner? [he asks an important question which is not a rhetorical question; then he says he is going to give them the answer to it; these very people are the ones upon whom the Lord is going to build] Behold, my beloved brethren, I will unfold this mystery unto you [he is going to tell them how in the next chapter, but he says, I have to control myself; I get shaken up by these things; he is really passionate]; if I do not, by any means, get shaken from my firmness in the Spirit, and stumble because of my overanxiety for you.”

Then he goes into the story of the olive tree. We’re not going to have time for that. Here are seventy-seven verses all about the olive tree, of all things. Do you notice what the idea of it is? Do you labor through it? Do you enjoy reading it again and again? Does it enlighten you? I see somebody it doesn’t enlighten. It’s the ethnic picture of the New World. Notice what we have here. This is Abraham’s seed sown among all the nations of the earth. What we have here is this long, fitful motion and mixing and separation and collision and ebb and flow and breaking and joining and scattering—springing there, expanding here, withering there. Absorbed, rejected, leavening the whole lump, like yeast—this constant churning around that makes all of the blood of Israel. There isn’t anybody here who doesn’t have the blood of Israel in him [or her]. This is the way these things mix up. If you have gone into genealogy, you know that is so. You cannot keep

certain things out of your genes, so we are all Jews. No, we aren't—Judah is just one of the tribes of Israel. We'll take up with the olive tree. Fortunately, in the next chapter after it he explains it. He says, "I'm going to explain the olive tree now." There is a reason for his putting this in here, and he dwells on it.

For the people to whom he was writing this, it would be very exciting actually. It's a very interesting sort of thing. We can't get too much of this type of literature.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 25

Jacob 5–7; Enos

The Olive Tree; The Challenge of Sherem

In the fourth chapter of Jacob he rings the gong in verses 13 and 14. What he is talking about here is absolutely basic. Notice that verse 13 is one philosophy of life, and verse 14 is the other philosophy of life. They are beautifully brought into contrast in the opening lines of *Faust*. Would somebody tell us who Faust was? He simply spooked the whole mentality of the Western World in the sixteenth century. Some say he invented printing. Dr. Faust was the great magician of the sixteenth century, the most learned man of this time. Of course, he is the subject of the greatest play ever written in German, Goethe's *Faust*. But here's what we have. He contrasts the two lines here. Notice, in verse 13 Jacob says, You lunkheads. He is trying to get through to them. He says, Can't you see what I'm talking about is real? Notice the words he uses: "For the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are [if they are true], and of things as they really will be [he keeps repeating that, and they are plain]; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls." There's no reason why you should fight them. We are not the only witnesses; the prophets are too, he says.

Then in the next verse he says the Jews wouldn't settle for that. They were too smart; they didn't want it that way. They didn't want plainness. He says they are "looking beyond the mark." They have to be smart and intellectual. It can't be as simple as all that, so that's the way Faust puts it. In the opening lines of the play he says, "I've studied everything." Then he goes on, "I'm the most famous man of my time. I know everything; I've studied everything. I've got to the depths of all the sciences and everything. Then here I am, poor old fool, and don't know any more than I ever knew before. So I've committed myself to magic; I'm going to take up magic studies now, that through the power of the spirit and revelation I might know the meaning of many secrets. That I don't need to say with sour sweat a lot of things that I don't know to move my students all the time. That I might know what really holds the universe together." The answer to that question we still don't know. We still don't know what the power is that holds the universe together. Gravitation is a complete mystery today, as it ever was. He finally decides to commit suicide, and what stops him is that Satan comes in and says, "I'll give you what you want." So he makes a pact with Satan, and the play goes on. But that takes us to the Pearl of Great Price. We won't go into that. But notice that this is absolutely basic. Here are two final solutions. They won't settle for the spiritual one, and Jacob said that's the way things really are. Well, how are we going to know it? If you start looking in the other direction, you will look forever because all scientific tests are tentative anyway. But that's the way they wanted it and, of course, they stumble. They'll always stumble on these things. But then he says, How do you think these crazy people will ever be [accepted by] the headstone of the corner? How is God ever going to build on them? he says. Well, surprise, surprise, I'm going to tell you, he says, in verse 18, "I will unfold this mystery unto you; if I do not, by any means, get shaken from my firmness in the Spirit" and get carried away by these things. He gets carried away in the olive tree story here. We can save some trouble with this story on the olive. As I said, it goes on for seventy-seven verses.

This is information on the olive culture. Joseph Smith was a farmer, but he didn't have an olive farm. It was believed in his day and mine too that olives would not grow out of sight of the Mediterranean—they had to grow on the Mediterranean shores. The olive culture is a very specialized thing, and it is described here in full detail—how to take care of olive trees and the peculiar nature of the olive tree, as the man says here. Of course, in the Book of Mormon there's no sign of olive cultivation in the New World. The olive tree [allegory] is taken from Zenos. He has taken from the prophet Zenos who lived way back between Moses and Elijah. He was an old prophet whose works were lost, but around 1906 the works of Zenos were discovered in the *Pseudo Philo*.

So here we go. First of all, this olive culture should be mentioned because this is good as an indication of reliability of the Book of Mormon. Nobody knew much about that then. Zenos' treatise on ancient olive culture, Jacob 5–6, is accurate in every detail. Olive trees do have to be pruned and cultivated diligently. The miracle of the olive tree is that it can't be killed. There are olive trees three thousand years old. The original olive trees are supposedly still in the Garden of Gethsemane. Whether that was the Garden of Gethsemane [in Jerusalem] or not, the olive trees are still there in Athens. You can cut down an olive tree until nothing is left, and the shoots will start coming out persistently. It's the source of life for the Mediterranean people. It supplies the oil. Everything is cooked in olive oil; it's nourishing in its own right. They didn't have soap. Soap was invented by the Saxons, so they always rubbed oil all over themselves and then scraped it off. That was the way to clean your pores, etc. They used it for everything. Remember our friend Solon, a contemporary of Lehi, was in the olive oil business. It's a great thing. That's why it is the Greek symbol of Athens—it's immortal, it springs up forever, etc. I grew up amid hundreds of acres of olives. Our house was right in the middle of an olive grove. They were harvested and made very high quality olives, but they had to be treated like this. Olive trees do have to be pruned and cultivated diligently. The top branches, as Jacob tells us, are the first to wither. The new shoots do come right out of the trunk. The olive is indeed the most plastic of trees, surpassing even the willow in its power to survive the most drastic whacking and burning. After a city had been destroyed, the one thing that would survive would be the olive trees. They could start life again as long as the olive was there.

Question: It speaks of the lord of the *vineyard*, and olives are trees.

Answer: A very good point; I'm glad you brought that up. Strange you should ask. I'm going to tell you pretty soon.

A good olive tree is greatly cherished. Notice he cherishes them and weeps about olive trees. A tree can be just like a pet because the quality of one olive tree isn't the same as another. When you have a good one you stick to it and do anything to keep it from dying out, deteriorating, and withering. No end of pains are taken to preserve, even through many centuries. Really superior fruit is very rare and difficult to obtain and perpetuate. The ancient way of strengthening the old trees, especially in Greece, was to graft in the shoots of the oleaster, which was the wild olive. All over the valley here, you'll notice, the one tree that grows everywhere is the Russian olive. You know these grayish trees? They [the pioneers] brought them in for shade, but they just grow wild everywhere. They don't bear olives, of course. They call them Russian olives because they belong to the family of the olives, and their leaves are just like olives. But they grow wild—too wild as a matter of fact. So you have to graft in the shoots of the oleaster, the wild olive. Also shoots from valuable old trees are transplanted. Another thing is that it will not only grow

up just like that if you whack it off, but also it is the easiest tree in the world to graft. You just have to stick a branch into it and it's growing. It's an amazing tree. Too much grafting produces a nondescript and cluttered yield of fruit, as we find in Jacob's story. The top branches, if allowed to grow up—as in Spain and France where they plant them along the road and use them for shade among other things—while producing a good shade tree (they form that way) will indeed sap the strength of the tree and give a poor crop. Fertilizing with dung is very important (he uses that word *dung* a number of times here) in spite of the preference for rocky ground, and has been practiced since ancient times. You notice, to the master's surprise, in the poorest ground it grows very well. The thing to be most guarded against is the bitterness of the fruit. That's why you soak it in brine for so long. All of these points, taken from a treatise on ancient olive culture, are duly, though quite casually, noted in Zenos's Parable of the Olive Tree.

So here we have a real olive tree going on here. He talks about it, and, as you said, what about this? Well, you see the nature of the olive tree is best to compare with this. You can cut, you can spread it, you can scatter it, you can try to destroy it. In parts where it became inferior, then all of a sudden it improved later on. Another part that was very superior suddenly and surprisingly started giving bitter fruit. This will happen. It will fool you an awful lot. So this is sort of a complex ethnical figure in the New World. This is Abraham's seed among all the inhabitants of the earth, mixed in all together. So Zenos spoke of the house of Israel. "Hearken, O ye house of Israel, and hear the word of me, a prophet of the Lord. For behold, thus saith the Lord, I will liken thee, O house of Israel like unto a tame olive-tree, which a man took and nourished in his vineyard; and it grew, and waxed old, and began to decay." So we go down the list here. He pruned it. You can list the number of operations that take place; there are quite a number. There's not as much duplication as you think. And you may think of the laborious, boring style here. Remember, Jacob apologizes for being carried away in his style, etc. This long thing wouldn't bore an ancient audience, necessarily, but it's a display of Jacob's own versatility. For example, a classic subject of disputation in the schools of rhetoric, especially in ancient Babylon and also in Greece, was a debate between trees. The olive tree would debate with the vine as to which was superior, and this would go on and on and on. They could go on all day; they never got tired of this stuff. Terence and Galbungus are supposed to have debated for fourteen days and nights on whether *ego* has a vocative case.

We proceed here with the grafting on the branches and the like, and the various things you can do with the olive tree. There are other writings like this that you could compare with it for style. And you ask this question when you look at it here: How does it describe the condition of the world today? You'll find that description in here too. I mentioned before those four chapters, 14–17, in John where he is talking about the relationship of the Father, the Son, the apostles, and the people to whom the apostles would preach—and also the world comes in. He goes over and over and over it again. He seems to be repeating, but he isn't exactly repeating. All those four chapters are taken up with just that. There are hundreds and hundreds of prepositions tied together by nouns, and also the pronouns: I and me, me and thee, thee and them, etc. In one chapter I think there are over 200 of those personal pronouns. That's the same sort of thing. You'd think John would get tired and worn out talking like that, but he knew exactly what he was talking about and made it very clear. He had to rub it in too.

Well, this [Jacob 5] goes on with various things. There's this thing about the garden. I mentioned that it [the olive tree] prefers the rocky land. The karst of the Dalmatian Coast is absolutely bare rock where the soil has been washed away. It was timbered once upon a

time. Anciently, the timber was all cut down, and the soil was all washed away. That happens when you cut them down; you lose them forever. But the whole coast of Dalmatia is olive groves, and between the olive trees are the vines growing. The word *kerem* is the word for *olive grove* in its oldest occurrence when it appears in the book of Judges 15:5. But in the rest of the Bible it means *a vineyard*. In [Ezra 7:22 and in Isaiah 27:2] they sometimes use the expression *kerem hēmer*. Isaiah used *kerem hēmer*, which is very interesting because *hēmer* isn't the Hebrew word for *grapes* or *vines*. It's the Arabic word (*khamr*) for *grapes*, *vines*, and *wine*. *Yayin* is the Hebrew word whence the Greeks get *oinos*, and we get our *wine*. Latin *vinum* and *wine* because the grapes did come from the Middle East. Palestine is the home of the vine, as well as the olive; they go together. There's the very famous poem by Ovid about the olive and the vine—how the vine clings to the olive and grows up around it, etc. The wedding of the olive and the vine is a classic theme. But here the word actually means either one. It means a *vineyard* or it means *an olive grove*, and they grew together. So when you see *kerem* in the Old Testament, you can translate it as either one. That's exactly what Jacob has done here. Of course, he was not a cultivator; he was born after the family left home. He had probably never seen grapes growing, unless it was wild grapes down in the Qara Mountains. I doubt that. But he is talking in terms of the scriptures because he says he is quoting Zenos; he is taking his story from Zenos. It's not his own experience at all. This is a very old story, and in very old times, before the days of Isaiah, they called it a *kerem hēmer*. And *hēmer* (*khamr*) is the Arabic word for *wine*, as against *yayin*, our [the Hebrew] word for *wine*. So it is very old, and you can use *garden* or *orchard* (it's six of one and half a dozen of the other).

He talks about preserving the roots and about transplanting here. Then he goes on about improvement of the crop in verse 17. The roots assert themselves, as they will—they'll catch on (verse 18). It's marvelous that they can grow in that rocky soil. They bring forth tame fruit, and then there's a problem of storage, "I shall lay up against the season, unto mine own self." It's like wine; the rarer vintage you keep. If it's particularly good, they'll say, "Up at Sunen the olives are particularly good this year, so this is a good year." Sometimes it's a bad one. It's the same thing with wine, as we all know. I'm sure we're experts on wine [laughter]. They go to the "nethermost part of the vineyard," and then there's the harvest where they hid the natural branches of the tree. There are very interesting discourses on this by Galen, the doctor. They would tie rocks from the branches so they would grow low and be easy to harvest. The classic way is to whack the tree with long poles and then catch the olives in a canvas; that's the way they did. But they would do these tricks and make the tree grow as low as possible so they could reach as much fruit as [possible]. But Galen gave a different explanation, a very amusing one.

Verse 21: "How comest thou hither to plant this tree, or this branch of the tree? For behold, it was the poorest spot in all the land of thy vineyard." Notice, in the poorest spot. Here was experimental planting; you do that all the time. You have to try things because you never know what's going to happen. "And the Lord of the vineyard said unto him: Counsel me not; I knew that it was a poor spot of ground. . . . And thou knowest that this spot of ground was poorer than the first." He not only let it grow there, but he planted it in even poorer, marginal ground. He was determined on expansion, and it brought forth much fruit. He wanted to expand his enterprise. (It's almost like the stock market; you can play around with olives and do things like that.) Another branch also brought forth fruit. You can lose all, and you can gain all. Notice that he talks about the hybrids here in verse 25: "Behold, this have I planted in a good spot of ground; and I have nourished it this long time, and only a part of the tree hath brought forth tame fruit, and the other

part of the tree hath brought forth wild fruit.” Well, that happens too. It would surprise you, these hybrids that come. Then the pruning is so important. It will stand almost any amount of pruning. “Pluck off the branches that have not brought forth good fruit, and cast them into the fire [then you have to rake up the orchard]. . . . The servant said unto him: Let us prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it a little longer, that perhaps it may bring forth good fruit unto thee, . . . and the end soon cometh.” Then there’s corruption. The tree can be spoiled, and once it’s gone what are you going to do? He tries desperately to save it. He’s talking about Israel now, you see. Verse 30: “And they came to the tree whose natural branches had been broken off, and the wild branches had been grafted in; and behold all sorts of fruit did cumber the tree.”

Israel is mixed up with everybody here, and I think you could show that if you put a sociologist on that. And it had tastes of every sort. There was this bad tree that had no good fruit on it at all. The Lord said, “What shall we do unto the tree, that I may preserve again good fruit thereof unto mine own self?” And the servant wanted to save it. They grafted in the oleaster, but what happened? In verse 37 the wild branches overrun the roots. They take complete control of the fruit, and the roots begin to perish. The natural branches become corrupt, and then they all become corrupt. Then the poor Lord of the vineyard wept because it was a precious olive tree, and he said, “What could I have done more for my vineyard?” He keeps calling it a vineyard because *olive grove* is two words. They use the same word for both (*kerem*), and in English we prefer one word to using two, I’m sure. It’s greater economy. So all had become corrupted. It’s getting bad in verse 42: “And now all the trees of my vineyard are good for nothing save it be to be hewn down and cast into the fire.” This is the last day. Boy, this is where we are now, you see. It’s cause for alarm. “Who is it that has corrupted my vineyard?” He goes into that and it goes on and on. Verse 77: “And then cometh the season and the end; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire.” That’s the final end, and you can see all the episodes in between—all the things that can happen to Israel.

Then he explains it in chapter 6. “This is my prophecy—that the things which this prophet Zenos spake, concerning the house of Israel, in the which he likened them unto a tame olive tree, must surely come to pass.” So he’s going to explain what’s going to happen to the house of Israel. Zenos’s [account] is in terms of the olive tree. This is in terms of Jacob himself. He begins at the end. He is going to go backwards. Then the rest are flashbacks. But he tells how it’s all going to end. (This is a common dramatic form; especially in movies they do this. You see what brought this all to pass, and then it goes back and tells you the story of how this came to be.) He’s talking about “the last time, that the servants of the Lord shall go forth in his power, to nourish and prune his vineyard.” Verse 3: “And the world shall be burned with fire [wow!]. And how merciful is our God unto us, for he remembereth the house of Israel, both roots and branches [but they don’t like it; they fight him]. . . . They are a stiffnecked and a gainsaying people.” Then why bring a plan to such people? The gospel has no better chance on the earth than a snowball in hell. People aren’t going to accept it. They didn’t in the time of Moses, they didn’t in the time of Christ, and they don’t today. They gave Joseph a bad time from the first, you see. Then John tells us why they didn’t [accept the gospel]. As he said in the beginning, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. . . . The light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God” (see John 1:11–12). Now isn’t that worth doing, just for a few, if it is possible? There’s the *power* again. And we have here: “They are a stiffnecked and a gainsaying people; but as many as will not harden their hearts shall be saved in the kingdom of God.” So there are some that won’t, and for the sake of them it’s worth it.

That's what the test is all about, as John tells us—that as many as would hearken become sons of God.

So the theme is *repent* because all are capable and all are culpable. Notice that He cleaves to us. It's up to us. God is waiting for any old time that you're willing to come around. Remember, he will cleave unto you. "And while his arm of mercy is extended towards you in the light of the day, harden not your hearts." But work, he says, for the day cometh when no man can. The day isn't going to be here forever, so it's very urgent. He uses the expression, Don't procrastinate, whatever you do. Don't put it off because an awful lot is at stake here. Why would we make just a few short years [decide our situation for] a whole stretch of eternity hereafter? Could that thing really be so? It really is. There are just a few bugs to get out of our existence here to perpetuate our life. The Russians think they can do it and make a person practically immortal. They can extend life, but then you have this. There's no [point in] living forever unless you have reason to live forever. We'll come to that later, but Nephi explained that too—why you would live forever. He said you will cross that bridge when you get to it. The Lord will tell you everything you are going to do hereafter, and you don't worry about it as you go. When you get there you will know there is plenty to be done, but meantime you can't bear the thought of living for a thousand years. It would bore you stiff. We have Heinlein's stories about "the old ones," those who can't die. They are the miserable old ones. They suffer unspeakably. They are bored because they have seen everything. "*Omnia fui et nihil expedit*," as the emperor Severus said, "I've seen everything, and nothing is worth bothering about."

But you have to go on living. As we learn here in the Book of Mormon very definitely, they cannot die. You have to go on whether you like it or not because that has already been arranged. As I said, in theory there's no reason why that can't be so. The second law [determines] why we break down—why we last just a particular period and then suddenly shut off, as if it were arranged ahead of time. If you can live ten years, why can't you live twenty? If you can live twenty, why can't you live thirty? You can go up to the hundreds, etc. And we cover quite a stretch of time. As I said, I have personally and intimately been acquainted with people whose lives stretch more than 250 years apart. I have known them personally, my grandfather and my grandson. The one will be living 253 years from the time the other was born, if he lives even as long as I have. So there you are. There is a time limit. Notice verse 6 says *today*. "Yea, today, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts; for why will ye die? . . . After ye have been nourished by the good word of God all the day long, will ye bring forth evil fruit [there's the vineyard], that ye must be hewn down and cast into the fire?"

So is the crisis so great? The word *crisis* means "the point of judgment, the point of decision." Why would you be hewn down and thrown in the fire just for being a human being—fiddling around and doing the things that normal human beings do, making a fool of yourself the way we all do, etc.? Why would you be damned like that? Hewn down and cast into the fire. You have to make it [the decision]; you have to insist on it, he says. Notice verse 8: "Behold, will ye reject these words? Will ye reject the words of the prophets; and will ye reject all the words which have been spoken concerning Christ . . . and deny the good word of Christ, and the power of God . . . and quench the Holy Spirit." Notice there are steps by which you do it here. First, you reject it. Then you vocally deny it. Then you quench it and do everything you can to stamp out the Holy Spirit. Then you mock it; you make fun of the whole thing. You mock the great plan of redemption.

Well, what do you expect if you do that? You've asked for it. You "make a mock of the great plan of redemption, which hath been laid for you [you'll never get home now if you are not careful, if you miss this time]. Know ye not that if ye will do these things, that the power of the redemption and the resurrection, which is in Christ, will bring you to stand with shame and awful guilt before the bar of God?" By that, you'll have to stand at the resurrection and stand before the Lord in shame and awful guilt. You are brought back to stand trial. Then there's this lake of fire and brimstone. This is a metaphor. "Ye must go away into that lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever, which lake of fire and brimstone is endless torment [that is what *brimstone* represents—just like the olive tree and the house of Israel; you're not a real olive tree; don't get that idea]. O then, my beloved brethren, repent ye, and enter in at the strait gate, and continue in the way which is narrow, until ye shall obtain eternal life." There is a proper course to follow. It's rather an easy one, but you have to watch now.

Now there is a character by the name of Sherem who challenges this teaching. He is included in here because he gave Jacob a bad time. He didn't want to take any of this, so this is the argument on the other side. This is the way most people go. He began to preach that there should be no Christ. As I said, I have plenty of friends who not only believe that Christ will never return, they don't believe for a minute that I believe it. They can't accept the idea that I would be fool enough to believe that, but I'm definitely sure of it. So he began to preach that there would be no Christ, "and he preached many things which were flattering unto the people." He gave them what they wanted to hear: God is dead, all is permitted. That's what they wanted to hear because, remember, these people were misbehaving. They were getting too rich, but above all they were being immoral. So they didn't want to hear this. What he told them was flattering to hear. There's no trouble at all; just go right ahead doing what you are doing. He was permissive, in other words, "that he might overthrow the doctrine of Christ." Notice that he was a rhetorician. He was a popular orator, a spellbinder. That meant a lot. Verse 4: "And he was learned, that he had a perfect knowledge of the language of the people [the vernacular; he knew how to manipulate]; wherefore, he could use much flattery, and much power of speech, according to the power of the devil." Make them feel good, butter them up. As Isaiah said, "They want to hear smooth things." Just talk smooth things to them and you are elected; you're in there. Joseph Smith said, "The devil is an orator." He certainly is. Jacob said, "For I truly had seen angels, and they had ministered unto me." But Sherem hadn't seen them. Sherem is being very orthodox. He thinks he is the religious one. He thinks he's pious. Notice that this is typical. You defend yourself by an attack. He said, Jacob is leading the people astray; he is teaching false doctrine. Constantine called the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325, and Eusebius was there. He was there in person; he was a friend of the emperor. They were discussing things such as seating problems and all this protocol stuff, and they started debating issues. Finally, a rustic farmer who had been attending up in the gallery, got up and said he didn't know whether it was the greater miracle to make a stone speak or to make a philosopher shut up. Which is the greater miracle? Anyway, Sherem was this kind, and he was powerful. So he came up to him and said, "Brother Jacob [speaking to him very benevolently], I have sought much opportunity that I might speak unto you [I've been wanting to speak to you for a long time; he is posing as the zealous champion of truth]; for I have heard and also know that thou goest about much, preaching that which ye call the gospel, or the doctrine of Christ [oh, no]. And ye have led away much of this people that they pervert the right way of God, and keep not the law of Moses which is the right way." See, he is teaching the orthodox way; he's doing what's right. He's Sherem, the defender of the faith of orthodoxy.

