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Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Semester 3: Transcripts of Lectures Presented to an Honors Book of Mormon Class at Brigham Young University, 1988-1990

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Periodic Extinctions

[A few minutes at the first were not recorded.] Mrs. Carroll lived across the river from them, on the other side. I would take my little bicycle and go along. I would always stop on the broadway bridge and look down the river. As far as you could see were the masts of ships—three masters, four masters. The three masters were the common ones. Ships were taking wood, salmon and things like that to the Orient and all around the world. There was a line that had three steamboats. The Alaska, the Beaver, and the Bear all ran up to Alaska. (They all sank later.) The thing is that along the waterfront in Portland, Oregon, as far as you could see were the masts of ships. Then all of a sudden they were gone; there were no more three masters. They just went like that. I used to be very good at making imitations of them. I worked with wood and had some good three masters. Right next to it was the station (it's still there), and there were the steam engines which were so exciting to watch. They have gone too, and they went just in one year. The whole thing just disappeared for an entirely new culture—if we can call it a culture. And at Sausalito later when I was at Berkeley you would see the same masts of ships, but they were the salmon ships that would come down and winter at Sausalito. Students would get jobs on them, and they would go up to Alaska for the summertime. Again, all these masts—and all of a sudden about 1939-40 they disappeared and there were no more of them. Everything has just gone away like that. You might say it’s sort of sad.

Speaking of the salmon herring this is typical. For thousands of years the main food of Europe was herring. It was required by the church. Of course, you had to have fish on Friday, so the greatest food market in the world was the herring market. The herring market was the Baltic. That’s what made the glory of the Hanse. The Hanse cities were the great merchant cities that still remain. They were the basis of the economy of Europe in the Middle Ages with the so-called Hanse. I should be asking you, what were the main Hanse cities? Bremen, Lübeck, Danzig, etc. We got awfully good in the last few years at fishing for herring, very efficient. They had electronic devices for discovering the vast schools of fish. Then they had nets ten or twenty miles long for scooping them up. Then they had floating factories for processing them while they were still on the water. It was wonderful. They got more and more efficient with the herring. Then suddenly one day about ten years ago there were no more herring, after all those thousands of years, not one herring left. The whole center of the Baltic now, more than a third of the Baltic Sea, is not just without herring. It’s without anything. There’s no life in it whatever. It’s nothing but algae, just blue-green algae, corilla bacteria that eat everything up, including the oxygen. So there’s nothing left; it’s now a dead sea. It didn’t happen over a thousand years. I would recommend to you the June issue of the National Geographic. The theme is the march toward extermination. This is one of those great periods of extermination. I mention this because this is the theme of the Book of Mormon in which the words destroy or destruction appear [354] times. That’s a discouraging sort of thing. But the Book of Mormon is as upbeat as it is downbeat. Let me refer you to this. We say this is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. These are the latter days. This is the end; this is the
final time. These are the last days of what? Well, the last days of a lot of things on which we are depending. But I think this National Geographic will be an interesting thing to refer to.

All the years I was teaching ancient history and things like that, there was lots of reference to evolution—an infinitely slow, gradual, relentless, perfectly regular process. That was the old Victorian idea—steady, reliable. That’s all gone now. You don’t talk about evolution that way, as the man says here. This talks about the capture of the last California condor. “During that same time [since the 1930s] as many as a hundred acres a minute of the world’s tropical forests, among the most richly populated habitats on earth, have been destroyed . . . An estimated million species will be lost in the next 25 years—a rate of one every 15 minutes.” Every fifteen minutes a species that has existed for thousands of years will disappear forever. Well, we obviously are living at the end of an age when things are going to change. We have to do something about it. What’s the handbook? What do we do? I panic when I read things like this. One answer comes—the Book of Mormon. You may think that’s a paradox, but it isn’t. We’ll see what the Book of Mormon is going to tell us.

Then it talks about other extinctions that are taking place. The first one was that one discovered by the Alvarez of Berkeley, [it occurred] 66 million years ago. The big question was why the dinosaurs suddenly disappeared. We know now that there were hundreds of varieties of them. They showed great adaptability. They could fit into almost any environment, but all of a sudden they just vanished. That’s because the earth got socked by a giant meteorite or a comet, and there was nothing you could do about it. At one time sixty to eighty percent of animal species disappeared. I think it was 1956 when Schwindewolf introduced his neocatastrophism. Everybody took it lightly then, but they don’t anymore. They take it more seriously. Namely, there are periods when you find before a certain time a vast variety of creatures are flourishing, and then they suddenly disappear. You don’t find them anymore in the strata above that, but you find totally different species suddenly appearing. Now what happens there? There are various theories. The earth gets socked by a meteorite. It jars the earth’s magnetic field and breaks the magnetic shield which comes from the North Pole and surrounds the earth, the Van Allen belts, etc., which allows solar radiation to come in from the sun. Cosmic rays reach from one side and solar rays to reach from the other. They both have the effect of breaking down our genes and cells and having us produce all sorts of freaks. There are jokes about this sort of thing because of radiation. Suddenly new types and species develop. Well, this is one of the theories. But the point is that things do get destroyed, and they get destroyed suddenly. When a certain period comes, that’s the end. We have been warned of it here. It says at least twelve mass extinctions have taken place.

I taught during the 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s at Claremont and Berkeley and places like that. We never dreamed of anything like this. It says, “The concept has hit science like a fireball during the 1980s.” They never expected anything like that. “. . . the causes behind those great dyings had remained obscure.” We don’t know why. We used to say the fossil record was too imprecise, but all this is changing now. “. . . the rules of evolution are being rewritten.” This is just the June issue of National Geographic, very recent. This is the thing they always used to argue about, go ’round and ’round about, and I thought it was a waste of time. I never engaged in those arguments. Dealing with human history within its time there is no evolution at all. We talk about the K-T boundary. That’s the boundary between the Cretaceous and Tertiary periods. During the K-T boundary the dinosaurs
disappeared. You go out and look in these Morrison deposits, this blue-green stuff you find all over Utah. That’s where the dinosaurs are. After that you don’t find anything. They were all wiped out. They call that the K-T boundary, when you move from the Cretaceous to all these strange creatures.

This isn’t in our creation story. This doesn’t belong to our story. Genesis isn’t concerned with this. This isn’t where Adam comes in. These are other creatures here. Remember, we believe in the gospel and we preach other things. Joseph Smith’s teachings are much more explicit on this than we realize because we get into them more today; namely, that the whole universe is multiple use, and so is the earth. Well, there are creatures on the earth that we know nothing about. They don’t concern us; they have nothing to do with our affairs. We have our own thing to concern us. Adam had his family. We are his people, and his history is our history. But there are other histories that have nothing to do with him. That shouldn’t disturb us at all, the idea that there should be anything else besides us. But it is very clear what is happening here. “Most scientists now concur that at least one great extraterrestrial object struck the planet around the time the dinosaurs died out.” There are lots of diagrams and pictures here; it’s very nice. Here’s the description, and it’s a very apocalyptic description. It’s what you read in the apocalypses of the scriptures. You will recognize these things—the Book of Mormon here. “In the first days after earth was hit, dust blanketed the entire world. It grew pitch-dark for one to three months.” Remember in the Book of Mormon it was a local upheaval, but it was the one that wiped out Nephite civilization. The people could feel the darkness. They couldn’t strike a light, it was so heavy. The same sort of thing may have caused it. It could be meteoric or volcanic; the two go together actually. (That’s the worst of it. The semesters always begin in the spring and in the autumn when I have my allergies, so we have to put up with that.)

“If the impact was on land, it probably got bitter cold. . . . The entire world caught fire.” Of course, this is apocalyptic, the earth going up in flames. This is actually what happened. It talks about Yellowstone and says that was nothing. “Yet this holocaust is insignificant compared with what Wolbach believes happened that day 66 million years ago when earth was hit. The entire world caught fire. . . . To get the amount of soot we find [distributed throughout the world at a certain level between the Cretaceous and the Tertiary] as much as 90 percent of the world’s forests must have burned.” We are taking care of that now. “The fireball would have had a radius of several thousand kilometers. Winds of hundreds of kilometers an hour would have swept the planet for hours, drying trees like a giant hair dryer. Two-thousand-degree rock vapor would have spread rapidly. . . . In addition, lightning discharges like those in a volcanic eruption could have ignited windswept fires on all landmasses that marched far faster than those at Yellowstone.”

It’s on a much greater scale than that in the Book of Mormon, of course, but it follows the same pattern. The same sorts of things are happening. It’s very depressing and very alarming. It says, “Such doomsday scenarios strain our belief. . . . No matter what causes them, mass extinctions do occur. They force a new perspective on the history of life.” They also force a new perspective on history, as I said before. In 1200 B.C. Troy fell, and that should concern us—that great tragedy of which Virgil said, sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalium tangunt (“hereto there are tears for misfortunes, and mortal sorrows touch the heart”). Matthew Arnold said that’s the most moving and the most tragic line in history. When we read that we are all in the same boat. You can’t help crying when you read that. There are these times when this hits. Then, in Lehi’s time the thing hit again. The year 600 B.C. was what Jaspers called the pivotal period. We wrote all about this in that book called An Approach to the Book of Mormon. That used to be a priesthood
manual in 1957. It introduces you to a lot of things like that. It’s not compulsory; you
can be sure of that.

Mass extinctions do occur, and when they strike it is not necessarily the most fit that
survive. This is the interesting thing, of course. Who survives? The problem of the Book
of Mormon is survival. Remember, you always have the one man against the world—
whether it’s Alma, or Ammon, or Jared, or Lehi. You always have the one man. Right at
the end there you have Mormon and Moroni. Who plans the survival? Survival is a tragic
word; we use it too much. Survival is a dirty word as far as I’m concerned, because it
means “I stay here while everybody else is wiped out.”

John Chrysostom is called “golden mouth” because he was the greatest Christian orator of
the fourth and fifth centuries. He handed on a lot of very interesting doctrine. He was in
Antioch at the time of the great earthquake that destroyed the city completely. It was after
the time of Christ that this happened. The same sort of thing happened then. These things
come in periods. There will be a long, stable period, just as we have with the weather, when
everything seems to be going nicely. We get the idea that this is the normal order of
things—the nice, safe, Victorian world in which things gradually by imperceptible degrees
work toward betterment. They work toward the better because that’s what evolution is.
Since the fittest survive, the better people are those that come through. So the world gets
better and better, and it’s wonderful. But it doesn’t work that way.

Whatever I was talking about, I’d better get on here now. What was I going to say? It’s
not necessarily the most fit that survive. “Mass extinctions thus promote new beginnings
...” Well, that’s the purpose of them. The Lord wipes the old slate clean and then he
brings more on. This is a principle stated again and again in the Book of Mormon. When
the cup is full it can’t be filled any further. It can’t be diluted; there’s nothing to do about
it. When the fruit is ripe there’s no point to letting it ripen any more. This is the promise
on this land here. Then the Lord will cause extinction. They will be utterly destroyed, he
says. After the winning of a great battle, the Nephites were celebrating, and Alma had to
tell them, four hundred years from now you will become extinct if you are wicked. That’s
the word he uses. The Lord takes care of these things in order to supplant them. It says in
the Book of Mormon, the Lord leads away the righteous into precious lands, and the
wicked he destroys. How do you get out of it? Well, it’s the story of Abraham, the story of
the children of Israel and Moses. Remember, Moses’ migrations took place during great
world upheavals of the same kind. That’s the 1200s, the same time that Troy was
destroyed, that the Israelites went out of Egypt into Palestine.

The best evidence of the greatest extinction of all, the Permian extinction in which 94
percent of all life on earth was extinguished, is in Utah’s House Range west of here. This is
an ironical thing. It is the best evidence we have for the worst extinction that ever took
place in the world, it tells us in this article here. The first mass extinction and the worst; it
was a terror. It has been turned over now as a range. There has been much discussion; the
ranchers are protesting, etc. It’s not doing any good because the Air Force is going to have
it. They are going to use it as a range to practice mass extinction, including biological
warfare. They are practicing mass extinction out there now. The clock comes full circle
here.

Then some other things. Life evolves anew after each of these. Boy, this is very sad. With
one of these extinctions, the Frasnian, a thin yellow sulfur mineral testifies of its existence
everywhere. It was “precipitated as oxygen suddenly vanished from the upper layers of the
oceans. As that band was deposited, most of the world's fish and 70 percent of its invertebrates perished. ‘The seas would have looked like the aftermath of a global red tide—dead animals floating everywhere,’ says Geldsetzer.” Oh boy, this is a cheerful beginning for our class, isn’t it. But we are starting with the Book of Mormon. “If you have tears prepare to shed them now,” should be our opening. You all know that line, don’t you? Antony’s speech, of course. You all had Julius Caesar in high school at least. Well all right, “If you have tears prepare to shed them now.” How long did it take? It could have taken 20,000 years, it says here but “maybe just one stormy night.” That’s how long it took in the Nephite story before the coming of Christ. In just one stormy night to wipe out 70 percent of the life on earth. That must be some show.

I remember going on a field trip with Brother Bissell many years ago when I first came here. We saw these things in Nevada—huge boulders of coastal rock carried right across Utah. Then there are these fracture points up Spanish Fork canyon where they smashed against other rocks. The violence of the thing must have been inconceivable. Oh, I was wrong; it wasn’t 94 percent. “The Permian was easily the greatest extinction of all time. Perhaps 96 percent of all species disappeared.” That’s something. Oh boy, these terrible things that happen. “. . . a profound but mysterious crisis struck at the end of the Jurassic.” There you go again. We still don’t have the explanation because the flowers, the angiosperms, suddenly took over with explosive rapidity. That’s a thing we often talk about in the class; not now though. It was because the dinosarian overgrazing threatened many growing plants, but the angiosperms were able to escape it. Those are the seedpod plants.

“A plague of little Asian mammals invaded North America and . . . They ate the last of the dinosaurs out of house and home.” They didn’t have anything to eat; this is another theory. “The cruelest K-T [Cretaceous-Tertiary] extinctions struck the seas. . . . All large marine reptiles also vanished . . . Ammonoids—lovely, coiled survivors of many past extinctions—died out completely.” They were once the big thing. This goes with the Doctrine and Covenants class as much as anything because it talks about the showers of stars and meteors. This is a very important thing that goes with them. The earth “was hit not by one great object but rather by a shower of comets that bombarded the planet over several million years.” This is how they are trying to explain it now. It’s a scary sort of thing too. “. . . when comets struck the seas, generating tsunamis and overturns of deep anoxic or toxic water . . .” The tsunamis are the tidal waves that drowned so many cities on the coast in the Book of Mormon when the great destruction came. Remember, they were caught in tidal waves. “The final terminating impact, says Kauffman, probably occurred on land, where it produced fire storms, soot, and a pall of dust.” There shall be a vapor of smoke and it shall cover the earth, says the Book of Mormon.

Every 26 million years we have these things happen. What could that be? Well, there are two theories. There is one of the Oort Cloud between Pluto and all this Neptune stuff. See how it has caught us by surprise overnight? Between them is a mass of stuff circulating on an almost galactic scale. Every 26 million years in the sun’s course around the galaxy we pass through that, and then we get showered by this stuff. The other [theory] is that the sun has a companion star, a dark star, that we can’t see at a great distance. They go around each other every 26 million years, and they call that Nemesis. Nemesis brings with it a cloud of planets in its own dust. When we pass through all that stuff, we get showered and plastered again. This is the picture, you see. There’s a dense cloud of comets that astronomers believe surrounds our solar system. Something could periodically unsettle that cloud and fling battalions of comets. It could be either Nemesis or the Oort Cloud.
They don’t mention that here. [It could be] a star orbiting our sun, a tenth planet. Our planet moves periodically through a star-dense spiral. Between 35 and 40 million years ago, a well-documented chilling of the seas did all the killing. It would still be a shower again.

Well, this is coming quite recently now. “Whether or not we fit a cosmic timetable for an extinction, we surely are in one today.” We are in a period of extinction today is what it’s telling us now. “It began in North America about 11,000 years ago.” That early there was a brilliant culture flourishing in the Balkans. We won’t go into the chronology of the Bible now, but 3,000 or 4,000 years before the pyramids there was the Varna Culture and the people in the center of the Balkans. They’ve discovered 36,000 artifacts—temples, marvelous sculpture, and wonderful metal work. They had fabulous deep mines; it was amazing. It was almost the same time as these creatures because this would make it only 9,000 B.C. It was there then. That particular civilization reached its peak between 8,000 and 7,000 B.C. “In North America about 11,000 years ago, most large [mammals] were wiped out. All perished abruptly. What happened?”

By abruptly, you know about the stories of the mammoths found with undigested buttercups in their stomachs, which means they must have been frozen very, very fast. It takes three hours to thaw a turkey. How long would it take to freeze a mammoth so that the digestive processes wouldn’t cause decay, gasses, and all that sort of thing? Here we have fresh buttercups in these mammoths. They were so fresh that there was an industry in Siberia, in Czarist Russia in the 80s and 90s, which sold mammoth meat for dog food commercially. There was so much of this stuff. “All perished abruptly. . . . The extinctions, however, were so rapid—within five hundred to a thousand years—that many scientists suspect an alternate—or at least assistant—villain in this extinction: Homo sapiens.” That man was the one who was responsible. He was the one that was responsible for that one. Now we come to ourselves, you see.

Now he says, “In the plant group I study, 42 percent of the species reported in 1930 have not been collected since.” This particular botanist talking is Sohmer, head of the Bishop Museum in Honolulu. Again, we only have to ask who buys the timber or beef these felled forests produce. Well, McDonalds does. They are the biggest market for the Brazilian jungles. “Though occupying less than 0.2 percent of the nation’s landmass, Hawaii contains 27 percent of the endangered birds and plants.” So we go to these sad statistics now. “We can see that the health of species is interconnected, that if we let too many disappear, we will go too [we depend on them; this is the picture today]. For the first time a living organism can consciously do something to halt a mass extinction.”

This is the theme of the Book of Mormon. Destruction is mentioned 354 times in the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon is a purely religious document. In fact, it’s the greatest religious document there is because it is the only one that answers the terrible question. I was going to bring along Richard Anderson’s paperback on the three witnesses and practically require it. It has come out now in paperback. That clinches things very tight now. The question that haunts everybody is, (only the Book of Mormon can answer this), “is this all there is?” Is there anything else? Well, we can talk about morals, beauty, ethics, and all this sort of thing and say that’s religion. But that isn’t what religion is interested in. We just want the answer to that one question. When we die is that all? Is there anything else? What comes after that? Of course, the answer comes with an angel from on high. Moroni, an angel from other worlds, from the immensity of space, comes and personally delivers the book. On top of that we have Joseph Smith’s witness, and you
have the three witnesses and the eight witnesses. All their lives they said they saw it. The three left the church, as you know, because of vanity and injured pride. They came back, except [David Whitmer], and they never denied their testimonies. Of course, as soon as they left the church all the newspaper reporters, ministers, and others swarmed in and descended on them like locusts. “Now you will tell us the truth; now you can tell us what really happened.” They did. “We’ll tell you what really happened; the angel came and showed us the plates.” That’s what they told them. They could never shake them [the witnesses] at all, any of them.

Well, how do you explain that? The great Eduard Meyer said, “We can only say that was a hallucination.” There’s a catch to that. The Book of Mormon is not a hallucination. I have been reading this week about the Rosicrucians in the 1600s. They had their sacred books. There have always been these groups of mystics, sectarians, and others. They have produced a manifesto. There’s one book called the Fama. They claim these books were delivered by angels, but when you read it, it’s nonsense. There’s nothing there. It doesn’t have anything to say, except the usual commonplaces. We should behave and love each other, etc. We know that.