And you notice that it's not a case of believer versus nonbeliever, or atheist versus theist. No, this is our simplistic view of things. We always think of the Book of Mormon as these conflicts between the good guys and the bad guys, the people that believed and the people that didn't. No, he wasn't an atheist at all. We keep "the law of Moses which is the right way. . . . And now behold, I, Sherem, declare unto you that this is blasphemy [what you are teaching]." What does the word *blasphemy* mean? What does it come from? What is *blasphemia*? To speak *blaptō*, which is what? It's *to treat lightly*, not with contempt, but not seriously. It is not to damn something to hell. It is not to say horrible and tremendous things, but *to treat lightly*. It's much worse to treat the gospel as trivia and laugh it off (you can't reach people like that) than it is to attack it savagely and say, "I'll show you where it is wrong," and really do some studying because then you are in danger. But that's what *blasphemy* is. We get the impression that when a person speaks blasphemy, he has spoken terrible things. He has denounced and used vile language. That's not it. *Blasphemy* is treating it lightly, "This is nothing; we'll laugh it off." It's laughing something off, which is the best argument if you want to crush something that you can't answer. You just laugh it off and walk out of the room. They ask plenty of questions about the gospel, but they never wait for the answers. I've noticed that, and I've had a lot of talks with some of those people.

Verse 7: "I, Sherem, declare unto you that this is blasphemy; for no man knoweth of such things; for he cannot tell of things to come [that's true; you can't know for yourself]. . . . But behold, the Lord God poured in his Spirit into my soul." That's an interesting expression. Is this a circumlocution for inspiration? He uses these eloquent expressions. The impression you get is a sudden idea or sudden inspiration. It suddenly came to him, just like that. We might express it differently. While I was talking with Sherem, he poured his spirit into my soul—I knew exactly what I was to say; it was not myself speaking, "insomuch that I did confound him in all his words [I was able to stop him cold—that was it]." He doesn't tell us the debate that took place in which he confounded him. All the schools are founded on *disputatio*, the disputation. That's what you do. That's how you train rhetoricians. We have mock courts here to train lawyers, etc. Rhetoric is a vile profession, as Socrates explained to his friend Gorgias, who was the greatest rhetorician of his time. Do you know our word *gorgeous* comes from his name because of the style of rhetoric he introduced. He came from Sicily, and he opened a school with his friend Protagoras. He was the first person to make a million dollars teaching law and rhetoric, how to win cases and sway legislatures, etc. That's what he was.

Notice Sherem has already backtracked in verse 9. "And he said: If there should be a Christ, I would not deny him [that's all right; I'd accept him]; but I know that there is no Christ, neither has been, nor ever will be. And I said unto him: [well, what about the scriptures?] Believest thou the scriptures? And he said, Yea. And I said unto him: Then ye do not understand them; for they truly testify of Christ." The Atonement is the subject of the Old Testament. Since I've done this thing on the Atonement, that I was supposed to finish up today (there are a lot of footnotes), that has come home to me so strongly. The whole thing is atonement; the whole thing is the mission of the Messiah. That's what the whole Old Testament is about. Of course, the Jews won't accept that. But the scriptures "truly testify of Christ . . . and it also has been made manifest unto me by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, I know if there should be no atonement made all mankind must be lost." The atonement, the sacrifice of Isaac, was not complete. Isaac actually wasn't sacrificed. They say that's the atoning sacrifice.

Notice he gets a bit sarcastic here. He falls back on the thing you're sure he's going to fall back on, "Show me a sign." Give me a sign or a symbol. Verse 13: "Show me a sign by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the which ye know so much." You know so much about this Holy Ghost; you just try to tell me who the Holy Ghost is. This is very cynical and sarcastic. Jacob says he doesn't want to tempt God to show a sign. "Nevertheless, not my will be done; but if God shall smite thee, let that be a sign unto thee that he has power, both in heaven and in earth." Well, the guy had a severe stroke then. He was overwrought anyway; he had been losing the argument. I think he was all excited and ready to bust a blood vessel, so he collapsed completely and fell down. He had to be nourished for many days. He had a bad stroke and passed out completely. He was the high pressure type, Type A like me, that gets those things. We have to watch all the time, you see. When he came to himself, he asked that the people be gathered together. Verse 16: "I desire to speak unto the people before I shall die." It's clear because he was still claiming to be orthodox. He was still accepting the Bible, so he is still available. This brought him to repentance, and he saw that he had been wrong. "And he spake plainly unto them and denied the things which he had taught them, and confessed Christ." He had done it out of vanity; this happens all the time. As Faust says, "mit saurem Schweiss zu sagen brauche, was ich nicht weiss." Faust makes a lot of speeches on that; this hypocrisy worries him very much and makes him sick. "For I denied the Christ, and said that I believed the scriptures; and they truly testify of him." (Remember that *Christ* here is the Christian equivalent of *Messiah*, *mashûah*, which means *the Anointed*. *Chriō* is the Greek word for *anoint*, and *Christos* is one who had been anointed, *the Anointed One*. *Messiah* is the "one who has been anointed." *Jehôshuaî*, *Jesus Christ* means *the Savior, the Anointed One*.)

"I have thus lied unto God," [Sherem said]. . . . And it came to pass that when he had said these words he could say no more, and he gave up the ghost, . . . [The multitude were impressed] and they were overcome that they fell to the earth." You notice in the Book of Mormon they fall to earth quite often when they are overpowered; there's this spontaneous falling to earth. There are formal and traditional responses to certain stress, and they differ very greatly. For example, in the German classroom if you like what a teacher says, everybody starts stamping on the wooden floor just like that until the whole building shakes. If you like it that's perfectly all right—that's accepted. If you don't like what he says [that's only fair], you hiss until you raise the ceiling. That's all right; you can do that. They are much more outspoken and much less restrained than we are. With an Anglo-Saxon stiff upper lip, we never indulge in things like that. Above all we don't collapse and fall down, but that's a common Oriental gesture. That's the way you salute. That's the way you recognize things. Five times a day you put your little rug on the ground, and you fall down on your face. This is called *proskynēsis*. It means "falling right down and kissing the ground." The *proskynēsis* is a very common way of demonstration in the ancient world. When the emperor came, there was a *proskynēsi*. When the pope passed, everybody fell down flat. You're supposed to be overpowered; this is the idea. With the Romans you were supposed to blind yourself like this. The dazzling light of the king is so great that you put your hand in front of your face to protect your eyes. That's the *proskynēsis* and the salute.

Of course, by the miracle Sherem had tipped the scales here. The people had attended the disputation here, and it was going both ways. Then Sherem lost it. When Jacob won hands down, it made a big impression. They were ready to be impressed now. Then Sherem himself came and admitted [his wrongdoing] and confessed it. Then when he

died, the multitude immediately went down in the *proskynēsis* and recognized [what had happened] with this spontaneous gesture which is very common in the Orient. “Since when have thy knees forgot their duty?” etc. If you don’t do that, of course, you are in real trouble in the presence of the emperor or someone like that. *Richard II* has something to say about that. Verse 23: “And it came to pass that peace and the love of God was restored again among the people.” So he [seems to] end on a happy note. But they tried to restore the Lamanites, and this was hopeless. He says they couldn’t move them. Verse 24: “But it all was vain, for they delighted in wars and bloodshed, and they had an eternal hatred against us, their brethren. And they sought by the power of their arms to destroy us continually.” There were these blood feuds. You thought it was going to end upbeat, but it ends on a very sad note in an extremely eloquent passage.

I think there is nothing in the Book of Mormon more moving than this. The prose sounds like a solemn dirge here in verse 26: “I, Jacob, began to be old; and the record of this people being kept on the other plates of Nephi, wherefore, I conclude this record declaring that I have written according to the best of my knowledge, by saying [and this is it] that the time passed away with us, and also our lives passed away like as it were unto us a dream, we being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers, cast out from Jerusalem, born in tribulation, in a wilderness, and hated of our brethren, which caused wars and contentions; wherefore, we did mourn out our days.” Notice the spondees. It reminds me more of the border ballads of Scotland than anything else, like “Edward,” “Clark Sanders,” “The Percy,” “The Douglas,” and “Bonny George Campbell.” They are very sad. Percy’s *Reliques* and the border ballads of Scotland are very sad.

There came some men by middle day,
Who saw their sport and went their way
And brought the king that very night
Who brought my bier and slew my knight.

There are these terrible stories they tell of the border wars because of perpetual feuds. So this situation exists. Look at Ireland today. My great-grandparents moved over from Edinburgh to Ulster. My great-grandfather was the first branch president in Ireland—the one I remember, who was twenty years old when Joseph Smith died. My grandmother left Ireland when she was seventeen, and she said she never wanted to go back. This was way back in those days. She said all she could remember in Belfast was blood running down the gutter. She said she could just see that blood in the gutters. So these feuds go on forever and ever. This is one of those perennial feuds that you have in the Book of Mormon. Of course, you get it in the Old World all the time. Look what they are having in Lebanon today. Is there ever going to be any settlement? This is the same feeling of blood, hatred, despair, and mourning out our days that you find in the Book of Mormon. It’s Oriental and Near Eastern. This is Palestine today. It’s sad—the Jews and the Arabs are having terrible times.

Now we come to the book of Enos. This is a fascinating book because it is a very good portrait study. Notice in verse 27 it says that Jacob gave the plates to his son Enos. Enos received the plates as his successor to the highest religious office in the state. He was the grandson of Lehi, so he was a blue blood. He would have been the king, but remember that Nephi’s people anointed his brothers to be the high priests. The kings were apparently minor figures, as you find them very often in history. The king is not the important person at all. Enos would be “king presumptive” as far as that goes. But the kings were

named Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Nephi. You never read about them here, but this isn't the historical part anyway. But still Enos was a person of great importance who would be the next high priest. In this religious community, the kings are not the real leaders. The kings were often ghost kings, like the queen [Elizabeth II of Great Britain]. She opened Parliament this week and read a speech to Parliament, which was her policy for the coming year. She didn't know what the speech said until she read it in Parliament; she didn't write it at all. It was written for her by Parliament. Then she just read the speech as if she was giving the orders for the whole thing.

Now Enos is out hunting. The best way to keep a pretender to the throne or an aspiring prince from getting into trouble and trying to jump the gun, of course, is to send him hunting (I brought something along about that, I think).

“Oh where ha’e ye been, Lord Randall my son?
O where ha’e ye been, my handsome young man?”
“I ha’e been to the wild wood: mother, make my bed soon,
For I’m weary wi’ hunting, and fain wald lie down.”

[He has been poisoned. The last line is not the way Brother Nibley quoted it.]

See, people are always trying to get rid of him, so they send him out hunting to be safe. But it's not to be safe when you go out hunting. Remember what happened to William II, the son of William the Conqueror. He was redheaded and he went out hunting in the forest one day. A fellow called Tirel was hunting, and William was shot. It was a political thing, and he was killed. He said he took William's red head for a squirrel. Well, maybe he did, but it's not safe for princes to hunt alone. Enos is hunting alone here. What happened to Siegfried? He was the prince and successor. Remember who came up and stabbed him in the back while they were hunting? He was hunting alone, and Gunther came up behind him and put a spear in his back. That was the end of Siegfried, so kings shouldn't hunt alone. There's a recent history of Persia by Rafsanjani (another one) who counts that no less than sixty-seven shahs of Persia (princes) were murdered on the hunt because you can have all sorts of accidents on the hunt, you see. How convenient to get rid of him. There is hardly a single shah in all the history of Persia, over a thousand years, that succeeded the person before him legitimately, as a son or anything else. It was always somebody else. Every shah fought the next shah and plotted against him. He said no less than sixty-seven shahs of Persia were killed on the hunt.

So here is a prince going on the hunt, and he is wrestling before God. He tells us he is not having much fun here. He comes out to think about things, and he does. That's a situation in which you can do it. Remember another person who went out hunting and was thinking about things in the woods? He had just been married a year when he left his wife and baby and retreated to the woods. That was Gautama Buddha, Siddhartha. He was a member of a princely family, a Rajan. The Rajan were kinglets, like Jacob and Enos. Jacob was not virtual ruler, but he had considerable clout in the state. That's what Buddha's father was; he had that influence too. But Buddha starting thinking about the worthlessness of it all. Well, his father didn't want him to get religion, so he surrounded him with all sorts of luxuries and things to distract his attention—the beautiful damsels and all that—with everything you can imagine. That spoiled him even more. He saw the worthlessness of it all; he wasn't getting anywhere. The worthlessness of the world just gnawed at him. He emerged with a totally different philosophy—the absolute, diametrical opposite of our friend Enos. It was the same situation. He was probably born in the same

year as Enos. He was born in 563 B.C. You can figure out that was just about the time Enos was born. Enos and the Buddha were the same age. Gautama was his family name, and Siddhartha, the prince, [was his given name]. *Buddha* means *the Enlightenment*; that was the name he got. He retreated from the world, sat under the popple tree, and had his revelations. He founded the religion which had more members than any other. But it is a philosophy; it's not really a religion. There are two basic principles. The first is, "There is no I; there is no ego. You are going to be absorbed into Nirvana." He went the opposite, you see. He had all this luxury and everything. What did it mean? Nothing, and it obsessed him. So what are we? We are nothing. Just forget that—forget any projects, forget any ifs, and be absorbed. That is just the opposite of Enos, where it is the individual who is going to live eternally. He is going to be exalted and go on. The other is just to be absorbed. One part of the philosophy is, "Don't expect anything, and you won't be disappointed." The other is, "The five senses betray us and don't show us reality at all." We don't see reality, we are not going anywhere, and you are not you. It's denial of the whole thing. On that is based a philosophy of life, self-control, behavior, etc.

Notice that he had been taught in his father's language, "and also in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." He was a very thoughtful young man, and he really had a conscience. The uselessness of his life was worrying him sick. He says, "And I will tell you of the wrestle which I had before God, before I received a remission of my sins." Notice, it wasn't like Jacob wrestling with God (not the angel; it's translated "the angel" in our Bible, but that's not correct). When you wrestle before God, that means you try to . . . What does a wrestler do when he starts to compete? He tries to strike position. They have to take up a position or a stance—you decide your approach, etc. [Suppose] you have been living in the world of daily life and been completely preoccupied with trivial things ("for to be carnally minded is death" comes strongly to me all the time; carnally minded is concerned with anything related to this world). If you think about that and then you are going to approach God, you can't do it just cold like that. You can't just say, "Hey God, listen to me; I have something to say." You are facing the Most High here, and you can't put anything over on him. He can see right through you, so you had better be careful what you say. It is going to be to your great advantage to see through yourself and everything else because he is going to see through you. So you wrestle with it; you have a struggle to tear yourself loose from your preoccupations and thoughts and your petty ideas. And to keep concentrated during prayer takes some effort. That is why in the ancient Christian circle, you concentrate your mind, as in a burning glass, on a particular object. It takes great concentration; it's not easy.

With Enos it's a wrestle, and he is not content with his life at all. He feels he is not living up to his capacity or anything else. It's like a prince having a good time, wasting his time. He is hunting now and probably hunts too much. He says, This is getting me nowhere. He makes it very clear here. He went to hunt beasts in the forests, "and the words which I had often heard my father speak [they kept going through his head] concerning eternal life, and the joy of the saints, sunk deep into my heart [he couldn't get them out. When he was hunting, he wouldn't want anything to do with that—riding along thinking of these things, or walking as the case may be]. And my soul hungered." He really needed something. I see the time is up now, so we'll leave hungry in that case. It won't do us any harm. We have four more meetings, and we may be able to get as far as the middle of Mosiah. Mosiah is an extremely important book. That is absolutely tops. It takes a different tone entirely from these others.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 26
Enos; Jarom; Omni
The Struggle of Enos

Who was Enos in the Bible? Does anybody know? Remember Adam had the sons Cain and Abel, among others. Cain disqualified, though they had great hopes for him. You know what happened to Abel. Then the next one in succession had the name of *Seth*, which means successor, substitute, double Adam, next Adam. His son was *Enos*, which means *Adam* or *man again*. It's the same meaning exactly. It means a human being. So we have three Adams in a row there. Also there are other names [that are interesting]. You notice we had that Sherem. Who would Sherem be? All names are epithets; they describe something about where a person lived, what he looked like, and something like that in all languages. *Sherem* means snub nosed or pug nosed. It's the same as the Latin *Simus*. They had *Rufus* for red hair, and *Curtis* for short man, etc. So Enos is man, and these other names have meanings too.

Enos is an important book, but we have to race through it here. It's just one chapter, you notice, but what a chapter! Remember that he was very well taught. His father was the high priest. His uncle was Nephi. That would make him a duke, I suppose. He was of princely descent. His father taught him in his language "and also in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." His father was the high priest, and in this type of state the high priest ranks as high as the king because this is inherited from Egypt too. In the Egypt of Lehi's day, the high priest of Thebes was equal to the Pharaoh. The Theban Pharaohs would marry their daughters or their sons into the high priestly family of Thebes in order to fix themselves because some of them were foreign dynasties. Or if it was the Tanidic or Semitic group over in the east delta, they would also take over the high priesthood. The king himself would take it over, as in the case of Korihor (good old Book of Mormon name). Or he would marry his daughter with the title "Daughter of the God," and she would be married to the high priest of Thebes. But the priesthood and the kingship just went like that. There was much rivalry between them, and you see that Alma is quite aware of them when he talks about priestcraft later on. But here it's the same thing; there are parallels anyway. Enos speaks of "admonition of the Lord," so he was very well trained by his father. He had this wrestle, not with the Lord (like Jacob) but before God. He had things to settle here.

I'll save some time by reading from an article¹ here: The beginning of Enos's story in a hunting scene has always been treated as a picturesque detail and sometimes cited as justification for the philosophy of the National Rifle Association (the great hunt, you see). It's the classic motif of the king's son (in this case his grandson) engaged in an activity which should keep him out of mischief and trouble. However, royalty on the hunt, as we mentioned last time, is already at risk, and the next-in-line hunting alone is courting the fate of a Siegfried (whom Hagen stabbed in the back while they were out hunting; he got him out alone) or a William II, who was shot because Tired said he looked like a squirrel, and no less than that of sixty-seven Shahs of Persia (as we mentioned the last time) or their heirs, all murdered on the hunt. It is easy to see why princes should not hunt alone.

It is not healthy; these convenient accidents do happen to the next-in-line. But it was not the risk to his life and crown that distressed Enos.

You know Prince Hal in *Henry IV* and *Henry V* of Shakespeare, the three plays. He would possibly have been the greatest king England ever had if he had lived long enough; he became Henry V. He was kept safely on the sidelines until his time should come. The king indulged him in all sorts of things. He engaged in wild pranks and became a great headache to his father with irresponsible horseplay, including highway robbery and things like that—anything to amuse himself because he was bored stiff. It's this idea of capable young men who are kept out of the action and have to find some, so they either get into trouble or they go crazy like Enos does here. He just can't stand it anymore. The discontented prince is the stock figure in legend and literature, but no less in history. Enos, exactly like Gautama (we mentioned him last time—Siddhartha, the Buddha) or Harun al-Rashid, was not at all satisfied with the way his life was going. Harun al-Rashid was the greatest of the caliphs of Baghdad, but he was bored. There are stories of his boredom because he had everything like the prince of Ishan. He had a giant black slave by the name of Jaïfar who was always trying to think up new amusements for him. Well, it was the same way with Petronius. His business was to think up new arrangements and new amusements for the youthful Nero who got into all sorts of mischief, as you know. He was not an unintelligent person, but he was kept on the sidelines by the feuding of Olivia and other people like that. They used to masquerade, dress up, and go out among the people to see what was going on. There are some long stories about how the king is so bored. The king says, "What shall I do?"

"Come out and look at your rose garden; you have plenty of roses. Listen to the nightingale, etc. Go into your harem. Have a banquet."

"Look, we've had all that," he says. So they go out. He dresses up and does something desperate. He's got to get some kind of action going, so he stirs things up among his own people just to be active, you see. But this is the way it goes.

Enos said he wrestled with himself, struggling in the spirit before God before he received a remission of his sins. Notice he tells us right at the beginning here that he went to hunt beasts. It's an intensely personal history. The words of his father "concerning eternal life and the joy of the saints" kept going through his head. This is what sunk deeply into his heart. He knew there must be something better than this [hunting], in other words. He wasn't having any of it, so he said he was missing it terribly. "And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker [he asked and said, 'I've got to have something here'; he was absolutely desperate], and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication for mine own soul [he hungered—he wasn't getting what he knew should be there; his father had taught him all these wonderful things]; and all the day long did I cry unto him [he wouldn't let up; 'get me out of this,' he said]; yea, and when the night came I did still raise my voice high that it reached the heavens. And there came a voice unto me saying: Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed. And I, Enos, knew that God could not lie; wherefore, my guilt was swept away."

See, this was his obstacle. That's what guilt is—the great obstacle. It's guilt that gives you a sense of your inadequacy. That's one place where Freud was right. Your guilt builds into you whether you cover it up or not. Your guilt will accompany you, and the more you get the worse it gets to overcome. You get mental blocks, you hesitate, you're uncertain, you

lose all confidence because that guilt is behind you. And you know it if it is only in your subconscious. He said, "My guilt was swept away," so he was free to act then. The only thing that can break it down is faith, as he says in the next verse. "Because of thy faith in Christ," this happened. You've got to get confidence from somewhere, and what is faith? We could write an essay defining that, couldn't we? The interesting thing, as we said before, is that you don't pray for faith—you exercise faith. You pray for health, the necessities of life, wisdom, and all sorts of things. But you have to supply some of the faith yourself; you have to be self-generating. It's at the very center of your existence, of your consciousness and your awareness. If you didn't have that [you couldn't act; for example], you could convince a person that he couldn't move his hand. He couldn't move his hand unless he thought he could move it. I've seen that happen many times. Once a person really thinks he can't do something, he becomes absolutely paralyzed. You can hypnotize persons that way. It's a lack of faith. As soon as he gets faith and knows he can, there's nothing to it—it can be done. But you have to generate some of the faith in yourself. We generate it with various stimuli. That's what the preaching and the miracles serve for.

Verse 8: "Wherefore, go to, thy faith hath made thee whole. Now, it came to pass that when I had heard these words I began to feel a desire for the welfare of my brethren, the Nephites." They are his brethren. He is a responsible person; his father is the big man. It was Jacob who brought the people to the temple, etc. This is a great responsibility for the people, so next it turns to that. It says, "a desire for the welfare of my brethren," so it's a personal concern for his brethren the Nephites now. They become his next concern; how about them being saved? And here we have a very interesting thing. The Lord will not make him any promises, and he gets the point here. "And while I was thus struggling in the spirit, behold, the voice of the Lord came into my mind again saying . . ." He is struggling with what? Professor Budine, the old Danish philosopher used to say that sorrow is our limitations. It's your limitations that make you sad. There you are again—your limitations are due to your guilt. The inadequacies are the things you have given in to. You went for easy solutions; you wouldn't exercise your capacity or expand it or anything. So your limitations haunt you on all sides. "Cooped, cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in by saucy doubts and fears, we can't move at all." So we struggle with our own limitations. That's what we are struggling for. If you had the power to take care of anything you thought was wrong, you wouldn't worry at all. You'd enjoy doing it, wouldn't you? Well, there you are.

So he was struggling in the spirit, and the voice came to his mind. Notice, did a loud voice resound through the forest? No, he says, "The voice of the Lord came into my mind [there is such a thing; that's where you are going to receive it] again, saying: I will visit thy brethren according to their diligence in keeping my commandments [he knew they weren't diligent at all; what's going to happen here now?] I have given unto them this land, and it is a holy land; and I curse it not save it be for the cause of iniquity; wherefore, I will visit thy brethren according as I have said; and their transgressions will I bring down with sorrow upon their own heads." Now that's the last word, and it's not very encouraging: "Their transgressions will I bring down with sorrow upon their own heads." When Enos heard that, he knew he was on the right track here, and his "faith began to be unshaken in the Lord." As a very generous, great-hearted person, he prayed for his brethren, the Lamanites. Notice that the Lamanites are always referred to as their "brethren," and not as "the evil empire," though look how evil they are in this book. "And I prayed unto him with many long strugglings for my brethren, the Lamanites." And he tells us in verse 14, "For at the present our strugglings were vain in restoring them to the true faith."