The Book of Mormon is not that. Nobody has ever been able to get around the witnesses, but it’s harder to get around the book. It’s a solid, compact mass of statements, a package containing thousands of clues. None of the critics that have torn into it have read it with care really. We haven’t either. That’s why President Benson said, let’s start reading it for a change. When I was a kid we just read it because it was sort of romantic. What did it have to do with things? It has to do with us today. So we have here this dazzling procession of vivid images, these marvelous vignettes and character studies perfectly conceived. The Book of Mormon was dug up, remember, so it’s a fossil. We were talking about fossils here, and the Book of Mormon is a fossil. Fodire means “to dig up,” and a fossa is a ditch. A fossil is something that is dug up. The Book of Mormon is literally a fossil because Joseph Smith dug it up. He removed the rock and dug and found the book. It’s as a fossil that the written word is the most marvelous invention known to man, because every ancient document is a fossil. This is fossilized thought here. Well, if you find a fossil it can tell you all sorts of things. But what does it depend on? It depends on you. You’ve got to bring all sorts of experience, knowledge, and acumen to the subject and see what you can do with this thing.

So what do you do when you have a literal fossil? The most marvelous invention of man, as Galileo and Arthur Clarke and others have told us, is the written word because it can do what nothing else can. It defeats time and place. When they dig up one of these fossils they are talking in terms of millions of years. The fossil is there and it is just as fresh as it was when it finally hardened, its last cooking. It comes down to us unchanged, and time won’t affect the written record either. Those golden plates could last for millions of years, being gold, etc. They o’erleap time and space too. It makes no difference with space. These things are thousands of years old. It conveys not merely sounds and images. I was talking about the fall of Troy, this great tragedy that electrified the human race. It has come down to us in the two greatest epics of Homer, The Iliad and The Odyssey. You could include The Aeneid and others. It’s left its memory and its mark with us, and it’s just as vivid now. That’s why the actor could shed tears for Hecuba. It was just too sad; it was heartbreaking. He was playing the role. What was Hecuba to him? Very much alive. This is a marvelous thing that the written word can do, that TV or nothing else can do. You have to have all sorts of fancy equipment for that. But what do you need to hand down a record for a million years and convey not only the names, places, dates, and
events, but your most subtle nuances of thought? So much of that is great poetry that can
move us now just as in the time it was written. It comes down, and what do you need? A
surface to scratch on and something to scratch it with. Take a rock or a stick. If you can
scratch enough, it will be as deep as the indentations in a fossil. It will last for a million
years. By the written word you o’erleap time and space and all the rest of it, just as when
you look at a fossil. The geologists can tell you what kind of a creature it was, what its
environment was, what it lived on, its habits, etc., just from that one fossil. It can even be
one bone. Of course, they do some very comical things. We know that some of the
reconstructions of dinosaurs of 150 years ago look very funny now. That isn’t the way
they looked at all. They didn’t have enough bones, but if you have enough to go on you
don’t need too much. A skillful geologist or paleontologist can look at a bone and tell you
all about the creature.

It’s the same thing in reading the Book of Mormon. With a written document you have
to go into it. Like the flight of the bee, the act of reading has never been explained. It’s a
mystery. There’s no reason why you should be able to do it. It’s a strange thing. The
classic example of that would be Arabic and other Semitic languages in which you don’t
write any vowels. You don’t have any punctuation of any kind. You don’t have any
capital letters to know when it’s a personal name. You make no division between the
words. You put no vowels. Every word has just three consonants. You just string these
consonants along and that’s it. Usually it’s badly written and covered with fly specks, so
how can anyone possibly read it? And yet it can be read. When people start improving on
it by putting in the little shaddas and fathas and putting in the pointings to help us
along, it becomes a nuisance. You say, “Take those away; we don’t want those. They’re a
nuisance. We got used to reading this.”

But how can it be done? In theory you have to know first what it is talking about. Then it
goes. But if you don’t you can be in an awful state of things. That’s the condition with
Egyptian today. We do not know the point of view from which to read it. Most of it still
escapes us. Egyptian is a good example of limitations of which men are not aware. We
think we have translated the text, and we have been deservedly tricked. There’s a very
recent study by Westendorf on that very subject, showing that we have missed entirely
the point of Egyptian. I think that is so.

When we read the Book of Mormon, we read it as if we were picking our way through a
mine field and missing ninety-nine percent of the message. Are we even aware of the
main points? We start with Alma 46, which is just like starting in the middle of a
sentence. We can’t do that. I had to go back over the weekend to review and see the
points which it brings out. We see certain points of emphasis; they repeatedly come out.
What emerges in the Book of Mormon is this very clear message. Up to Alma 46 I’m
going to make a quick review next time and show what they were actually talking about.

I must remind you of this too. When you read the Book of Mormon, or any book, you
must do exactly what you do when you see a play. We don’t realize how great Shakespeare
was. This is a new discovery. The traveling [groups] of English players had a great deal to
do with the Reformation on the continent of Europe. They set the pace at courts, at
Lüneberg, at Heidelberg, in the Pfalz, in the Palatinate, Oppenheim, at various places. A
writer by the name of Francis Yates has been investigating this idea. These wandering
players had an enormous influence in all the courts of Europe where they would go. You
would not make a sharp distinction between the reality of the court and the reality of the
play. You remember when the players come in *Hamlet*, treat them according to their nobility. Treat every man according to his desert and who will escape whipping [paraphrased]. The court itself was a theater. In fact, the court is a stage in Egypt [and elsewhere]. What was the theatrical part and what was the real part? You notice they overdressed. They dressed themselves in the most fancy way. They used overblown theatrical language. We call it Elizabethan Renaissance. Then in the time of James I it carried on in exactly the same way and produced Milton. There’s this mood of the courts and this mood of reality. Shakespeare is constantly reminding us that when we read these things and when we see the plays, this is not the real thing. You have to produce the real thing. After he gives what I consider the most vivid description in words of an event that I can imagine, the description of night in the camp in *Henry V*, he concludes:

Sit and see
Minding true things
By what their mockeries be

He says, this is just a play; we are just putting it on. You mind the true things by what the mockeries be, but you have to apply your mind to it. Throughout *Henry V* the chorus is always interfering and reminding that this isn’t the real thing, but you must make the real thing. So we have the famous prologue at the beginning. Should I recite? Yes, I should. This takes you into the mood of the court.

O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention,—
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!
Then should the warlike Harry, like himself,
Assume the port of Mars; and at his heels,
Leasht-in like hounds, should famine, sword, and fire
Crouch for employment. But pardon, gentles all,
[This is only a play; this is the best we can do.]
The flat unraised spirits that have dared
On this unworthy scaffold [the stage] to bring forth
So great an object: can this cockpit hold
[Can I tell you about Henry and his wars on this wooden stage?]
The vasty fields of France? or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
[The Globe Theater was a round O.]
That did affright the air at Agincourt?
O, pardon! since a crooked figure may
Attest in little place a million;
[By writing one, if you add enough ciphers to it you can get a million; put the one and we will be the ciphers and exaggerate it.]
And let us, ciphers to this great accompt,
On your imaginary forces work.
Suppose within the girdle of these walls
Are now confined two mighty monarchies,
Whose high-upreared and abutting fronts
The perilous narrow ocean parts asunder:
Piece-out our imperfections with your thoughts;
[You must make this story.]
Into a thousand parts divide one man,
And make imaginary puissance;
[One man is going to represent a thousand soldiers, so you make an imaginary army. But you have to do it yourself.]

Think, when we talk of horses, that you see them
Printing their proud hoofs i'th' receiving earth;—
For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings,
[You dress them up and put them in their proper places.]

Carry them here and there; jumping o'er times,
[You jump over time and place, just as you do with the written record here.]

Turning th' accomplishment of many years
Into an hour-glass: for the which supply,
[You can take the events of many years and present them in one hour, as you can read it in a book the same way.]

Admit me Chorus to this history. . . .”

Shakespeare, Henry V, Prologue

So he says you have to do it all yourself, and when you read the Book of Mormon you [should] do that. We skim through and look for the high parts. We look for the heroic Captain Moroni, and that’s about as far as we look in the Book of Mormon. But that book is so full, and it’s so exactly, so meticulously veracious. Everything is exactly the way it should be, the way it is presented. And the economy, it’s so condensed, all this that gets in here. It’s a miraculous work. I see the time is up. Are there any questions? Of course, everybody asks, “What are we going to write for this course?” But I’m not going to tell you.

1. “The March Toward Extinction,” National Geographic 175/6 (June 1989): 662. (Brother Nibley quotes and paraphrases information from this article.)
I thought that since we are going to begin with Alma 46 and since I have not been looking especially at the Book of Mormon all summer, and neither have you, a review might be in order. Of course, that was a mistake. The great Joseph Justus Scaliger, the greatest scholar who ever lived, said, Arabic is like the devil. You reach with your finger and it will grab your arm. Then farewell to peace of mind forever after. It won’t ever let you go. The Book of Mormon is that way too. You reach with your finger and it will grab your arm. But we’ve been able to avoid it rather well until now. As I said, we pick our way through gingerly as if we were going through a mine field avoiding all the unpleasant passages. Well, we’re not going to do that now. But this review brought out certain things which I just noticed this morning. Every time you read the Book of Mormon you find all sorts of things. We were talking about the recurrent themes in the Book of Mormon. I discovered that in the first forty-five chapters there are eight recurrent themes. All the time these keep going over and over again. They are extremely important. In the second half of the Book of Mormon they become intensified. It builds them up, and they become very exciting then. Let’s see what these themes are now. We’ll call them recurrent themes. There are various names for them, such as leitmotifs. We are calling them “recurrent themes” because they keep coming over and over again.

I’m going to save you some trouble here. You always bring your Book of Mormon. After all, it is our text, the only text we have. It is a very good one, you know, and it’s basic to this course. Is there anybody who doesn’t have a Book of Mormon here now? That would be disastrous. Well, we will skip through now and consider these things. They are very important and extremely relevant. We start out right at the beginning seeing [Lehi with] many afflictions, highly favored, etc. He starts right out telling us in verse 4 that the great city of Jerusalem must repent or be destroyed. That is the theme of destruction. We mentioned that last time. All of a sudden they’ve discovered [the evidence of these destructions]. They had reason to know it all along. Here we walk around on the fossil remains of previous ages of the earth. They are all deposited under us, but they are there. And we are going to make a deposit too in our own time. We mentioned the article in the June 1989 National Geographic and that extermination is now a basic theme in the history of geology. There have been periods of extermination. That was introduced by Schindewolf, the German archeologist, in the 60s and was called neocatastrophism. It was the idea that there had been a series of catastrophes. It was sort of put down when he came out with it, but now it is fully accepted. The history of the world has been a series of regular catastrophes. Cyclical catastrophes can’t be avoided because their cause is from outer space. He says it was either the Oort Cloud and the Star Nemesis.

We notice this in human history the same way. We go through a series of destructions; this is what the Book of Mormon is about. For example, this theme of destruction in 1 Nephi 1:4 comes out again in the Words of Mormon. They’re almost completely wiped out. He starts out by saying there is almost nobody left. The whole thing is gone now. The big destructions come later on with the time of Christ, [earlier with] the Jaredites, and the rest. So we have in the history of the world all these destructions. It begins with why was
Jerusalem destroyed. Did it necessarily have to be so? Jeremiah was a friend of Lehi. He was a contemporary and knew him very well. That’s very plain from the Book of Mormon; he belonged to that group. We don’t go into that this semester. The fifth chapter of Jeremiah explains why. Very briefly it will tell you why—because the people were proud and corrupt. The rich were proud and the poor were oppressed. There was no justice. Everybody was out for money. Everybody had their hearts set on wealth—that fatal theme in the Book of Mormon. They set their hearts on riches, so we have this rottenness, etc.

We have the whole Lamentation Literature. The earliest records we have start back in the old kingdom of Egypt. We have what they call “The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage” back in the early time. He describes the complete collapse of the Old Kingdom. It all fell for the very same reasons. The great Babylonian lamentation literature has been collected by Lambert in one large Oxford volume. (You can look at it here.) The lamentations that these things must come, etc. And what was Enoch doing? He was prophesying and warning against the destruction of the world. It came and it was complete. In the time of Noah there was one of those great upheavals that do take place. In the time of Lamech and the time of Cain we are told how the evil spread abroad. We are always sinning and we can’t keep out of it for some reason or other. This has always been recognized. Human history always seems to be running downhill. I guess that’s entropy, that’s gravity. Gravity sucks us all down; we are all being conquered by gravity everyday. I’m beginning to sag at all points here. There’s no way I can avoid it; I’m sorry about that. This is what happens. We all yield to gravity and are taken downward.

We begin the Old Testament and the Pearl of Great Price with Adam in the garden, in the world as it should be, in a heavenly place. Then he is kicked out and starts cultivating the earth. The books of Abraham and Moses are marvelous for this. We see the stages. Adam and Eve accepted the gospel and rejoiced in it, but their children [almost] all turned away from it. They mourned before the Lord. They did the best they could to save their children, but they could do nothing about it. They had Cain and Abel and lots of children. Cain and his people loved Satan more than God and would not listen to Adam. Cain made his covenant with Satan and things got worse and worse. Then with Lamech the evil spread among the whole human family and everything was going downhill. Well, this is the basic philosophy of history too, of the ancients themselves, the most famous being Hesiod’s *Theogony*. I suppose you all know who Hesiod was. I’m going to stop asking questions because that’s a fatal mistake when you ask questions anymore. It used to be you could get some answers, but no more. Some of you may have seen that long article by Carl Sagan yesterday with all those ghastly statistics about American education. We are just about as low as we can get. We can attest to that. Hesiod was writing at the time of Homer, about 770 B.C. He was writing on a much older basis, about the golden age. In the beginning there was the golden age, followed by a silver age, followed by a bronze age, followed by an iron age, followed by an age of clay. You’ll recognize those as the figure that Daniel saw. Remember the head of gold, the shoulders of silver, etc. In other words we decline. Each generation is a little worse, or a lot worse, than that which went before. Must that necessarily be so? Well, that’s so because of our nature; we have to be that way. “The troubles of our proud and angry dust are from eternity and shall not fail.” We run down, as Job says, “Man who is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.” If we are made in that sort of a way, how can we avoid it? It’s a fine thing to turn us loose here?

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!

That’s from the Rubaiyat. In my day every kid knew the Rubaiyat by heart. Nobody’s heard of it today. That’s it; we’re made that way. As Beatrice says to Dante, God just made me that way. I’m good and you’re bad because God made me that way. That’s predestination, you see. Can you escape it? Do we necessarily have to be bad and go that way? This is very often mentioned in the Book of Mormon. Is there a general theory of human behavior? Yes, you will find that 2 Nephi and 3 Nephi break out and express themselves very warmly on this particular subject, on the unregenerate nature of man. You put him where he doesn’t have a chance. What are we doing here? Well, it’s the Heisenberg uncertainty principle. Statistically, we always go downhill that way, but that’s no excuse for the individual doing it. Heisenberg showed that that applied throughout all science. You can predict with absolute certainty how a mass of atoms is going to behave, but you cannot predict at any time what any one of those atoms is going to do. It can go off anytime it feels like it; there’s no way of controlling it. That’s the uncertainty principle, and it’s so with us. The world may “go to hell in a basket,” but that’s no excuse for you. That is what Lehi is told, and that’s what we are all told. He has given us the plan, and he has given us the help. He says, I’m going to give you all the help you want. I’ll give you everything you need. All you have to do is accept it. If you don’t accept it, you can’t complain that it’s your nature. You recognize your weak nature and ask for help and you will get it. But we refuse it when it is offered this way, so we have all these downhill things.

Well that’s 1 Nephi 4 already, the way things go, this recurrent theme of destruction. And, of course, the Book of Mormon ends with destruction. It ends with the most bleak and terrible and the saddest of destructions. It’s very sad. Remember, your great epics all begin with the destruction of a civilization, the destruction of Troy being the classical example. When the city is destroyed what do you do? Then there is the second theme, the theme of survival. It’s the very next theme that comes out here, which is “get out.” Lehi was told to get out and leave Jerusalem. In a dream he was told he would have to get out. So he is the one that makes an escape. Then this again is the theme.

The idea of an archaic civilization that was much higher than has ever lived since has been revived by an eminent scientist, by Giorgio De Santillana at MIT. The idea that there was an archaic civilization that had vast knowledge we always thought was a rather romantic, rather mysterious sort of thing, like the Atlantis business. But there is evidence that that is actually the case, that Jamshyd and his seven-ring cup have disappeared.

They say the lion and the lizard keep
The court where Jamshyd feasted and drank deep
And Bahrám that great hunter
The wild ass stands o’er his head
But cannot break his sleep.

The great Jamshyd lived before, and those have all gone. They all rest now. But the idea is that at the very beginning things were better—in other words that evolution has been downhill and not uphill. It’s the very opposite of what the Victorians taught. The strange thing is now that someone like Santillana says there may be more than something to that.

So they choose to get out. They are told to migrate here. Of course, they all migrate.
Adam migrates. He leaves the garden and has to take out into the lone and dreary world and establish himself. Then his sons and daughters scatter everywhere throughout the world. After the flood the three sons of Noah [Genesis 9] scatter in three different directions. They are always scattering to repopulate the earth, etc. When you go out, you choose the wilderness. Of great importance is the person who makes the escape. Odysseus is a good example. Like Lehi, he is driven out and he wanders. He was not rescued from Troy; he destroyed Troy. He had more to do with it than anybody else. "He was a man who was forced to wander many places and suffer very many evils. He saw the ways of many men and saw the customs of many nations, seeking to get home to save his own life and those of his companions." But he failed to save them because they were foolish. They couldn’t control their lusts and their appetites, and they were destroyed. They never got to see their homes again. Only he came through. See, it’s the righteous man, the lone survivor in the desert. The Book of Mormon is full of those lone survivors; you’ll notice that.

On this theme of getting out: In 2 Nephi 5 after they have settled in the New World Nephi must depart. He must leave the people because his people have become corrupt then. He goes out with the people who will follow him. They go out by themselves and settle. He builds a temple and they live “after the manner of happiness.” It’s not necessary to suffer the way people suffer. They don’t have to if they would only do that “after the manner of happiness.” It tells us what the secret is of living “after the manner of happiness.” It puts that in a very nice way. It says to like the things that God likes. That’s the thing that will make you happy, and you will get along fine because then you will have what you want.

In Omni 12 it tells us how Mosiah leaves from Nephi’s new ideal community. Lehi leaves Jerusalem and settles in the New World with his ideal society. They have saved themselves in the wilderness, but they go bad. So Nephi leaves them. Then Nephi’s community goes bad and Mosiah breaks off. He is told in a dream to leave them. So in Omni 12 Mosiah goes out and is made king in Zarahemla. Then in Mosiah 7 Ammon goes to the land of Lehi-Nephi and finds a Mulekite enclave there. Then we have Zeniff’s story. He went out, and they [his group] went bad. In Mosiah 17 Alma is under pressure. He was a priest of King Noah, and he had to get out to save himself. He went out with a community, and they organized themselves in the wilderness at the Waters of Mormon. They had an ideal setting there, but it didn’t last again. They caught up with them. Then under Lamanite pressure Noah and his priests took off to save themselves—“to save his own life and those of his companions.” Alma got out by the Waters of Mormon, and Noah left. Then the Lamanites took them in and formed another community. Then in Mosiah 21 [Ammon] meets Limhi and they join together. They make a break because they are living under Lamanite pressure here by King Laman. They make a break and escape to Zarahemla. Everybody is always breaking out and escaping throughout the Book of Mormon, you notice.

In Mosiah 23 Alma is forced to move again. He makes a city of his own, but he won’t be king. Then his rival Amulon comes along and becomes so oppressive. He is an old priest of Noah too, and he hates the sight of Alma. He oppresses him as much as he can because the [Lamanite] overlord has made him the local king over Alma’s people. That’s the worst thing that could happen to Alma. So by night they make a break and leave too. He gets out and ends up safe in Zarahemla in Mosiah 24.

Does anybody else get out here that we notice? We are going to see other escapes like
that. They are going to be destroyed, so you get out. That’s the next thing to do; that’s logical enough. And you choose a wilderness. Remember, it tells us in the book of Ether (a marvelous book, absolutely indispensable; we have to have that, the Jaredite story) that they go to that place where there never had man been. They go to a land which has never been occupied by human beings. It has to be a real wilderness; they are always going to wildernesses. This is an interesting thing here. The Saints went to the wilderness. As you know, Moses left the Egyptians and went into the wilderness, where he wandered forty years. The prophets always go out into the wilderness. Elijah went out and hid in the valley. The Qumran people had to imitate that. This is the Rechabite doctrine. When Israel or Jerusalem becomes wicked, the pious go off and live by themselves in the desert and wait for God to give them more revelation. That’s the theme of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Those people went out to Qumran to do that very thing, so we have the Rechabites.

We are told in Jeremiah 35 that Jonadab ben Rechab and his son were righteous, and they were so blessed. They were the only people that were not corrupt in Jerusalem. They were blessed by having special offices in the temple forever after that. They went out to live in the desert by themselves. They would not live in houses of stone, and they would not even cultivate the ground. They would live as John the Baptist lived. John the Baptist was another one who went out into the wilderness. “Why have you come out into the wilderness?” He was contemporary with Qumran of the Dead Sea Scrolls. We are told that he was a wild man and that he lived on wild locust and honey. He dressed in camel’s hair and he scared people. When Enoch appeared the people said, “There’s a strange thing in the land; a wild man has come among us.” We know from the Jewish sources that when John the Baptist appeared people said, “Who is he?” They said, “He is Enoch.” They asked him, “Who are you?” and he said, “I am the man.”

Josephus never gives the name of John the Baptist. He tells his story but never gives his name because when they asked him who he was he said, “I am Enos,” which just means “the man.” They took him for Enoch. It’s this idea of the one who goes out and lives in the wilderness. As a witness against the sins and follies of the human race, you go out by yourself. People try that all the time. The Saints were driven whether they wanted to or not. The Mormons didn’t stage it. As George Albert Smith, Sr. said, “We came out here of our own free will because they made us.”

There have been plenty of sects that have imitated that. That’s what St. Anthony did. St. Anthony was a rich fellow who lived in the fourth century in Alexandria. It was a thoroughly Christian city, but it was always corrupt. He went out in the desert to live by himself and started the monastic movement. The native Egyptians participated in that, and it became a great movement. An anchoritic monk is one who goes out and lives by himself in the wilderness. There are the two kinds. There’s the monasticism of the desert and the monasticism of the sea; you choose the island or you choose the desert. They did. The idea was that the only way you could live purely, the only way you could keep yourself unspotted from the world, was to get out and live in the desert. They did in great flocks from the fourth century on. In Italy there was Monte Cassino in the sixth century with the Benedictine Order. Then it spread, and they became the Mendicant orders in the thirteenth century, St. Francis, etc. This was always popular that you had to go out and live by yourself. Of course, that had problems. Many of them became rich and corrupt. But we can’t choose a wilderness anymore, can we? Oh, yes. There’s always an artificial wilderness. You can always make a wilderness. Most of the wildernesses people have moved into have been those created by the follies of men. There are such wildernesses.
There’s a recent, rather thorough, aerial survey of England that shows where there was a
great civilization in England at least as early as 4300 B.C. Most of north England was
under dense cultivation—farms, fish ponds, orchards, villages, towns, everything. It
completely disappeared and then was completely covered by something else. Then it
happened again. It happens again and again. Strange things happen here. Again and again
the world has been depopulated to a greater degree than we realize. You think of the
plague in the time of Marcus Aurelius that wiped out most of the population of Europe
and the Near East. It started in the Near East. Then you think of the 1340s when the
plague depopulated four-fifths of some countries, and some communities completely. In
England a totally new village culture—way of doing things and type of farming—
emerges suddenly after the Black Death because it just depopulated the land. Yes, you
have your artificial wildernesses. People get themselves into this trouble, and then the
world is desolate. You have great migrations. There are times when everybody is
migrating and nobody knows who is in charge or where to settle—terrible times. In 3,000
B.C. there was such a time. The whole world became homeless. The weather was behind it
too. They had bad years and had to move. In the great heartland of Asia the crops failed.
The central hosts of Asia are living on a marginal economy, and when the grass doesn’t
grow they have to move and wander with their flocks. They infringe on the outlying
civilizations. The civilizations are all on the edge—the Chinese, the Indian, the Egyptian,
the Babylonian. They are all on the edge of what is called the heartland. That’s the basis of
Halford Mackinder’s geopolitics on which Hitler based his aspirations and his empire. He
had a geographer called Haushofer who [adopted] geopolitics.1

It still runs the world. We are thinking in these world terms with these desolations.
Because wars are so unpleasant we often completely forget how great the destructions
were and that there was another people there entirely and they have disappeared
completely. When the destruction is in tens of millions we forget that it does change the
scene. We start out and say, “This is a fresh beginning, and we will just put that all behind
us.” We like to say that and we do. So we forget how many times this sort of thing has
happened, how hard it hits, and when it hits how great the destruction is. It’s a funny
thing. Many people in Germany were destroyed too. Ludwigshafen was the old capital of
Baden, a very aristocratic, beautiful city. It was one of those marvelous Baroque cities on
the Rhine and the capital of Baden. I was on a mission part of the time there. Then after
the mission I went back to the same place during the war. It had just been occupied there.
I sat on the fountain. There was a very famous fountain with magnificent horses on it in
front of the palace there. Well, there was no palace, there was no horse fountain, there was
nothing left. I sat on the red sandstone remains. It might just as well have been the
Mojave Desert. I ate my lunch. There were flies there, and there was a lizard that
scampered across the red sandstone. I thought, the lion and the lizard keep the courts here.
This was one of the peaks of civilization of the eighteenth century, and here I was sitting
on its ruins. It was just as ruined as Babylon, more ruined than many a place in Egypt.
There it was right in Germany where I had been on a mission. It was a very impressive
thing. There was nobody there at all. The whole city was just empty; I could go take
anything I wanted—loot if I wanted to. But there was nothing; it was all gone. This
happens in place after place.

The mayor of Pforzheim, another place not far from there, told me that in the last British
air raid on that town of 80,000 people, 30,000 were killed. That’s what happens, and then
we just forget about those things. We have artificial deserts that we can move into, so
don’t worry about not having a wilderness to go into. We have this extermination.
Then we have these swarming times when everybody is disorganized and disoriented. The book of Ether is a classic treatment of that. I wrote a book on that, *The World of the Jaredites*. That’s called the heroic period, the epic period. It produced epic literature and was called “the swarming time.” [This happened] in 1700 B.C. Then in 1200 B.C. Troy fell—not just Troy but the Egyptian empire and everything fell in 1200. Then 600 B.C. was another pivotal date, in Lehi’s day. The old governments, the old sacral kingships disappeared everywhere. In 1200, 1700, 2400, and 3000—about every 600 years. It looks like that, doesn’t it?

Now look at Beirut. I also used to live in Beirut. It was the most cultivated city in the East, the Switzerland of the East. All the people in the Near East, the Arab sheikhs, the Egyptians, and the Turks invested their money in Beirut because they knew it was so safe. It was a safe and civil society. It was all full of banks, swank shops, and things like that—the most sophisticated place of all. This was the old Phoenicia, and they were very proud of the fact. We had a student here who was a Lebanese girl, and she became very angry if you said they spoke Arabic. She said, “We speak Phoenician.” Well, they do have a dialect of their own. Look at Beirut today! You couldn’t find anything worse; the whole city is a ruin. The people are fighting each other—people who have been living in that city together for hundreds of years. The Christians, the Maronites, and the Moslems have lived together there. Now the Sunni come in and fight the Shiites. It’s over a minor point of doctrine, who was to be successor of Muhammad. Well, that’s not minor with them, and it’s not a point of doctrine. But it’s just about that. Was it to be Ali or was it to be Omar? The one is [the choice of] the Sunnites and the other is the Shiites, and they are killing each other like crazy. The city has become a complete shambles—that big, prosperous city, a place to put your money that was safer than Switzerland. Now it’s not the best city—it’s the worst. It’s just a total ruin; you can see that on the news now. It’s ghastly. Nobody dares to go there anymore. You’ll get picked up like that. That’s the world we live in. Anything can happen when that can happen. If they had prophesied that ten years ago, you would say the Arabs are crazy. They have no sense of history or anything like that. Ah ha, this is what happens.

Our third motif here is the importance of keeping the record. Why this importance of the record? It’s constantly going to be repeated here. For example, in 2 Nephi 29 he explains why the scriptures are to gather all things in one, the great unification. They are absolutely necessary to the project to orchestrate the whole thing, to bring it together. If this was just one disconnected series of tragic events, the thing would be a horrible mess. People think it is, but it isn’t. It all fits into the same plan, and the record is going to tell us that. God wants us to keep the record which shows us that the thing is orchestrated here, just as you bring an empire together. You couldn’t have an empire until you had the written word, until you had writing. An emperor has no control out of sight of the next country or people unless he has the written record. He sends a scribe out to bring in the reports. He has the main office or bureau, and that’s the center of empire. They talk about that with the destruction of the Egyptian empire in *The Wisdom of Amenemope*, the Egyptian sage. There’s quite a great wisdom literature; they are lamenting for the destruction of everything. One very important thing he says is that the mob breaks into the royal archives, brings out all the records, takes them out into the alleys, and stamps them under their dirty feet. With that the empire disappears because if [the records are] gone, it’s gone.

There’s an Arabic account of a great empire in the East. A tornado came and scattered all the records everywhere, and the empire disappeared. Without the records at the control
you don’t know who owns what or who owes what. If you have no records, you have no account of anything and no control. Writing is not only the greatest invention of the human race, it is the greatest means of control and oppression. All it takes is a name written on a piece of paper to put an Arab oil sheikh or a Japanese consortium in charge of half the mountains in Utah here. They may never see them, but you can’t go there now because they own them. Why? Because their name is on a piece of paper. That’s quite a thing. I wrote an article on that called “The Arrow, the Hunter and the State” in a political journal years ago. It stirred a lot of people up. Our society rests on such flimsy things. But the written record has this strange power. As Galileo said, it makes all other inventions look like nothing. It is the invention. You will never be able to catch things with a TV or anything like that hereafter. We have writings right here that are 5,000 years old. They still get their message across. It can be emotional and stir us very deeply after all those years. All it took was a rock surface and something to scratch on it. That’s it. If you set up a broadcasting system or something like that, it’s very fragile, very brittle. That will break down at a thousand points, but writing can be preserved as long as any fossil, a million years. It’s an amazing invention, isn’t it?

The importance of the record is another point we make. First there is destruction, geological and historical cycles. Then there is survival, the Rechabite motif, getting out. You are commanded to go out into the wilderness and survive there. You can’t find a wilderness? There’ll be one made for you—don’t worry. Remember the “yellow dog prophesy,” that when the Saints go back to Jackson County there won’t be a yellow dog to wag its tail there it will be so wiped out. This could be the aftermath of a nuclear war, you could well imagine. After that, there will be deserts, don’t worry, places where it’s not safe to go for ten thousand years. I don’t like that kind of a desert. We are making for that sort of thing. It was Julius Caesar who quoted a Gaulish chieftain as saying about the Romans, “They make a desert and they call it a peace.” Once the Romans had made peace all you had was a desert. You dared not raise your finger; there was nothing there at all. And the only safe Indian was a dead Indian. We did that. We forget that the great Indian culture of the eastern United States was completely annihilated and so quickly. You can catch it in a few things like that book The Star in the West, but very few records of that remained after.

Then we get the next point which is the gospel plan. The Book of Mormon not only is a history, but as the history goes along it explains what’s happening. It takes us by the hand and gives a meaning to the whole thing. It tells us where we fit in and why this is not just a lot of nonsense, why we are being told this. It’s very carefully selected and very carefully edited. We are conducted through here, and we find such marvelous gospel sermons. The Book of Mormon has more gospel sermons than anything you will find anywhere. They go further in explaining what is going on is this world than anything else. You will find such sermons in 1 Nephi 10, the plan with Christ as the center, a single unified plan. That’s what scientists are talking about today, a unified plan that will explain everything. That’s what we want because they are all connected somehow. How can we explain them? This is the theme in the Book of Mormon. It says, “Bringing things all together in one.” That’s what the written word has the effect of doing. But the plan itself is explained here. In 1 Nephi 12–14 he shows the whole story; it would be pointless without it. When we are suffering these things we have a right to know, but we refuse to believe. If the Lord tries to explain it to us, we do like Cain. We turn on our heel and march out of the room. “I’m not going to listen to anymore of this,” Cain told the Lord in [the book of] Moses. That’s what we do. But it is explained and nowhere better than in Book of Mormon. As 1 Nephi 16 tells us, this is hard to take. It’s a bleak story, etc.
This [chapter] tells us about the Liahona. The Liahona is all the help you will ever want. We talked about the technical aspects of the Liahona which are historical. The Arabs do use such guiding arrows to direct them through the desert, the spinoff spindles. You hold them on your finger, etc. The point here is that the Lord will always give you guidance, but you must be in a frame of mind to receive it. When this was explained later to the young Mormon by his father, he said, these things don’t work anymore. They work only according to faith. This is not magic. This is not a machine that does things for you and tells you where to go. It’s not a magic wand, ring, book, robe, or anything like that which operates itself no matter who has it. If you get the ring of Solomon then you have the power of Solomon. No, it doesn’t work that way. The Liahona only works like the Urim and Thummim, like seer stones and things like that, for people who qualify and know how to do it. Any complicated device will work only if you know how to use it. You must be in the right frame of mind for the Liahona, as he explains to his son, to receive it. And there are Liahonas all around us. The only thing that keeps us from receiving the message that’s coming in so loud and clear is our vanity.

I just thought of a passage on Newton this morning from Richard de Villamil, who wrote a book called Newton, the Man. Newton is the greatest scientist in history as far as we know for making significant discoveries and thinking things through [and explaining] the activities of the brain. But look in what a realm he worked. He said you can’t do it without revelation. This is an important thing. You know the Newtonian hymn. How does it go?

Praise the Lord for he has spoken
Worlds his mighty word obeyed
Laws that never shall be broken
Has he for their guidance made.

The laws of nature are for the worlds, which God has made for their guidance. We have to follow them. If you don’t follow them, you are asking for trouble. This is about Newton, “Why do I call him a magician? Because he looked on the whole universe and all that is in it as a riddle.” I said last time that read is the same as riddle. When you see a document in front of you, it doesn’t speak to you itself. You have to apply your mind to it. We talked last time about the importance of doing this very thing, of bringing these things to mind. All the book does is give you various hints, but it’s not the real thing. Shakespeare says again: “Sit and see, minding true things by what their mockeries be.” He says, this is just a play. We went through this with Henry V. This is just a play; this is just a book; this is just a mockup; this is just paper and ink. You’ve got to apply your mind to that, and to the degree to which you do you can find out that it will convey a great message to you. But you must apply your mind to a much higher state than you do with just your own intellectual powers. You must concentrate intensely, the most intense kind of concentration, which is prayer. You’ve got to pray about it. That’s not just joking; that’s an intellectual operation he is talking about. Nobody realized that better than Newton. Nobody was able to make the great discoveries that Newton was able to make for that very reason.

Just after the war the British appointed a council to examine into the Royal Academy and why science was not very fruitful. It wasn’t very fruitful at that time. They said, Newton is a great man and made great discoveries in spite of his faith in God, his prayers, and all that sort of thing. They failed to realize the point that it was only because of those things.
If that will give you the results, let’s do that. It says here, “. . . because he looked on the whole universe as a riddle, so he had to solve that riddle.” This book is a riddle. To read is to riddle, or to unriddle. If it was in another language with other characters, then you would have to learn them and work them out. “What is this talking about? What is this telling us now.”

It’s a marvelous thing. I was so elated last night. I read until 3:00 a.m.—silly. I was reading Arabic, and I was doing it because of this darn class. It got me saying, “Well, have I forgotten everything. It’s been years and years since I’ve done that.” So I started reading, and it’s the darndest thing. It all came back just like that. I haven’t made any effort to hold it or anything like that. Somebody was pushing it all back there, words I had only seen once. I remembered exactly the day I looked them up and exactly what they meant at the time. Marvelous! But this is the way the thing hangs together. There’s no reason why it should do that. Look, as I say, there are no capital letters. There are no divisions between words. There are no vowels. Well, how can you read anything? There is no punctuation of any kind, and yet you can read the stuff. Well, that’s against all the rules. You shouldn’t be able to do it. Faith has a place. If you panic and think you can’t (this often happens), then your mind goes blank because you lack faith. You decide, well, I can’t do it. It’s not going to come. If you try to play or sing at a recital you know that. If you suddenly panic you’ll tighten up and you won’t be able to play a note. You’ll become terrified. So we live by faith. You must loosen things up and get things rolling by faith. Faith is not only the lubricant that keeps things going, it’s the force behind them. But the force behind them is a force like the force of an airplane. It’s a vacuum. It sucks you forward. You move forward into a vacuum when you learn things; nobody is pushing you from behind. You move spontaneously into the vacuum. As soon as you are aware of that vacuum in front of you, you are sucked into it automatically. You can’t resist it; it will pull you in. This is the way we are drawn onward, as the expression is used in the scriptures. It drives you forward. We are drawn out.

Back to a riddle, “. . . as a secret which could be read by applying pure thought to certain evidence.” This was the folly of the Renaissance and Reformation too and the Hermetic movement and all that go with them, namely that they thought it could all rely on the power of the human mind alone. They thought they were clever enough to do it with the liberation that came. I won’t say “at the end of the Middle Ages” because scholasticism was just as vain and just as intellectual. This was St. Augustine’s thing, that by thought alone you could prove the gospel, by thought alone you could prove anything you wanted to. You were equal to anything. When they discovered new devices and new documents like the great Hermetic literature, then they became confident that there was nothing they couldn’t do, that the human mind was capable of anything. They were fooling themselves because the human mind isn’t. But aided it is, with a Liahona, if God aids you with this sort of thing and you want to join him. The Book of Mormon has a great deal to say about this, about the powers of the mind and what we can do by faith. He goes on here, “. . . as a secret . . . by applying pure thought to certain evidence, certain mystic clues which God had laid about the world to allow a sort of philosopher’s treasure hunt to the esoteric brotherhood.”

Like the people of Lehi they go out and they keep themselves to themselves. There are always secrets in the church. But God has laid about these hints, treasure clues. It’s a treasure hunt, but God has given us the hints. He has given us the clues. This is Liahona pure and simple. It worked only according to their faith. Then it would put them onto the
road they were supposed to go. There are the two arrows. One says “stop or go” and the
other points the direction you should go in. It says there were two arrows in the spindles,
and this is the way the Arabs had done it in ancient times. This all came out long after
Joseph Smith’s day. “. . . to allow a sort of philosopher’s treasure hunt to the esoteric
brotherhood.” You know what esoteric means. That’s those who have been initiated and
know inside what it is talking about, those who accept it and are willing to give it a
chance. That’s esoteric. There’s exoteric, those who belong to the outside world. But
esoteric, is a comparative form and means “more inward, the people who are more inside.”
The insiders know how to look for clues here that God has set about in a sort of treasure
hunt. They are there; it’s true.

All this marvelous information we have been getting from the stars with the spectroscope,
etc., that evidence has been there all the time. The stars have been twinkling their light.
They’ve given their colors and their brightness. All the indices of their nature have been
there all these thousands of years. All we had to do was react to them. All we had to do was
start thinking about them and look at them. Then we would react to what the stars really
have to tell us, but the hints are there. He has here, “He believed that these clues were to be
found partly in the evidence of the heavens and in the constitution of the elements.
That’s what gives the false suggestion of his being an experimental natural philosopher.”
He says he wasn’t an experimental natural philosopher; that’s only part of it. “. . . but also
partly in certain papers and traditions.” Now we are getting to the record. Newton
actually believed that there were certain ancient papers and traditions that had been
handed down in the manner of the Book of Mormon. We are talking about handing
down the record. “. . . papers and traditions handed down by the brethren in an unbroken
chain back to the original cryptic revelation in Babylonia.” Well, that’s the Hermetic
literature that comes out here and the Chaldean records of Abraham. The thing here is that
he not only believed in the present evidence, but also that this had been documented in
the past. “He regarded the universe as a cryptogram set by the Almighty, just as he himself
wrapped the discovery of the calculus [he discovered calculus, as did Leibniz at the same
time] in a cryptogram when he communicated with Leibniz. By pure thought, by
concentration of mind the riddle he believed would be revealed to the initiate.”