He didn't get a cheerful promise for the Nephites, and he is not going to get one for the Lamanites either. So this is what he prays, and it is not a prayer that is full of hope and exuberance at all. Why does he even think of this in verse 13? This was his prayer, "I desired of him—that if it should so be, that my people, the Nephites, should fall into transgression, and by any means be destroyed." So he sees that as a very distinct possibility; he got the point when he had a desire for the welfare of his people. We expect a reassuring and cheerful answer when we pray for the welfare, but you notice he doesn't get it. Must He be so brutally honest here? God goes to the point. So he prayed that if the Nephites should fall by transgression, "the Lamanites should not be destroyed [he knew Nephi's prophecy, of course], that the Lord God would preserve a record of my people, the Nephites . . . that it might be brought forth at some future day unto the Lamanites, that, perhaps, they might be brought unto salvation [it's not too hopeful for either one of them, is it? The best he can do is hope that maybe the Lamanites might get something]—For at the present our strugglings were vain in restoring them to the true faith [we couldn't get anywhere at all]. And they swore in their wrath that, if it were possible, they would destroy our records and us, and also all the traditions of our fathers." Well now, that was some situation! So he cried unto the Lord continually; the command was that he should ask Him. "Wherefore, I knowing that the Lord God was able to preserve our records, I cried unto him continually, for he had said unto me: Whatsoever thing ye shall ask in faith, believing that ye shall receive in the name of Christ, ye shall receive it."

Then here he gets his answer in verse 16. He knows how it is going to turn out now. The promise is implicit in the answer. "And he [the Lord] covenanted with me that he would bring them forth unto the Lamanites in his own due time [so it was the Lamanites that would get the record after all—there would be no Nephites around anymore. So he knows now how it will end; it comes clear]; . . . wherefore my soul did rest. And the Lord said unto me: Thy fathers have also required of me this thing; and it shall be done unto them according to their faith." Notice it's the very same thing; we are back on square one again. Lehi asked the same thing, and so did Nephi when he asked what would happen. He got the answer that they [the Lamanites] would have no power over you [the Nephites], unless they also rebel against me. Then he goes forth just like Lehi did. "I, Enos, went about among the people of Nephi, prophesying of things to come."

Let's get back to this argument for a minute about Siddhartha and Prince Hal because this contrast is a very interesting thing. He had to come to peace with himself. It is an intensely personal story. If he had nothing better to do than to hunt by himself, he was wasting his talents and he knew it: he knows he is missing something, that this is not what he should be doing—his father had told him about that. [He said] "And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication for mine own soul" (Enos 1:4). He prayed all night long, determined to find release from an intolerable situation. He felt implicitly as every intelligent person does, "Woe unto him . . . that wasteth the day of his probation, for awful is his state!" (2 Nephi 9:27). As a good prince, once his frustration, or, as he says, "my guilt was swept away" (Enos 1:6), his next thought was for his people. Now, as I mentioned, the most significant parallel to this was certainly that of the Buddha. The latter was born in 563 B.C. This is about when Enos would have been born, which makes him strictly contemporary with Enos, a grandson of Lehi. His [Gautama Buddha's] father too bore the title of king—*Rajan*, which means minor king, a priest king. But he was also like Jacob more of a counselor and tribal leader. Living in luxury (now we are quoting from his biographer), "the thoughtful young prince must have become increasingly aware of the emptiness of such a life." Well that's what worried Enos. So he left his wife and child [they had only

been married a year] and, “as did many young people of this time, . . . sought higher knowledge in the silence and solitude of the forest.” He went out into the forest in the very way that Enos did.

Is the author of the Book of Mormon simply following the Buddhist story? Far from it. The two tales separate at this point and end up at opposite poles. Buddha found the answer to his quest in “the two fundamental principles of Buddhism,” which we mentioned last time, namely that there is no permanent existence, and that there is no enduring soul—no *I* nor *Self*. And, of course, we believe in eternity; the whole thing is eternal blessings. In fact, his last verse here is a marvelous thumbnail sketch of the Atonement—it gets every point of the Atonement in one verse there. We will get to it presently, but first the two fundamental principles of Buddhism are exact opposites [of what Enos taught]. Instead of eternal life he is after, forget that—there is no permanent existence, and there is no enduring individual soul. You will be dissolved into Nirvana. These are the two principles: As an individual there is no continuation. There is no *I*; there is no *Self* because they depend on the five factors of body, feeling, awareness, the will, and consciousness. We must get rid of all of them [according to Buddhism]. These things which Gautama renounced are the substance of Enos’s salvation—eternal life for one’s self. These are the two things that the Buddhists would never allow—no eternal life and not for yourself, certainly.

We’ll go on here. These things will be brought forth unto the Lamanites. Notice this interesting description of them; it’s about as gory as you can get. Are these children of nature? No, they are not. These are not primal or primitive people he describes here in this long verse 20. There are many recent studies on this. Lord Raglan, Joseph Needham, Giorgio de Santillana, and Levi-Strauss (the anthropologist) are showing that wherever you think you find primitives what you find is the remnants of former civilizations. After all, we believe that Adam started out at the top; he was the best and smartest man of them all. We have been going down hill ever since, and there’s plenty of evidence for that. With what we call “primitives,” you ought to be darn sure you’re dealing with people that are really primitive. They are very hard to find, actually.

Verse 20: “And I bear record that the people of Nephi did seek diligently to restore the Lamanites unto the true faith in God. But our labors were vain; their hatred was fixed, [notice this:] and they were led by their evil nature that they became wild, and ferocious, and a blood-thirsty people.” They are not children of nature; that’s not the way they have lived “for millions of years.” We think we can go out and find people, such as in Australia, living as people have always lived for untold millennia. There’s no evidence for that whatsoever we now know. [It was thought] that all these primitive people throughout the world developed on parallel lines following rules of evolution wherever you go. But since [Sir James George] Frazer’s day, they have all been connected. So they were all historically aware of each other; they have all been in occupied territories; they all live on the scenes of earlier civilizations. Look at the Central American Indians among those magnificent ruins, and nobody knows to this day exactly what went on there. Nobody has the vaguest idea what it was like in 1000 B.C. They had these tremendous civilizations. They were there, and we know these people are descended from them. If it weren’t for the ruins, we’d say, “Well, obviously these are children of nature; they’ve always been here, etc.” They became the “gentle savage” when they were discovered. It’s the same thing here: “They became wild, and ferocious, and a blood-thirsty people.”

People do become that way; that's an interesting thing. If we are left alone, we become that way. If you don't believe that sort of thing, why don't you scout through MTV tonight and look for some of the major rock concerts. You see tens of thousands of arms all waving; it's about as savage and primitive as anything you could imagine. There's not a thought going on in their noggins, and these are the product of an ancient, venerable, extremely highly developed civilization with a tremendous history, literature, and everything else. These nitwits are vegetables reacting this way. You see it's possible to bring forth this thing in our natures; we'd all do it. He is going to tell us how they had to keep up the pressure so his own people wouldn't slide right into that very condition. The Lamanites became "full of idolatry and filthiness; feeding upon beasts of prey; dwelling in tents, and wandering about in the wilderness with a short skin girdle about their loins and their heads shaven; and their skill was in the bow, and in the cimeter, and the ax. And many of them did eat nothing save it was raw meat; and they were continually seeking to destroy us."

Well, they had to have something to do; they had to have a project in life. Here is the contrast—here is an agrarian civilization. A few years ago Masseyn Driver did an exhaustive study of all the Indians of North America, everything that was known about them since the time of their discovery. Ninety percent of them were agricultural; they weren't hunters at all. They cultivated and lived in villages, and they were settled people. Driver's study was published by the American Philosophical Association, and it's the best summary of American Indians to date, considering all their tribes, all their distribution, their culture, what they had, and everything. It's a big work. Anyway this is very different: "The people of Nephi did till the land and raise all manner of grain, and of fruit, and flocks of herds, and flocks of all manner of cattle of every kind, and goats, and wild goats, and also many horses." These horses, etc., are very interesting; that has always been an issue. My friend Woodrow Bora worked for years on that at Berkeley. That was his field, and he was convinced that the Spanish didn't bring the first horses here at all. There were plenty of them, and he talks about that.

Then notice this: "And there were exceedingly many prophets among us [that means schools of the prophets—a strange situation like in the days of Saul]. And the people were a stiffnecked people, hard to understand." Considering what those called "Lamanites" had slid into so easily, they had to keep this from happening to their people. How could they do it? Well, it was just like New England where many people went savage. Then in 1856–57 there was the Reformation here in Utah. Brigham Young and Jedediah Grant had to launch the big Reformation because the people were getting quite wild and irresponsible—going off by themselves, etc. Some of them would live with the Indians. Some of them were very competent people, but the Reformation was necessary to bring the people back again to their religion. It was very dangerous to get out here and then suddenly everything was up for grabs. You could go anywhere you wanted and take anything you wanted—just help yourself. One thing the Indians were good for was to suppress that. Someone would go out ranching—out in Skull Valley, for example—and the next thing that was known their ranch house would be burned down. Maybe the people would be found there, and maybe they wouldn't. A lot of that happened in Manti and San Pete County where my mother was born. People would go out and try to become too independent, and the Indians would take care of that because they would expose themselves when they did that. The Indians weren't particularly savage, but they had their reasons. They were hungry, too.

This was the only thing [that would keep them in line]: “And there was nothing save it was exceeding harshness, preaching and prophesying of wars, and contentions, and destructions, and continually reminding them of death, and the duration of eternity, and the judgments and the power of God, and all these things—stirring them up continually to keep them in the fear of the Lord. I say there was nothing short of these things, and exceedingly great plainness of speech, would keep them from going down speedily to destruction [they would decline, and that’s what it would mean]. And after this manner do I write concerning them.” Notice this constant thing. On Normandy it was just like boys out of school. All sorts of atrocities were performed. Nobody reads about that. They don’t tell about it, but in my division there were some terrible ones. There were some awful things done because a lot of them were crooks that were only allowed out of jail on condition that they join that happy band, the Hundred and First. That was the condition. A lot of them did, and they were pretty wild. But these people are constantly in danger of subsiding into the savage way of life. A good rock concert will show that. But you have to have the New England frontier severity, the preaching, and the strictness to keep people in line.

Verse 24: “And I saw wars between the Nephites and Lamanites in the course of my days. And it came to pass that I began to be old, and an hundred and seventy and nine years had passed away from the time that our father Lehi left Jerusalem [he got to be very old; he talks about that]. And I saw that I must soon go down to my grave.” So he wrote this at the end of his life, and it had been 179 years since they left Jerusalem. Isn’t that an awful long time, you say. Wouldn’t he have to be about 140 years old? Well, not at all. I started wondering about that. It had been 179 years, and this is Enos, Lehi’s grandson. How would that be possible? Well, it’s easily possible; I started figuring out with my own family, etc. The successors aren’t necessarily the eldest. Joseph, Jacob, Ishmael, Nephi, and Israel were not the oldest sons. There could also be a lot of daughters. Lots of people live to be old. It could be somebody like Irving Berlin who is going strong at a hundred, or George Burns. You know about him. Ramses II reigned for sixty-seven years, and Seti II reigned for ninety years. Verdi did his best work after he was eighty, and Sophocles did the same. Isocrates gave his great Pan-Hellenic oration when he was in his nineties. He would have been quite competent, I think. And so it goes. In that case you don’t have to knock off even 100 from the 179, but if you do, that leaves you 79 years. His father, Jacob, was born 8 years after they left Jerusalem, so knock 8 years off the 79. His father would have been 69 or 70 years old when he was born. That was by no means rare among the Patriarchs. That’s not impossible. The sexologists tell us today all sorts of things about how people should go on having affairs into their eighties, etc. Such are the morals of our time. But anyway, it was quite possible. This is not a fantastic thing. It would be if they had been very young along there. It depends on his age, but he gives the impression of being very old. He began to be old and would soon go down to the grave. He reports this rather late; I would say eighty or ninety years later. That would [have been] plenty of time.

He has rejoiced above all things in the world in the gospel. Notice this verse 27. As I said, it brings in every point of the Atonement in proper order. First of all he says, “And I soon go to the place of my rest [that’s the thing that people do just after they die], which is with my Redeemer.” Note that the *Redeemer* is the one who has bought you back to where you were. You once belonged to him; now he redeems you. *Redemptio* means someone who buys back something that he has sold before, talking about a slave. If I sold a slave and now I buy him back, that’s *redemptio*. I go back to where I started—to the Lord, dependent upon him. “For I know that in him I shall rest [next comes the rest]. And I rejoice in the day when my mortal shall put on immortality [that’s the Resurrection that

comes next], and shall stand before him [that's the Judgment], then shall I see his face with pleasure, and he will say unto me [this is atonement, being united, coming back home again]: Come unto me, ye blessed, there is a place prepared for you in the mansions of my Father. Amen." Of course, a mansion is a house which is yours, and there are many mansions where you stay overnight as you progress on your journey. When a great king or lord made his tour, the Royal Progress, where did he stop at night? He didn't camp; he had mansions. He had special houses built for him to stay overnight. The first year of his reign he had to make the complete tour of his kingdom. I wrote a long article on that in the *Western Political Quarterly* years ago.² The mansion is the place where you stay during the course of your progress on your journey. You continue to have your mansion, and on you go. There you have your eternal progression; you have everything there in this one verse. How neatly he puts it together. They had the full gospel of the Atonement here.

Now we come to Jarom. His name is interesting. Notice, these names are not in Hebrew. They are in Aramaic or Arabic which were near to the language of Lehi's people, I'm sure. *Jarom* means "to prosper or to get a good share of something." It means "to support one's family properly." It also means "to have good luck in business" or "finding something of value." It can also mean "to grasp or snatch something" or "to be a crook." That's the way these words do; one meaning leads to the next. They are very rich, but the basic meaning of *Jarom* is "to be prosperous, to be happy." What English word do we have? Well, *Richard* means the same thing, "to be rich, to be well off." So we will call Jarom, *Richard* here, just as we called Enos, *Adam*, and we called Sherem, *Pug*. And *Jacob* in Hebrew means *the heel*. Verse 1: "Now behold, I, Jarom, write a few words according to the commandment of my father, Enos, that our genealogy may be kept. And these plates are small [he has just written a little bit] and as these things are written for the intent of the benefit of our brethren the Lamanites, wherefore, it must needs be that I write a little." Now here is the important thing; you notice the secret is out here. He writes it for the benefit of the Lamanites. He's not writing these Nephite plates for the Nephites. He knows they're not going to be here after a while. He writes these plates for the "benefit of our brethren the Lamanites." Now he does some prophesying too, "but I shall not write the things of my prophesying, nor of my revelations." Now this is a very interesting thing. We talk about the living prophet. He prophesied and he had revelations, but he doesn't write them down. Why not? Because they are already written down. "For what could I write more than my fathers have written? For have not they revealed the plan of salvation? I say unto you, Yea; and this sufficeth me."

Notice that the living prophet doesn't supplant the scriptures. When we get to 3 Nephi 23, you will see how the Lord asked to see all the scriptures, went through them, checked them, and said, You are going to need these [paraphrased]. He corrected mistakes that had been made and added Malachi who wrote after Lehi left Jerusalem. Here was the Lord himself. He could have said, "Forget the scriptures—I'm the one that gave them." No, he didn't do that; he said that you use the scriptures. It's the same thing in two passages at the end of the gospel of Luke—in the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke, verses 32 and 44. He opens the scriptures to the disciples in verse 32, and they begin to understand him. Right at the end they begin to understand, but they didn't understand the scriptures before. Then finally it tells us, beginning with Moses and the prophets He went right through the scriptures after the Resurrection, explaining all things concerning himself. He wanted them to have those scriptures. So don't think because we have living prophets they can supersede the scriptures—they don't. You notice that the prophets cling more to the scriptures than anyone else. I didn't bring along an apparatus text of the Greek or the Hebrew testaments, but there you will find solid margins of quotations. The book is

nothing but a pastiche of quotations from earlier scriptures. What's the New Testament? In Matthew the angel comes, and all he does is quote the scriptures; he said nothing else. All throughout the scriptures, the Lord when he preaches, and the apostles when they write the letters, are quoting the scriptures. We have this on-going library, and they all tell the same story. Jarom says he is not going to bother to repeat because you have it all here. You have it all if you pay attention to it.

Why is it necessary to go into detail like this? It's the way people are. These are the same people we have been talking about all along. Verse 3: "Behold, it is expedient that much should be done among this people, because of the hardness of their hearts, and the deafness of their ears, and the blindness of their minds, and the stiffness of their necks; nevertheless, God is exceedingly merciful unto them, and has not as yet swept them off from the face of the land [another very hopeful record and commentary, isn't it?]. And there are many among us who have many revelations, for they are not all stiffnecked [ah, there's a ray of light, you see—this is why things go on] and have faith, have communion with the Holy Spirit." You know in the beginning of Luke, it uses the words *Holy Ghost* in the Bible. Mary was filled with the Holy Ghost. When they went to the temple and brought the Lord, Simeon was filled with the Holy Ghost. He repeated again, "I was told by the Holy Ghost that I would live to see the Messiah." Then the Prophetess Anna in the temple was filled with the Holy Ghost and bestowed a blessing. So the Holy Ghost, operative before the coming of Christ, is preparatory. The Holy Ghost prepares them that way, and it's that way here. "The Holy Spirit, which maketh manifest unto the children of men, according to their faith."

Well, two hundred years had passed away now, "and the people of Nephi had waxed strong in the land [this is twenty years later; Jarom and the priests have had twenty-one years working on them, and they have improved; it's very obvious]. They observed to keep the law of Moses and the sabbath day holy unto the Lord. And they profaned not; neither did they blaspheme. And the laws of the land were exceedingly strict [they are still keeping it, and the people are behaving]. And they were scattered upon much of the face of the land, and the Lamanites also. And they were exceedingly more numerous than were they of the Nephites; and they loved murder [and all that sort of thing]. . . . They came many times against us, the Nephites, to battle." What could they do? They had to arm themselves, but the only defense they had was righteousness, it tells us here. Notice he says, "But our kings and our leaders were mighty men in the faith of the Lord; and they taught the people the ways of the Lord; wherefore, we withstood the Lamanites [because they were taught the ways of the Lord] and swept them away out of our lands." Then they began to fortify their cities. There was pressure on them all the time, but throughout the Book of Mormon all battles take place on Nephite territory, every one until right at the end. In Mormon 4:5 he says, if we hadn't invaded their territory, we would never have been defeated. Because of that the Lord told us we were asking for it, and we were destroyed. But their wars were always defensive and always the three-times rule. They let them invade, but it was always fought on Nephite territory. Don't go fooling around with other nations. Remember, that's what the Lord told Israel when they went into Palestine. He said, you are going to have them on your borders, but no matter how they treat you, no matter how dangerous they are, this is a commandment—you shall not meddle in their affairs [paraphrased]. This is a very important thing.

Verse 8: "And we multiplied exceedingly, and spread upon the face of the land, and became exceedingly rich in gold." They had quite a culture. There was great emphasis on metal work, and that's what you do find. Whether you dig in Peru or in the Mississippi

Valley, you find metal objects and things mixed with metal—malachite and turquoise and things like that. They got themselves prepared for war, but that didn't keep the peace. "And thus being prepared to meet the Lamanites, they did not prosper against us. But the word of the Lord was verified, which he spake unto our fathers, saying that: Inasmuch as ye will keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land [there's the secret]. And it came to pass that the prophets of the Lord did threaten the people of Nephi [all the time; they had to keep that up, you see; arms didn't make them secure], according to the word of God, that if they did not keep the commandments, but should fall into transgression, they should be destroyed from off the face of the land [that was the danger]. Then they kept the law of Moses, "and the intent for which it was given; persuading them to look forward unto the Messiah, and believe in him to come as though he already was." We should live as if the Messiah had come, shouldn't we, because he has come before our time? In the sacrament we remind ourselves of that as much as we can. But we still put off the hard things until he gets here. We say, "Well, when he gets here we will start living the Law of Consecration, etc." Is that what he wants? Verse 12: "And it came to pass that by so doing they kept them from being destroyed upon the face of the land [that's what happened; they preached to them constantly, threatening them, etc.]; for they did prick their hearts with the word, continually stirring them up to repentance." It wasn't their military might; they were destroyed at the peak of their preparedness and their experience. The most magnificent army ever on the continent was that of the Nephites destroyed at Cumorah. As a matter of fact, smaller armies had beaten larger armies of Lamanites again and again, as Mormon tells us before they came up to Cumorah. That wasn't the thing at all. They had to keep running to stand still though. They were continually stirred up to repentance. Then we have more sidelines on race, etc. "After the manner of wars, and contentions, and dissensions." That means going off and joining other groups in the woods or wherever they were. Dissensions are where people dissent, fall away, and go off and join other groups. That's in internal affairs, etc. And it talks about separate journals being kept. There are other plates of Nephi. If you want to read about the wars, that's where you read about them. The kings had their own records, and the priests had theirs—just as in Egypt from the twenty-second to the twenty-sixth dynasty when Lehi was living.

Now we come to the book of Omni, whose name is very obvious. It means *belonging to Amon*. Remember, *Amon* is the name in the Book of Mormon. There are more Ammon names and Amon compounds than anything else because actually in the time of Lehi *Amon* was the god of the empire. It was the one time when God filled the earth. Amon filled the earth with the Egyptian Empire. They claimed everything, but always in the name of *Amon*. We have the marvelous sermons of Wenamun, the Egyptian ambassador to the court of Biblos. He was on business there when he talked about "Amon who rules all the seas and rules all nations." We have songs in which we refer to Adam-ondi-Ahman and *Amon* as an epithet for *God*. Actually, it means "the one who is not known, the secret one whom we can't name, whose name is not known to us." But Omni means *he who belongs to Amon*. "I, Omni, being commanded by my father, Jarom, that I should write somewhat upon these plates, to preserve our genealogy. Wherefore, in my days, I would that ye should know that I fought much with the sword. . . . But behold, I of myself am a wicked man, and I have not kept the statutes and the commandments of the Lord as I ought to have done [no wonder things aren't going too well here]. And it came to pass that two hundred and seventy and six years had passed away, and we had many seasons of peace; and we had many seasons of serious war and bloodshed. . . . And I make an end." This man is not a very inspired writer. He admits he is wicked; he's at least honest. He's a patriot and a military hero, but not a particularly good man, although honest.

Then Amaron writes next. There's your nation-ending again. Off-hand *Amaron* means *our beloved*. *Amar* is from *Mary* and *Mar*. It means *good, great*, and all sorts of things. That root is very rich. *Mar* is a *chief* or a *prince*. The chief friend of the king is a *mar*. It means *friendly, friend*, or anything like that. In verse 5 we get another chronology; it says "three hundred and twenty years had passed away" at that time. Well, you take off the 179 years that Enos talked about, and you get for these three men—Jarom, Omni, and Amaron—141 years, which gives them an average of 47 years. That is not fabulous by any means, but the chronology is moving right along here. Notice that the arms didn't prevail after all. Verse 5: "And the more wicked part of the Nephites were destroyed." How very selective of the war, but wars are selective, aren't they. What happened to the SS, to the Nazi empire, etc.? The more wicked part of the Germans were destroyed. They were definitely; it was very selective. The rest are very good people, most of them—just as good as we are. That [the destruction of the Nephites] illustrates the fact that "inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall not prosper in the land."

Wilford Woodruff made a point on this idea that prospering is a sign of virtue and righteousness. He said that many Latter-day Saints have the idea that since you prosper if you are virtuous, therefore wealth proves virtue. You must be righteous if you are rich. If you are so righteous, why aren't you rich, in other words? But the Book of Mormon explains that constantly. It says the settlement comes when the cup is full, when the fruit is ripe. The Lord gives you as much rope as you want. He lets you go all the way, as far as that goes. You can be as rich as you want. He won't mind about that, but you catch up with yourself. And I said that wars are selective. Look at verse 7: "Wherefore, the Lord did visit them in great judgment; nevertheless, he did spare the righteous that they should not perish, but did deliver them out of the hands of their enemies." This is where security lies then, and war is strangely selective—not just in great numbers, but individually. That's a thing one is very much aware of in the field. I could a tale unfold on that theme.

Verse 8: "And it came to pass that I did deliver the plates unto my brother Chemish." Now that's an obvious word. *Chemish* is the same as the Latin *Quintus*. It means *the fifth*, either the fifth son, or the fifth in line of succession. Is he fifth? He looks more like sixth. If you have Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, and Amaron, that would make him the sixth. Unless it is after Jacob; who knows? Anyway it is a perfectly good Semitic name which means *the fifth*. It's a common proper name too. There's the town of *Chemish*. As I said, the Latin word *Quintus* means the same thing, the fifth son. "Now I, Chemish, write what few things I write, in the same book with my brother [you see he wasn't the eldest; he was a younger brother, so he could very well have been the fifth brother, the fifth in the line; Nephi himself was the fourth; Sam was older than he was, I suppose]; for behold, I saw the last which he wrote." This is how it was passed on; the records overlap here. He wrote it with his own hand while I looked at it; then he handed it to me to make sure I delivered it with my hand [paraphrased]. This is a typical colophon. The main thing in passing down a record is to ascertain where it comes from and how authentic it is. That is the Egyptian colophon which was always put on. "This was written by my own fingers," the scribe says, "and it was taken from a book in library So-and-So or it is from my own knowledge." That's what they keep doing in the Book of Mormon. The colophon is very important, you see. The Book of Mormon starts out with it, telling who wrote it and what time period it is. We call it *colophon* which means "something glued on, something added." When you had a roll how would you know what was in the roll? The roll goes around like this, looking at the end. Then you would glue on something here to tell you who wrote and what it is in the library so you can find it. Otherwise, you'd have to unroll the whole darn thing to find out what was at the beginning of it. You glue it on; it's not part of the

roll itself, just something added. We have these things in the Book of Mormon, especially in the first part.

The next one is Abinadom. Now we have a good old Canaanite word. This is a Canaanite name. I'll bet *Abinadom* means *Abinetchem*. It's a combination, a typical Canaanite name. It means *Abi* (my father) is friendly, gentle, loving. *Neṭem* means *sweet* or *agreeable* in Egyptian, and it's a borrowed word. So *Abinetchem* could very well mean "my father is benevolent or sweet." These are guesses, but they are good. If you are inventing names, he couldn't do better. He is hitting targets right and left here. Verse 10: "Behold, I, Abinadom, am the son of Chemish. Behold, it came to pass that I saw much war and contention [and his was their way of life], . . . and I, with my own sword, have taken the lives of many of the Lamanites in the defence of my brethren. [And here are the parallel records:] And behold, the record of this people is engraven upon plates which is had by the kings, according to the generations [but they are sinking pretty low now; they are running down with all this fighting, etc.] and I know of no revelation save that which has been written, neither prophecy [he knows of no revelation or prophecy in his day; the prophets were silent]; wherefore, that which is sufficient is written [because they don't want any more]." Well, it's time to do something now, so what happens? Ah here's the Rechabite motif again! Somebody has to move out, just as Lehi had to move out of Jerusalem and Nephi had to move out, leave their community, and go out by himself with the people of Nephi. They have become faithless and corrupt now, so somebody has to leave them. This is what Mosiah does; he decides to cut out with all the people he can get to go. This is that procedure which is the Rechabite formula. It's time to leave them.

Verse 12: "Behold, I am Amaleki, the son of Abinadom [of course, that's a simple name; *Amaleki* simply means *my king*]. Behold, I will speak unto you somewhat concerning Mosiah [a very interesting name, a combination of *Moses* and *Yahweh*, *Jehovah*; we come to him later and see why that is so, why his father gave him that name], who was made king over the land of Zarahemla." We haven't heard of *Zarahemla* so far. It always got me because there's an important trading center in the middle of the Sahara that goes by the name of *Dar al-Ḥāmrā'* which means *red city*. Of course, it depends on the dialect. *Zarahemla* means *red city*, but what attracts me about that is that the Hopis say that their people came from the "great Red City of the South when it was destroyed because of the wickedness of the people." They were led by prophets and came north. They call it "the great Red City of the South." Of course *Zarahemla* means *red city*. "For behold, he being warned of the Lord that he should flee out of the land of Nephi, and as many as would hearken unto the voice of the Lord should also depart out of the land with him, into the wilderness." So here we have the story again of fleeing out. They are leaving the Nephite society now and going out with Mosiah himself. Into the wilderness is where they go with their tents and all the rest of it. It's the story of the frontier. "And they departed out of the land into the wilderness as many as would hearken unto the voice of the Lord; and they were led by many preachings and prophesyings [there's *das wandernde Gottesvolk*, God's wandering people, like the Puritans, like the Pilgrims, etc. Like the Saints coming to the valley here, they were led by preachings and prophesyings]. And they were admonished continually by the word of God; and they were led by the power of his arm, through the wilderness until they came down into the land which is called the land of Zarahemla [how far that was we don't know]. And they discovered a people, who were called the people of Zarahemla."

I see the time is up now. We will stop with the people of Zarahemla because they weren't Nephites at all, and they are much more numerous than the Nephites. They are the main people in the Book of Mormon. We talk about "Nephites or Lamanites." Forget about that; these are the people Zarahemla. And they rejoiced exceedingly because they [Mosiah's group] brought a record of the Jews and they were another group that came from Palestine. Here in one verse they cover what has taken fifty pages to describe. Nephi describes in fifty pages how his people got from Jerusalem to here. Now these people came from Jerusalem too, and we are told how they came here in one verse. So this obviously is not a history of the Mulekites. This is the Mulekites that came here; it doesn't give them the name yet. It was a general migration. They would have left about 586 B.C., and they would have been here now about 350 years living this way. We get some racial complications here because they were visited by Coriantumr who was king of the greatest tribe of the Jaredites up north who had come there thousands of years earlier. They overlapped because he lived with them for nine months. So it goes.

1. Brother Nibley is reading from his book, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, CWHN 8 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1989), 535–37.

2. See Hugh W. Nibley, "Tenting, Toll, and Taxing," *Western Political Quarterly* 19 (1966): 599–630; reprinted in *The Ancient State*, CWHN 10 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991), 33–98.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 27
Omni; Words of Mormon; Mosiah 1
The End of the Small Plates
The Coronation of Mosiah

Well, now we've got to the point where in one verse they take care of the history of a larger people than the Nephites. It just simply says they crossed the ocean and landed here, and that was that. Why don't they talk about that? That's verses 15 and 16 of Omni here. Why doesn't he tell us more about a lot of people? We're going to get a lot of that here. Remember, the Book of Mormon is the religious history of one family, and that's all. They have told us that time and again. The kings and the wars are all there, but they're in other books—and they're small things. And so we go on here, and he's going to tell us about it. They had many wars and contentions. I'm not going to tell you about them, because I'm not even telling you about the Nephite wars, he says. Their language had become corrupted because they had no records. How corrupted had it become? Remember, they had come from Jerusalem, but they were a "mixed bag." When we talked about Lachish, we saw they were mixed that way. They picked up people from everywhere. We don't know to this day—there's no agreement—whether the language talked in Palestine in the time of Christ was Aramaic or whether it was Hebrew. Some even think it was Greek. But their language became corrupted. Well, what do they mean corrupted? Any language you speak is the language of the people. That's what the *lingua* is; it's the *lingua franca*, the language that everybody speaks. That's the official language, no matter how much has been changed. Every language has changed immensely. They had been separated from Jerusalem for 350 years, so they couldn't understand each other. It was a dialectical difference.

Two years ago we were visited by some cousins from the Hebrides. Those are islands off the west coast of Scotland, up north there. We drove around the valley and showed them the sights, and they chatted merrily among themselves. They went along looking at the sights, and we couldn't understand a single word they said. They spoke straight English, but we couldn't understand one word they said. They had to translate things for us. How could that be? Our families both left England at the same time, in [1621]. They stopped there, but the rest of the family went over to County Antrim on the west coast of Ireland and settled there. They went on speaking English, the very kind we speak today. In fact we speak that dialect here. The west country English dialect is what we speak—that's our western *r*, etc. So we went on and spoke our kind of English, but they stayed in the Hebrides and for 350 years we were separated. Now we can't understand them. That's exactly the amount of time here that these people have been separated since they left Jerusalem. These people went over, and they spoke their [language]. They didn't have records, and they may have been speaking another dialect because there's a great deal to indicate that Lehi and his people were from the desert. Remember, he was descended from Manasseh, and that means many of them would have lived east of the Jordan.

Question: Is it possible that with the Mulekite migration there were Phoenicians?

Answer: There could have been all sorts of people, a mixed bag, because they got a lot of people together—anyone was going to get out. A member of the royal family was there, and he had circulated. Was this the little kid who had gone around to the villages? He was the youngest member of the royal family, and he was the one who had survived. They got out when they heard the news [that the royal family had been killed], because he was busy warning and assisting the others.

Question: Could this also be perhaps where they got the name *Timothy* from? I hear that *Timothy* is a Greek name.]

Answer. Oh, no, remember we said that before that in Lehi's day Palestine was swarming with Greeks, important Greeks. Remember, it was Egyptian territory at that time and Egyptian culture. The Egyptian army, Necho's army, was almost entirely Greek mercenaries. We have inscriptions from that very time up the Nile at Aswan—inscriptions from the mercenaries of the Egyptian army, and they're all in Greek. So Greek was very common, and especially the name Timotheus. That was a common name on Cyprus, and of course, Cyprus was Greek at that time. Remember, there was a great mix-up here, and it continued right over here. We're going to see a lot of it. The people with the records come in, and they take over. That's what happened when the Normans came into England—the Norman minority mixed with the Saxons, and within another 350 years you had Chaucer's English. These things take place that way.

But this is what happened. Notice over here. It wasn't just the people of Zarahemla, but there was a leader called *Zarahemla* among them. He seems to have been a very genial person; he agreed to all sorts of things. He united with Mosiah and agreed to have him made king. Notice in the verse 14 here it says, "And also Zarahemla rejoiced exceedingly." He was just too happy for words to find out about these records, because they [the Nephites] brought the plates. They knew about that. He was a leader, apparently; he knew more about it than most of them. Verse 18: "And it came to pass that after they were taught in the language of Mosiah [Would that take years and years? No, just a week or so. The language, being the two dialects, they would begin to understand each other—it wouldn't take very long], Zarahemla gave a genealogy of his fathers, according to his memory."

Well, yesterday I had my home teacher, Brother Amosa, who is a gigantic Samoan. His father is a chief there. His father had just come two days ago from Samoa to tell how things were there in the old country. It's very interesting what he said, but the thing is, he can recite the genealogy back twenty or thirty generations by heart. You see, they know their genealogy—the islanders do. And that's the sort of thing these people had done. Zarahemla knew it by heart because he was the chief. "Zarahemla gave a genealogy of his fathers according to his memory." See, this isn't the people, this is the man speaking. He was their chief, as we'd say. And that's the way it's done. Verse 19: And, the people of Zarahemla, and of Mosiah, did unite together; and Mosiah was appointed to be their king," with no objection from Zarahemla. As I said he was a genial person, only too glad to have them. But Mosiah is the king only of the migrant Nephites and of the Mulekites here. He's not the king of the Nephites back home. Remember, Mosiah had to move out back here in verse 11. There was no revelation, no prophecy. The lights went out, and it was time to move on. Then Mosiah moved out with his people, and he took the records with him. So he was a person of importance there.

Verse 20: “It came to pass in the days of Mosiah there was a large stone brought unto him with engravings on it; and he did interpret the engravings on it by the gift and power of God.” How does that happen? Well, they started shipping crates of cuneiform documents from the British Museum in the middle of the nineteenth century. Grotefend and others were excavating in Ninevah. When they started getting these records, George Smith used to pile them up. He worked with them. Nobody knew how to read them. It was a complete [mystery] until it was finally cracked later. But George Smith suddenly was able to read them—just by dealing with them, just by handling them and looking at them. The same thing happened with Llewellyn Griffith. He could read Meroitic. That was the language of upper Egypt when the people were driven out of Jerusalem. The priests of Thebes fled and went to the upper Nile. They took Egyptian records with them, and they developed a language of their own called Meroitic that no one can read to this day. But Llewellyn Griffith could read it. He was a Welshman with a Welshman’s mystic gift for language, I suppose. None of his pupils ever picked it up. But he had that great intuitive gift. An intuitive gift is a very important thing in something like Egyptian. Well, some of you language people would know that on a good day, it’s like falling off a log. Everything is perfectly clear, and you wonder whatever bothered you. But if you have a day or haven’t had enough sleep or if you lose confidence, you might as well forget it. You’re not going to read anything that day. You can’t do it if you don’t have the faith and the confidence. But when you feel “gung ho” and have perfect confidence, you can just sail along with a Coptic or Aramaic text—no trouble at all. But other times, don’t even give it a try. So, it is a gift, and you know that from your own experience.

Well, they brought these stones. He [Mosiah] had the gift and power of God, and he told what they said. Coriantumr was discovered by the people of Zarahemla. They had been there 350 years. And he lived with them for nine months, which shows that the Jaredites survived at least until 500 B.C. They went [hundreds] of years before that, maybe back to 2000 B.C., and I think much earlier. It doesn’t make any difference. They were the people who were destroyed upon the north country. The woods Indians, plains Indians, and others like that had a great culture up there once, but they had been destroyed. They came from the tower. Notice that it doesn’t say the Tower of Babel. That’s very important. As a matter of fact, we learn from the book of Ether in the Book of Mormon that the name isn’t Babel, but it’s Nimrod, which is exactly what it was. Remember it went north in the valley of Nimrod. Now we know through tradition and everything else that the tower was called “Nimrod’s Tower,” because Babel didn’t come in until later. That was [determined] from the philological events, etc. And so they came out from the tower. It’s careful not to say the “Tower of Babel,” which was later. But Nimrod’s Tower was that one, and it tells us in the first verse of the second chapter of the book of Ether that they went up into the valley northward where there never had men been, and it was the valley of Nimrod. Nimrod was the big name at that time. I’ve written a great deal about Nimrod, but we won’t go into that here. At that time the language was confounded, “and their bones lay scattered in the land northward.” That’s a literary expression. Their bones could still be there, but in various stages of decomposition, I suppose. That’s from their latest war.

Amaleki is writing this, you see. “Behold, I, Amaleki, was born in the days of Mosiah [he’s looking back on history]; and I have lived to see his death; and Benjamin, his son, reigneth in his stead.” And under King Benjamin the two governments fuse, of course. Benjamin defended Zarahemla from Lamanite attacks; he drove them out of the land of Zarahemla. Verse 25: “I began to be old; and, having no seed . . .” Amaleki has no children, so he hands the records over to King Benjamin. Remember that they had been kept in separate archives—the royal archives of the doings of state and the wars, etc., and

the family archive of the revelations and inspirations that's been handed down. (That's the one we're getting.) But here they're joined in one, and from now on King Benjamin keeps all the records in his archive. And Benjamin has a passion for these records. He's a great antiquarian, we'll find out. He's keeping the records after he ceases to be king. Benjamin is the man to have them, so the two governments fuse, and the plates are now in the hands of one king again. And Amaleki says, "I shall deliver up these plates unto him, exhorting all men to come unto God, the Holy One of Israel, and believe in prophesying, and in revelations, and in the ministering of angels, and in the gift of speaking with tongues." Notice "in the gift of speaking with tongues, and in the gift of interpreting of languages." They had these gifts among them, which indicates they had more than one language. They must have had quite a number of languages or dialects, as far as the case may be. Then in verse 26 he testifies to the Atonement. "Yea, come unto him, and offer your souls as an offering to him, and continue in fasting and praying, and endure to the end [that's the formula: fasting, praying, and enduring to the end] and as the Lord liveth you will be saved."

Now, there were a certain number that wanted to go back. Remember, Mosiah had led them out when things had become too corrupt in the land of Nephites. Now people wanted to go back to the old country. They were homesick and wanted to see what it was like back there—like we want to go back to Jackson County. Verse 27: "A certain number went up into the wilderness to return to the land of Nephi; for there was a large number who were desirous to possess the land of their inheritance." That was their country. Perhaps it was a better country than the one they were in, I don't know. So they migrated back again, but here's a nice psychological touch, a true touch. Many an enterprise has been ruined by a leader with too much authority. Notice that their leader was a strong and mighty man. Well, good—that qualifies him. But he was also "a stiffnecked man, wherefore he caused a contention among them; and they were all slain, save fifty." What American settlement do you think of when you hear about that? Jamestown, of course. Jamestown was the most booming, the most promising enterprise in Virginia in the seventeenth century. They went and settled there, but there was quarreling among them and they disappeared completely. Nobody knows what happened to Jamestown, which was to be the biggest settlement in the New World. They had their deeds and their contracts and everything else to the land from King James, and the colony just disappeared because of the quarreling among themselves. And the same sort of thing happens here. There was contention, and they were all slain save fifty in the wilderness. They went back to Zarahemla but they still didn't give up. [They wanted] to go back again. So finally he ends up, "It came to pass they also took others . . . into the wilderness. And I, Amaleki, had a brother, who also went with them; and I have not since known concerning them."

Now this shows the planting of the tribes and the customs. They were moving all over like this. We're just following one line, a red line of history here. You see what was happening on the continent all over the place. His brother went out, and he had not heard of them since. Well, they could have settled. There were people wandering in all directions here. It's a very complex picture here, mixing with others. So now we come to the Words of Mormon, and please note the date of this. This was written 500 years after the other books we've been reading because he was summarizing later. He was looking back on the whole thing after the curtain had gone down. He's the epilogue, you see. Remember the formula from Job: "I alone am saved to tell thee." So the lone survivor is an important theme in literature and history—the one who survives and tells the history. There are some famous ones in literature, of course. "And now I, Mormon . . . have witnessed almost all the

destruction of my people the Nephites.” So he comes at the end, and this is the theme. Is this going to spoil the ending, incidentally? We know how the Book of Mormon is going to end, now. Does this spoil it, if you know how it’s going to turn out? Well, no. This is the theme of the Book of Mormon. They want us to keep it constantly in mind. This is a bleak theme, speaking of “fear and trembling,” you see. Who’s going to write our epitaph here? So from the first page to the last, we’re reminded the people were destroyed, the people were destroyed, the people were destroyed. Why bother us with that story? Well, it bothers us. They insist on bothering us with that story.

“I witnessed almost all the destruction of my people, the Nephites. . . . I deliver these records into the hands of my son; and it supposeth me that he will witness the entire destruction of my people [they were scattered and destroyed, as you know, but they’re still alive—many of them went out and joined the Lamanites; great droves of them were doing it at that time] But may God grant that he may survive them, that he may write somewhat concerning them, and somewhat concerning Christ, that perhaps someday it may profit them.” You notice [this means] after the destruction. That’s like comparing Jerusalem. Jerusalem was destroyed from time to time, it says. That’s the same thing. The people were destroyed. Well, if they were all destroyed, how can it profit them someday? But it doesn’t mean that. There are survivors, as far as that goes. But *destruo*, as I said, means to break down the structure of the society, that sort of thing. So they were all destroyed, and it [the record] is for them. Well, he searched among the records, and he had plenty of time. “I searched among the records which had been delivered to my hands, and I found these plates [so there must have been quite a pile of them], which contained this small account of the prophets, from Jacob down to King Benjamin, and also many of the words of Nephi [those are the books we’ve just had here; he gave them to us]. And the things which are upon these plates pleasing me, because of the prophecies of the coming of Christ; and my fathers knowing that many of them have been fulfilled . . . down to this day [and there’s more to come—that’s why he is going to deliver this—there’s more to come after him; he’s not the last one]. . . . Wherefore, I chose these things, to finish my record upon them, which remainder of my record I shall take from the plates of Nephi.”

Now why these plates? Verse 7: “And I do this for a wise purpose; for thus it whispereth me, according to the workings of the Spirit of the Lord which is in me [he has this very strong feeling that these records have a purpose and he has to save them], wherefore he worketh in me to do according to his will.” Notice he’s not talking about visitations of angels or revelations or things like that, but this is the intense feeling a person can have. He says that it works in him. It is the Spirit of the Lord which is in him and whispers to him. He has a strong urge. There are many levels of revelation in the Book of Mormon; it’s a very interesting thing. For example, Lehi says, “I have dreamed a dream; in other words, I have seen a vision.” Well, where do you draw the line as long as it is inspiration and it’s true? Verse 8: “And my prayer to God is concerning my brethren, that they may once again come to the knowledge of God [so his brethren are going to survive, and it’s addressed to them primarily], yea, the redemption of Christ; that they may once again be a delightsome people [there’s nothing said about change of race or color or anything like that; they are so mixed up by now, but *delightsome* is what he means—delighting the Lord]. And now I, Mormon, proceed to finish out my record, which I take from the plates of Nephi.”

Amaleki is the last one we read; he is the last one just before the Words of Mormon. The book of Omni ends with Amaleki. Verse 10: “After Amaleki had delivered up these plates into the hands of king Benjamin [notice, he is repeating here], he took them and put

them with the other plates [so the two records are now combined], which contained records which had been handed down by the kings. . . . And they were handed down from king Benjamin, from generation to generation until they have fallen into my hands [they had been handed down for more than five hundred years] . . . for there are great things written upon them, out of which my people and their brethren shall be judged at the great and last day.”

Benjamin had some contention among his people. (Notice that he [Mormon] picks up with Benjamin; that’s where it is going to start.) Here in these two verses [13 and 14], he confirms what [the book of] Omni told us. Amaleki said the same thing in verse 24 of Omni: King Benjamin gathered together his armies and stood against them with his sword. He drove out the Lamanites and brought peace to them. What about this sword of Laban always popping up? Remember, in ancient and medieval times nothing was more valuable than a good sword, because nothing was rarer. The steel of a Damascus sword could cut through an anvil, so it is said. When you had a sword like that, it was extremely precious. You know the most famous sword of all, the sword in the stone, which was Excalibur. That sword was handed down. The person who had that sword would have more than human power. There are some famous swords. Saladin had one. I’m trying to think of some other famous swords, but you can see why a sword would be very valuable and why it would be among the national treasures. The sword of Laban was handed down among the national treasures.

Verse 14: “They did contend against the Lamanites until they had driven them out of all the lands of their inheritance.” Notice that Nephites always fight on their own ground; they claim no other. He drove them out of the lands of the Nephites’ inheritance. Then there came false Christs and all these false teachers. There were a lot of them going around. They were allowed to teach, as far as that goes. But they [were punished] not according to their beliefs or teachings, but according to their crimes. They committed them and were caught in their crimes. False teachers were punished according to their crimes. Remember, Satan was cast out of heaven not because he voted against the Great Plan that the Council passed on (we have many accounts of this in places like the *Abbatôn*), but because when he lost he took to arms. He refused to accept the verdict. Immediately, he revolted with a third of the hosts of heaven, and they were cast out. It was not because he dissented and had a different idea, but because he resorted to violence and force to put it over.

And [in verse 16] then there were many dissensions. Here’s your race problem again. *Dissension* means that the people left and went out to be by themselves or to join other groups. This happened with the Nehors on a big scale, and it was still going on. There were “many dissensions away unto the Lamanites.” The Lamanites were getting almost a steady influx of Nephite blood, so there was this mixture going on all the time. This idea that anything you find in the Western Hemisphere is either Nephite or Lamanite is utterly absurd. The Nephites and Lamanites were minorities by this time. As it told us before, they called them Lamanites and called them Nephites as political labels. That’s what they were.

Verse 17: “For behold, king Benjamin was a holy man and he did reign over his people in righteousness; and there were many holy men in the land.” It was a sacral state, but they had to use “much sharpness,” the same as ever, to keep people in line. Using this “much sharpness” was the price of peace. Verse 18: “Wherefore, with the help of these, king Benjamin, by laboring with all the might of his body and the faculty of his whole soul,

and also the prophets, did once more establish peace in the land.” Notice the “faculty of his whole soul” and the “might of his body.” He used all the strength he could. The faculty of his soul wasn’t exerted on the Lamanites; this isn’t a military action we are talking about. This is what it takes. Exerting his whole soul, in cooperation with the prophets, he established peace in the land.

Now we come to the marvelous book of Mosiah. I have been rushing to get to it because I wanted to get to it this semester. I’m very happy that we can, and here we go. Notice that it begins with the *happy land*. They’ve had a long period of prosperity now. “And now there was no more contention in all the land of Zarahemla.” The curtain rises on a very happy scene, and they are going to have a big national celebration to celebrate their victory, their success, their long years of peace. Their king was a great hero with them because of all the things he had done. “King Benjamin had continual peace all the remainder of his days.” There was a long peace here, as I said. This is a happy situation that we begin with. The subject of this first chapter is *communication*. This whole introductory passage is talking about plates and records. The second chapter is the one that takes up. I said that Benjamin was a great antiquarian. He was just the one to take the records because he was very much concerned with this. He called his three sons—Mosiah, Helorum, and Helaman—“and he caused that they should be taught in all the language of his fathers [see this complexity], that thereby they might become men of understanding.” The language had changed, and they needed to use the original texts (we should take some hints from this) so they could understand the scriptures when they read them “concerning the prophecies which had been spoken by the mouths of their fathers.” They were speaking another language now.