Of course, that was the mistake of the Renaissance and Reformation. They broke down
because they believed that by pure thought they could do it all, that they could pull
themselves up by their bootstraps. As Job 11 says, man cannot by searching find out God.
You can search all you want and find out a lot of things, but you need God to help you if
you are going to find out how it all belongs together. “He did read the riddle of the
heavens, and he believed that by the same powers of his introspective imagination he
would read the riddle of the Godhead.” That’s going too far. Man cannot by searching
find out God. “. . . the riddle of the past and future events divinely foreordained, the
riddle of the elements and their constitution from an original undifferentiated first matter
. . .”, which is what we are talking about here. That’s what we are looking for today is that
ultimate particle, something beyond the quark. It’s beyond the undifferentiated first
matter originally. That’s what it begins with, just one particle. It begins with one type of
matter.” . . he could read the divinely foreordained, the riddle of the elements and their
constitution from an original, undifferentiated first matter, the riddle of health and
immortality. All would be revealed to him if only he could persevere to the end.”

This shows his neurotic state. The reason these men were able to do such great things . . .
They did force themselves all the way, but in the end they didn’t find it. Descartes,
Leibniz and all the rest of them were doing the same thing. They realized we haven’t even
begun to use our brains. If we start that, who knows? Naturally they jumped to the conclusion—there’s no limit to what we can find. We can find out it all because we have been able to find out so much. We have been neglecting it all these years. Now let’s put our minds to it and we can go all the way. They [scientists] are still trying to do that. This is the neurotic condition in which you end up if you try that. “All would be revealed to him if only he could persevere to the end uninterrupted by himself, no one coming into the room—reading, copying, testing all by yourself. No interruption for God’s sake, no disclosure, no discordant breakings in or criticism, with fear and shrinking as he assailed these half-ordained, half-forbidden things—creeping back into the bosom of the Godhead, into his mother’s womb, voyaging through strange seas of thought alone.” Not as Charles Lamb, a fellow who believed nothing unless it was clear as three sides of a triangle.

This is what the Book of Mormon gives us, this kind of enlightenment. The mystery of the Liahona is what we are talking about here. It’s a type of thing. God will give it to us to aid our thinking, but you have to bring your mind to it. If you didn’t think, the Liahona wouldn’t work. It worked only according to their faith and according to their behavior because again you have to keep the line pure. If you introduce corrupt elements, it’s like introducing impurities in a conveyor. Impure copper is going to heat up. The more impure it is the less good a conveyor it is. If it is perfectly pure then you have a marvelous conveyor. That’s what we have to be. This purity of life is an absolute necessity to go with these other things, and the Liahona wouldn’t work without it. As soon as they started misbehaving, it refused to work. This applies to everything we do in our lives.

We talked about three of the points. We have a couple more for the next time. But for heaven’s sake read the Book of Mormon and put your minds to it.

Teachings of the Book of Mormon

Hugh Nibley

Semester 3, Lecture 59
Alma 46
Book of Mormon Themes
Apostasy

We were talking about these recurrent themes in the Book of Mormon. Any of them would make a good subject for the final examination. We only give one test here; you just have to write a paper at the end. That’s worked out best; I’ve tried every other combination. My daughter was just telling me that this Friday she takes her final examination for a Ph.D. at Harvard. She said it’s funny. She can get a book absolutely down cold and recite it word for word (she has a marvelous memory) long enough for the examination. But after that’s over, it’s forgotten. You all know that experience.

I notice when you write these papers they get better and better. The last two semesters I’ve had marvelous papers, awfully good. You would never believe what can come out of this class. When you have a paper like that, you want to live with it. People come and ask for it again, and they take it seriously. You actually learn something. What’s a good subject for this final? Well, all of these things we’ve mentioned would be good ones. First of all the idea of destruction, the geological and historical cycles. This is a theme in the Book of Mormon. It rings all through the book. You would think there was not room for anything else until you start reading and you find there’s room for all sorts of other themes. But here it is the theme. “That day has finally come that we knew should come.” Because of our imperfections we break down. Anything which isn’t perfect isn’t going to last, if it has the slightest flaw. That’s why we must come here and get baptized to wash away our sins and achieve perfection. We are no good at all. Through the atoning blood of Christ we have to get cleaned up because we are getting ready for the long pull. There’s a long time ahead whether it’s eternity or not. Let’s just cut it off at three hundred billion years, for example. That’s quite a while. If you have flaws in your character, they are going to raise hell in that time, in very little time. They show very quickly, as you know, if you have imperfections in your character.

It’s an amazing thing, like a building with a flaw in it. You may have seen the way New York is falling apart. I think it was on the last “60 Minutes.” Bridges and sewers and the underground are all collapsing. It would take fifty billion dollars to restore them, because of little flaws in them. They thought they would last for a long time. They are all solid concrete, steel, etc. But the whole thing is just collapsing. Because this is mortality things have flaws in them. One little flaw, one little leak and you are on your way to destruction. So we have to think in terms of perfection, which is a long way off. We are faced with this constant destruction. We are constantly being oxidized. We are all being burned up in a slow furnace twenty-four hours a day.

When the announcement comes Aeneas says, “The final day has come that we knew must come.” You’ve all read “The Idylls of the King.” That’s the theme there, isn’t it? These idealists are going to have order; the Order of the Round Table is going to last for thousands of years. Well, it only lasts for less than one generation because of the flaws of
character of the people, no matter how small they are. You have to be ready and resigned to it. As Achilles said when he was about to knock off the youngest son of Priam, “All right, my boy, everybody has to die sometime; you might as well enjoy it. Why are you raising such a rumpus? Patroclus died, who was a much better man than you, so remember that . . . . There were brave men before Agamemnon. Perhaps the men of an earlier time were better than we are.”

We talked about the constant decline because things run downhill. That’s entropy. So destruction is a great theme, and the Book of Mormon hits it all the time. How can we get around it? How can we avoid being depressed by it? Then there is the problem of survival. Survival is a dirty word. That means, “I’m going to be here after everybody else is gone.” It would be pretty dismal. We may not want to survive and wish we were dead. We mentioned the Christian fathers of the fifth century last time. They had a great earthquake in Antioch. It just wiped everything out. It was the “me generation.” He said, “That’s what has destroyed us. Everybody is out for himself.” This is the philosophy of our time too. This is the ironical thing. There was a common joke in Antioch. “I wish there was an earthquake in Antioch that would kill everybody else but me. Then I would be the richest man in Antioch.” That’s what we want, to wipe out all opposition, use hostile takeovers, crush them, knock them out, etc. Those are policies that are used today. Then you will be the one on top. You will be the lone survivor, and won’t it be wonderful to survive? No, it won’t be.

This is the Rechabite motif—driven by fate. All the great men are wanderers, strangers like Abraham. He was a stranger and wanderer in the earth looking for a city of God which was built without hands. Abraham was called a refugee. Every year, especially the seventh year, every Jew would come to the temple and make a basket like a cornucopia of all the good things from his land, the blessings that his land had given him. Then he would say a prayer and say, “Our father Abraham was an outcast and a Syrian, a tramp and a wanderer that had no home.” That’s what the word Hebrew means—Ivri means a person who has no attachment, a displaced person. The Israelites were always displaced persons. Abraham wandered; he had to rent his grave from a Phoenician in Hebron. He didn’t have anything of his own. He was a stranger depending on other people’s bounty wherever he went, and of course depending on God wherever he went. Our father Abraham was a stranger, a wanderer, a tramp, and so are we all. We used to sing a hymn “I’m a Stranger, I’m a Pilgrim.” That’s our condition. That survival or Rechabite motif in the Book of Mormon is very important too. You’ll notice that. It comes out all the time that we are all refugees.

After all, how mobile our society is. How many of you live in the same home your grandparents lived in? That used to be the normal thing. When I was in Germany we had a meetinghouse in Salzgasse No. 9, an old Roman street in Bruchsal, a very ancient town. This house had been occupied by Sister Glück’s family for a thousand years or so. All sorts of vicissitudes had happened. And the first house ever dated by tree-ring dating is in Hualapai in the Hopi village up on the First Mesa. Sister Theresa Harvey is the one who revived the making of ancient pottery. Her house was dated to the eleventh century, about eight hundred years. They have been occupying that house for all that time, a very enduring, very lasting civilization. That civilization is extremely stable and ours is extremely unstable. All you have to do is look at the fluctuations of the Dow-Jones. Nobody knows what makes it go up or down. If you do you’re guaranteed to be rich. You could become fabulously rich if you could be sure. That’s why insider trading is such a crime. If you tip somebody off, he can be sure about what is going to happen in a certain
thing. We can never be sure; that’s why the stock market moves. As long as it moves up and down (it’s been doing some great things in both directions) it’s a very insecure society. We are on shaky pins. We don’t know where we are going. A product that may go over big now will be no good a little later on. We talked about the things that passed away, the sailing boats that used to sail the sea in my day. Imagine that. This idea of survival is the Rechabite motif, and the Book of Mormon deals with it all the time because they are always running away and surviving.

Another theme is that this is the land of promise. The Lord said, if you want to be saved you have to get out. Lehi has a dream—he must get out. Nephi has a dream—he must get out. Mosiah has a dream—he must get out. You must get out of here. It isn’t safe where you are; you have to keep moving. This business of surviving has to be more than survival. It’s a nice subject for a paper.

Then this idea about the record, how the books hold it together. That’s another theme we mentioned. A book is a mnemonic device. There’s a great deal said about memory and the importance of memory. The purpose of writing, as the Book of Mormon tells us, is to keep in the people’s memory the things that the Lord wants them to know. That’s why it is given to them. He says, if we had to write these things from memory our record would not be reliable. So no matter how good your memory is you have to write things down. The record holds everything together. Your identity is your memory. If you lose your memory you lose your identity. I did for a while back in 1964. I had a minor stroke or something and forgot absolutely everything, lost identity and everything else. The remarkable thing is the way it came back, improved as a matter of fact. This is a strange thing. In his writing on the brain Sir John Eccles says there are two miracles of the brain. One is that you concentrate on one thing, and yet as background you can think of everything at the same time. Popper and Eccles wrote this book; they cooperated on it. Popper is a positivist in absolute science and wants no nonsense at all, but they agreed that the most miraculous thing in the world is that you wake up in the morning. They say that’s just as miraculous as the resurrection would be—that you can blank out at night, let your brain go, and come back completely. Your whole person is there the next morning after you have slipped away. It’s quite a miracle. He says, don’t be too astounded at the resurrection. When it happens you say, “So what!” You don’t believe a thing can happen until it does happen, and then it looks like the most normal thing in the world. You could write about the record and about memory. This is why we need the record. We say, “No, we are looking toward the future. We are not time bound; we are not bound to the past, etc. But the past is all we have to show for our existence. If you forget the past where do you stand? You are a person without identity; you are beginning life anew.

We had an extremely stupid but beautiful girl in a class back at Scripps College in Claremont, California, a very expensive girls’ school where I used to teach. Charlie Wilson used say, “Isn’t she marvelous? She’s born new every morning—complete blank?” If you lose your memory that’s what happens. We don’t read today, and we don’t know what’s behind us. This is the great disaster that is coming upon us today because we have no feeling of identity of ourselves, no national identity. So we have to wave flags and do all sorts of very superficial and artificial clowning. To remind ourselves of the great nation, we have to put on military displays that lead to nothing but trouble. We don’t have a feeling [for traditions]. You notice there are civilizations [that have this feeling]. This is a very important thing “that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” This is very strong in the Book of Mormon. As you know they are constantly talking about keeping the record alive and keeping their traditions alive. You
Then the gospel plan. As I said, the Book of Mormon has better, more clear expositions. The half-a-dozen sermons you find in the Book of Mormon are great. Some of them are the only ones, like Alma’s talk to his son Corianton. He is the only person who tells us what happens after this. Is there something? Yes, he says, I know. I went there, and it was hell what I had to go through because I hadn’t been doing right. There is more, and it tells us the whole plan. It’s laid out throughout the Book of Mormon. All these passages right at the beginning of Jacob on how it is going to be. After their greatest victory Nephi can prophesy. This gospel plan is temporal and it is eternal. It goes for the eternities. And they live after the manner of happiness in the gospel plan. What a marvelous thing to say—that there is a manner of happiness and what it is like. Nobody else has it. You can have everything here. This is a theme we haven’t mentioned, that of materialism. It piles up. Remember the Buddha. He was the son of a local prince but a very rich one. He had everything he wanted. His father particularly spoiled him because he didn’t want him to become mystic and join the priests or anything like that. He gave him everything the heart of man could desire—the food, the play, the games, the sex, and all the rest of it. It made him sick, and he just brooded about it. He was not satisfied with it. He went out into the woods and finally found nothing. What was he looking for? The only conclusion he could reach was the five conditions in which you are nothing. Don’t want anything and you won’t be disappointed. Don’t expect anything. There is no hereafter. There is no nothing. Once you get that idea, then nothing will worry you. Of course it won’t. You might as well put a bullet through your head. Then nothing will worry you either. But that was it. The religions of the East promise us that. Don’t expect anything and you won’t be disappointed.

The very same problem was faced by Enos in that marvelous book. There’s another thing you could write about, character studies in the Book of Mormon. There are at least twenty sharply defined, clearly pictured characters in beautiful little vignettes. Just in a few lines or a few verses it brings out the character very clearly and sharply—just what makes this person tick. Enos was a marvelous example, so was Nephi. (What a neurotic Nephi was, worried himself sick.) All day long Enos brooded. He’d had everything in his life. He was worried about himself because he hadn’t been doing right. He said, this can’t be what I’m here for. Then he finally remembered what his father had told about these things. He prayed all night for it; this must be it. The whole thing was he said, this can’t go on—I can’t live like this. He went alone to hunt beasts in the forest. He was the spoiled prince who had everything, but it wouldn’t do at all. He finally had the vision; the Lord came to him.

It was the same thing with Enos and Harun al-Rashid, who was the most sumptuous and greatest of all the princes. He is the hero of A Thousand and One Nights. He had everything, and the Arab does that. They know how to live it up, as we see by the Arab sheikhs. Who ever dreamed they would be the richest people in the world? They were the poorest people. They had nothing but dirt and sand when I was over there. There are long stories of how at night Harun al-Rashid would try to amuse himself. He would do everything he could think of. His faithful servant, a giant black man by the name of Jafar, did his best to entertain him. He said, “What can we do?” Well, they would dress up like Prince Hal would and go around at night and visit all the “stews” and places like that and have fun. They would disguise themselves, fool people, and find out what was going on. They would amuse them. He goes through his gardens; they don’t amuse him. He listens to the nightingale. “Well, I’ve had enough of that.” The harem, fifty women! What do
you want? This went on. The point is that Harun al-Rashid is absolutely sick because he has too much. He has everything. And another prince. You will recognize this one:

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on’t! O, fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. . . . the earth, seems to be a sterile promontory.

Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act I, Scene 2

He wants to commit suicide. We could go on about Hamlet. He feels that way, that it’s rank and gross. He goes on and on about it. We won’t give you that speech now. It’s the same thing with him.

If you have everything, that’s not going to be it. This brings in the subject of materialism and the fatal gong that strikes in the Book of Mormon when it says, “They set their hearts on riches.” Oh, look out when it says that! And does this apply to us?

Then there’s the ethnic mix. Here’s another one you could write about. The Book of Mormon is a crazy quilt of ethnic mixture, and we have always been so simplistic about it. When I was a little kid everything you found was either Nephite or Lamanite. Well, that’s not so at all according to the Book of Mormon. It talks of vacant lands and people who had been there, of vast areas deforested by the former inhabitants of the land. They weren’t Jaredites either. This was down in the south lands. They used to teach in the Church actually that the Rocky Mountains here were formed because the Book of Mormon says there was a great storm and some of the earth was cast up. Of course, they were volcanic. It gives a perfect example of a number eight on the Richter scale, a humdinger of an earthquake in all details. It gives a beautiful analysis. We’ll get to that. But that doesn’t mean the Rocky Mountains were formed with it. We used to leap to those conclusions. Like Hilary said of the Bible, “Anything that isn’t mentioned in the Bible you can safely say never happened.” Because the Bible is the perfect book. If it’s not mentioned in the Bible it didn’t happen. Well, fundamentalist Christianity isn’t too far away from that either. They preach the same nonsense as that. Don’t make this ethnic mix business so simple.

I should have brought a book from 1830, a beautiful exposition. It’s an American writing showing that the Indians all came over the Bering Strait. Notice, that simplistic theory is still accepted now. There’s a series running on Channel 7 right now on the Maya, and especially the newly discovered sensation of the Indians who were in Florida in 5,000 B.C., about 7,500 years ago. Does that clash with the Book of Mormon? No it doesn’t. You look at the Book of Mormon ethnology and you’ll find out about that. As it starts out, you notice, Lehi is of what tribe? He is out of Manasseh. Well, who is Ephraim and Manasseh’s mother? We are descended from Ephraim. Ephraim and Manasseh were the sons of Joseph and Asenath. Joseph married Asenath, and she was the daughter of the high priest of Heliopolis. She had to be pure blood Egyptian. So the ancestor of Ephraim is Egyptian. Don’t worry about that. But that gives a terrific mixture because the Egyptians were already a mixture of at least seven different lines. Asenath had at least seven.

Remember they [Lehi’s family] were half Manasseh. They were on the other side of the Jordan. They were desert Arabs. They all had Arab names, as you find in the Book of
Mormon. [His family] marries up with Ishmael. A Jew isn’t going to be called Ishmael because Ishmael was the enemy of Jacob. Ishmael was the father and hero of the Arabs. He had his daughters marry the sons of Lehi. You can be sure they were Ishmaelites because Lehi himself was a desert man. He was a merchant who traveled in the desert. Ishmael would be his cousin and an Ishmaelite.

Then they took Zoram. He was the servant of Laban, as you know. It calls him a slave. But a Jew can’t be a slave of another Jew. Zoram, as his name shows, was obviously of some other tribe. He could have been from one of the old Canaanite tribes, a Phoenician, or anything else. Right from the beginning you get this terrific mixture in the family of Lehi. Then throughout the Book of Mormon you find all sorts of mixing going on—strange things. The ethnic mix is a good subject.

Then there’s the theme of the promised land. In the Dead Sea Scrolls every blessing goes with a cursing because that’s the penalty. In a contract you have to have a penalty clause. If you don’t keep the contract, you said, “Well, that’s fine. If I keep the contract I get rich. If I don’t keep it, nothing lost.” When you invest in a thing like that you have to be kept to something. The promised land is never mentioned without the curse that’s on it. There is a promise on the land. The curse is sometimes mentioned first. There’s a curse on this land if you do not live up to it—when you are ripe in iniquity. When you get this record you shall know.

So we have the promised land and the migration times. The people are always migrating, but they are always doing that anyway. Here we always migrate; we always keep going. As I say, you are not living in your grandparents’ houses. We not only move individually and by families, but we also move by mass. There have been mass movements toward the Southwest since World War II, a great movement toward the sun belt. It changes culture, habits and everything else. We are always changing, but you reach a certain point of corruption. Now the means are at hand by which the whole earth can be swept clean—to be swept from the face of the earth, that’s the promise. Of course, anciently they were. You don’t have to have modern technology to do that. You can do that quite efficiently because fire will have the same effect once you have set it. The Assyrians and the Romans were very good at making empty lands and producing wildernesses.
Incidentally, that’s another theme, the wilderness theme and the importance of living in the wilderness. You’ll notice that at least half of the Book of Mormon takes place in the wilderness. It’s always the good people that are in the wilderness. “Into the woods my Master went, Clean forspent, forspent.” You go into the woods to clean yourself up. You have to go back to nature to make yourself clear. They do that. Lehi and Nephi would always go out by themselves to pray. And where was the revelation given to Joseph Smith? In the grove. He went to the grove. He starts out his story that was discovered in 1969 (the oldest version of the First Version) with how he got onto it. He lived in the most beautiful area. Upstate New York is gorgeous, but then it was a marvelous wilderness. He said he looked about him and saw what a beautiful world it is, the sun and the moon and all nature in its glory, and man walking forth upon the face of the earth with all his potential and glory. This was when he was just a kid fourteen years old. And when he looked upon the wickedness and the dissensions and the violence and the deceptions and the meanness and the cruelty of man, he said there was something definitely wrong. That’s what first sent him to the Bible and out to the grove to ask what was going on. There the Lord told him, “Behold the world lieth in sin at this time and none doeth good, no not one. . . . and mine anger is kindling against the inhabitants of the earth to visit them according to this ungodliness . . .” His anger is kindling, getting hotter and hotter. It’s building up.