They had many prophets, you notice. Verse 3: “My sons, I would that ye should remember that were it not for these plates, which contain these records and these commandments, we must have suffered in ignorance.” This is in spite of the fact that they had many prophets. Don’t get the idea that because we have a prophet we don’t have to pay much attention to the scriptures. There’s this idea that we have a living prophet to answer all our questions and solve all our problems for us—nothing could be more absurd than that. Here he says, “Were it not for these plates . . . we must have suffered in ignorance, even at this present time, not knowing the mysteries of God.” Well, don’t prophets reveal mysteries of God? The Lord told Joseph Smith, if I’ve told you a thing once I won’t tell you again; if it’s in the scriptures, don’t ask me about it. You look it up yourself; I’m not going to repeat these things. If we don’t take advantage of the revelations we have, we are not going to have more. If the heavens have been silent, there is a good reason for it. Verse 4: “For it were not possible that our father, Lehi, could have remembered all these things . . . except it were for the help of these plates; for he having been taught in the language of the Egyptians therefore he could read these engravings.” We saw these engravings that Martin Harris had from the plates.

Question: Does that also refer to the brass plates?

Answer: No, they were probably in Hebrew. The bronze or brass plates were the record of the Hebrews that was kept by the Jews. Well, they were kept by the Jews since they left Egypt, too. And in 750 B.C. they introduced this very convenient Demotic script, which could be written in a tiny fraction of what it takes for Hebrew, which is very clumsy. Notice there has never been a cursive Hebrew. You always have to write each letter separate right to this day. They don’t run letters together speedily as they do in any normal cursive—that’s crazy. For that reason, right at the beginning they could very well

have adopted that Demotic script, whatever it was. But he [Lehi] could read these things and teach them to his children. So they had been handed down, and “thereby they could teach them to their children, and so fulfilling the commandments of God, even down to this present time.” This is 470 years later. Most ancient records are kept by priests also, and almost never in the vernacular. In the Middle Ages if you were keeping a record of anything it had to be in Latin. That was required, although Latin was not the language of any of the nations of Europe at that time. Spain, Italy, and France—they were all dialects of Latin, but they kept the records in classical, Ciceronian Latin. They all kept records. If you are going to read any chronicles, we have the *Monumenta* here from the Middle Ages. We have the *Patrologia*. We have great collections of medieval records here, and all in Latin. Unless they are from the East; then they had to be in Greek. In other places they had to be in Coptic, which was invented for the purpose. Coptic was invented for the purpose of keeping records. It’s a very interesting thing. They use fourteen old Egyptian hieroglyphs, mix Greek letters with them, and get Coptic. So that’s the way you do; you have a special technique of record keeping and a special language for the record keepers. They have to learn it for the sake of continuity because a language changes. Of course, there are exceptions. We have the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, which are very valuable—the *Laud* and the *Parker Manuscripts*, Anglo-Saxon writings that go way back. They are in Old English.

Question: Didn’t the common people depend on the leaders to be taught the gospel?

Answer: Yes, they depended very much on these prophets. You notice there were many holy men who always had to work on it. The people weren’t so excited about it; they didn’t come to meetings very often. As he said here, “And they did speak the word of God with power and with authority; and they did use much sharpness because of the stiffneckedness of the people” (Words of Mormon, verse 17). So the holy men always had to “crack down” on them. There was that sort of thing.

Verse 6: “O my sons, I would that ye should remember that these sayings are true, and also that these records are true, And behold, also the plates of Nephi . . . and we can know of their surety because we have them before our eyes.” He testified to them.

Speaking of these records here, remember the Lord says, “There is no end to my works or my words.” As I’ve written down here, every creature wants to get in on everything it can. Before you can get in on a project, you must know about it. Without the records you are living in a closet, and we have a closet mentality. And without the records we have no memory; we have the scope of an insect. We can see only what is immediately in front of us. William James defines *intelligence* as “the ability to react to an absent stimulus.” If I can react to an absent stimulus (something that isn’t here), I must have some imagination. But a bug can only react if you touch it, if you are immediately in its presence. Of course, a lot of animals have instinct; they know absent stimuli, preparing for earthquakes, and things like that. But if I don’t know anything at all of the past, I have no memory and I have no identity. Your memory is your identity. A person who has lost his memory has lost his identity. It’s the same with a people; they do the same thing. We feel sorry for the insect; it doesn’t know what it is missing. But we are built to be high-powered information centers, every one of us. The data pours in, and we are battered by impressions from all sides—not just radioactive materials. Rays, and particles, and many forms of energy are trying to get our attention.

The eye that cannot choose but see,

We cannot bid the ear be still [whether we want to or not]
Our senses feel where ere we be
Against or with our will.

So these impressions and this potential knowledge is pouring in on you all day. You can become immune to it. You can build up a great defense system against it—an immunization system. You can immunize yourself from knowledge of all sorts, and we are rather good at that because it can be very disturbing sometimes.

Well, Benjamin waxed old then, so he must have taught for many years. There has been a regular priestly collegium going on here. He talks about these holy men and how they worked together, etc. Verse 9: “He waxed old, and he saw that he must very soon go the way of all the earth; therefore, he thought it expedient that he should confer the kingdom upon one of his sons [this is the way he went about it]. Therefore, he had Mosiah brought before him.” Years ago in the old priesthood manual, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, that has been reprinted many times, I had a breakdown of this coronation rite. In the Bible in the book of Kings, you read that there were many kings and how they got to be kings. We are told how they got to the throne and how they lost the throne. There’s a lot said about it. But not one instance in the Bible tells us how a coronation as performed—what they did at a coronation. Yet that is one thing on which we are best informed in all ancient records. In Egypt we know every step of a coronation, and in Babylon, and wherever you go, because it’s in the government records. The coronation is a great ritual. It’s a solemn rite, and it’s a historical event, too. There’s the great assembly. I wrote this here about the great assembly.

Having nothing to do with this, I assembled a whole collection of articles that came out in the *Western Political Quarterly* on the ancient coronation ceremonies. There were at least a dozen different cases of when this happened, and they all followed the same pattern. That’s the pattern that’s followed here very closely. I gave quite a breakdown, all the things it breaks down into. You would be surprised how elaborate and how accurate this description is of a coronation. But after I wrote this, I discovered *Nathan the Babylonian* (*Nathan ha-Babli*). Now, as you know, the Jews sought refuge in Babylon. When Jerusalem was destroyed, they went to Babylon. They were kept there for many years, and many of them stayed over. That became the Jewish center of the world, so the great *Talmud* is the *Babylonian Talmud*, written in Babylon down to the year A.D. 1040. The two great schools were recognized in Babylon. This is by Nathan the Babylonian who witnessed the crowning of the king in captivity. He is called the *exilarch* or “the king in captivity” or the *rosh galuth*—the “head of the captivity.” He describes the coronation. Here is how the Jews really crowned their kings. This is the process by which they crowned their kings. He tells us about it here. He lived in the tenth century, and he was an eyewitness of what went on there. He starts out here with the *qahal*, which is the whole community. Our word *ecclesiastical* is the Greek equivalent of that; it means “the calling forth of all the people in a general assembly.”

[According to Nathan], when the ruling council of the whole community of people has agreed on the appointment of a king to rule in captivity, this is the way they go about it. They invoke the heads of the two great schools at Babylon, the School of Sura and the School of Pumbeditha. They hold a meeting with the heads of the schools, the heads of the people, the elders, and the heads of the synagogue, and they meet at the house of a rich and important man who is greatly honored to have this. He pays the expenses of the preliminary meetings. They decide on who will be the king, and they make arrangements.

It would have to be within three days. Here [in the Book of Mormon] Benjamin says suddenly, I'm going to call a king. There's not going to be any discussion because the king is going to be you, and tomorrow you are going to make the announcement [paraphrased]. Why is it that Benjamin himself didn't make the announcement that his son should be king? That was the practice. Why did the new king announce his coronation and not the old king? You've heard, "The king is dead—long live the king." He can't claim to be the king while his father is still alive—that's rebellion. They have to wait until the old king is dead. Then how do you have the old king in the rites? Well, this is very important; the Egyptians really had this developed. The new king is *Horus*, but he has to be recognized by his father. The high priest takes the part in the temple. It is all done by proxy, vicariously. The old king is represented vicariously. That is what happened, and this is what happens here. The *hazzān* takes the place of the old king; he is the *praecentor*. He takes that part and leads the people, and he is the one that hands the crown over. But the announcement has to be made after the king is dead. That's why Benjamin says to his son, I will announce that you will be king, but you will call the people together; you are the one who has to summon them.

Verse 10: "Therefore, he had Mosiah brought before him; and these are the words which he spake unto him saying [he is ritualizing it, making it very formal]: My son, I would that ye should make a proclamation [Well, why don't you make it? The thing is that the king can't announce that the king is dead. The son has to announce that there is going to be a new crown] throughout all this land among all this people, or the people of Zarahemla, and the people of Mosiah." Notice that they are still separate people. You are going to send out the *heror*. The proclamation is very important. Anyone who refuses to come will be banished from the kingdom for three years; that's the universal rule. You had to come to Rome when you received the notice, and you had to come in person. If you didn't come to acclaim the king at that time, you would be an outlaw. You would be banished from the kingdom. This is very important. It tells in the book of Zechariah, And all that do not come up to Jerusalem in the proper season to hail the king there, on them shall be no rain; they shall be cut off [paraphrased from Zechariah 14:17]. You don't have any rights if you don't come as a true citizen, and you have to become registered on that day, for example, in Rome or Greece when they chose a king. You had to be on the list of the *incisi*, the *incised*. They had big lead tablets or plates swinging on sort of doors in the forum. The names of all the citizens were written on them, and you had to come and check your name to show that you were there—that you were an *incisus*, one whose name was *incised*. If you weren't one of the *incisi*, you weren't a citizen; you had no rights whatever. It was very important for people to come and acclaim at the *acclamatio*. I wrote an article on the *acclamatio*, too.¹ It was to acclaim the new king or ruler, and this is what they are going to have happen.

Well, he goes on here, but if you have all read the account in Mosiah of the coronation, let's just race through Nathan the Babylonian's story here. All the elders assemble, and they set the new king apart. Then they proclaim that all the people must come together and bring presents. Here in the Book of Mormon they all bring their first-fruits. The king can only be crowned at new year, the beginning of the new age. It's the Festival of the Booths. They brought their tents, and they all camped with their tents facing the temple. That's not in the Bible, but in the new Temple Scroll that's exactly what happens. There's a special arrangement made for all the tribes. Each tribe has its place, and a place is established for their booths. *Booth* is a very interesting word. It's a good old English word, but it's the same as the Semitic word *bayt*, a house where you throw stuff together and

live. And there's our word *abide*, to live somewhere temporarily. You *abide* in a *booth*. There was the *boðthstether* of Iceland, where the people would come to the great assembly to elect the king, and there was the *logberg*, the mountain of the law. From the top of that the *goði* would read the law to the people, just as Benjamin reads the law to the people here. The high priest was called the *goði*. The people would all come and camp around there in booths, and the rings from those booths still remain. They had stones to hold them down. It tells us in the Bible they were as a shelter from the sun and the rain because it was temporary. They were camping there. The law is "Thou shalt not celebrate the Passover within thy gates." Everybody had to come as a pilgrim, and everybody had to bring a gift in all these places. So they came as pilgrims and lived in their booths. It tells us in the Temple Scroll that every booth faced the temple hill. They completely surrounded it and faced the temple, and they lived in their families separately, as we are told in Mosiah here. As the *Talmud* said, they must feast and sit in rings in their families with their back to each other [paraphrased]. There were certain rules. It tells us the same thing here, that they sat separated by families (Mosiah 2:5).

I want to get back to Nathan here and the way the Jews did it in the Middle Ages when they continued through the years to crown a new king in captivity. They still had their king, and they followed the old established rites. So this is what happened then: They would bring the presents, each according to his means—presents of gold and silver, the richest they could. Then they would feast together in separate families. They would have the big feast. It was a feast and celebration, the great assembly. It was usually a two-day affair, and the day before a wooden tower (this is very important) was erected. Note that Benjamin had a tower put up so he could speak from the top of it; he did the same thing here. There's no mention of towers like that in the Bible, but here it is. It was ten-and-a-half feet high, four-and-a-half feet wide, and broad enough to have three seats. In the center is the big seat for the king, and either side are his two counselors—the head of the School of Sura on the right, and the head of the School of Pumbeditha on the left. (You always have to have the president and his two counselors.) The king is the one who sits on the central throne, the empty throne. It was covered with costly cloths and things. Underneath this tower was a choir of young men, chosen for their voices and for their nobility. They had to belong to illustrious families; it was a very great honor to belong to the choir. They played an important part. Benjamin said, "I'll go down when the heavenly choirs sing." The choir sang the "song of redeeming love" that Alma talks about later on.

Then they open with prayer in which they ask for revelation, that the Spirit of the Lord might be with them. Then there is the sabbath hymn. The people sing an antiphonal hymn—the people sing and the chorus replies. Then there is the universal acclamation; they all stand up and go along with this. It is an antiphonal chorus. Then they sing the Creation Hymn which is very important. They are celebrating the foundation of the world. Here they sing a song called "By the Spirit of All Living Things." The meeting is opened by the *hazzān*. Remember, he is the person who takes the place of the old king. The *hazzān* is a *cantor* today, the one who sings in the synagogue. But the *hazzān* is the *praecantor* who takes the place of the old king and acts as master of ceremonies. He is the principal person there, but the other king is the one who gives the great sermon, of course. Then they give the holiness shouts. The people repeat the prayer, the *qiddūsh*, which is a prayer for the dead actually, so that all people are present on this occasion. Remember, this is a great feast of the ancestors throughout the world when they make this great assembly. The *qiddūsh* is actually the hymn for the dead and has to do with work for the dead. But while the people say it in a low voice, the chorus under the tower gives the hallelujah

shouts. Then all the people arise and utter the Eighteen Benedictions which have to do with the creation of the world. Some people think the Eighteen Benedictions were the oldest text there was. Then they are all seated and the king appears. It says the king has been kept in concealment until now. He mounts the tower and, of course, all the people arise then. The king sits down, but the people remain standing while the two counselors come in and sit down on either side. Then all the people sit down again. But there is also a *proskynōsis*. They fall down in the presence of the king. We saw that before. When people are overwhelmed or want to appear overwhelmed, they go through the act of falling down on their faces. That happens here.

I've gone through it all with quite an elaborate bibliography of sources here. It's in lesson 23 of *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, the old priesthood manual. I didn't realize I had broken it down into such small sections. They really follow very closely along what should be done. As I said, we are sticking to the Jewish record here now. Then what happens? Over the king's head alone there is a magnificent baldachin cover, and the seats of the other two are separated. They are not right close to his. In the Temple Scroll living in the tents and the baldachin are important. Then the master of ceremonies, the *hazzān*, enters the tent in which the king is sitting and gives him a blessing in a low voice that only he, the people on the stand, and the chorus underneath can hear. It's a confidential thing, and all the other people hear is the chorus shouting Amen at the end of certain sentences on certain occasions. So they know that big things are taking place. It's all hush, hush and in a low voice when the *hazzān* goes in. It's the old king handing over personally the rule to his son. It's done in a mystical sort of fashion, with great silence and reverence. He comes from the tent and gives his royal blessing, and the old king blesses the new king.

It's now the king's time to give a great sermon. King Benjamin's sermon is delivered on this occasion—the old king in this case. But the *hazzān* gives the first sermon, and the king gives the second. It's Benjamin who gives the sermon. You may think, "Why not Mosiah? He's the one who is going to be king?" They both give sermons here. He gives the sermon, and that's the first part of the ceremony. Notice, there are two orations in the Book of Mormon here. That's the first part, and the second part is inaugurated by the new king himself. He opens the proceedings [Nathan ha-Babli] says. He gives a sermon on the subject of *ha-perūsh shel îtî ha-yîm*, which is the proper sermon for the particular day. It's the New Year sermon which introduces the creation, the new year, the restoration of life, and all this sort of thing. This is the sermon he gives for the day, it says, "for that very day." Or he gives permission for one of his counselors to give the sermon; he can do that, too.

And it's very interesting that there was an interpreter there because they are not speaking the language of the people here. The whole thing is in Hebrew, and these people speak Aramaic. They have been living in Babylon a long time. They are speaking the eastern Aramaic dialect, so they don't understand the sermon. So again you see this business of the two languages being used. Benjamin had his sons learn the languages because they now read from the Book of the Law. The people can't understand it; there's an interpreter there all the time. Next the king himself personally interprets the Book of the Law. That's exactly what Mosiah does, interpret the law to the people. For the rest of the Book of Mormon the law that Benjamin and Mosiah gave them is the basic law right to the end.

That's the organic law of the Nephites, and it's based on the law of Moses. It's their reading and application of it.

After this introductory sermon there is a *silentium*, and that's a very important thing. Even in the Byzantine court they call it *silentium*. It's the Latin word for "being silent." You get it in Psalms and [Habakkuk 2:20], the very famous introduction. All the churches use it. "But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." That means be quiet. When God enters the temple there must be an absolute hush, and they really insist on it here. If anybody breaks the silence by so much as a *tziftzûf*, which means a *whisper* or a *twitter*, [he is in trouble]. I love the Hebrew word for birds; you can't say the word without chirping like a bird. That's what the word is; you just write it out like that. It says there is not to be a twitter or a sound. So there's a *silentium*.

In the Meistersingers when they are going to inaugurate the mysteries of the Musicians Guild, the first announcement is, "One, two, three, *silentium*, *silentium*, *mach keine Rede und kein Gesumm*—be silent in His presence." This came from the Byzantine court, which came from the Persian court. You find it all over the Old World. As I said, you actually find it in the Old Testament, too, that very famous saying, "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth *has lefanau* [that means *hush*] before his face." *Kōl hā-āretz*, "all the earth." They do the same thing here in this Babylonian version, and they demand absolute silence and awe.

Then when the *hazzān* starts reading, he covers his face and recites the whole speech with his eyes closed. If anybody utters a sound, he opens his eyes and looks at them. It says, "The people are overwhelmed by the most unspeakable fear and terror." He is in an inspired state. It's the same thing here. Remember, the people are smitten by the things they hear. But if there is any lack of discipline or whisperings (that's the word it uses here), he opens his eyes and gives you one look. He has his face covered with the *tallith*. But that look is absolutely petrifying; the people just freeze. He gives the sermon from the law, and then there's a question period. There's a certain learned old man who is supposed to reply for the people in the question and answer period. You can [ask] anything you want. Remember, there is a dialogue in Mosiah. Benjamin explains things, everything the people want to know. He gives the answers. It's a very interesting thing that he begins by saying, "It's necessary for you to understand these things." Not only does he have the translator there, but he asks if there are any questions. He makes it clear so people understand it is given for their benefit.

This is the first time he [the new king] is called "the prince." After he has given the speech, the people all shout together, "Long live the king" for the first time. They call him the *nāsîk*, "the king" or "the prince." It's a famous title. *Rōpsh gālûṭ*, "Long live the ruler of the captivity." Well, *gālûṭ* means *revelation*, *people*, and all sorts of things, "a thing which is unfolding or revealing." Now he is officially the king at last. They finally acclaim him with "Long live the king." Then they say, "May we live and long may the people of Israel live." After that the *praecentor* or *hazzān*, blesses the king and consecrates him. He is now the king. Then a financial report of the kingdom is given. This is a very interesting thing. It includes the donations that have been given on this occasion, and he blesses the givers. After the king receives the Book of the Law, he stands up and expounds the law to the people. This is the main thing—the king discoursing to the people from a tower on the law that they are supposed to obey, the laws and customs of the people. Then it closes with

a prayer, the king and the Book of the Law are blessed. All the people cry, "Amen, we accept." They all must cry "amen." He presents it and they accept it. Then they all go home.

This is the picture we get in the Book of Mormon. The same thing goes on here. This [Nathan ha-Babli] was discovered in the late nineteenth century sometime. You shouldn't find it too hard to understand what goes on here. It's the sermons that count because they are directed to us, and he lowers the beam. It's interesting that this is the great occasion of the national celebration. If ever there was a successful people, standing tall, [it is these people], and all he does is throw cold water on the whole thing. He just drenches them in it. He says, You fools; you don't see things as they are at all. Don't get any big ideas about yourselves. Look out!

1. See Hugh W. Nibley, "Acclamatio," in Dalmas H. Nelson and Richard L. Sklar, eds., *Toward a Science of Politics: Essays in Honor of Francis Dunham Wormuth* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983), 11–22.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 28

Mosiah 1–2

King Benjamin's Speech

What we have today is a very good lesson on the subject [of fear and trembling], so let's get started here. Now we have that most marvelous book of Mosiah. We can't spend any more time talking about the setup of the meeting, the protocol etc., which is so thoroughly accurate. I was going to bring a book of as many as eight articles of mine on the subject of the great assembly, the national assembly, in ancient times. It's loaded with evidence of all kinds, but the time is far spent. But notice certain things. Every ancient people held their yearly assembly, they held it in the new year, and the king presided. When they had the new king, it was the New Age, and they brought their first-fruits and all the rest. This was not only in Israel, but in at least every other major ancient civilization. Notice he brings them together; we are in the first chapter here. He has to send out the proclamation; that's the *heror*. When you get the proclamation, you must come or be banished from the kingdom for three [years]. Then you have to go on to give the people the name. It's very important on this occasion to have a new name because he says later on, "This day has he spiritually begotten you." This is the *genethlia*, the *natale*, the day of birth. Not only nature is born anew, but all things are born anew. That's why sometimes it's held in the spring equinox. (I can talk faster than this, and I may have to because we have to cover a lot of ground. Be sure you get everything down. No, watch your Book of Mormon very closely here.) In Mosiah 1 he is going to give them a new name and a new identity. See, every time you get a new life or a new advancement, a new step or initiation, you get a new identity, a new persona. When a person is born he gets christened. He is not christened until he joins the church. This is the theory in the Christian world. With us it used to be always on the eighth day, circumcision, etc. You have a new name, and when you get married you get another new name. If you get any office, you also get another new name. Then at your funeral you get another identity, etc. They go through the same ritual every time. And, of course, when you reach maturity there's a very important thing—the rites of initiation that come with maturity. In the Christian churches it's when you are confirmed, around the age of fifteen. In all primitive tribes and [other societies] when a person becomes mature—reaches manhood or womanhood—there is that rite. Then they get a new name; they are identified with another group entirely. Boys are no longer with the women, etc. They now belong to a man's *phratry*. These are the rites of puberty. So each time you get a new name, a new identity, a new appearance, new marks, and a new title or degree.

Then he hands over the national treasures to his successor. They always have the national treasures. For example, in Japan the sword and the mirror. In the book here it's the scepter. In the national treasures you will often find the mace and the ball, or the *mekht* in Egypt, or the mirror and sword, or the jewel and the *gnobis*. There are a certain three or four things. The Hopis still have a very sacred, secret box that they call the *tipony* that keeps their most secret things—the records of their wandering and certain very valuable objects. Just as in the Ark of Covenant were kept not only the rolls but the *lûlāb*, the *hyssop* and various very important things as symbols of the time when they were in the

desert. There was a sample of the manna. All these national treasures were handed over. They had their *tipony* here, their national treasure. It included the plates of brass, the sword of Laban, and the ball or director of the Liahona. The ball or director isn't working anymore. That's not the point; it's a national treasure now. But he tells them in verse 17: "Therefore, as they were unfaithful they did not prosper nor progress in their journey." It didn't work by magic; it worked by faith. This still applies to the Book of Mormon today. It's the book, the plates themselves. If you are faithful you will prosper on your journey, and if you are not you will be smitten with sore afflictions.

I told you last time about my home teacher, Brother Amosa, a giant Samoan whose father is a chief and just arrived here. I said, "How are things going in the Church there?"

"Not so well; people are indifferent. We need another 1966." In 1966 there was a great typhoon that hit them. After that the people in the Church were very active and faithful. Now they have slowed down again, as native people do and as we do. So they need another shakeup. As he says here, "Therefore they were smitten with famine and sore afflictions, to stir them up in remembrance of their duty."

This is the new king putting out the proclamation because the old king is usually dead before this happens. The new king is the successor. Now we come to a great nation holding its national celebration. They are celebrating their brilliant victories and their long peace. Thanks to King Benjamin there is a great upbeat time of looking back with pride and achievement. Oh, don't fool yourself; watch what happens here. They gather at the temple; we saw that. Remember, they always have a census when they come in because you must be one of the *incisi*. You must register your name. This was in Israel, too. You must register your name when you go up to the temple. They didn't bother to do it because there were so many. They would take their time with it. They brought their firstlings; it was the new year all right. Notice in chapter 2, verse 4, what keeps a society great. It is having "just men to be their teachers, and also a just man to be their king, who had established peace in the land . . . and filled with love towards God and all men." This is your great society, you might say, but you see nothing about power and gain, about the military might and wealth of the nation. Wealth is no measure of its greatness, and military might isn't either. If so, the Assyrians and Genghis Khan's society would be the greatest culture of all time. Just men, just peace, and love toward all men [are the important things].

So they came to the temple and camped around according to the old custom, as we know from the *Temple Scroll* now. It was discovered in the 1950s and first published in 1976. [They camped] according to their families—"every family being separate one from another," as they had to. They ate with their backs to each other, in fact. Their tents faced the door of the temple, and he had a tower erected. That's a novelty we didn't know about at all until we get Nathan the Babylonian. I may as well put some of those things from Nathan down here. He was Nathan the Babylonian, Nathan ha-Babli. That means "the man of Babel." We talked about the two schools, the seats on either side. They were his counselors. They could give the speech instead of him. He invites them by courtesy to do so. They invite each other to do so, and it comes back to the king again. Then he gives a speech. First, he reads the law. He gives the sermon of the day. But then he gives a *darash* [explanation, commentary]. He doesn't read it, but he teaches from it. He lays down the new law, the policy of his administration. There was the School of Sura and the School of Pumbeditha. The first school, the more important one, was back in Palestine. That was the

School of Jamnia, the one that Johanan Ben Zakkai established when they broke with the temple. They didn't like the temple at all.

Then he starts his speech to them. These are the words; they are going to quote his speech to us with the people all around the temple. He began to speak from the tower. The people couldn't all [hear] it; the words were written and sent forth. We actually have circulars of the king's speech that was circulated by the king of Persia in distant provinces of the empire. Copies of a speech from the time of Darius have been picked up. So if you couldn't attend the king's speech, he would have it copied and circulated in the empire, as we have it here. Verse 9: "And these are the words which he spake and caused to be written." And you notice how it begins: "Open your ears that ye may hear." This is a *silentium*. No matter what the culture was, they always used the Roman word—whether it was the Byzantine court and then it went into the Russian court when the Russians took over the Byzantine Empire. In East or West, everywhere they used this word *silentium* because everybody had to be absolutely silent and give ear. In Israel it's called the *shem*, *listen*. Notice: "Open your ears that ye may hear, and your hearts that ye may understand, and your minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to your view." It's a solemn and awesome occasion. There is going to be a dramatization here that will set forth the basic principles. They are going to be in contact with the other world. This is a very important thing. It's very interesting that what the Romans call *mactus*, the Egyptians have a word just like it. That's when the *mundus* is open, the *orcus mundi*. Just as in all Hopi celebrations, there is in the center of the ring the *canistra*. There's a hole, the *sipapu*, which opens up to the Spirit World. It's only opened up on this day. It's the same thing here. You notice what the formula is. As I said before, "The Lord is in his holy temple; everybody hush." That's a thing that has been taken up by the churches. When you are all together then the Lord enters, as the king enters on the tower, and everybody has to hush then. That's the *silentium* here, "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him." So they have come to hear the mysteries of God.

First of all he tells them, Don't be afraid of me; I'm just a man [paraphrased]. This is a spooky occasion. Remember, when you leave this great celebration in Israel, according to the law of Moses, everyone must eat the last meal with his sandals on his feet, his staff in his hand, and wearing his robe. They are going to be ready for a quick getaway. Before dawn they must leave the site and leave no food there. They must have eaten everything, and no one must look back when they leave. This is very important. The Spirit is there and you are going to leave. It's a very holy and sacred occasion; something very powerful is happening there, which the Romans called *mactus*. He says, Don't be afraid of me. This is nothing spooky; I'm just a man [paraphrased]. This is important to know. Verse 10: "I have not commanded you to come up hither that ye should fear me, or that ye should think that I of myself am more than a mortal man." This is the occasion on which the king would assert his divinity; he would be hailed as a God. "My name is Ozymandias, king of kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!" That name *Ozymandias* comes from *weser maat Ra*, which was the name of Senwsret III who is supposed to be the same as Sheshonk and contemporary with Abraham. That's supposed to have been the Pharaoh of Abraham. These things all run together anyway.

I'm just a man like yourselves, he says. Notice in verse 11 that he has his authority from three sources: "I have been chosen by this people, and consecrated by my father." He has it in the patriarchal line; he has been consecrated by his father. But he has been chosen first of all. Notice that all the kings, including Nephi, had to be chosen by the people. He

was chosen by the people, and that's what the people come for—to acclaim the king. We have the psalms of David that describe various aspects of this situation. The climax of the meeting is the *acclamatio* when everyone acclaims. That's why you come up. All must acclaim in a single voice. We'll see they do it in a single voice, and you will see how that is possible. That is because of the *hazzān*, the *praecentor*. He waves a flag and says what they are to shout, and then they all shout it together. This is the way they did it everywhere, including Israel. It may seem funny to you that people reply in one voice—"we have seen; we understand; we accept"—using exactly the same formula. It's because they have been told what to say, and they are being led by a choral leader. They shout together that way, and it's very important to have him there. Sometimes the king himself would take that role, as in a Greek play. "I have been chosen by this people, and consecrated by my father, and was suffered by the hand of the Lord that I should be a ruler and a king over this people." That *suffered* is very good; it's the same word that is used with respect to the Constitution—"which I have suffered to be established by the hand of righteous men." That means to *permit* it, to go along with it. It doesn't mean to initiate, as we read in the Doctrine and Covenants 101, verse 77 and following, especially verse 79. And he mentions it in the next verse: "I say unto you that as I have been suffered to spend my days in your service, even up to this time." Not that I have been commanded, but I have been allowed; I have been given that privilege. I have been *suffered* to do it. It may not be God's plan, but he will allow men to do it their way, because it is for their own good.

No one can come empty handed into the presence of the king. And Nathan the Babylonian said, "Everyone brings as costly a gift as he can possibly afford." But Benjamin says, none of that. He mentions it and talks about it, but says, I'm not that kind of a king. This is an important thing. There has been an article come out recently in the *Studi e Materiali*, the Italian journal of ancient religion, a very good journal. The main theme of the king's speech when he speaks in Israel is to formally deny that he is the king. The real king is God; he makes that clear. He says, "You've elected me your king, but the real king is God." It was the theme of the king's speech in Israel, and, sure enough, it's the theme of the king's speech right here in Mosiah's book. He says here: "I . . . have not sought gold nor silver nor any manner of riches of you [you are not supposed to bring up any of that for me at all; that's not what I'm after]; Neither have I suffered that ye should be confined in dungeons [he wouldn't put up with anything like that], nor that ye should make slaves one of another." Where does the king get his power? He is going to tell you where he gets his power. He hasn't suffered it. How does he stop it? Does he lock them up in jail? Does he make slaves of them if they do that? Does he put them in dungeons? No, he says they don't have dungeons; they don't make slaves. Well, how does he do it? Notice in verses 13 and 14 that he does it two ways: First, by teaching, and then by example. "Nor even have I suffered that ye should commit any manner of wickedness, and have taught you that ye should keep the commandments of the Lord, in all things which he hath commanded you [and I have set the example]. And even I, myself, have labored with mine own hands that I might serve you, and that ye should not be laden with taxes, and that there should nothing come upon you which was grievous to be borne." Notice again that *to suffer* is *to tolerate*, *to condone*. The countermeasure was teaching and example, and this is how it worked. Does this mean no taxes at all? Many people love this part of the Book of Mormon about not being laden with taxes. This means not *grievous* taxes, "grievous to be borne." As he says a little later on, "We pray the Lord not to suffer us to be tempted beyond what we can bear." Of course, that's what we talk about in the Lord's prayer, "beyond what we can bear." But the idea that any required contribution of me is painful, that's Scotch. I hear many Scotch jokes in the family about

that. If you have to give anything at all, that really hurts—no matter what it is. Whatever brings me money is good; whatever takes money away from me is bad. That's the simple rule we are following today in our legislation policy and everything else. Anything that makes me rich is good; anything that doesn't make me rich is not good. It's a very simple rule, and it works beautifully with us. We stick to it like glue. But Benjamin said, I have not permitted you to be "laden with taxes grievous to be borne."

Then he says, "I can answer a clear conscience before God this day." This is an important thing, too. To whom is the king answerable? He is not answerable to the people or anyone else. It's just as in the temple. He is answerable to no one but God—as if that wasn't enough. But, of course, the doctrine of majesty in the ancient world is that the king is answerable to no one, with the divine right of kings. George III became king, and that brought on the American Revolution. [James II] became king, and that brought on the revolution of 1688, the Glorious Revolution in England. Or King John brought on [the Magna Carta] at Runnymede in 1215. But Benjamin said he could answer with a clear conscience. The Roman theory of majesty, *maiestas* (Cicero discoursed on it) is that the magistrate—the king, the top man who is a *Rex*—is absolute. Nobody can question him; he can do anything he wants. The king's will is as high as it goes. This has been taught right down into the twentieth century. Just before World War II, this was absolutely believed and taught throughout Europe in the great empires of Russia, Austria, and Germany. The emperor could do no wrong; he was the one and they didn't question him. He had absolute right. Parliamentarianism came in way back in the days of King John and put a check on that, but it was still the thing [in some countries]. Today we have another source that is answerable to no man. Do any of you read much of Malcolm Forbes? Well, if you have money you don't have to answer to anybody. That's the whole point of having money, he says. You are your own boss; nobody can question you. So the worst thing that could happen would be that somebody would threaten to take any of it from you, by legal or any other means. That can't be legal means because we have to be free. As Cain said, now I am free—his property falls into my hands [paraphrased]. That's what made Cain free. This is a very important speech, and we must pay attention to it.

To whom do you make your covenants, in the temple or anywhere else? With God and God alone. We don't swear oaths to each other, even when you get married. Remember, the covenant for both the man and the woman is with God directly and nobody else. As Heber C. Kimball said, "All the others are present only as witnesses." That's why you're not going to be punished if you break them. Nobody is going to send out a posse and run you down because you have broken your covenants or promises. No, that's between you and the Lord entirely. It's made that way in the first place, and he is the only one you will have to answer to. You don't have to answer to other people. They don't know your condition. I don't know yours, and you don't know mine.

Now, he goes on here. God is the employer and the paymaster here. Verse 16: "Because I said unto you that I had spent my days in your service, I do not desire to boast, for I have only been in the service of God." Again you see, I haven't been serving you—I have been serving God actually. If you ask him what he wants done, that's the way he wants you to serve him. He's the employer and the paymaster, but how does he want you to serve him? As Solomon said at the dedication of the temple, What kind of a house can we build for you? The heaven is your throne, and the earth is your footstool. What kind of a temple can we build you? [paraphrased]. Well, we can't at all, of course. It's for our benefit that the work is done, but God wants you to serve him. I heard a good one yesterday: "There are a lot of Latter-day Saints who are eager to serve God on an advisory basis." And that's

as far as it goes. In verse 17 he tells them that applies to them, too. “I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings, ye are only in the service of your God.” If you want to serve God, this is how. This is how God wants us to serve him.

It’s so easy to use the word *God*. It’s like the Victual brethren of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the Baltic. They were a pious band of old holy pirates. They had a great castle called the Umsberg, and they robbed everyone. But their slogan that justified everything they did was “Friends of God, enemies to all men.” How can you be friends of God and enemies to all men? Well, you can use the word *God* so easily and say, “God wills that I chop your head off,” etc. Both sides appeal to God in a war to justify their case. You can’t do that. If you want to serve God, that’s the way you serve him. He wants you to [serve your fellow beings]. There’s nothing you can do for him; he doesn’t need your help. He doesn’t need your assistance. He doesn’t need you to rush into the field and avenge his honor, as we get from Abelard in the Middle Ages, and also Thomas Aquinas. God’s honor has been damaged, and we must avenge it. So we go out and chop people up, etc., to do honor to God.

Verse 18: “Behold, ye have called me your king; and if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to serve you, then ought not ye to labor to serve one another?” This is how I serve; I labor to serve you as your king, not to expand my power or my might. It can’t be, “Me first. I want it all and I want it now.” You labor to serve one another. He is rubbing it in here. “And behold also, if I, whom ye call your king, who has spent his days in your service, and yet has been in the service of God, do merit any thanks from you, O how you ought to thank your heavenly King! [He is the real king—this is the point. This is the theme of the king’s address from the tower. We know this from other cases, too]. I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess . . . if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day, . . . I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls [twenty-four hours a day] yet ye would be unprofitable servants.” An unprofitable servant is somebody who consumes more than he produces. You can’t possibly produce what you consume. You can’t produce even a blade of grass. No one can pay his own way in this world. If you say you’ve paid your own way, you can’t. He is “even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants.” So much for being independent. You are dependent on him every minute. You should know that and realize that other people are, too. What he wants you to do is to help them. He doesn’t need your help.

Verse 22: “And behold, all that he requires of you is to keep his commandments; and he has promised you that if ye would keep [them] ye should prosper in the land; and he never doth vary from that which he hath said; therefore, if ye do keep his commandments he doth bless you and prosper you.” Then he mentions three points here. Notice this thing is one of the constants. It isn’t just the law of the promised land; it applies everywhere. Here he goes now: “And now, in the first place, he hath created you, and granted unto you your lives, for which ye are indebted unto him.” You have no control over that whatever—this idea of life and death. Then to make somebody work, because if he won’t you threaten his life. He’ll starve if he doesn’t work on those terms, and they did. When Brigham Young told about his first mission, it was terrifying and horrifying what happened. He said that people were dropping dead in the streets. They couldn’t find work because it had been a bad winter. Nobody would give them anything to eat, and they would actually drop dead in the streets in Liverpool, Manchester, and places like that. The

poverty was simply terrible and nobody would lift a finger. At the same time the nobility and the upper classes were rolling in wealth. The wealth of the empire started pouring in then. He [Brigham Young] didn't think that was right. But God has created you and all that, and why should you deny anyone the right even to live unless he works on certain terms. If he is forced, he has no other choice than to take a minimum in order to keep body and soul together, which barely does it. You've got him where you want him, and you take advantage of his necessity to stay alive.

Verse 24: "And secondly, he doth require that ye should do as he hath commanded you." First, he has created you. You should be grateful to him; therefore, in view of that you should do anything he tells you to do because you are his creatures. And thirdly, if you do that he blesses you immediately. You don't have to wait around for sometime later on to see if it happens. This is a very interesting thing. You say, "I've waited and waited and nothing has happened. I've prayed." It's like the old woman who prayed that the hill would be removed from behind her house. It was a nuisance. She got up in the morning and it wasn't moved. She said, "Oh, I knew it wouldn't be moved anyway." That's the kind of faith [some people] have. But really, if you do it [keep the commandments], you immediately get results—no waiting. So much for being independent. "And ye are still indebted unto him, and are, and will be, forever and ever; therefore, of what have ye to boast?" Remember, everybody was happy and bursting with fun. They were feasting and all this sort of thing. Now he really starts pouring cold water on it. He's the "wet blanket" here.

Verse 25: "And now I ask, can ye say aught of yourselves? I answer you, Nay, Ye cannot say that ye are even as much as the dust of the earth; yet ye were created of the dust of the earth; but behold it belongeth to him who created you." Where is the hype here? Where is the national pride? Where is the standing tall? Why does he put them down this way? This is no way to celebrate. He tells us that he is being very realistic about this thing. In the next verse he says, don't think that I am putting you down. "I, whom ye call your king, am no better than ye yourselves are; I am also of the dust. And ye behold that I am old, and am about to yield up this mortal frame to its mother earth. Therefore, as I said unto you that I had served you, walking with a clear conscience before God [you must serve one another], even so I at this time have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might be found blameless." He had his stewardship, and that's why he was doing this. It's the same as Paul said in Corinthians. He said, I thank God that I baptized none of you because all Asia has turned against me [paraphrased]. His mission in Asia seemed to have been a failure. He said, I thank God I baptized none of you. I am clean. I've done my mission, I performed my duty, I did what I was called to do. He shook his garments and said, Now I am clear. The blood is on your garments now; it's not on mine anymore [paraphrased].

Verse 27: "... that I might be found blameless, and that your blood should not come upon me, when I shall stand to be judged of God of the things whereof he hath commanded me concerning you." Notice that it is very personal. God has commanded me to do certain things concerning you, and I have done them. Now you have to do certain things because that is what I have been told to tell you. I want to "rid my garments of your blood, at this period of time when I am about to go down to my grave, that I might go down in peace, and my immortal spirit may join the choirs above in singing the praises of a just God." Remember, there is a very well-trained choir of distinguished young men singing under the platform. It was covered over so nobody could see it. In some of the rites, the choir would hear it and cry "amen" when the whole

thing was done in whispers up on the stand there. They were there for the Creation Hymn; they were very important. Verse 29: "I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might declare unto you that I can no longer be your king [we are to transmit the rule of the kingdom now; that's the purpose of the meeting]. . . . My son Mosiah is a king and a ruler over you." Not until he is acclaimed; he has to receive the acclamation. The *acclamatio* is very important. If you fail to raise your voice and acclaim the king, you haven't supported him. Then you are in a state of rebellion. All the earth is either *ager pacatus* or *ager hosticus*. According to the Romans, it is either "pacified earth" or "hostile earth." If you haven't sworn allegiance to the emperor, then you are legitimate bait for us. We can go out and conquer you because you are in a state of rebellion against the king who is the *pater mundi*, the parent of all the world. That was the title of the Roman emperor, *pater mundi*. He had the right to rule the earth. If anybody did not acknowledge his rule and had rebelled against him, the Roman army went and conquered them. There was this everlasting imperial expansion, which reached its limits and then collapsed like a bubble, as these things do.

So Benjamin is going to hand it over to his son Mosiah. And he is following the commandments of his father. Notice that it is being handed down in the patriarchal order now. Verse 31: "As ye have kept my commandments, and also the commandments of my father, and have prospered, and have been kept from falling into the hands of your enemies, even so if ye shall keep the commandments of my son [Benjamin's father was Mosiah, and then his son is another Mosiah], or the commandments of God which shall be delivered unto you by him [you listen to his commandments; I'm handing over the authority to him now], ye shall prosper in the land, and your enemies shall have no power over you." Keep the commandments of God given to you by him. If you don't do it no amount of armaments is going to save you, as we learn in 1 Nephi 2. Here is the real danger in verse 32: "But, O my people, beware lest there shall arise contentions among you, and ye list to obey the evil spirit, which was spoken of by my father Mosiah. . . . For if he listeth to obey him, and remaineth and dieth in his sins, the same drinketh damnation to his own soul; for he receiveth for his wages an everlasting punishment, have transgressed the law of God contrary to his own knowledge." That's the important point. He did it quite deliberately and quite openly. This is what your "hell fire" is.

Then back to this theme again of your obligations. Don't think you are independent. Verse 34: "Ye are eternally indebted to your heavenly Father, to render to him [not to anyone else. Do what he wants you to do; that's all that's required of you, and he has told you what he wants you to do] all that you have and are; and also have been taught concerning the records." He thinks these records are very important—the obligation to keep conference reports, etc. You know the Church has always kept the best records in the world. Herbert Bolton at Berkeley was in charge of all the American history; he was the "big wheel" there. I remember when he stood in front of a collection of Church records in the Historian's Office in Salt Lake City. He was aghast and said, "These are the only perfect records in the world." Everything was in there—every meeting, everybody who attended the meetings, and everything else. You may think it's all useless. It probably is useless, but the record is complete. We insist on keeping a complete record. We are told occasionally by writers such as Nephi and Mosiah in the Book of Mormon, "I don't know exactly why [we are keeping it]." Nephi said, "Maybe it is to preserve the language of our fathers," but it didn't preserve the language. But we have to keep these records; we don't know what they will be useful for at some future day. It's a very interesting thing.

My daughter just got back from China after spending one week in Peking. Imagine flying over to Peking, spending one week, and then coming back here. She and her husband were on an assignment. They had this thing funded by Harvard with plenty of “dough,” etc. So they went over for one week and then they came back. But the interesting thing they discovered is the attitude toward the gospel there. Certain things and records of the Church, especially the book of Abraham and the Egyptian matters, have absolutely fired the people’s imagination. She said, “It will just explode once these things get there.” These are records we thought would never have any particular value; they have never had any great appeal to us. I’ve taught this book of Moses year after year, and nobody ever pays any attention to it. We just put all that Egyptian stuff on covers of candy boxes, argue about it, and guess about things. That’s not it at all. It’s going to mean an awful lot to those people. It may convert half the world, for all we know. But why did we keep those records? Why did Joseph hand them down? That’s quite a story, and the records we keep today can sometimes be extremely important. In about 1909 there was a terrific rumpus in Washington against admitting Reed Smoot to the Senate, because he came from Utah and was a Mormon. Of course, this was a state within a state, etc. After he was in the Senate they made another rumpus—they framed him with a couple of women in a hotel room and all this sort of thing. The great day came and he said, “Everybody in the Senate knows that I keep a journal and I write everything down in that journal. I can tell you where I was and what I was doing.” The whole thing collapsed right then and there. There was no case because he had kept a record of what he had been doing and everywhere he was during the day. You never know, so keep a record. Especially if you are horsing around, you’d better keep a record [laughter], but don’t keep double books as most of the big corporations used to. “Used to,” I say.

Notice he tells them to keep a record of “all that has been spoken by our fathers until now [no matter how repetitious it is, etc.—that’s very important to keep the traditions]. And behold, also, they spake that which was commanded them of the Lord; therefore, they are just and true [here’s your tradition again]. And now, I say unto you, my brethren, that after ye have known and have been taught all these things, if ye should transgress and go contrary to that which has been spoken, that ye do withdraw yourselves from the Spirit of the Lord, that it may have no place in you to guide you in wisdom’s paths that ye may be blessed, prospered, and preserved.” See, the Spirit of the Lord guides you. It won’t promise you instant prosperity; it will guide you and give you a sense of the things you should be doing. If you don’t, you are in a state of “open rebellion against God; therefore he listeth to obey the evil spirit. . . . Therefore if that man repenteth not, and remaineth and dieth an enemy to God, the demands of divine justice . . .” Notice that he shifts this whole thing to the larger scale. This is on a cosmic pattern and has to do with the other world. That’s where atonement takes place. That’s where we return to Heavenly Father and are redeemed, bought back again. See all that *re* business. You are *redeemed*, you are *resurrected*, you are *raised* up again, you *return* and go back. *Teshûvâh* means *to return* and *yeshîvâh*, *sit down* once you get there. We mentioned the *reconciliation*. It all has to do with going back to a prior condition that you lived in before you came here—it’s very clear. As I said, the only alternative to that is a simplistic predestination which just stops everything dead cold. “The demands of divine justice do awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord [this is what hell is, of course], and doth fill his breast with guilt, and pain, and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever.”

In this life we have a very lively sense of other people's guilt, but we don't have a very lively sense of our own, do we? When you get there, you'll be the one that knows about it. They won't have to bring forth too many books to tell you what you have been up to; you will know everything. You will remember everything vividly, it says. See, you've missed your chance, no matter how many chances you have hereafter. For example, if you flunked out of school at an earlier time, you may be given other chances. That's fine, but that will always set you back. You'll always regret it and be disadvantaged by it. So "his final doom is to endure a never-ending torment." These are terms we must accept if we want eternity. But he'll have to face the never-ending torment of the fact that he had the great chance here, and he muffed it—he spoiled it himself, he willfully lost it. That will never cease to bother him. That doesn't mean he will always cook in the fire and things like that at all. Don't lose it here! This may be the greatest chance you ever had. Verse 40: "I pray that ye should awake to a remembrance of the awful situation of those that have fallen into transgression." How high the stakes are here, and it's an awful situation. I have to remind you of that, he says, because we are always falling into it.