You know we are living in some times. We need the Book of Mormon more than anything else. This is the handbook we have, because it’s a happy book too. This is the nice thing. You can live after the manner of happiness among the worst conditions. You notice when the Greeks produced their best comedies, tragedies, and poetry was when Athens was hiding behind walls under siege by Sparta and a strong coalition. The plague had broken out in the city. They hadn’t any food. In the most terrible conditions they produced their greatest masterpieces, a remarkable thing. Maybe we’ll have a chance to produce some masterpieces if we stay around. Let’s hope not.

The wilderness is an important theme. You escape to it. You all know “sweet are the uses of adversity.” It starts out with the duke. I’ll give you the speech and you’ll see what it is. They are out in the woods, and it is winter time. Remember, As You Like It takes place in winter under the bleakest circumstances. Shakespeare is very fond of having people go back to the wilderness. When they are disillusioned they go back. King Lear does and in As You Like It they do the same sort of thing. The duke says,

Now, my co-mates and brothers in exile,
Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
[He had been a powerful duke.]
More free from peril than the envious court?

There’s where the danger is—not out in the woods. They’re starving to death and freezing. He’s shivering around. The duke is covered with furs, and they are all shaking. What a way for a comedy to begin! That’s a bleak situation.

Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
[We’re back to fundamental, elemental things now.]
The seasons’ difference; as the icy fang
And churlish chiding of the winter’s wind,
Which, when it bites and blows upon my body,
Even till I shrink with cold, I smile, and say
‘This is no flattery; these are counsellors
[Flattery was all he got when he was back in office.]
That feelingly persuade me what I am.’
[Then comes the speech we all know.]
Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
[It looks bad.]
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
[If you want to see honesty and see things the way they are, you must get away from the public haunts.]
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing:
I would not change it.

Shakespeare, As You Like It, Act II, Scene 1

He has to go out to that sort of thing. We find a lot of that here, so we’d better put the wilderness theme down here. They are always doing that in the Book of Mormon. When Alma, Enoch, Jared, Lehi, Nephi, Ammon or whoever it is runs away, it is always to the wilderness. You get out and get away from people if you can. Can we get away from people? As I said, we can arrange artificial wildernesses. Today we are very good at doing that.

Then we have the theme of the routine apostasy. Must it always happen? We say the individual is without excuse, but they [societies] always apostatize. We are going to get a very good speech on that in the chapter we are studying today—chapter 46, which we will soon get to, believe it or not.

Then there’s the theme of prophecy. The Book of Mormon has some marvelous prophecies for the people of Lehi and for us. When you read the Book of Mormon keep an eye open for prophecy. It’s loaded with it. It’s all over the place and it’s very clear. Then we have those great sermons, etc. These are some of the main themes we have in the first 45 chapters. Now we start with chapter 46. If this chapter was the only one we had, it would be quite enough to prove the Book of Mormon with evidence to convince a person. It really would. Let’s open to 46 here and we get a lot of surprises. It’s extremely rich in evidence. But notice what the situation is here. Naturally, you must read what goes before. You have to have a memory; otherwise, you are nowhere here. There had been a great war, and they had been saved by “the skin of their teeth,” by the genius of Moroni mostly. After the war there was a post-war boom. At the end of chapter 45 everybody got very rich.

We’ll start with verse 21. “For behold, because of their wars with the Lamanites and the many little dissensions and disturbances . . .” There were lots of troubles everywhere because things had gotten uncorrelated, like the Church in Europe after World War II. Strange things had grown up. Strange leaders had taken over, and there were arguments about doctrine. People lost touch. That’s what happens when you don’t have the written
record and you don’t have the controls. This happened in Europe in almost all countries where they were left alone to their own resources. They start little groups of dissent. There would be arguments in the branch, power struggles and little things like that. This is what happened during this long fourteen-year war. There were many dissensions and disturbances, so they had to make a single regulation throughout the Church. The central authority had to take over, which you have to do, of course. That’s why you have the central offices, etc. So Helaman, the son of Alma, and his brethren went forth to establish the Church again. They went to straighten things out. But the people didn’t want to pay any attention to Helaman. Things were going too well after the war. They gave a sigh of relief and wanted to take it easy. In Alma 45:23 it says, “. . . and they would not give heed to the words of Helaman and his brethren.” Why not, after the war? Remember, this was written by a 23-year-old in the 1820s in upstate New York. People knew nothing about this course of history, but this is the course that history has taken in our day. This is what you might expect to happen after a great war, but who would have all this figured out? This is what happened, and it sounds very familiar, doesn’t it? “But they grew proud, being lifted up in their hearts, because of their exceedingly great riches. . . .” great prosperity.

It’s an interesting phenomenon—the great wars of extermination in Central Asia. Genghis Khan and Kublai Khan would just wipe out whole nations. The funny thing is that after those great exterminations or after the plague in Europe there always comes a boom period. Apparently it relieves population pressure or something because great prosperity always follows. There is always a big market for things. There is always lots of raw material around. Labor is expensive because the workers are few. The great plague in the middle of the fourteenth century only lasted a few years in England, but it lingered on here and there. So many of the people were killed off that the farm workers could now ask for a raise in pay because there were fewer of them. Immediately the Crown [Edward III] cracked down with the most severe laws preventing any wage raise. You had to take the wage you could get. That led to the Peasants’ Revolt shortly after that led by [Wat Tyler] in the time of Richard II. Richard II took the side of the peasants, but the land owners were too tough for them. This theme goes on. After a great war or plague or whatever then there is great disturbance, terrific economic booms, and great greed. That’s a good example because there were only about a third of the workers left. They wanted to get a raise in pay because they had more work to do and they had better opportunities. But they passed laws that (1) you should not leave the farm; you must never leave the land you are on, and (2) you must never ask for a raise. In other words stay the way you are forever. We profit by the war; you don’t, [they said]. So the great lords and barons from then on made an awful mess in England. Under Simon de Montfort they became greedier than ever.

This is what happens here. “But they grew proud, being lifted up in their hearts, because of their exceedingly great riches; therefore they grew rich in their own eyes, and would not give heed to their words, to walk uprightly before God.” Who is Helaman to speak to us? We’ll go our own way. So big trouble begins with chapter 46. We are starting out now very appropriately on a timely theme. This chapter is so compact and rich with detail, all related. It alone would prove the Book of Mormon. So what did they do? Well, they felt their wealth was threatened, and they formed an opposition party. And what’s more, this is the Central American pattern. They cracked down on the peasantry with hit squads, and they really meant business here. Notice it says they “gathered together against their brethren. . . . they were exceedingly wroth, insomuch that they were determined to slay them.” This was not just politics here. They wouldn’t put up with this sort of thing, that in
their exceeding great riches they might feel threatened. And they found a strong leader, somebody like Noriega. They always find a strong and ruthless leader. It was Amalickiah, and he was clever. He was a good man [for this job]. He was a leader; he was sharp. Again, one of these character studies. Amalickiah is a marvel there. He has all this mixture of cunning and wisdom. He’s clever and a good military man. You see the flaw that runs through his character, a dangerous character. He was a dictator. Notice that he “was desirous to be a king.” These are the king-men here. He’s a typical military dictator, a type that has proliferated today. He makes a reflection on the next page which is very much to the point here.

Who was backing him? “. . . those people who were wroth were also desirous that he should be their king.” They lined up back of Amalickiah, and he was very good at organizing them. Amalickiah was very good at organizing them. He organized together various conflicting groups. He brought them together in a common cause here. “. . . and they were the greater part of them [ambitious lower officials] the lower judges of the land, and they were seeking for power.” An upwardly mobile, ambitious class seeking for power, and this was the man to give it to them. “And they had been led by the flatteries of Amalickiah . . .” He promised them that they would come to power. Notice, “he would make them rulers over the people.” This is the classic pattern, not only in Central America, but in modern Europe. Brother Joseph has it all down when he is still in adolescence.

Verse 5: “And they had been led by the flatteries of Amalickiah, that if they would support him and establish him to be their king that he would make them rulers over the people.” Well, that’s what you do. You make people ambassadors, department heads, and cabinet members if they support you, to put you on the throne. This is the pattern we follow in this country. “Thus they were led away by Amalickiah to dissensions, notwithstanding the preaching of Helaman . . .” It didn’t do any good.

What if you were to take this first six verses. This would be a good subject for a final. Take these first six verses and put it in the form of a “McNeil-Lehrer Report” or “Face the Nation” or something like that. You have a council who are discussing the situation: This is the situation at that time. “Well, what do you think is happening in the country now? Here we’ve just come through the war. We finally made it by the skin of our teeth. Now we’ve had the post-war boom. What is all the trouble happening in the country? Who do think is responsible? What do you think Amalickiah’s chances are? Well, he’s getting a lot of people now, but he can’t hold them. Oh, can’t he though?”

You could have an argument going on in the way that we argue today around the table with things like these programs that go on morning, noon, and night—some of them, like McNeil-Lehrer on a pretty high level. You would discuss this thing. “What are Amalickiah’s chances? What do you think is behind him? How can he count on wealth? What can Helaman do? He is the head of the Church. What are Helaman’s chances? Well, they’re pretty good. What about the lower judges?” You’ll have one of them on the panel. He defends Amalickiah. He wants to get the country moving ahead. He doesn’t want it dragged down by this equalitarianism.

We go on, but you can see that all sorts of arguments are possible. Here is Goering’s promise and Hitler’s promise: He would make them rulers over the people. Goering used to fire up the Hitlerjugend by saying, “We are going to rule the world, and you can all be governors and rulers somewhere. You can hunt tigers in India, and all that sort of thing.
We promise to make you rulers; we will be the master race.” The English had been doing it before, and the German were just jealous. I don’t think they could ever be as nasty and efficient as the English were after they got going. Once you win you settle down and become more humane. But the British—you should see them in action! They don’t fool around. You wouldn’t hold an empire for a hundred years if you didn’t crack down relentlessly, ruthlessly. I’ve seen them do it time and again.

Thus they were led away to thinking they would be something “notwithstanding the preaching of Helaman and his brethren [don’t you think Helaman’s preaching will bring them around? No, that will never bring them around], yea, notwithstanding their exceedingly great care over the church, for they were high priests over the church. And there were many in the church [but the church at least will hold out; oh no, the church is yielding and collapsing before this post-war boom here that has everybody raked in] who believed in the flattering words of Amalickiah . . .” You notice they found the political and economic arguments more interesting and more persuasive than the religious arguments. Religion is all right in its place [for most people], but you [need to] believe in the gospel all the way—that it is real and that is the law by which we are to live on the earth. Nothing else will do it, absolutely not. I would recommend reading Brother Joseph Fielding Smith’s edition of *The Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*.

Notice it’s the political and economic arguments that get to them. That gets to people. Then you want to take sides. That’s easy to argue out. Everybody is an economist. Everybody knows the politics. We are pushovers for this sort of thing, and Amalickiah knew it. Great psychologist too. “. . . therefore they dissented even from the church [the church people started dissenting too]; and thus were the affairs of the people of Nephi exceedingly precarious and dangerous . . .” They had this sudden reverse after the war when everything seemed to be going so well. Of course, this was utterly exasperating. They thought they had it made. Now we can settle down. The war is won. The world is safe for democracy, etc. It never turns out that way. “. . . notwithstanding their great victory which they had over the Lamanites, and their great rejoicings which they had because of their deliverance by the hand of the Lord.” Right in the middle of the celebration the whole thing collapsed and went sour. Imagine how they would feel about that.

Well, this happens again. Remember, within just [eleven] years (1918-29) of the armistice came the Great Depression. The whole country just collapsed. Here is [Helaman’s] reflection on it, and it’s a marvelous one. It’s philosophical here. Joseph Smith talked about the brethren this way. If you have a Bible, I think it’s the first chapter of Ecclesiastes. It’s marvelous. He’s reflecting, “What does all this mean?” Speaking about our round-table discussion, etc. It says here, “Thus we see how quick the children of men do forget the Lord their God [this is the way we are made], yea, how quick to do iniquity, and to be led away by the evil one. Yea, and we also see the great wickedness one very wicked man can cause to take place among the children of men.”

Well, of course, we think of Hitler and Stalin there. They were one-man shows, and the infinite wickedness and mischief they were able to do. They were the only men because the most skillful of all stay in the background. You never hear of them. I could a tale unfold about things like that. But the fact is that one very wicked person can do an awful lot of damage, as Satan does. We can see how it happens.

Let me have your Bible, would you? My Hebrew Bible is such a massive thing; it bears me
down. We all know this one: “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?” What good is your career going to do you? We are careerists today. That means you reach the top of the ladder and then you go nowhere. You have nowhere to go. There are some very sad things about this. One day everybody is kowtowing to you. Then you are no longer chairman of the board. You come to the office the next day and they say, “Who are you?” You find your desk has been cleared out, etc. Studs Terkel has written a very interesting book about these men. He interviewed top executives who suddenly reached the top and then were released. The next day they went to their office and were thrown out. They weren’t even recognized, these men that everybody was licking the boots of the day before. This is the way we do things.

“One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever [the show goes on same as ever]. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose.”

There’s the great ode of Catullus on that: “The sun sets and the sun rises again. But once our little brief light goes out, nothing remains for us but one long night of nothing.” How negative. That’s the philosophy of the Romans. The Romans were a materialistic civilization. They lived for that. That’s all they had to look forward to. What a world we are in. Nothing gives you comfort like the Book of Mormon. You won’t find this cynicism in the Book of Mormon, but you will find this. We are to blame for the whole thing. It’s because of the foolishness of men. They don’t have to act that way. How quick to do iniquity, how quick to forget, and the great wickedness of one very wicked man. We are prone to wickedness. We are very vulnerable to all sorts of foolishness.

“The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full . . . All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.” We all sit before the “idiot box” and it just goes on and on. We never get anywhere at all. “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.” This sad Book of Mormon story is all going to be repeated over and over again. This happened then, and it’s happening now. Must we go through with this? “Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us.”

We do have recurrent events, and we do go ’round and ’round the cycle here. “There is no remembrance of former things [they are all forgotten; they are swallowed up; how quickly we do forget so we can live our own generation]; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after. I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.” It was King Solomon. We talked about Buddha and Enos. It says here, “And I gave my heart to see and search out by wisdom concerning all thing that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.” It’s a rough road here. Does he understand that it’s supposed to be? Again, the Book of Mormon has the explanation. You could write on that—this time of probation, this time of testing. And yet it can be a happy time too.

“I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.” Solomon is fed up with his 400 wives, his most beautiful of palaces, magnificent temple, etc. But he is like the rest of them. You are not going to get it here,
he says. “That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered [if it isn’t there]. I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.”

That was his foolishness. He thought he was so wise that the Shulamite, this clever woman, made a monkey of him. In the story of Bilqis and King Solomon, the great epics in Arabic, the Queen of Sheba ties him into knots with her clever riddles. She is so much smarter than Solomon that he’s ashamed of himself. She really lowers him down. It’s the same thing with the Shulamite in the Hebrew tradition. “And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.”

So let’s enjoy the great ignorance we are reveling in at the present. On this happy note we will continue. I say it again—we need the Book of Mormon.

Somebody has left a number of copies on the desk here of President Benson’s speech on the Book of Mormon. You should all pick one up when you go out. We are on Alma 46. I said it before and I say it again. If this was all Joseph Smith ever left us, it would be very powerful evidence to his being a true prophet. It starts out on a theme that has become painfully obvious today. Remember, we began at the end of the preceding chapter with a coalition of protestors, an action group. They felt their wealth was threatened, and they were going to undertake desperate measures. Who were they? Well, we can find out who this group was in Alma 45:23–24. We mentioned who they were. “And now it came to pass that after Helaman and his brethren had appointed priests and teachers over the churches that there arose a dissension among them, and they would not give heed to the words of Helaman and his brethren; But they grew proud . . . because of their exceedingly great riches; therefore they grew rich in their own eyes . . .”

Then if we go to verses 4 and 5 of this chapter, Amalickiah desired to be king, and those who supported him “were the greater part of them the lower judges of the land, and they were seeking for power.” Upwardly mobile, career people here. In verse 5 he promised to make them rulers; he promised careers. They were going to have a spoils system. When I get in you will all have better jobs [he said]. He has a backing here, and he is very skillful in manipulating it. Then in Alma 51:8 we also have reference to who comprised this particular support group he had. It wasn’t strong enough to hold on, as you soon find out. “Now those who were in favor of kings were those of high birth [as you would imagine], and they sought to be kings; and they were supported by those who sought power and authority over the people.”

Ambition all over the place is the point. All the ambitious, the rich, the upwardly mobile people of high birth, the snobs. Then in verse 17 of the same chapter: “And it came to pass that Moroni commanded that his army should go against those king-men, to pull down their pride and their nobility . . .” Verse 21: “And thus Moroni put an end to those king-men; and thus he put an end to the stubbornness and the pride of those people who professed the blood of nobility.” They were brought down to be humble. So we get a very good idea what kind of a coalition this was. It’s typical Near Eastern, Central American—you name it. Anywhere you get this combination—the landowners, the powerful group that gets together and wants to rule the land, as against a popular leader leading a popular cause.

We read in verse 7 that “there were many in the church who believed in the flattering words of Amalickiah . . .” They were taken in because they were more impressed by political and economic arguments than religion. People always are. They had just gotten through a hard war, and the affairs of the people of Nephi were “exceedingly precarious.”
They were exhausted after the war. They are split down the center now, and this is the last thing in the world that Moroni wanted, of course. Moroni wasn’t the head of the church; [Helaman] was. We mentioned this before; we see how quick these things happen. Verses 8 and 9 belong to what you call “wisdom literature.” It was very characteristic in Lehi’s day. More studies are being made on wisdom literature than any other field today. It has to do with the common ground of the Egyptian and Hebrew wisdom literature. The Wisdom of Solomon is found in the Wisdom of Amenemope word for word. The wisdom literature of the [Egyptians] and the wisdom literature of the Hebrews is like that. Nobody was willing to admit it until very recently. You are very suspicious when you find the Bible in Egyptian writings, but there it is. They have finally broken down and admitted it. There are studies by Fox and many others on this particular subject, showing that the wisdom literature of the two is the same. Way back it was discovered. Erman discovered it ages ago. A very important work, “The Tomb of Petosiris,” was studied by a Frenchman who found at least twenty passages from the Old Testament in the tomb. This was a very important high priest’s tomb from the fifth century B.C. during the Persian period. What was he doing quoting the Old Testament all over the place? “Come with me and I will teach you the way of salvation, the way of light and truth.” He goes on in that manner. Lefebure, who edited the text and got it all together, said, “It’s pure coincidence.” There are at least twenty passages that are identical from the Old Testament and the teachings of Petosiris, and lo and behold it’s just a coincidence. They had nothing to do with each other. Can you imagine that? Well, finally they have broken down and admitted, “Yes, it must be the same.”

It’s not surprising the Book of Mormon is written in Egyptian. It’s much more concise and easy to handle. They tell us if they could write in Hebrew they would, but it is too large and takes up too much space. At this time demotic writing was the official writing in Hebrew. It had only been in for a hundred years, but it was the new shorthand. Everybody was using it because it was very convenient. It was so much shorter than anything else discovered.