Verse 41: "I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God." He wants them to be blessed and happy. After all, that's the whole thing. We are talking about fear and trembling, but that's not the object of our being here. We should have joy here and now—there's no reason why you shouldn't. Remember what Eve said to Adam in the book of Moses [Moses 5:11]. Those who keep the commandments "are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual." If you want prosperity, that's what you do—you keep the commandments of God. We are capable of happiness. The word *joy* appears 167 times in the Book of Mormon. (With a computer you can check up on anything like that and have an authoritative statement. We have to quantify everything now, don't we? The quantification of the obvious.) You will be blessed in all things, and what you are doing is "making for a state of never-ending happiness." Isn't that asking for a lot? If you have a chance of getting that, what a fool you would be to miss it. The punishment is not too severe. The punishment is in missing this: Being blessed and happy here in things temporal and spiritual, and then a state of never-ending happiness after this. See, the idea of Christmas is to give us a glimpse of what the world could be. In "A Christmas Carol," Scrooge gets a look. But the point is that it should be Christmas every day. The purpose of the great assembly, the meeting of the Jews on Yom Kippur to celebrate these things, and the Festival of the Booths is to remind them (he's going to bring out that theme of equality here) of the time when all men lived as they should—when the earth was a paradise and a Zion. That's the way it should be. We rehearse it once a year just to show that it can be done. Just one day of the year we show that it can be done. Then it's *mactus* and the bonds are let down. All your formalities, all your stiffness, all your class consciousness must be thrown aside now. This is a *saturnalia*. They said *ia saturnalia*, and then they were all equal, all brothers. At the feast everybody got enough to eat, etc. That's what we try to do at Christmas; we allow the poor one good meal a [year] and feel very virtuous because of that. One day they get proper nourishment, but the rest of the time they can take care of themselves. But it's supposed to rehearse the eternal order of things every day.

We have to fight down the feeling that that's the right way and what we are doing is the wrong way. We have to fight down the "intimations of immortality," that there is this better life. There are so many poems about it. The one that is most recited in the Church is Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality."

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy, . . .
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

“Common day” is the real life, but it isn’t, after all. It isn’t the real life. We come here “trailing clouds of glory” and this is the nostalgia we all feel. That’s the basis of Platonic idealism, that this is not the real world. You all know Plato’s story of the cave at the end of *The Republic*. [According to that] this world is just shadows on the wall of a cave, and the real light is behind us. We are not facing it, but that’s the world we came from. What we see here is just shadows moving on a wall—not real substance, not real things. It isn’t real, after all. We talk about a never-ending state of happiness. It should be never ending, but we don’t have this idea of eternal progression or never-ending happiness. That’s been wiped out by the concept of the career, which is a very dirty one. That is the idea of the slippery slide. You climb the ladder in your career and reach the top, and then down you come. That’s the only way you have to go. Everybody knows that, and it’s a terrible disillusionment. There’s nothing else except to die. Careerism is as near as we get to it. You feel justified, exhilarated and fulfilled as long as you are getting promotions. When you don’t get a promotion [it’s bad]. Oh, the bitterness in the Army. I heard General Bradley say that he never knew a happy general because everyone wants to be promoted over the other. The promotions get fewer and fewer; there are five thousand generals. The competition becomes fiercer and fiercer. The feuds among their wives and all the rest become unbearable. So he said he never knew a happy general because they want more promotions.

Benjamin goes here. Now concerning that which was to come, remember, the purpose of the year festival was to determine the fortunes of the new age. It was not just launching a new year. *Year* is *gīār* and *yule*, the same word as *wheel*. It means “a turning, a revolution.” It’s the same word as *while*. The interesting thing is that in the Arabic world it’s *ḥawl ḥawla*. It means “the cycle turned, the wheel revolved, the year went around.” The Greeks call it the *enianton*, “the here we are again.” Jane Harrison wrote a book about that. You come back again, and you are in a revolving circle of the time that goes on forever and ever. You prophesy, and the king has to prophesy. In Asia he would use the *baresma*, that is the 52 slips or cards with signs on them. He would practice divination, as fortune tellers do with 52 cards. Or the king of Babylon would mount to the top chamber of the tower, where there was a round table. He would spend the night there and cast the dice on the table, with 360 possibilities. There were 36 possibilities on the dice, and he would cast them ten times on a special table. Each day would be predicted by casting the dice. In Germany, he would pour lead into water and watch the way it formed. It was the time of fortune telling and that sort of thing. In Rome you would have the *sortes*. You would throw things out and watch how they fell, just like the divination arrow. The *Liahona* was a divination arrow. The tossing of arrows is still done by the Arabs and the Jews. It’s in the Bible. The twelve arrows of the tribes were the *shevet*. They were kept in a container, and they would draw out the lots for the tribes. The *shevet* is an arrow shaft, and that’s the word for *tribe*. Each tribe would have its shaft which was marked, just as there was marking on the arrows of the *Liahona*. You would predict by drawing lots. Everywhere they would predict. And by observing the sun, the Egyptians had very elaborate ways of telling. You had to face toward the south, etc. There were the *haruspices* from the flight of birds—and [there were] livers and all the rest of it. But the thing was that it was the time for fortune telling.

[Benjamin] said, “Behold, I have things to tell you concerning that which is to come.” This is the assembly, this is your future, and it’s the king’s obligation to prophesy on that occasion. But in this case he is going to tell them what an angel told him. Verse 2: “And the things which I shall tell you are made known unto me by an angel from God. And he said unto me: Awake; and I awoke, and behold he stood before me. And he said unto me: Awake, and hear the words which I shall tell thee; for behold, I am come to declare unto you the glad tidings of great joy.” This “glad tidings of great joy” is very interesting. It’s repeated in Alma the same way. Of course, that comes from Luke 2:10. This is the season for that. There were certain shepherds in the field watching their flocks, and the angel of God came and said, “Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy.” This is an oriental form. In Greek it has been strained, and in English even more strained. But it’s the *masdar*. When you want to make something extremely emphatic, the *masdar* is to repeat the verbal noun. For example, in Arabic it’s not right to say, “He rejoiced greatly.” You have to say, “He rejoiced a great rejoicing or a great gladness.” So we have that form there, *joy* and *gladness*; or *fear* and *trembling*. You always intensify it. That’s biblical parallelism. Professor Popper wrote his dissertation on that subject of biblical parallelism. You emphasize it by repeating the same thing in another word. There shall be *joy* and *gladness*, *fear* and *trembling*, *light* and *truth*—things like that. They are the same thing, and you put them here. This formula, “glad tidings of great joy,” and other such combinations are used as intensives. As I said, it’s a required form in the language the shepherds would have been speaking. It sounds funny in Greek is all. It’s not lifted; I mean this is the proper form as it should be expressed. This is the way it is in the Bible. The angel uses this on more than one occasion. It’s always an angel that says this, “Awake, glad tidings of great joy.”

The angel scares the daylighters out of everyone he appears to because it is a culture shock. He comes from this other world, and it’s more than they can take. The first thing he says is, “Don’t be afraid.” He even has to say that to Mary. And Zacharias was stuck dumb; he was absolutely paralyzed after his session with the angel. Nobody had seen an angel for for a hundred years, and it came as a shock. But here the angel came to him with the usual formula. He is not quoting the scripture here; he is just stating the formula. They are speaking the same language here that they spoke in Israel, I dare say. But this is the Christmas message here. Notice this. The birth of Christ is exactly what he is predicting here. Verse 4: “For the Lord hath heard thy prayers, and hath judged of thy righteousness, and hath sent me to declare unto thee that thou mayest rejoice; and that thou mayest declare unto thy people, that they may also be filled with joy. For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent . . . shall come down from heaven among the children of men [so this is a Christmas celebration here; this is very apposite to the time, isn’t it?] and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight. . . . And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death [and then there’s one more thing to note here—why he suffers so much anguish]; for behold, blood cometh from every pore.” As I said, that used to be considered one of the serious breaks in the Book of Mormon. [People said], “Ah, Joseph Smith really slipped up there.” No, *porus* is an ancient Latin word that was used by the doctors. Galen and Hippocrates knew all about pores. They didn’t know about circulation of the blood. The answer was, “Well, nobody knew about circulation of the blood until Harvey in the seventeenth century.” But they did know that people could sweat, and even sweat blood, too. They used the word *porus*, the old Latin word for it.

Why did he suffer like this? Not because of the crown of thorns or the nails or the whipping, however bad that may have been. That had nothing to do with it. Remember, mental anguish is far worse than any physical anguish. Notice: “So great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and abominations of his people.” That is what caused the suffering, of course. Read in 3 Nephi 19. We will have to take up here next time and finish his speech. You can see the theme of “fear and trembling” runs like a red thread through this discourse.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 29

Mosiah 3–5

King Benjamin's Speech

The time is short. “The time has fully come,” in the words of Elijah. Let’s not waste any time because we don’t have much. Let’s put something on the board first. How many points did we list? We will make this point number six. I knew I had forgotten something; that was an important one—something to be afraid of.

When I got home after the last class, this current *National Geographic* was waiting for me. The entire issue was devoted to trying to save the world while there is a little time left, and they are not kidding. There is the statistical [evidence], but we are not going to linger on it. We have to get to Mosiah’s speech which is on the same subject. The point is this, for example: “At the current rate of destruction, our tropical forests will be gone within 25 years.” Most of you are not anywhere near my age. [By the time you are,] they will be gone and “with them at least a million species, probably many more, of which only a relative handful have been tested for possible use by man.”

Here’s a very interesting statistic for today with regard to our book of Mosiah when he [King Benjamin] talks about if a person puts up his petition and you refuse to give him something to eat. What happens to you? You have grave need of repentance when you say, “Well, I’ve earned mine, etc.” Never in the Book of Mormon is there such a thing as the “worthy needy.” If a person is in need, he is in need and that’s that. Whether he’s worthy or not has absolutely nothing to do with it. It says here: “A quarter of the earth’s people control eighty percent of its resources . . . and unbelievably [this is unbelievable] in this golden age of science, forty thousand young children die of hunger and related diseases [diseases related to hunger] every day.” That’s what hit me. I thought it would be perhaps every year or something like that, but every day. You’d think that would take care of the population problem, but it wouldn’t. It goes on; I’m going to harrow your souls up with these statistics, etc.

This is the way they do it, too. “This year fourteen unarmed members of the Takana tribe were massacred by killers and the higher timber dealers so they could take over their lands [this happens everywhere]. There are organizations to kill Indians and get their lands. Whole villages have been wiped out or pushed around and killed by thugs from the town of Pegamara in order to consolidate the land for one big rancher.” This is the imbalance that Mosiah has a great deal to say about, and how relevant it is today. Well, we can’t go into this. Get hold of this last *National Geographic*, and it will scare the daylights out of you. So there is room for fear and trembling with your generation. I’ll be out of it by then. No, I won’t! You would be surprised how many connections we’ve got with the others. If I live as long as any of my grandparents, I will be around still—an old pest. This is the way the book of Moses closes; this is what happened to the world then. “And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah: The end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence, and behold I will destroy all flesh from off the earth” (Moses 8:29–30). And the Old Testament says, “And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come

before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth” (Genesis 6:13).

This is another important thing mentioned here. This is a thing that we bring out in the Pearl of Great Price class from the book of Moses—the five great periods called the periods of mass extermination. There have been five times in history—explained by meteorites and this sort of thing—when almost all species were wiped out and new species arose all of a sudden. We won’t go into that; that’s a long story. But they were in another one of those times, and the man tells us here that in the last days of Eden . . . It’s a doom’s day book we have here, you see. This is Professor Wilson of Harvard who says: “Virtually all students of extinction process agree that the biological diversities in the midst of the sixth great crisis were this time precipitated entirely by man.” There have been these crises of mass extermination. This one is going to be as thorough as any, and we are to blame for it. So the scriptures are not talking about something that is fantastic and beyond, although we used to think so. When I was younger this sounded so far out we didn’t take it very seriously.

We are on [Benjamin’s] great speech, and the speech has three parts. Notice in the first part they are celebrating. He is telling them that the good times they have been having are just a prelude to great things to follow and to eternal life when they can have joy and salvation forever if they do the right thing. The second part is saying don’t let it go to your head. Notice how he cuts them down in that second part—you are nothing, you are the dust, you poor miserable creatures, etc. What a way to be talking to the people at a great national celebration. Then the third part is devoted entirely to economics—what do you mean if it goes to your heads? Then you will get this idea of inequality resulting in greed. He says it will destroy you here and it will damn you forever.

Again, I call your attention to a current publication. Have you seen the new *Time*? Spread on the cover of the new issue of *Time* is just one word, *GREED*, and that’s describing our American civilization. Don’t think Mosiah is not relevant to the times we live in and don’t think it’s not a prophetic book. I doubt that Joseph Smith would have been able, at the age of 23—being just a poor, uneducated farmer—to have figured this all out.

We are on Mosiah 3:9: “And lo he cometh unto his own.” Now, this is how it happens. He cometh unto his own, and he tells us, for example, in verse 13 who his own are. “And the Lord hath sent his holy prophets among all the children of men [his own will carry on the work for him when he isn’t there. He comes to his own with that purpose that salvation, through them, might come to the children of men who have faith on his name. They will carry abroad the name and the doctrine. They will perpetuate and spread the name because, of course, he is not there anymore. You have his name to call upon. He comes to his chosen people, and he trusts them to carry on the name to the rest of the human race—Alma 7 is marvelous on that—“that salvation might come unto the children of men even through faith on his name.” But he will be turned down cold. Remember the beginning of John: “And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (John 1:5). He came to his own and his own received him not. They wouldn’t receive him, but there’s that very important addition—just a few did. But to as many as did receive him “to them he gave power to become the sons of God.” What a prize! It is worth it going through all that. But he is going to be refused by the world and by his own people, as we all know from the New Testament, of course. Verse 9: “They shall consider him a man, and say that he hath a devil, and shall scourge him, and shall crucify him.” But his blood atones for the sins of those who aren’t guilty and have never heard the gospel.

They won't be damned forever because that has been taken care of. "But wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God! [That's a different story entirely, but the door is open to him, too.] For salvation cometh to none except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ." That's why he keeps hammering away at repentance here.

Here are his own: "And the Lord God hath sent his holy prophets among all the children of men, to declare these to every kindred, nation, and tongue [believe that and this is the first step; this is what they must do in verse 13 here] that thereby whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same might receive remission of their sins, and rejoice with exceeding great joy, even as though he had already come among them." Don't worry what dispensation you live in. You are going to have the same trials and you are going to have just the same privileges that any other dispensation has. The strongest test in the Book of Mormon as to whether people will have faith on the mission of Jesus Christ is what? Well, he hadn't come yet. There were people like Sherem and Korihor and the rest who said, "He hasn't come yet. We don't believe there is such a thing. We are supposed to look forward to something we haven't seen. He won't even come here." Then after he had come, what happened? Well, in the 1940s and since then in the theology of all the Christian churches—led by such people as Rudolf Bultmann, the great Lutheran pastor, and Albert Schweitzer—the big thing was to demythologize and de-eschatologize Jesus. Anything that is supernatural to his story, the story about his being the Son of God, that's a myth, so you demythologize it. You move that out of the New Testament, and then you have the real story of Jesus, the good teacher, the kind man. That was it; that's as far as you have.

So, he is just as hard to accept after his coming, though he did come and we have the record, a very good record, especially John's record. Remember, John is the only New Testament figure mentioned in the Book of Mormon. They take the record and they demythologize it; they take the whole message out. But the hardest time of all was when he was actually there. That was the hardest time to believe him. They wouldn't believe him then because they could see he was just a man. They said, Abraham we know and Moses we know. He is our prophet. But who is this guy? [paraphrased]. And they wouldn't accept him at all. It is an equal trial for any dispensation. If he hasn't come yet, are you going to believe? If he has already gone long ago, two thousand years ago, who can believe that old mythology? That's a test, too. When he was actually there, that was the hardest of all. They said, "Look, you can see he's a man; that's all there is to it." So he was crucified and the rest.

Verse 14. "Yet the Lord God saw that his people were a stiffnecked people [he knew that they would refuse him] and he appointed unto them a law, even the law of Moses." That was for their weakness. It catered to their weakness, of course—as much of the law as they could take. But they didn't understand "that the law of Moses availeth nothing except it were through the atonement of his blood." It has to be completed; you have to have the original. They thought that just by keeping the law they would be saved.

Now he talks a lot about the little children. Why the emphasis on little children? Because the little children are the only segment of society that offer no resistance to the message. They qualify and they offer no resistance because they are not guilt-ridden. Because they don't feel guilty, they are not afraid to accept. As little children they are naive, etc. But the reason we shy off and don't want to go for all of this is that we have a subconscious burden of guilt. We have been doing wrong things and are not up to it. That's why whenever an angel appears everybody is scared stiff, and the angel must say, "Don't be

afraid; I have a good message.” It’s that culture shock. We don’t want to be exposed to another world—to what we might be, etc. It’s too much to take. It’s terrifying, utterly terrifying. You would sooner go crazy, and people do, rather than that.

Verse 16: “And even if it were possible that little children could sin they could not be saved; but I say unto you they are blessed; for behold, as in Adam, or by nature, they fall, even so the blood of Christ atoneth for their sins. . . . There is no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men [can you think of any other way? We follow this pattern because it was the pattern that was laid down in the eternities in the Council in Heaven], only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. For behold he judgeth, and his judgment is just [men are not], . . . but men drink damnation to their own souls.” Don’t try to do it yourself; it’s like do-it-yourself brain surgery, or something like that, trying to save yourself. The reason is this. We might atone for our sins in this life in the things we do. We might make up for them, etc. But we are talking about eternal life and going on forever. There is nothing you can do to equip yourself for that—to qualify yourself for that by removing all your sins, etc. We are going to talk about men being carnal, sensual and devilish. We have to get along here, anyway.

It [salvation] is only “through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord God Omnipotent. For the natural man [here it is] is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, [you shy off, you won’t have anything to do with it] . . . unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit.” The thing is this. See, you have blown it now. There is only one thing you can do—put yourself entirely into my [the Savior’s] hands, and it will all be taken care of. But you have to do something. By putting yourselves into my hands, the Lord says, that doesn’t mean you just lie down and don’t do anything, which is by grace you are saved. We have heard that a million times—*nur Gnade*, only grace. There is nothing you can do about it; you are reborn and that is all there is to it, etc. No, it’s as if you had taken off in a small plane at the airport. You have never flown in your life. You turn on the key and you are suddenly in the air. What do you do? The tower says, “All right, put yourself in my hands. Do exactly as I tell you, and I can get you there. But don’t try to do anything on your own or fix it yourself. Do as I tell you to do.”

You say, “Why should I do that? I don’t know anything about that.” You refuse to do it, but that’s the only thing you can do. In that condition, we must follow instructions implicitly. When he says, “Put yourself in my hands,” you say, “I will just lie down and let him land me.” Oh no, we don’t have automatic pilot. You have to land it, but you do what He tells you to do. That’s the position we are in. We have to do something. Either we help ourselves and do it all or somebody else does it all—that is what the Christian world believes. At Christmas the idea is that all the human race was lost and Christ came; we sing a song and everybody is saved and that’s that. They are saved from their sins. He has taken away the sins of the world, so we have nothing to worry about. [According to the Christian world] that was the glad news. Well, it wasn’t the glad news. The glad news was that the Lord has shown you a way out. That’s what it is here and, of course, that’s what we have there.

So that’s the enticing—the Holy Spirit wants to help you. He is enticing and doing everything he can to bring you into his orbit. He wants you to cooperate and do something for yourself, and he will tell you what to do. But you have to put off the natural man. As I said, you have to be able to put yourself entirely into his hands (don’t try to do the thing yourself) and become as a child. Why the emphasis on children? As I

said, children will accept the gospel. They will accept the plan and obey and will offer no resistance. Verse 20: And the gospel “shall spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.” Again, the universality of the Book of Mormon. When all have had the chance, “And behold, when that time cometh, none shall be found blameless before God, except it be little children, [the others can save themselves] only through repentance and faith on the name of [Jesus Christ] the Lord God Omnipotent.” Why the name? Because he is all we have. The account of him is the story—the name that we refer to. You have no identity without your name. You have to know who you are talking about, you see. If you say, “Let’s worship So-and-So,” I would say, “Well, give me his name. I don’t know who to worship unless you tell me who I am worshipping.”

Verse 24: “And thus saith the Lord: They shall stand as a bright testimony against this people, at the judgment day; whereof they shall be judged, every man according to his works.” That’s good, according to his works. It’s not whether you believe or not, but what you do, or your intentions. People were burned at the stake for believing the wrong things, not for anything they did that was bad, but for believing—that was the standard thing. And it’s [man is] in the singular, you notice, every man according to his works. You won’t be judged with the society. You are not judged by your associates or anything like that, but what you do is what you will be judged by no matter what society you are in. Solzhenitsyn wrote the great book *The Gulag Archipelago*. We used to read it, but we don’t read it anymore. It’s too big and too hard to read, I suppose. But the point is this. In this prison, the worse possible prison where nobody had any freedom at all, everybody was just as free as air because they could do and think what they wanted to, regardless. Nobody could stop you from doing that. The idea is that you will be judged by your works and your words, as he is going to tell us later on. But then what will happen? As I said, if you see the angel, what do you do? You “shrink from the presence of the Lord into a state of misery [anything is better than that; you draw back deliberately into a state of misery, which is safer] and endless torment, from whence they can no more return; therefore, they have drunk damnation to their own souls.”

Is that bad? What is the alternative? As we mentioned last time, you will never be able to cure yourselves of it. The serious mistake or regret is permanent, you see. For example, you make a mistake in solving an equation or problem. If you go on with the problem, the further you go you don’t wipe that out. It gets worse and worse and does more mischief the farther you go. You can never get away from it, and you can never get away from this. You can cover it over, but this eternal misery is the torment of mind that you are in—the more we see the folly and loss of what we did back in time. If you regret you did something, it’s not wiped out with time. You say, “If I only hadn’t done that then it would have been all right.” It’s these mistakes we have made, etc. And then “mercy could have claim on them no more forever.” That’s pretty bad because they have waited until the cup of his wrath is full.

Now, the fourth chapter. This is the reaction of his people, the *proskynōsis*. They all fall to earth. In [the account of] Nathan the Babylonian they do. It’s to show that you are overwhelmed. Of course, the Moslems still do that five times a day. You fall down right flat on your face, and that’s *proskynōsis*. They fell to earth, and they viewed themselves—not as fiends in flames and burning coals and things like that. Verse 2: “And they viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth [now he cuts them down—boy, is he going to work on that]. And they all cried out with one voice [now, how could they cry out this long thing with one voice? I told you about the

hazzān, the *praecentor*. He leads and throughout the ancient world in Greek and Roman times, he was called the *stasiarch*. Someone would hand him a piece of paper, the emperor would tell him, or someone else would tell him what he wanted the people to chant. He would say, “Now all together” and he would read a line and wave the flag, and they would all chant together. That was these formal chants, and this was the way it was done in the circus. You would sit in your cheering section. You had your color—either red, white, blue or green. The factions would fight each other, but they had cheerleaders and cheer sections. This went way back to the early days of the Year Festival when the prophet or the leader or the *môreh* would tell them what to believe. In Nathan the Babylonian’s account, the whole thing is directed by the man on the tower. The old man, the *praecentor*, comes down, they ask the questions, the king interprets the law to them, and they all answer together. So that’s what they are doing here. It isn’t as if they all spontaneously recited this whole thing in one voice. It says it was in one voice, but that’s the way it was done. It was perfectly normal.

Verse 2: “And they all cried out with one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ [notice, *atonement* is mentioned quite a number of times in this chapter] that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, . . . for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men. . . . And the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy [it was a joyful celebration, a great time, you see; they could all hardly stand it, they were so joyful here] . . . because of the exceeding faith which they had in Jesus Christ who should come.” This is a marvelously happy event, you see. He is ready to bring us back into the great eternal order of things. But how is he to do it? You see, this is what they are talking about here. Even if we could make up for our sins here, it is that other life that they are thinking of. Now they have had a glimpse of it, they are filled with joy. They are filled with the spirit. These times come because of exceeding faith. We think of the dedication of the Kirtland Temple. That’s the sort of thing that happened when the marvelous manifestations were received and everybody had revelation, or the day of Pentecost, those days. Under normal conditions they would be normal, but the earth is a bad place.

Then King Benjamin replies to them. Notice, it’s a conversation. It’s an antiphonal between the king and the people. The singing is always antiphonal, but we can’t go into that. It’s divided into groups, one group answering the other as they discuss this. Verse 5: “For behold, if the knowledge of the goodness of God at this time has awakened you [see, they are just full of this knowledge of goodness] to a sense of your nothingness, and your worthless and fallen state.” Now here, when they are in the height of their glory, he starts reminding them of their worthlessness and their nothingness in their worthless and fallen state. I don’t think that would offend them at all. If you were in the presence of celestial glory, you would certainly feel that way and you wouldn’t feel at all insulted. They don’t feel like crawling under rocks though. They feel pretty good about it. He says, You have come to a knowledge of the goodness of God; you see how good he can be now. This is the grace of God. And then he says, This is the atonement prepared from the foundation of the earth, going back to the premortal existence when they discussed the creation [paraphrased]. This is a biblical expression, too—“the atonement prepared from the foundation of the world”—although Christians ignore that. What was going on then if they prepared a plan at that early time? Verse 6: “. . . that thereby salvation might come to him that he should come and put his trust in the Lord, and should be diligent in keeping his commandments, and continue in the faith even unto the end of his life.” The plan was

prepared from the foundation of the world. You come here, you have faith, you put your trust in him, and then you do something—keeping his commandments. It is faith that keeps you on the track here. We go along with these things.

Verse 8: “And this is the means whereby salvation cometh. And there is none other salvation save this which hath been spoken of.” This is the only way. Why this peculiar way? As I said, can you think of any other? After all, our condition is desperate. We have to trust him, put our trust in the Lord. Trust him and you will be safe; then you will do something and feel better about it. He says there are no other conditions given to you. These are what they are in verse 9: “Believe in God, . . . believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend.” Now this justifies you in believing in God. St. Augustine is baffled at the beginning of the *Confessions*. Why should I believe in God? If I believe in God, I am not playing fair. I am cheating because I believe in him already, and I haven’t seen him or anything like that. I have to let him make the first move [paraphrased]. So he argues around and around about that. “You have made us in such a way that our hearts are restless until we have been joined to you somehow.” Well, he is right there, but what do we do about it? The point is this. “Believe that man doth not comprehend all.” There are all sorts of things you don’t know, so it’s quite possible that God can exist. That’s among other things. “Believe in God, . . . believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend.” Of course, that’s the greatest stumbling block of science, as Karl Popper says. Then the next step: “And again believe that ye must repent of your sins and forsake them, and humble yourselves before God; and ask in sincerity of heart that he would forgive you; and now, if you believe all these things see that ye do them.” Notice that the verse ends that way. First you believe in him. Then you repent and humble yourselves before God, realizing that you are nothing, “and now, if you believe all these things see that ye do them.” It all comes down to action here. That’s the first premise, to become aware of your nothingness and your fallen state.

“And again I say unto you as I have said before [this marvelous verse 11 reviews the things you must keep in mind; he says he is going to give them a reminder; he is hammering it home, you see] that if ye have come to the knowledge of the glory of God, or if ye have known of his goodness and have tasted of his love.” He catches them at this high point in this euphoria. This is the time to get to work on them without offending them and get through to them. Their minds are open and they realize that anything is possible now] and have received a remission of your sins, which causeth such exceedingly great joy in your souls [notice, he keeps repeating *joy* in this chapter] even so I would that you should remember [along with your joy], and always retain in remembrance [always keep this in mind] the greatness of God, and your own nothingness [if you put the two together, you have nothing to worry about because you won’t be disturbed by your own personal ambitions and disappointments or anything like that; nothing will bother you that way if you realize your own nothingness], and his goodness and long-suffering towards you, unworthy creatures [he is certainly flattering the people here!], and humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily [this is what you are supposed to do now after this], and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come [which you have just received]. Behold, I say unto you [now here is the guarantee—it’s worth it; it’s a darn good investment, he says, in verse 12] that if ye do this ye shall always rejoice.” So, if you want to be happy, this is the way you do it. I certainly believe that.

This is the wellspring of humor, too, you will notice. If you realize your own nothingness and the greatness of God, that's what all humor is. It's recognizing the absurdity of man's position—the pretensions, the fat lady, the pie in the face, etc. It deflates the pretensions of vain man. You think you are so important, etc. Then you slip on a banana peel and that's real comedy. That's what's funny because of the human situation. All humor has that ironic touch to it. We pretend to be so great, so important, etc., and we are such idiots. It is really very funny—the person who is nothing who thinks he is everything. “But man, proud man, dressed in a little brief authority plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven as make the angels weep, who, had they our spleen, would all themselves laugh human.” If angels were capable of laughing, and I think they are, they would laugh themselves silly looking at the antics of man. He goes on then, “Could great men thunder as Jove thunders, we would have nothing but lightning.” Great men think they are so important, and he rubs it in. That's in *Measure for Measure* by Shakespeare.

He shows he is cutting them down. But you will always rejoice, and I think that's a fair exchange. I am perfectly willing to laugh at myself and realize what I am because it is a fair exchange. And now he gets into the economic part which is very important. This is very interesting here. If you have proper sense of balance and sense of humor (verse 12), then “ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him that created you, or in the knowledge of that which is just and true.” Then you will have a true knowledge, a true value of things. Notice *just* and *true*. You will have the correct values, as we would say today. And in the knowledge of him, that's a real at-one-ment. And then in the next verse, the reward of that socially: “And ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably, and to render to every man according to that which is his due.” If you realize that you are nothing and that the Lord will take care of everything—everything will be solved if you obey and do what he wants you to do—then you won't have any intention to injure one another. There won't be any rivalry, and you will find plenty of this in the Book of Mormon. Envy, jealousy, fights, murders, the desire for power and asserting your ego and the like all come from the same thing. Then you will have no mind to injure anyone. You will live peaceably and render to every man according to that which is due. That would make dull fare on prime time, wouldn't it? Verse 14: “And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry, or naked [40,000 children die of hunger and hunger-related diseases every day; something is wrong here; that's something to be afraid of]; neither will ye suffer that they transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrel one with another [as kids do], and serve the devil, who is the master of sin, or who is the evil spirit which hath been spoken of by our fathers [that other one]. . . . But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another.”

This is another piece of news. It was on the NBC news last night. This year, so far, 160 people have died on the sidewalks of San Francisco. Can you believe that? They starved on the sidewalks of San Francisco. What is going on here? What a society when it comes to that. So he says here: “And also, ye yourselves will succor those that stand in need of your succor; ye will administer your substance unto him that standeth in need [he doesn't say to the worthy needy or unto him that deserves it; it's not a case of deserving, as he says here]; and ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish. Perhaps thou shalt say: The man has brought upon himself his misery [I got mine and he didn't work, he is a lazy bum—that is the excuse we all make, of course]; therefore I will stay my hand, and I will not give unto him of my food or impart unto him of my substance [I work for mine] that he may not suffer, for his punishments are just—[he is not one of the deserving poor, but even if this is true] But I

say unto you, O man, whosoever doeth this the same hath great cause to repent; and except he repenteth of that which he hath done he perisheth forever, and hath no interest in the kingdom of God [in which the law of consecration is mandatory].” You have no choice but to keep it. We have accepted and promised to keep it, too. Verse 19: “For behold, are we not all beggars?” This stings a lot of people; they don’t like it at all. They try to give it an allegorical or symbolic interpretation—spiritually beggars, etc. I have heard people doing that, but of course, he says “of your substance.” I am talking about goods and substance and going hungry and that sort of thing. I am not talking about what you call spiritual things. “Behold, are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend on the same Being, even God, for all the substance which we have.” Notice, not just for our spiritual fare, but substance—food and raiment. He says, I am talking about economics; I am talking about food supply (food and raiment) and gold and silver and the luxuries you have, too [paraphrased].

Verse 21: “And now, if God, who has created you, on whom you are dependent for your lives and for all that ye have and are.” He mentioned that before, remember; if you worked 24 hours a day just for the Lord you would still be an unprofitable servant. You can’t produce anything, and that’s made so very clear today more than anything because the great money makers are not producing anything. They are [behind] the takeovers. They destroy companies and take them over, by a manipulation of the computer rather than the tape anymore. By manipulation they become hundred-millionaires overnight. You know the deals, the takeovers and the junk bonds, the parachutes and all that sort of stuff. We will see what King [Benjamin] does just to drive home his point. He goes out and works in the field, and he does it quite seriously. Kings do that, you see. They were on the level here of Indian culture, actually. This is the way they keep things going and have a stable society. It has a good deal to say in this *National Geographic* about the society that is stable and the expanse of a society that has to go out and wreck anything if it is not growing at least four percent a year. But you can’t go on doing that forever. There is only a limited base on which we can operate. [This is another thing that] was in the paper this week. I am sure this is the only place in the world where you have a large and powerful society made of mining, lumber, cattle interests, etc., that call themselves the Anti-Wilderness League. Of, course they have nothing against the wilderness but they just want to take [control of it]. Since this is the state that produces kids faster than any other, you would think we would be more concerned with the rather distant future. Why destroy the resource base for the generations to come? Boy, they are out for taking everything they can to make a big profit. That’s the philosophy of the time. I don’t need to tell you that people want it all and they want it now. “And now, if God, who has created you, on whom you are dependent for your lives and for all that ye have and are, doth grant unto you whatsoever ye ask that is right, in faith, believing that ye shall receive [that’s a conditional offer; anything you ask for, if it is right and you ask in faith, believing, you will receive], O then, how ye ought to impart of the substance that ye have one to another.” And not at some future time when we find it easier and more convenient to observe these rules. We hear that all the time.

Verse 22: “And if ye judge the man who putteth up his petition to you for your substance that he perish not and condemn him.” You judge him, you say he is not worthy. Have you worked? Do you deserve this? He puts up his petition, you see. He is desperate; he has no choice. You read Brigham Young’s account of his first mission in England in the 1850s. It was horrifying. It was a bad year, and in cities like Manchester and Leeds people literally were dropping dead in the streets everywhere. And England was never richer than at that time. The rich were just rolling in the fatness of the land, and these people were

actually dropping dead. You can see why that got through to Brigham Young and why he became such an ardent champion for the United Order, etc. But you don't judge a man. You don't hesitate and say, "I don't know whether I should or not," and condemn him. That's what you do. You say he hasn't worked as hard as you have. Maybe he has and maybe he hasn't. We have the interesting philosophy that you are either making money or you are doing nothing. That's the choice you have. You can either work for a profit—either prepare to make money or make money—and if you are not doing that, you are doing nothing. You can be considered idle in that case. That's why we have reinterpreted "the idler shall not eat the bread of laborer." Of course, for all these thousands of years it just simply meant that the idle rich shall not eat the bread of the laboring poor, which has been the rule down through the ages. We turn it right around today—I worked for mine, so you won't eat my bread. Well, we won't go into that. Stick to Mosiah. Don't look at me; I didn't say it. He says here, "... and condemn him, how much more just will be your condemnation for withholding your substance, which doth not belong to you but to God [what he asks you to do with it is this, he says; it belongs to Him] . . . and yet ye put up no petition, nor repent of the thing which thou has done. I say unto you, wo be unto that man, for his substance shall perish with him [and, of course, you can't take it with you]; and now, I say these things unto those who are rich as pertaining to the things of this world." Frankly, he says, this is an economics discourse I am giving you here.

Verse 24. "And again, I say unto the poor, ye who have not and yet have sufficient, [can keep body and soul together] . . . I mean all you who deny the beggar, because ye have not; I would that ye say in your hearts that: I give not because I have not, but if I had I would give." Salt Lake City is a great place, the crossroads of the West, for panhandlers and for tramps going through—and for getting turned down. They will tell you it's the hardest town in the country as far as that goes. Every tramp knows that if you want a handout you don't go to a rich house; that's the last thing you do. You will get thrown downstairs or thrown out the back porch. You go to people who are poor and they will give you something. That is the best chance you have. It's the same way with contributions, etc. It has to be sincere. Verse 25: "And if ye say this in your hearts ye remain guiltless." Of course, if you are rich you can't possibly say it in your heart. You must be very poor indeed. Even the poorest is going to share; you are going to see that's the way. During the bad times of the twenties when I was a little kid playing in the backyard, every afternoon there would be a grimy old tramp or maybe two. They weren't tramps—they were like the street people today. Mother's standard handout was bacon and eggs, bread and milk, and all this stuff. There was a mark on the front door. Every tramp knew it was there, and they knew it was good for a handout. Mother never turned them down (we never should) because she learned this from her father when they lived on the plains up in Alberta. They went out to Raymond and ranched out there. Whether it was an Indian or anyone else, their father (like Brigham Young) just hammered it into them, "Never, never, never turn anybody away." Many have been visited by angels unawares. They may be testing you, as far as that goes. So that has always been the policy never to turn anybody away.

That makes it very cruel when it comes to giving people rides on the highways. See what an awful position we have got ourselves in, where for your own safety you dare not. It's even against the law sometimes, and yet you can't afford to pass somebody out on the road. So I always pick them up; I haven't been bumped on the head yet. It's worth taking the risk. Sometimes it can be a pretty bad risk. Some of those characters are pretty tough, you know. But you have to do it. Usually if you start preaching to them, they will ask to get out. "Stop here and let me out." It's an interesting thing, but we won't go into that.

“If ye say this in your hearts ye remain guiltless, otherwise ye are condemned; and your condemnation is just for ye covet that which you have not received.” It is not yours.

Even more important is that God gives you a remission of your sins from day to day. That is great if that happens. They stay with you; nevertheless, a remission of your sins means another chance. You will be given another chance. He knows you are going to sin some more, too, but he will still give you another chance just as long as you are in the flesh. Remember that marvelous verse where Nephi said: “And the days of the children of men were prolonged, according to the will of God, that they might repent while in the flesh” 2 Nephi 2:21. We live far longer than we need to, but that gives us a better chance to repent. He said that is the purpose of lengthening it beyond the age of procreation, etc.

Here is the rule, and this is a very important rule. Incidentally, this was the slogan of Louis Blanc’s commune in Paris in 1871: “From each according to his means, to each according to his needs.” That is the same slogan as we have here, but the next verse tells us how that can go wrong. Verse 26: “I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath [if you have an awful lot of reserve laid away, a couple of hundred million in the bank or something like that, you haven’t given according to that which you have, I am sure. If you have anything left at all in fact], such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants.” Their wants need to be supplied and that’s all there is to it. But this is what goes wrong. This is where we break down in the next verse. You may say, “That’s a fine theory, but I won’t have to do that.” It has to be administered in the proper way, and, as I said, that’s where the breakdown has been. Human beings haven’t had these principles of the gospel or haven’t had this vision of the eternities to inspire them and keep them on the track as the early Saints had. It says: “And see that all these things are done in wisdom and in order [that’s the trouble—it leads to disorder and squabbling. Inevitably that happens when you try, in any kind of economic order, and it’s pretty bad]; for it is not requisite that man should run faster than he has strength [that is the usual weakness—getting ahead of the program, trying to do it all overnight. You call it revolution—a sudden, quick change—trying to run faster than you have strength. You have to build up to these things, but you have to keep at it, and you have to use wisdom and order]. And again, it is expedient that you should be diligent [keep at it], that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order.”

It has to be done, but you have to keep the pressure on and *do it*. We use that as an excuse for not doing it at all. We say, “We spent two weeks trying to install the Law of Consecration. Last week it didn’t work at all. It broke down, so we won’t try it at all.” That’s not the way things are done in order and what Brigham Young was trying so hard to do—and John Taylor, and Lorenzo Snow, and Wilford Woodruff. They were all ardent champions of it. They tried to do it. The Saints wouldn’t do it, and that was that. What kind of Saints? But notice here that you do have private property. There is such a thing, and this is very important. But let’s remember the importance of these words *property* and *private*. *Proprium* and *privatus* both mean “set aside to the individual.” The basic meaning of *proprium* is “to separate.” The root is *parare*, “to set apart.” This means a thing which is set apart. This means that it belongs to you only and is unique to you—it is *privatus*. It can’t be related to anybody else in the human race or the state. And *proprium* means *mine*. It’s mine proper and nobody else’s. It means absolute and complete possession, and it’s a thing that you need for yourself. It’s necessary. That is to say—your clothes, your shoes, your books (it could be, but you can share them around; you could lose them all,

but that's all right). It includes your house, the shelter, and the food. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." These are things that are proper to you, and they shouldn't be separated from any man. Everybody has to have his glasses if he needs them, or his toupee, or whatever it is. It's the sort of thing that by nature can't be shared by anyone else; it won't fit anybody else—his teeth or something like that. That's very private as far as that goes. That's what is really meant by *private*. It is very clear in the Jewish law. Then remember, he [King Benjamin] is going by the Law of Moses where every seven years all debts are cancelled and every servant must be freed—anyone who is in bondage. Every contract is dissolved. You go right back to where you were in the beginning because that goes back to the time when they were in the wilderness, and the Lord fed them with manna, etc. They were all equal, and you couldn't profit on the manna because it says if you kept it for 24 hours against the day when there would be a shortage, it would spoil and start to stink. It would stink and you couldn't keep it. Many people wanted to profit by it—the future's in manna—but it never worked. It says here, [verse 28] if you borrow something from a neighbor, i.e., tools and etc., you should return it. Actually, every year we have to replenish our tools in the garage because people borrow them and never return them—the ladders, spades, rakes, and everything else. Those are personal tools you have, and also your books, your notebooks, your writing utensils, your house and your children. They are *privatus*.

We used to go down and swim at the Malibu beach when I was a little kid. We would stay all night there, but we shouldn't. You would get arrested if they caught you there because the whole area belonged to an old woman who lived in Philadelphia, a crotchety old creature. She had never seen it, but you couldn't go there because her name was on a piece of paper somewhere. We call that property, but that isn't property at all. Or, as Brigham Young puts it: An old widow's cow is what she needs to live; she depends on that for a living. I have known many a Latter-day Saint who has bought a widow's cow for \$5.00 and then gone down on his knees and thanked the Lord for his great blessing [paraphrased]. He said that on more than one occasion. Many a Latter-day Saint has taken a widow's only cow for \$5.00 because she had to have the money, and then gone down on his knees and thanked the Lord for his blessings. That is what he is talking about here. And you return what you borrow; people have a right to some things that are private. Needless to say, the people that are threatened most in their privacy are those that have the least. They don't have the Doberman pinschers, the electrified fences, the flood lights, the electronic gates, the telephones, and the walkie-talkies patrolling the place. There's a fetish for this stuff. I knew a very rich Latter-day Saint in southern California, a top man who was so important he had to be accompanied by bodyguards all the time. You couldn't get anywhere near his house. You had to go through a gate, identify yourself with a card and everything else. That's the way to live, isn't it? He's a prisoner, practically, as far as that goes. Well, yes, he has to live in a compound, and he can only go out under certain conditions. It's like having to ask for permission before he can go out. He is checked coming in and going out. That's the way to live all right. Then he says, "whosoever among you borroweth of his neighbor should return the thing that he borroweth according as he doth agree, or else thou shalt commit sin." Notice, he has made an agreement with his neighbor. If you agree to give it back, that's all right. If he lets you keep it, that's fine, too. But you must keep your agreements among yourselves in your personal affairs and the things that really belong to you, "or else thou shalt commit sin; and perhaps thou shalt cause thy neighbor to commit sin also." This happens the same way.

Verse 29: “And finally, I cannot tell you all things whereby ye may commit sin.” I could make a long list of all the ways you can sin. It’s like the probabilists of the sixteenth century. Molina was the famous Spanish probabilist and Jesuit who compiled that great list of sins and how much one sin weighs against another, using a decimal point. How many sins can you list? He said, “You can list sins forever.” This is a good point, incidentally, and I am still looking for the author of that quotation. It was some scientist, but it’s a maxim. Everybody knows it. “There are a thousand ways in which a thing can go wrong, but only one way in which a thing can go right,” he said. When you are calculating in quantum physics, etc., there are thousands of ways in which things can go wrong, but only one way in which things can go right. That’s his argument. So somebody [God] must be in charge. If you leave it up to chance—Darwinism and other theories claim it all happens by chance—everything could go wrong and stay wrong forever. But there’s only one way things can go right. Who takes care of that? Anyway, he [Benjamin] says, “I cannot number them. But this much I can tell you [this is what he has been getting at. This is his big chance to get through to them. This is his farewell address], that if you do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds [these are the three things, remember; these are the three things you produce: thoughts, words, and deeds] and observe the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives, ye must perish. And now, O man, remember, and perish not.” So we are at risk here. It’s very serious. This test is very important.

Then [in chapter 5] the king says, Will you accept that? They are going to make a covenant now. This is very important. It is the time of year that they make covenants. He desires to know if they believe. Verse 2: “And they all cried out [again, here is the *hazzān*, the *praecentor*] with one voice saying [notice, it’s in verse]: Yea, we believe all the words which thou has spoken unto us; and also, we know of their surety and truth because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually. And we, ourselves, also, through the infinite goodness of God, and the manifestations of his Spirit, have great views of that which is to come.” He started out by saying open your ears and pay attention to a view of the mysteries of God. This is what he has been talking about. They say they “have great views.” They see marvelous prospects there. “And we are willing to enter into a covenant with our God to do his will.” They are going to do it now. Remember, at the new year all contracts were made. In England, for example, the King held a festival, which is a yearly festival and had to take place at the solstice, at Christmas time. At that time all contracts were made—only at Christmas time. They couldn’t be made at any other time; I mean a contract with a servant. If you couldn’t catch hold of him for a year and a day, then he was free because the contract only lasted for a year. It had to be renewed every year when you came to the great assembly of the king and to the year rite. They are called by various names, but that was the time that contracts were made. The rule was that after a year and a day it became invalid and had to be renewed at the end of the year. That’s what they do. “And we are willing to enter into a covenant with our God to do his will, and to be obedient to his commandments in all things.”

Verse 7: “And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall [he is going to give them a new name and, of course, you always get that—a new name, a new identity, a new year, a new life, a new beginning. It’s a refreshing of things; that’s what he is talking about] ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you.” Well, what is Christmas? It’s the *natalis*, it’s the

genethlia, it's the birthday. That's what it is called in French, Spanish, German and everything else. It's the great birthday. The *natalis* is the birthday of the human race and of the king. In Egypt everybody dated his own birthday from the year of the king. They dated their own lives from the king's birthday. They would say, "I am twenty years old as of the king's last coronation." That's the way they would do it. So the king's birthday was everybody's birthday. That was the renewal of the year. It's because you are born [again]—notice, "this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and daughters." Notice he says, "And this day [which is the new year of the Hebrews, the *Rosh ha-Shanah* or "the head of the year." That is almost a literal translation of the Egyptian word, which means "the time of the pre-existence, the beginning, the re-inauguration of the whole thing." Here it is, the same thing as what the Jews call it. It's the *Rosh ha-Shanah*. That's the beginning of the year, the beginning of creation, the beginning of everything. They are renewing their whole life, they have been begotten, and] ye are born of him and have become his sons and daughters. And under this head [moreover] ye are made free." It's the universal birthday and they celebrate it. As soon as this is announced, everybody yells *io saturnalia*. That means "all servants are free now—everybody is equal." In Israel it was literally so. It was the Hallelujah. It was the Jubilee Year. They celebrate the jubilee when no servant is a servant anymore. No one is subject to anybody anymore. Nobody is in debt to anybody. That's the way it was in the original. That's the way the Lord wants it to be, so they are rehearsing this just as at Christmas we pretend to live in a jolly time. It shows we are capable of living under such conditions, but we can't last more than that. You know what we have done to Christmas commercial-wise.

Verse 8: "There is no other name given whereby salvation cometh; therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ, all you that have entered into the covenant with God that ye should be obedient unto the end of your lives." Then he does the next thing. (I see the time is up now.) He is invited into the tent, etc. And then he talks about the right hand and the left hand of God. That's an important part of the celebration. Verse 12: "I say unto you, I would that ye should remember to retain the name written always in your hearts." Then in the next chapter he takes the census. Remember at the first he said they were so numerous that they didn't number them. But now they have entered a covenant, they have committed themselves by name, so he had the names taken of everybody who was there. Their names were all taken down, and they were enlisted as it was in Rome—the list of the *incisi*, the *incised* list. You weren't a member of the kingdom unless your name was on the list. So you had to be registered in the books—the books that were open from the foundation of the world. Remember, when the world was founded, the books were opened. They always preached that. The Book of Life was one of those books, and there were many other books. The Book of Life, as the formula goes in the New Testament, which was open at the foundation of the world, containing the names of all those who would come down to this earth in the various dispensations. That's what the Book of Life was as understood by the Jews and the Christians in the early days. So all this falls into the pattern of reality, of the real social organization. And there's the fact that it bears this amazing stamp of authenticity—that everything takes place here exactly according to the pattern of the ancient year assembly and the like. I can't go any further with it now, this being the last class. It's enough to make us take it very seriously, isn't it?