In room 35 (I think) of the Cairo Museum there is an inscription. I should have brought along pictures of it. The inscription is in Egyptian hieroglyphic writing, Egyptian demotic writing, and Greek. The Greek and Egyptian take up so much space. The demotic takes up just about seven lines. All the other inscriptions take up half a wall, but this one is just like that. It’s amazingly economical. That’s why they were using it. If they could write in Hebrew, they would be more understood.

So we have this wisdom literature. Then we go on to verse 10 and talk about the tricks here—Amalickiah’s cunning and flattering words. That’s the secret. All through the Book of Mormon you see that’s what does it. Public relations do the thing. As Joseph Smith said, the devil is an orator. He flatters them and tells them the things they want to hear. Samuel the Lamanite said, when someone comes and tells you what’s wrong about Zarahemla you stone him, cast him out, and say he is a false prophet. If he tells you what’s right about Zarahemla, you carry him on your shoulders, dress him in costly attire, and parade him around the city.

It’s very interesting that the Chilan Balam, a Mayan document, says when a true prophet came among the people, they would lift him up and carry him on their shoulders through the city, exactly as it says in the Book of Mormon. He says, when a false prophet tells you what good people you are then you say he is a true prophet and you raise him up, dress him in fine apparel, and carry him around the city. This chapter 46 is just loaded with
these things that are just casually tossed in, little things that you have no control over.

A German scholar, Friedrich Blass, wrote a massive work, a documentary on the proving and testing of ancient documents. We have it here, and I have a copy of my own. Blass gives a number of ways by which you can test the authenticity of an ancient document. The most obvious is this. First, it can be a document [written by someone] like Clement of Alexandria, Philo, any of the apostolic fathers, or any of the writers in the *Patrologia*—the fathers of the church. All they are is commentaries, like science and health. Other people have written their bibles and their commentaries, but they are just commentaries on the scriptures. They are sermons, wisdom literature, etc. That’s fine. Joseph Smith wrote a history. Blass said the one thing you cannot fake is a history, and the longer it gets the more dangerous it gets exponentially. Every time you add an item, you make it that many times more difficult to get away with something, because you are tipping your hand if you are making it up. That’s very obvious. So a historical document is the hardest to fake, and a long historical document is impossible to fake. This certainly is impossible here.

He said the best way of testing these is not the broad sweeping ideas and concepts, romantic descriptions, or things like that, but the little details of everyday life that slip in, little casual things. This chapter is loaded with them, the things that you never suspected. They sneak in on you, those things that a person wouldn’t have known or faked. Remember, nobody had been to Central America at that time. It was *terra incognita* way back in the 1820s when he was writing about it. We are going to see some of these things. Like Samuel the Lamanite [said], they flatter the people. That’s the best way to get the votes. Tell people what they want to hear. Don’t rebuke them. That’s what we like to hear—that we are standing tall and all that sort of thing.

Moroni is “fit to be tied,” of course. He is the one who just got them through the war. They got through by the “skin of their teeth,” a very close thing. It was a long war, and both sides were exhausted and sick of it. Then this guy started stirring things up again. He started it going all over again. Well, you can imagine how Moroni would feel about that, because Moroni hated it. Remember, he was very young. He came out when he was twenty-five as a general. But he retired very early, too, after very few years. When the war was finally over he retired to his own home and died shortly after that. He didn’t live very long. He could have easily been dictator afterward. He was the hero, the man of the hour, the great leader, etc. Nope, he dropped all his offices and all his honors and retired to private life. That’s the last we hear of him until he died at a relatively young age.

Moroni is going to do something about it. Verse 11: “. . . he was angry with Amalickiah.” I should hope so. Now we start getting some of this stuff that couldn’t be faked by anybody. (I would leave my Arabic text home, wouldn’t I? This will have to do for the time being.) “. . . he rent his coat; and he took a piece thereof, and wrote upon it—In memory of our God, our religion and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children—and he fastened it upon the end of a pole.” Now we have this coat called which is going to be used as a banner called “the title of liberty.” He talks about “Christians” and uses all sorts of things that you think he may be giving himself away with. How about this coat?

Well, now we are going to have to refer to the Battle Scroll. You all know about the Dead Sea Scrolls. It’s hard for me to realize that [many] other students until now were contemporary with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, but that’s forty years behind us
now. The Dead Sea Scrolls aren’t daily news anymore. In fact, they have been suppressed ever since 1960. Neither the Catholics nor the Protestants liked what they said. We’ll see why. I must tell you something about them in that case. I have this article. You know where they were discovered and all that. In 1948 a shepherd boy by the name of Mohammed Dhib was the nephew of the majordomo in the house of President Barnes at the American University in Beirut. This all ties up. He was just a shepherd boy east of Jerusalem there, out in the desert along the Dead Sea. Incidentally, that majordomo was a very interesting person, and he was very much interested in the gospel, especially in the Pearl of Great Price. That’s another story; these things all tie together. He [the shepherd boy] was chasing the sheep (you all know this). The sheep went into a cave. He threw a rock in to see where it would land in the cave. Instead of a “clunk” he heard a “clink.” It hit a jar. They went in and there were all these jars stored there with documents in them. Then they discovered eleven caves in quick order. They went out there and got all excited. There was a big fight about what the documents were. They were buried there by some people who fled from Jerusalem at the time it was destroyed after the time of Christ, in the year 70 A.D. But before that in 150 B.C. they went out there, and earlier than that.

Should I draw a map? Well, all right, this is the way it goes [he draws a map]. The Dead Sea comes out here with a thing called the lisân or the tongue, which sticks out into it. It’s very shallow here; you can walk across. They do. That’s how they smuggle arms today into Palestine, by walking across here at night. They hold them on their heads. There are paths across, but you must know the way. If you miss your step on either side you are gone. It’s twice as salty as the Great Salt Lake. It’s not just brine; it’s acid. It just eats your head off if you get into it. But they do swim here at Ein Gedi. There’s a deep canyon looking very much like Rock Canyon with very steep very dangerous cliffs, etc. In those cliffs are a number of caves and holes. The Cave of Manuscripts was found there in 1965-66. Yadin and his group found it there. There Arabs had known about these things all along. This is the Cave of Manuscripts, but the original was at Qumran. This is where the cave was in 1948. They found other caves and everybody went out. Here’s Jerusalem right down here. It’s not very far. Here’s Jericho. It’s just a couple of miles above. The highway, now they’ve paved it, goes down there all along here, and then zigzags along here. (That very graphic map will tell you exactly what’s going on here.)

At Nahal Hever they found the Cave of Scrolls, and there they found that the people had been fleeing to these caves and hiding way back since the earliest days of the Egyptians. When the Egyptians came in way back in the First Dynasty, 3,000 B.C., they started depositing stuff—family goods, records and things like that in these caves. Some marvelous temple implements were deposited in the cave at En-gedi, along with these documents. What they find is deeds, wills to farms, etc. One thing leads to another. This all belongs in last semester, but we have to know about this because we are talking about the Battle Scroll that came from this. One of these scrolls was describing how Israel should go to battle in the last days and in their days, the sacred order given to them with the law, which we don’t have in the Old Testament. What is the sacred order of battle they have to use? Very important are these banners. They talk about their liberties and their families. They figure in the regular order of battle, and this plays a very important role here.

They were edited by Professor Yadin. He has been here several times. He just died. He was the one who took command in the great eight days war for the liberation of Israel in 1948. He visited us a number of times here. He was telling a group of us one night that this Battle Scroll was discovered just before the battle of the liberation of Israel—the first
battle when they had to fight [with] nothing, that miraculous war when they finally got a foot in the Holy Land. When the Arabs were going to sweep in and wipe them right out, they discovered this. He said this was a great inspiration, because this is an inspiration to the liberating of the land. They raised the title of liberty and all that sort thing. That had a great influence on them. He told some remarkable stories. He was chief commander. He not only was the head of antiquities in Israel, but was the commander of the army at that time. He told about a furious argument he had with Ben Gurion. Where should they deploy their artillery? On the Golan Heights to stop the Syrians up there, who are very dangerous? Or should they keep them back in Jerusalem to defend the city. After much argument they decided to split their artillery and put half of it in the Golan Heights and half of it in Jerusalem. The entire artillery consisted of two guns—old, brass 75 skoda guns from World War I. That was their entire artillery, and with that they saved the nation. Believe it or not, that’s the way things happened. Miraculous! Yadin said, “We don’t believe in miracles, but we count on them.” Typical Jewish joke and typical Israeli attitude. They put one at the Golan Heights and one in Jerusalem, and the Syrians lost a tank attack. The one gun let go, the only one they had. Bam, it hit a tank. It completely surprised them. They didn’t know [the Israelis] had any artillery at all. Then it shot again and hit another one. [The Syrians] said, “Hey, they must have heavy artillery.” They stopped the attack and drew back then. That saved Israel. It was as close as all that. Just one feeble, old 75 gun was all it took to do it, to promise other things like filling the people with panic. It was like Johnston’s Army [and the Mormons]. These things go that way. The Lord said, “I’ll fight your battles,” and he does.

Anyway we have this Battle Scroll, and it’s interesting because of all this talk it has about the [banner]. Let’s read the rest of it. “… he rent his coat; and he took a piece thereof, and wrote upon it—In memory of our God, our religion and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children . . . And he fastened on his headplate, and his breastplate . . .” Notice, he put on his ceremonial armor, his extra armor. “… and his shields [in the plural], and girded on his armor about his loins.” He is really heavily armed. Then he took the pole with the title of liberty and bowed himself down and dedicated it and the land to the Christians. (I guess we’d better take it verse to verse here.)

Let’s first take the Banner of Kawe and the background of the liberation of the people by the man with the banner. It’s the idea of it being his coat, because immediately we think of the coat of Kawe. The freeing of Israel is closely connected with the name of Cyrus, who was their great deliverer. It was Cyrus who brought them back from the Babylonian captivity after the days of Lehi here. After they had been there seventy years, he brought them back. They were ready to come back, and Cyrus brought them back. They were very close to the ancient Persian empire, as you know from the book of Esther. Esther was the “right hand” of the shah there. So we have the story of Kawe. We summarized it here in An Approach to the Book of Mormon. There’s some interesting material in here, I noticed. Part of it is the story of the Banner of Kawe. (I was going to bring the later Arabic stuff. I had it all home, but I’ll bring it next time. That’s all right.) We talk about the very close association here in Jewish eschatology, in the Jewish books like the Talmud. After all, what happened when Jerusalem fell in the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls. It was destroyed, absolutely smashed, and the people scattered. It tells us in Matthew 25 that it was going to be—and better in the Pearl of Great Price (Joseph Smith—Matthew). Where did they go? Where did they flee? Most of them fled to the Persian empire and settled. Persia gave them shelter for hundreds of years. The most important old settlements of the Jews were around Persia. I have a collection of the documents that were collected there by an investigator who went around and interviewed. He interviewed Jews all over in the
Persian empire at that time and got old stories about them. One of the stories that was a favorite was the story of Kawe. This is what it is.

We have in the Title of Liberty episode a clear and independent parallel, for Moroni’s banner is just like the “Flag of Kawe” (dirafsh-i-kâwiyâni). He was the legendary founder of the Magi. We are already into Hermetic literature here with the Magi, the same Magi who came from Persia to give gifts to the Lord because they had seen his star in the east. They had seen his star rising; they were astrologers. They play a very important part in the Cabala and in Jewish mysticism all the way through. They are always popping up. This is the founder of the Magi, not of the Persian nation, but of the sect of holy men who studied the cosmos, made predictions, and lived strictly moral lives in community of the saints. These are the Magi. In the beginning of the story Iran was under the rule of the serpent, the oppressor, “the man of the Lie and king of madmen,” Dahhak. It means “the lier, the deceiver.” Dahhak ruled the nation. He reigned a thousand years and forced all men to subscribe their names in the Book of the Dragon. That’s an interesting thing because Moroni requires all the people that come under his banner to subscribe their names. The same thing happens in the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Battle Scroll, as we will see.

We are dealing with one particular episode, with one particular phase of a culture, in which you have a rather complicated, rather exotic way of doing things. The Book of Mormon just matches up to perfection here.

To liberate the people there rose up in Isfahan a mighty man, a blacksmith named Kawe. He took his leather apron. Remember, Moroni rent his own garment and put it on a pole. That’s exactly what Kawe did. He took the leather apron he wore at his work and placed it on the end of a pole; this became the symbol of liberation and remained for many centuries the national banner of the Persians as well as the sacred emblem of the Magi. Going about with his banner, he waved it everywhere. Kawe called upon the people to rise in revolt. We are told here in verse 21: “. . . the people came running together with their armor girded about their loins, rending their garments in token . . .” the same as when they came to join Kawe here. This is a ritualized thing. Remember, ancient society was sacral. Everything they did was a rite, an ordinance. If they went to war, it was an ordinance. When they came back, it was an ordinance. And everything we do is an ordinance. It’s ritualized. We don’t hold it sacred necessarily, but say a football game. We follow rules and ordinances and colors and procedures—everything as if it had been orchestrated since the year one. This elaborate [procedure] of a football game is a rite. It’s symbolic, one color against the other color, and one gets the most points. All these people come, sit around and look at it, and take sides. They cheer together in unison. All this was well established by the Romans when they had the factiones and the same colors. You would cheer for your party, etc. This is very ancient; it goes way back.

We have it going back here. Going about with his banner, Kawe called upon the people to rise in revolt and shake off the oppressor; to lead the people, the hero Threataona [our friend Moroni] was raised up in the mountains by a shepherd. (Well, Cyrus was raised up in the mountains by a shepherd.) He put Kawe in charge of raising and leading an army. This Threataona is a doublet of King Cyrus, the founder of the Persian nation and in Jewish lore the holiest of kings next to Solomon and David. So they are very close to these customs. The holy kings are Solomon, David, and Cyrus. The parallel with the story of Moroni’s banner is very striking here.

The Dead Sea Scrolls provide the link here. We’ve got Kawe and his banner going. The Dead Sea Scrolls are the best control we have on the Book of Mormon, because here the
Jews are doing things as they did back there. It matches the Book of Mormon in so many points. As early as 1960 John Allegro, who had been very active in the scrolls, lost a job at Oxford for writing an article which was published in the Atlantic. It showed that between 1950 and 1960 the scrolls had been suppressed. Father Joseph Fitzmeyer gave a course in Aramaic here one summer about ten years ago. There were four or five of us in the course. He is the foremost Roman Catholic scrolls man in the country. Father de Vaux was the one who was in charge of editing the Catholic scrolls. Under the Rockefeller grant they divided them up. Catholics would have some, Baptists would have some, Presbyterians, etc. To make a long story short, Father Fitzmeyer insisted at that time that not five percent of the scrolls had been published. They had all been kept back. The Christians were worried sick about them; they are much too Jewish. And the Jews are worried sick about them; they are much too Christian. What they are is Book of Mormon.

This article by Norman Golb is a good one. It came out in 1987. Norman Golb teaches Hebrew at Hebrew University, and he has taken these scrollers to task. The way they could avoid being serious about it and having to explain the scrolls was by saying, “Well, they are just Essenes.” The Essenes were a group of crackpots that lived out there. Josephus mentioned some of them living on the Dead Sea. Some of them lived in Egypt, etc. Dupont and others said they were Essenes, and they argued about that. They finally concluded we’ll say the Essenes wrote these and we won’t have to worry about them, because they were just crackpots. We don’t have to explain this. But it wasn’t that way at all, as Norman Golb shows. They were not Essene a bit. He makes these points here. He talks about the Essene fervor, and everybody takes it for that now. “What they are not told is that the Essene-Qumran theory, however widely accepted, is at odds with almost every shred of evidence. The analysis of the scrolls actually reveals that Judaism as a whole was the salient influence.”

This represents the religion of the Jews before the fall of the temple. These things we have to remember too. The synagogues, the schools of the rabbis, didn’t begin until the temple disappeared. A rabbi is not a priest; he has no authority. He is just a learned man who has been chosen by a community. They are very jealous of the temple. When the temple was taken away, that order went away. Then the synagogue became the important thing, though they had used it before. When they lost the temple they lost everything. An entirely new order of Judaism was established. Before then their practices were different, their doctrines were different, and everything else was different. The Book of Mormon is temple-centered Judaism. The first thing Nephi does when he goes off and founds his community is to make a model of the temple. They build a temple. The people throughout the Book of Mormon are temple-building people. Well, they came just under the wire because after that the temple was destroyed. Then came the second house. The temple of Solomon was still standing in Lehi’s day, but it wasn’t standing in Nephi’s day. After they left, Jerusalem was destroyed, and especially the temple. So here we have another kind of Judaism entirely, which sounds an awful lot like Christianity. It keeps mixing them. That’s why nobody likes it. They blame the Essenes for that; they were a mystic group, etc. But he [Golb] says that won’t do. This is the Judaism that was practiced by all the Jews before the fall of the temple. That’s what it is, and that’s why it sounds so strange to you.

He tells us here, “We widely accept the Essenes as having a great effect on the formation of Christianity. . . . In the cemeteries at Khirbet Qumran were the graves of women as well as men. Unqualified sexual abstinence they didn’t have.” We are told in the ancient records of the Essenes that they were celibate, but the people at Qumran weren’t celibate.
It took an awful time to bring these people to realize this. During the war I was back there in 1964, and there was not a soul there. I was sent back by the Brethren to get something. Joseph Saad was the only person in the big Rockefeller Museum. The Palestine Museum it is called now. He was in charge of the whole operation. He coordinated the whole operation. He was the only one there, and we got to be very good friends. He’d take me out to Qumran. We spent several days out there going around, recalling all the things that happened there such as the arguments. They couldn’t agree on anything they found. The interesting thing was there were all these baptismal fonts. They are very obviously baptismal fonts. Immediately, the Christians all declared, “Ah, these were just pools for tanning leather.” They almost panicked when they saw these Jews had baptismal fonts there. We went back later with a group, and the Jews had taken over at that time. They had rearranged everything and put big signs up there that said these were baptismal fonts—this is where they baptized. This made such an impression on one member of the group that he joined the Church. That’s a non sequitur, but it’s true. These actually were baptismal fonts for the community.

What were they doing out there? There were all sorts of people. It’s a long story, but you can’t do anything serious with the Book of Mormon without bringing them up here. Father de Vaux said the Essenes must have lived in caves, but what we find is administrative headquarters buildings. Father de Vaux had his opinion about things. You have all seen pictures of Cave IV, the one where the point comes out and it has the caves along the side like this. You see the pictures. This marly material looks like the Morrison deposit here, about the same color, etc. It has these caves in it. That’s Cave IV where they found so many caves. We were going all through Cave IV. Up in the chinks and everywhere these documents were stuffed all over the place. It was marvelous. They had them lined up in jars, a whole library. The work was all over, and they were all packing up to go home. They had just discovered three caves. They were through. Father de Vaux said, “There’s nothing left here.” He didn’t want any more. Then an Arab boy curiously scrambled down the side here, went into one of these caves, and started walking around. He came and reported this Cave IV that they discovered. He said he never saw anyone so mad in his life as Father de Vaux. He said he thought he would die of apoplexy, because this guy had discovered a new cave when it should have been all over with.

It talks here about the refectory, the place where they ate. There was a sort of dumb waiter there, a hole in the wall where they served food. The experts couldn’t figure out what that was at all. The Arabs who were excavating said, “We know what this is. This is what they do at all the palaces, etc.” When a meal is being prepared you never should smell the food until the banquet comes. Then the women come bringing the grub in, the roasts and all the vegetables with the good smell. Then they come in and everybody shouts because it’s the food and everybody smells it. But it’s a bad sign if you smell the food before the banquet. It’s cooked in a cook house outside and then it is brought in. Here they served it through the dumb waiter because this was a community of some sort, they say. Again our experts were all nonplussed because the ignorant peasants who were digging for them knew a lot more about the place then they did. They came out all the way through. “Oh yeah, we know how they do this. We have been doing this ourselves all the time.”

The point to this is that out here in Qumran over 10,000 fragments have been discovered. Every book of the Bible except Esther is represented there. We have all sorts of writings, including the most valuable ones. We won’t go into them. They are necessary here, because among the important ones discovered in Cave I is IQM. This is the way they
always note them. This means “Cave I, Qumran, Milhamah (Battle Scroll).” That’s the Hebrew word for “battle.” It’s the Milhamah Scroll from the first cave. This tells about the order of battle. It’s worth the whole book, telling about how these people go to battle, how they raise the banner, what they prescribe on the banner, and how the leader takes over. We’ll see that in a minute.

There were five to eight hundred extremely diverse texts found in the Qumran caves, not just fragments but texts. There were thousands of [fragments]. The scrolls derived not from an author’s workshop, as they have always told us, but from one or more large libraries. Since no evidence of a library has ever been found at Khirbet Qumran, where did they come from? It seems these people all came from Jerusalem. There’s a large and heterogeneous body of literature.

This is important. In 1952 the Copper Scroll was discovered in Cave 3. This is an interesting thing. Where did they have their treasures buried? What was the most valuable of all? That would be the book that registered where all these things were to be buried and hid. Where were you to find them? They put on brass plates so it wouldn’t perish. They had plates so big riveted together like that with three holes for rivets in them. They put them together side by side and then rolled them into a copper scroll. It took years to solve how they would get that unrolled. They didn’t unroll it. They finally had to saw it into strips in order to read it. But the interesting thing is that it turns out to contain the record of where all the other scrolls are found. Naturally, the most valuable one would be kept on metal, like the brass plates and the gold plates of the Book of Mormon (gold being rather expensive). About the same size, thickness, etc. The Copper Scroll was associated with documentary autographs. It was written by the person himself. In fact Allegro, who edited the Copper Scroll, said he sees how the people get tired writing in it. [It contains] personal writings. Their hands get tired. They slow down. The figures get more careless, exactly as we read in the Book of Mormon, where the writers say we could write more, but our hands are not up to it. We could write more if we could write Hebrew. They complain about the difficulty of writing on the plates, and these people do the same thing. They are writing on plates here.

He [Golb] says here, “The Copper Scroll has been executed, not in a scribe’s elegant book hand, but in the relatively crude and haphazard style associated with documentary autographs.” The persons themselves are writing it. It is not a professional scribe. This is what you write in and make your own contribution, as in the Book of Mormon. “It includes the various prized artifacts, including written documents.” This tells you where to find the other documents. “They have been sequestered at burial sites throughout the Judean wilderness [they scattered them everywhere]. Many hiding places are located in the wadis eastward and southward from Jerusalem. The next scribe cache is near Jericho, for example, where books were indeed discovered during the third and ninth centuries.”

I wrote an article in the Revue de Qumran on this, showing that the Arabs were constantly discovering these in the early centuries on Islam.¹ They mention a number of such caves where documents were hidden. They are lost now; we don’t know anything about them. But they talk about these caves, and they are mystified by the people who lived there and who left them there. There was a very important community called Raqim [now Sahab] a few miles south of Amman. I went out there with Auni Dajani, who was the cousin of the king and head of archaeology in the country. We spent some time out there. I was surprised when I went back the next time years afterward to find that there was a big
monument to Auni Dajani there in front of it, telling the work he had done. It is now converted into a sacred shrine, “The Shrine of the Seven Sleepers.” They are erecting a monstrous mosque there of reinforced concrete. It’s going to become a pilgrimage shrine and center. It started out with that little typical Qumran. I had a suspicion there was another Qumran out there at Raqim. It sure enough was, but they got into all sorts of trouble. Both Auni DiGianni and his brother Rafid DiGianni were murdered. All sorts of things happened. They play rough back there. What it describes is the widespread sequestration of books and valuable artifacts at sites scattered throughout the Judean wilderness in a pattern radiating not from Qumran but from Jerusalem.” These were Jews fleeing at that time everywhere. They had been doing this thing since 3,000 B.C. Every time there was danger, they would flee to these caves. Remember, the Lord tells them, in that day flee to the mountains and don’t come back. That’s what they had always done when the enemy came in. We find more scrolls way down south here at Masada.

The moral of all this is that “Christian ideas we find here—predestination, election, the duality of the flesh and the spirit, darkness and light, falsehood and truth—evolved out of Judaism as a whole. [Because of the scrolls] Judaism and Christianity cease to be distant theological cousins and become much closer relatives.” That disturbed both of them. The Jews found it much too Christian. For example, they had to organize at Qumran in a meeting with a presidency of three and a council of twelve, and whenever they met they were supposed to have the sacrament, the bread and the wine which would anticipate the coming of the Messiah. Well, this is Christian; this isn’t Jewish. It shouldn’t be here 150 years before Christ, but there it is and it’s Book of Mormon too. The Christians don’t like it at all because these people were Jews stealing their thunder. The Catholics say they have robbed Christianity of its originality. Christianity isn’t original in the Book of Mormon; it has always been chosen from the very beginning. The gospel has always been there. We find these two things running right together. This is so important for our [chapter 46] here because it starts using the word Christian all over the place. They took the names Christians, and they possessed the land for Christ. What would they call themselves then, if you want to anticipate? Well, they would call themselves Masîḥ. The names Christ and Christian [are found] in verses 13 and 16 of Alma 46. In Hebrew and Arabic that is Mashiḥ/Masîḥ, but the Jews won’t use that word today. Christ means “the anointed one,” mashâḥ is “to anoint,” and the Meshiaḥ means “the anointed one.” It means exactly the same thing as Christ. Like the Moslems, they [the Nephites] don’t use the word Christ; they use the word Messiah. They don’t use the word Christian; they are the Messiah people. So these people in the Book of Mormon use the word Messiah, but Christ means the same thing. It’s very interesting that modern Hebrew avoids that. They won’t use that word Messiah because that is making a concession here. They call them the Nôtsrim; that’s the Nazarians. It’s safe to call them Nazarians, but if you start calling Christians Masîḥ, as the Arabs do, that means we are in real trouble here. We are admitting that they believe in the Messiah, the coming of the anointed one, which we believe in too.

I’m going to tell you another series of connected stories. I first went down to the Hopis in the 40s with Brother Virgil Bushman who had lived his life among them. They are renewing the mission to the Hopis, which are the oldest civilization settled in America, the Southwest Indians. They are Pueblo Indians and they have lived in their cities for well over a thousand years there. Old Tom Kuyushva was the first member who rejoined the Church. It’s a very interesting thing. Brother Bushman went down and gave a sermon on the Book of Mormon. Tom was the grand old man; he was the leader. It’s in Hotevilla
there, the most pious of the communities. They have five kivas, and he is the one that is always dressed with the ceremonial turquoise, etc., always with the proper accoutrements, the knots and all the rest of it. He always had the place of honor at the dances, etc. He was at the meeting. At the end of the meeting, he came up and said, “Brother Bushman, I want to be baptized.” (He didn’t know any English.)

Brother Bushman said, “But you don’t know anything about it; you’ve just heard it. He said, “But I know it’s true; I know it’s true in here.” So he did become an elder and he became very important. When I went back later with Brother Bushman, he told the story of how the Hopis settled there. They came up from the South. The Great Red City of the South was destroyed because they were wicked people, and they killed the prophets. The migrated at that time; they came up from the Great Red City of the South that was destroyed. When they came up they came to First Mesa, the oldest mesa. That’s old Oraibi. It was the springtime, a beautiful period. The grass was green and waving in the wind. It was a beautiful spring day, which you don’t often get there. The leader walked up the hill, and they saw a tall, handsome man standing at the top of the hill there. He went up to him and said, “Who are you?”

He said, “I am Mashovi.” The two names given are Mashow (Messiah) and Mashovi. He said, “I am Mashov, and I rule all this land that you can see. It all belongs to me as far as you can see. If you want to settle here, you must pay tithes to me.” The leader put out his hand for the nakwatch; that’s the sacred grip to identify himself. The tall, handsome man put out his hand. The leader gave a strong jerk on it and pulled off his mask (remember, the people always wear masks for ceremonies), and it was a death head. It was Satan masquerading as the Messiah. Nevertheless, they still continue to pay their tithes to him, because after all he is the ruler of this world. He is the one who possesses the land. They will pay their tithes in the Church, but they will also pay their ten percent to Mashovi. The interesting thing is that the same story is told in Thalab, whom I failed to bring today, about when David went up to the mount of the temple in Jerusalem. He wanted to build a temple there. He was met by the tall, handsome stranger who was Satan and had to have a fight with him. It’s a very interesting thing the way these tie up. This name Messiah is the name they would use for Christ. The Moshihi is what they call themselves, and in our language it’s Christian.

Here in Alma 46:13–14 Moroni consecrates the Title of Liberty. Liberty is dPRor heruth. This may sound like modern American language, something Joseph Smith was just lifting. But don’t fool yourself. After all, what is the inscription on the Liberty Bell? “Proclaim liberty throughout the land.” Where does that come from? That comes from Leviticus 25. That’s Old Testament. That’s Jewish, proclaiming liberty throughout the land. They are just following the procedures since the days of Moses. Under the Law of Moses liberty was the name of the game. The Jews alone of all people held the Jubilee. Remember, every seventh year and then every seven times seventh year all debts were cancelled. All slaves were freed. Everything was wiped out. No other people had that. Now that was liberty, because as long as we are in debt to each other, as long as we are under contract to each other, as long as we have to pay off each other, we are not in true liberty. But they knew what real liberty was, and the Lord gave them that command, that every seventh year every slave should be let go. Not just let go. He should be provided for well for the rest of his life. They would take good care of him. All debts would be considered paid off. As long as we are in debt to each other, we can’t say anyone is free in particular. The Jews knew
what freedom, *heruth*, was. They talk about it all the time here.

The titles on the banners are very interesting. There are quite a few of them. They always talk about these idealistic things. This is what Professor Yadin had to say about it. We were fortunate to have Yadin visit us here personally so many times and be so confidential. We do have the Jews visit us from Jerusalem, and we visit them a lot too, as you know. We have a Jerusalem Center there. The titles are mainly based, as Yadin points out here, on apocalyptic, eschatological, and pseudepigraphic parts of the Bible—those prophets in general, and especially Isaiah, who is the favorite in the Book of Mormon, as he is in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Great equality is the influence here and the influence of apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic. That means this borderline literature that goes back to the Jews, that was lost and has just been found throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This Dead Sea Scroll stuff you would call pseudepigraphic. For example, this is called *The Battle of the Sons of Light and Darkness.* That’s the title that’s given to this, although the title page was missing. He says what we find on the banners are things like this: “Names and Positions of Michael,” “The Light and Darkness,” “The Angel of the Ancient World.” Then they talk about “The Day of God,” “The Place of Knowledge of Justice and Truth.” Finally there’s the calendar. They enroll by families. Everybody who enrolled under a banner had to sign his name exactly as they do here in the Book of Mormon, where it says [verse 21] they came running, and covenanted, and rent their garments. We will get to that, but I see the time is up now. There’s so much of this and it’s so condensed. To put it in a proper order is more than I can do.

The prodigality of Alma 46 leaves my poor old noggin bemused. I don’t know how to handle it. I made a list last night of sixteen points of evidence it brings out, any one of which would be enough to write a book about. Just now before the class a question occurred to me, and it is very important for us to answer it here. Is our main interest here proving the Book of Mormon? Brother Monte Jensen, do you think so? Is your main interest in the Book of Mormon proving that it is true, that it is a real history?

“No, I don’t think so.”

Then what is your main interest in the Book of Mormon?

“Learning more about its message.”

That’s the point. People say that same thing about the Bible. “Whether it’s true or not, whether it’s a myth or not, it has great lessons for us.” They say that. Well, the Book of Mormon certainly has great lessons, but it has always been the main issue whether it’s true. A famous critic of the 20s and 30s, Bernard DeVoto, was born in Utah. He edited the Atlantic Monthly, I think it was, for years. He characterized the Book of Mormon as “a yeasty fermentation of nonsense, unspeakably absurd.” Well, is it that? It’s obvious that he hadn’t read it. Later on he apologized. He read a chapter and it changed his mind. I’m not fooling. But it can’t be proven.

The religious editor of the Los Angeles Times came down and interviewed some people here. He asked me, “What eminent archaeologist has ever been forced to believe the Book of Mormon by the evidence?” You’re not going to twist anybody’s arm. After all, angels are not scientific. Anyone who pretends to be a scientist in his profession is not going to accept angels, unless he is forced to. You’d have to have evidence so powerful that it would force an archaeologist or anthropologist to believe it. You’re never going to find that, are you? But the answer to that question is what on earth does anybody know today about what was happening in the New World 2,000 years ago? You can find remnants from which you might reconstruct this, that, or the other, but we have no written record, no names. We know nothing that was going on in Book of Mormon days. You dig and then you compare what you have found here with what you have dug up somewhere else. Then you argue about how to account for the resemblances, etc. You never get anywhere. Archaeology is not a science at all. You just dig and you guess. They haven’t got very far. We aren’t going to get very far with evidence here, are we?

Let’s ask somebody else now. If it’s true, it could still be a great book, couldn’t it? We’ve seen that. Is Sister Matthews here? What does religion teach us? What are the religious teachings of the Bible and the Book of Mormon? [Her answer is not audible.] She really comes to the point. Why we are here, what purpose, etc.? Unless the Bible is true and those stories are true, what is it doing? Philosophy teaches those things. That’s what you
think about in philosophy, though you came nearer the point. Most people today, including most ministers, say that the Bible teaches us morals, ethics, aesthetics, principles, spiritual things, and beautiful stories. It teaches love, affection, family—all those things. But you don’t have to go to the Bible [for them]. You don’t have to have angels come to tell you that. “It needs no ghost come from the dead, my lord, to tell us that,” as Horatio says. We have thousands of books on that subject. The whole fourth floor is taken up with books that will tell you about humanity, love, morals, human nature, and all that sort of thing. No, the only purpose of religion is to answer one question, and Sister Matthews came very near to it. It’s called the terrible question that nobody could answer. I used to talk a lot about that. The question is: Is this all there is? If this is the whole show, then your whole way of life is going to be arranged differently, isn’t it? Remember what Korihor teaches in the Book of Mormon? When a man dies that is the end thereof. Therefore, they lifted up their heads and rejoiced. They could sin all they wanted to; there would be no reckoning or anything like that. They were glad of that teaching that when the man dies that is the end thereof. Well, that question will pretty well determine your behavior, won’t it? Is this all there is?

Pure fantasy can teach us wisdom, morals, kindness, courage, forgiveness, and other moral things. We tell stories in Sunday School from Van Dyke. It was very popular in the 1920s to invent sentimental religious stories—“The Little Engine That Could” and things like that. We give those as Sunday School lessons. They’re morals which are fine. You give them in Primary and the like, but we are talking about the real thing now. Take the great fantasies like A Midsummer Night’s Dream or The Tempest. A Midsummer Night’s Dream ends with a blessing on the house. It’s a beautiful thing, a blessing on the house and peace. “I am sent, with broom, before, to sweep the dust behind the door.” It is pronounced by Puck, a mythical sprite. There’s nothing there. Then there’s that other play of great fantasy and power. His last play teaches all sorts of moral lessons, the main one being the lesson of forgiveness. How does it end?

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act IV, Scene 1

There is nothing before, and after this it will all just vanish. Life is just a play, just a presentation. It won’t leave even a rack behind. A rack is the torn clouds that remain after a storm. It won’t even leave that behind. It’s all going away and leave nothing. Most people believe that’s how it is. That makes a difference, so this business is very important. Claudio sums it up in another speech from Shakespeare and gives the final word on the subject of death. Claudio sums it up in the prison. He doesn’t want to die for his sister.

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot [nice prospect];
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice.

These are the various prospects of the hereafter that religion held forth in Shakespeare’s day. The center of hell in Dante is not fire; it’s ice. Everything freezes. It’s the heat death. Everything is absolutely cold. It reaches zero, and that’s where it all ends. Of course, that’s the second law; everything is running down. The first law is that heat can’t go from a cooler to a hotter body. It always runs downhill, and that’s the way it is in Dante.

To be imprison’d in the viewless winds,
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world; or to be worse than worst
[Then he brings up the new doctrine of purgatory, which was the worst of all.]

Of those that lawless and incertain thought
Imagine howling!—’tis too horrible!
The weariest and most loathed worldly life
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
Can lay on nature, is a paradise
To what we fear of death.

Shakespeare, Measure for Measure, Act III, Scene 1

The doctrine of purgatory is not an old one. It’s not an ancient one. It was introduced in modern times, in Shakespeare’s day as a matter of fact. That he thinks is the worst of all, the most horrible. Remember, in Hamlet he says:

I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,  
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,  
And each particular hair to stand on end,  
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine.

Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act I, Scene 5

This is the issue after all then, isn’t it? It’s the whole thing. How do you explain the plates and the angel? Well, they were a hallucination. That’s what the great Eduard Meyer said, and he had more respect for Joseph Smith than any of them. But the trouble is the Book of Mormon is not a hallucination. It makes all the difference also where he got that book if he really saw the angel. Angels’ visits always mean rejoicing. It’s a breakthrough, you see. There is more. You never dreamed about it, but this is just the beginning. It’s a great show, and you have been shortchanging yourself. You have been living “cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in to saucy doubts and fears.” Have you been living like that? No, that’s no good. But now an angel comes, a real angel. This makes all the difference if he really saw it. That means we are living under wholly different circumstances from the “lives of quiet desperation” that we normally live, and nobody can escape it. The mere reality of the Book of Mormon puts everything in a different light. You can accept it as a moral doctrine and teaching, but that isn’t it. They are a dime a dozen. In the editorials in the
paper everyday somebody moralizes, points us the way of righteousness, and condemns sin, folly, human misbehavior, and the human comedy. This [the gospel] means we don’t need drugs to escape from the dawn of nothing. That’s the trouble. There are lots of verses in the *Rubaiyat* about this. We used to learn this when I was in high school. It’s the most negative thing in the world.

One Moment in Annihilation’s Waste, [That’s all we have.]
One moment, of the Well of Life to taste—
The Stars are setting, and the Caravan
Starts for the dawn of Nothing—Oh, make haste!
Oh, make haste.

Hurry while you are here because you don’t have much time. That’s all there is. It’s the dawn of nothing after this.

Let’s turn to this list. We were talking about the list of sixteen [evidences], and I’m not including the remarkable resemblance to our own time and the remarkable relevance to our own situation with which this chapter begins. Remember the post-war boom, the arrogance of the people that divided them, and this cultural difference here. The main issue in the Book of Mormon is not between the Nephites and the Lamanites at all. That’s not the fight, and this is an important thing. This is our first point in this cultural thing. It’s between totally different ways of life that began already in Jerusalem. You notice that Alma is like Lehi, Nephi Ammon, Abinadi and the rest. We talked about the Rechabites who want to live the old law in its purity. In this wicked and sophisticated civilization you can’t do it, so there is always this conflict. Alma is over strict. He is a prude really. He gets on your nerves. No wonder he caused his son Alma to revolt. But these people have to be. Remember, it tells us in the short books like Enos, unless our laws were extremely strict and severe that’s the only way we could keep things under control at all. Like the Puritan settlements in New England, they had to be extra severe. It’s the conflict between them and the more permissive way of life that the Nehors immediately introduced. That became the state religion. The righteous, the people of the Church, were always a small minority, except for two hundred years, throughout the Book of Mormon. They were the minority, and they were in constant conflict with these others like Korihor, Nehor, Zeezrom, etc. Leaders were always able to get a big following if they protested against this overly strict religious society in which they were living. They lived the old strict law of the prophets. It was austere living. It was a life of the mind. And every time there was a break, they would take to the wilderness. It happens very often here.

We mentioned the confusion of the Dead Sea Scrolls people last time. They did the same thing. They left Jerusalem because Jerusalem was corrupt. The scrolls are full of this. They were waiting there for the prophets. They were waiting for God. As it tells us in Isaiah, we have gone into the desert to prepare the way for the Lord to come, and we can only do that by preparing ourselves that we might have visitations by angels. They were looking forth to that sort of thing. [We discussed] the confusion of the people of Qumran and all up and down the Dead Sea. It wasn’t just Qumran. This was the standard religion of Lehi’s day, and it was lost. That’s why it’s not popular today. That’s why they have suppressed the scrolls actually. It’s very natural to confuse them with the Essenes because the Essenes were another such body of people that were [escaping] from the world. But, after all, St. Anthony was a rich Christian fellow living in Christian Alexandria. He saw it was a terrible way [to live]. He retreated to the desert and founded a monastic movement. We have to go out to the wilderness and purify things, and there’s confusion. There were
many such groups. This is the whole Hermetic tradition. They formed these conventicles, these groups. That would include Pythagoras, the Platonic schools of teaching, and everyone who wanted to live a pure life. They wanted to get away from the corruption of the world which always follows the same routine, the four things that Nephi talks about: money, power, popularity, and the lusts of the flesh. Those are the things we all want to enjoy. This is repeated a number of times in the Book of Mormon, and Nephi makes it very clear [1 Nephi 22:23]. As I said, there were many groups. They were always doing this breaking off. And they keep breaking off from the Church and going out to Baker and places like that. There have been many, many splinter groups from the Church. Russell Rich devoted many years to studying those groups, and there were over a hundred of them. So we have this theme that runs through the Book of Mormon which is very solidly backed up now by the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Then in contrast to this, the other culture is that of Amalickiah. Now that’s a giveaway. Now we are getting to a possible piece of evidence. A second point here is the name Amalickiah. He is the leader. He sets himself up, and they all follow. His name Amalickiah is “my king is Jehovah.” Amalickiah was a Mulekite. We forget that Zarahemla wasn’t a Nephite city at all; it was a Mulekite city. The Mulekites were a mixed band, much larger than Lehi’s group, that came over when Jerusalem fell. We know now from the Lachish Letters that the youngest member of the royal family did escape. He would be Mulek, the “little king.” Possibly, they call themselves the Mulekites because he led their particular group. He [Amalickiah] represents the Mulekite reaction against the strict teachings of Lehi and Nephi’s descendants. The Mulekites were never that way. They not only built the big city of Zarahemla, but they [included] almost all the dissenters, just as some of the greatest men. Ammon was a Mulekite, a pure descendant of Zeniff. This was a mixed batch. They had no objections to accepting the foreign Mosiah as king. He was a Nephite and became their king. Then Mosiah and Alma take over and they practically rule the state. They lay down the law, and they are very strict, both of them. But you notice the second Mosiah keeps the law of Benjamin, which was the liberal [part] of the old law of Moses—namely, as it tells us in Alma 30, absolute freedom of speech and of religion. Alma’s own son deliberately started making all sorts of trouble, but they didn’t lock him up, though [Alma] was head of the Church. Mosiah’s four sons joined him, and they made as much trouble as they could. They represented this easy-going, more popular religion. You’d think, well why don’t these two men crack down and put them in jail. It says because there was a law against [persecuting a man for his belief]. I’ll read it to you because it is a very important law. They were free to do this, so you are going to have these two societies, two cultures, two ideals side by side here.

Let me read you Alma 30:7 and 9. “Now there was no law against a man’s belief; for it was strictly contrary to the commands of God that there should be a law which should bring men on to unequal grounds.” With pressure groups you’d come under pressure if you believed with a minority or something. “Now if a man desired to serve God, it was his privilege; or rather, if he believed in God it was his privilege to serve him; but if he did not believe in him there was no law to punish him.” It was not a crime not to believe in God. Atheism had as much right as anything else. Otherwise it would have been unequal, it says. “For there was a law that men should be judged according to their crimes [that’s an overt action]. Nevertheless, there was no law against a man’s belief; therefore, a man was punished only for the crimes which he had done; therefore all men were on equal grounds.” No pressures could be brought in that case.

This Korihor had been raising hell, as you know. But they didn’t imprison him. He was
killed by the intolerant Zoramites. A Zoramite mob killed him, but among the Nephites he was free to circulate. He went about and you know what he preached. The law could have no hold on him. He “began to preach unto the people that there should be no Christ.” He said it is a foolish and vain hope to yoke yourselves with such foolish things. He said, this is not intellectual; this is foolishness. It’s not intellectually sound. Notice, these were the intellectuals, the rationalists, the positivists, etc. These foolish old traditions, these old myths, have kept you down. Alma 30:27: “And thus ye lead away this people after the foolish traditions of your fathers, and according to your own desires; and ye keep them down, even as it were in bondage, that ye may glut yourselves with the labors of their hands, that they durst not look up with boldness, and that they durst not enjoy their rights and privileges. [He was allowed to preach all this?] Yea, they durst not make use of that which is their own.”

They had to pay taxes and things like that. It was a sacral state. This [preaching] was allowed. You see these two cultures side by side, and this conflict is the one that hits you all the way through the Book of Mormon. We are so naive and so simplistic in the Church. We say, “Well, there were the good guys; naturally, they were the Nephites who were white. Then there were the dark people who were the Lamanites.” It isn’t that way at all. This is the real issue all throughout the book, and it’s the issue in our world. Our war is not with the Lamanites today. And along with this, you notice, they are bound to resent Nephi, Lehi, and Alma and Mosiah’s complete rule. Why should they be in charge? It was all right to make Mosiah king because he was a great man. But when he joined Alma and gave Alma plenary power in the Church, people started objecting. Then there was this rebellion that became very popular. The Church from then on is a small minority; they don’t hold their own at all.

Along with this there are frequent indications we will see in the Book of Mormon of ancient and exotic peoples in the background. For example, when Alma went to visit the Zoramites on a mission. They dissented, as you know, and went out. They had only been away from the central culture for a short period. He says they [Alma and his group] were utterly dumbfounded. They were so amazed they didn’t know what to think of it. It absolutely stunned them. They [the Zoramites] had a totally different religion of very exotic things in which they built high towers and stairways and all this sort of thing to have prayers. They loaded themselves with all sorts of costly and lavish apparel, and the priests were parading around. Well, immediately we come into a world with which we are familiar from the murals, vases, and the reliefs of Central and South America—this lavish, strange religion which was there before. The Zoramites took it up obviously. Almost overnight they had this whole different culture. [Alma and his brethren] were completely amazed by what they found, how they had changed everything. They kept some of the old religion and adopted this, that, and the other. But who would give them this idea? You don’t just invent a religion whole cloth that way. They came out and picked this up.

Then there is the Sebus game [Alma 17:26], for example. This is a worldwide thing. Well, we won’t go into these things, but that’s another of these exotic things. We find constant hints. For example, they talk about the whole central country which was barren of trees because of the inhabitants. Well, [some say] you can’t make a desert that way, but you can. We know now that’s what started the Sahara going. People do create deserts. They do deforest countries entirely. In fact, Plato talked about that. He said that half the Peloponnesians are now just desert because people have cut down the trees. Well, this happened in the Book of Mormon here. Who were these people? It’s not talking about the roving Jaredites in the north country. We’re talking about something else here. Anyway
this is an important thing. These contacts are mentioned only when necessary, and this is why. The Book of Mormon is very carefully edited to focus attention intentionally on the small minority of believers who remain true and faithful. It's a history of the Church. It is handed down genealogically from father to son. It deals with the affairs of the Church. So throughout the Book of Mormon we find intense hostility between these two ways of life. One is strict and upright, and the other is glorying in displays of wealth, fine apparel (notice the language; it uses lavish terms) and proud nobility. We saw that last time. It's the very sort of thing we find so strikingly illustrated in the murals, vase paintings—the tasteless profusion of the jewelry and feathers, the parading of priests, and the pride of these things. The buildings and exceedingly high towers play an important part in the Book of Mormon—how they are built and who builds them under enforced labor. This is a striking point, and it comes out in this chapter very clearly.

In this chapter Moroni appeals to the folk memory of the ancient Hebrew customs and traditions. Here's something that is really quite solid here. This refers us to the Dead Sea Scrolls. Remember, he talks about the banner that Moroni raised to rally the people to assert their religion and their freedom. We saw that Kawe did this too. Again, that's the story of another society of these special people who went out to live the pure life, the Magi. It was not the Persian nation; that was under Dahhak, the lord of the lie. He was the one that had to be overcome. Kawe put his leather work apron on his pole, held it high, put an inscription on it, and rallied all the people to him for their freedom. They founded the freedom and the nation of the Magi, which was a separate, chosen group. Remember, they figure in the Bible too. The Jews were very close to these particular people. [Kawe's banner] was also for their religion, their freedom, and their national existence. And on the banner of Moroni was the inscription, “In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children . . .” (We should be following along here, shouldn’t we? We have two books to follow.)

This is the picture, but now we come to the Dead Sea Scrolls where we get it very concretely. This is the ideal war. It says when the people shall return from the wilderness to Jerusalem, then there will be a time of troubles and then there will be wars. This is the way it will be fought. These are the rules of the sacred warfare prescribed for Judah at all times. There is an argument whether this has to deal just with the last war at the last time, or this is the rule by which they were always supposed to govern their warfare. We learned from the Battle Scroll, the IQM, about when Israel went to war. It’s quite a coincidence that this was edited by Yigael Yadin. He was in Provo several times, and we had some nice long talks with him about this. He was not only the editor, but he was the general, the commander and chief, in the war in 1948. He says this was discovered in 1948 just on the eve of the war and it fired the nation to great deeds. They did these tremendous things. We mentioned last time how two old Skoda guns from World War I were able to turn the tide of invasion. The strange things that happen!

The banner is the important thing here. When they go out to war, the high priest raises the banner. I think the best thing to do is to read the general account that Alma gives. Then I’ve noticed some things in the scrolls here. We have the text here, and this is the one we will follow: “When the sons of Levi, the sons of Judah, and the sons of Benjamin [those three tribes] return from their captivity in the wilderness . . .” They regard themselves as living in the wilderness as long as they are in a state of captivity in the wicked world. “On the return from the captivity of the bnei (sons) of light . . .” The title of the book is The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness. That’s the way the world is divided, and this is a theme that’s very notable in the Book of
Mormon too, especially Alma talks about this when he talks about his redemption from the darkness to the light, etc.

There are some places I have marked here: “On the trumpets they shall inscribe ‘Those Called of God, the Princes of God, and the Church of God [it means the order, the organization of God]’” This shall be on one. Fortunately, Brother Yadin has supplied us with a translation here. That helps, you know. But we agree very well on these things, needless to say. It’s talking about “the peace of God in the encampments of his Saints.” They call themselves the “Saints.” They are coming back and organizing themselves. [Much like] Alma 46:13 here it says, “Ye shall write ‘the peace of God in the encampment of his Saints’ upon their trumpets, and they shall write ‘God’s mighty deeds to scatter the enemy and put to flight all the opponents of justice.’”

Now this doctrine of desolation is very important. When Israel went to war, the people were rallied by such inscriptions on the banners. The banner was called the nes, which the lexicon will tell you means “a pole, a flag, a standard, a signal, an assignment.” Title is the best translation you could give that. It also says it gave them title to the land; the emphasis on the land is very important all the way through here.

We asked Yadin, “What is your religion? What do you believe in?” Remember, he was an enlightened modern Jew. He said, “My religion is the land; I believe in the land.” That was his religion, the Holy Land. It’s an obsession with the land. It’s repeated again and again way back here. They still are. It’s the same thing here: “Blessings upon the land.” Alma talks about “the promised land” and “to give us a title upon the land.” They talk about this closeness to the land and the idea of the promised land.

Verse 17: “And it came to pass that when he had poured out his soul to God, he named all the land which was south of the land Desolation, yea, and in fine, all the land, both on the north and on the south [all the rest of the land, including some of the south lands]—A chosen land, and the land of liberty.”

“Chosen land” should have been capitalized because that’s exactly what the priest does here. Before the battle the high priest goes out between the ranks of the army who are lined up. It describes how they should be lined in proper array in straight lines, holding their weapons. There’s lots of description. It goes on for fifty pages describing exactly what their deployment of the troops should be. When they are deployed and ready for battle, the high priest goes out in front of the army. He walks back and forth and pronounces a curse on the enemy land. That is the shema or sh'maḥ, or it can be ḥoreb, or ḥomāḥ, “land Desolation.” Ḥoreb is the Semitic word for war. Or desolation is ḥomāḥ. But in the Dead Sea Scrolls it says, “It shall be called sh'maḥ,” which means “nothingness or wiping out.” That’s what’s going to happen. In the story of David after a certain king’s land was cursed it was called sh'maḥ. But here is where they have this ritual thing. The other side is the land b'rākhāh. It’s the land that is chosen. Here’s a very interesting thing. In Hebrew b'arakh is “to bless” and bāḥar is “to choose.” The one means “the blessed land.” The other means “the chosen land.” Bārūkh is the blessed one, and berākh means the chosen one. Here he calls it the “chosen land.” This is referred to in other places too in both cases. This is a remarkable custom, but it’s not in the Bible. You don’t find this. Before the war the high priest dedicates the land of the enemy and calls it
“desolation.” This is a doctrine of the chosen land, and it’s very ancient.

Yadin makes a lot of the close resemblances between the Roman rules of war and the Hebrew ones. That’s not accidental because, as you know, armies do imitate each other. They have to. You have to compete. If they have a superior uniform for camouflage, you adopt the gray or the green. If they have helmet that gives better protection, the other side adopts the helmet. After a war has been going on for a while, two armies begin to look awfully much alike. You can’t allow another person to have an advantage indefinitely, so you do what he does if it’s working better than yours. So the armies look alike. Yadin, who was a tactician and a general, went into this. He said the Romans followed the same principle. They divided the world when they went out to war. They had the right of the fetiales. The priests would go out and throw a lance across the border with a curse. They did it seven times here, and they did it three times in Rome. They invited the enemy to submit. This is ager hosticus. It has not been conquered. This is the outside world. They would call it “the world of darkness, the eland, the empty land, the desert land.” They would cast a spear across it three times inviting them to submit. If they didn’t submit then, of course, they were in a state of rebellion. They were the dark outer world, and to Rome they represented a threat. That’s why Rome had to expand and have the world’s great empire. They couldn’t leave it the way it was.

There are some marvelous stories about Alexander on this. When he was in India the wise men, the Brahmans, asked him, “Why do you conquer the world?”

He said, “I’m not conquering the world; I’m just liberating it. I’m spreading light and truth. I’m moving into the darkness.”

This obsession was the same with the Romans. “Oh, we’ve got to win. As long as those people are unconquered out there, they present a threat to us because they are ambitious too and we have stuff they might want.” That’s called ager hosticus and we [the Romans] are ager pacatus, the two parts of the field or the land. This is the people that have accepted Rome and, therefore, are pacified. The ager hosticus is those that haven’t. They are hostile. Hostile is the same word as ghost. It’s the outer world—ghost, host, guest, a person who comes from afar, a stranger. Of course, this is the same theory in Islam. Pacatus in Islam means “having submitted, at peace, having accepted.” This is the Dar al-Islam. Dar means “settled territory.” This is the land that has submitted, that is under God, that has accepted Islam. If you don’t accept Islam, there’s always trouble. That’s Dar al-Ḥarb. That’s your Horeb in the Bible. This is the land desolation. This philosophy endures throughout the Book of Mormon, feeling threatened, etc. Moroni is under constant pressure for that reason. We see that later on though. All these customs are clearly picked up in the Book of Mormon. You’re not going to get this from the Bible or even from the Apocrypha, except for the new things like the Dead Sea Scrolls.

In verse 18 we get the contrast. The cultural contrast is nowhere more clear than in this characterization by Moroni of his own people as “we who are despised.” Well, the Battle Scroll of the Dead Sea Scrolls starts out by saying this, “The sons of Levi and the sons of Judah are exiles in the wilderness.” It isn’t just captivity, but they are exiles. They are outcasts in the wilderness. That’s the gālūth. “They fight against them with all their troops when the exiles of the Son of Light return from the wilderness to encamp in the wilderness of Jerusalem.” They are still in the wilderness all the time, but they are exiles. They are driven out; they are homeless. It becomes more explicit later on. Describing their
Ah, here is this, “The high priest shall go forth from the middle in the interval [the space between the lines]. The priests, the sons of Aaron, clad in garments of white, shall curse the land desolation and bless the land bountiful.” The other land is the land bountiful, the blessed land and the chosen land.

“When war cometh to your land against the enemy that oppresseth you [notice, they are being oppressed by the enemy all the way along here] . . . and you shall be saved from your enemies . . . Thou hast chosen for thyself from all the nations a people holy through the covenant, taught the statutes, enlightened in understanding, hearing the glorious voices.”

This is not the language that the Jews accept today at all. They say, this is apocalyptic. “This is eschatological language, and we don’t go for that. We are strictly historical.” As Yadin said, “My religion is the land.” And then his saying, “We don’t believe in miracles, but we count on them.” When you get a passage like this, you realize that they don’t like this. Yadin doesn’t like this at all.

“. . . hearing the glorious voices, seeing holy angels, open of ear, understanding deep things, even the mysteries.” Then it goes into cosmology which the Jews are supposed to leave alone. The Talmud says it’s better that a man was not born than to bring up subjects like this. Then he goes into this sort of thing: “. . . the expanse of the skies, the hosts of the luminaries [the stars], the domain of the spirits and the dominion of the holy ones, the treasures of glory . . . He hath created the earth and its boundaries of her divisions into the wilderness and the plain land . . .” This goes into your cosmological, cabalistic doctrine that was rejected by the rabbis after the fall of the temple. The Book of Mormon is full of it. Then talk about being redeemed. “. . . by the hand of the poor ones that are to be redeemed by Thee . . .” They describe themselves as the “poor ones,” the Evyonim/Ebionites. That’s what he’s talking about when [Moroni] says, “Surely God shall not suffer that we, who are despised because we take upon us the name of Christ . . .” They think of themselves as the despised ones, and it’s the same thing here. Notice, he is saying this while he is waving the banner. This is on the banners that he is talking about. “. . . by the hand of the poor ones that are to be redeemed by Thee with power and retribution, for wondrous might the heart shall be a door of hope.”

The next section begins, “For into the hand of the poor ones [again he calls them that] wilt thou deliver the enemies from all lands into the hands of them that are prostrate in the dust.” He describes them as the “poor ones” and “as prostrate in the dust.” That’s an expression, remember, that King Benjamin used. Again, you won’t find that in the Bible. But the king said, “You are less than the dust.” When he asked the people to submit and accept the law, he said, “Prostrate yourself, even in the dust.” Here it describes Israel that way. When he is waving his banner around, he says, “For into the hands of the poor ones thou wilt deliver the enemies from all lands into the hands of them that are prostrate in the dust so as to bring low all mighty men of the nations, to render the recompense to the wicked upon the head of thine enemies and thy truth upon all the sons of men.” Needless to say, the Messiah passages are the ones the Jews don’t like. As I said, the Dead Sea Scrolls are in bad repute both with Christians and Jews because there is too much Christianity in them. The Jews say, “They are anticipating Christianity; we don’t like that.” The Christians say, “This robs us of our originality by having those things there when they
shouldn’t have them.”

“The Levites [the elders] shall bless people from where they stand, the God of Israel and all his true deeds, and they shall curse all the spirits of Belial in his place and solemnly declare . . .” Notice, they shall bless the people where they stand and shall curse the people of Belial where they stand. As it says, [Moroni] pronounced all the land to the south Desolation, and he pronounced a blessing on all the other land.

“They shall solemnly declare this and bless the God of Israel for his holy plan.” Again they are always referring to the plan. Do you know the word plan isn’t found in the King James Bible? It’s an amazing thing. We think in terms of plan all the time. That has been picked up by most churches today. They use plan a great deal. They didn’t before. They thought that was one of the follies of Mormonism.

Here’s another one: “. . . through the poor in spirit there shall be a gnawing of the hard heart and the hard hearted.” Again, a favorite theme with Alma is the hardness of their hearts. “And through them that are upright the way of all the wicked shall come to an end, and thy mercies upon the remnant of Israel.” And remnant is a theme in the Book of Mormon again. They think of themselves as the remnant. “Thy name shall exalt thy mighty acts forever at the turning points of epochs and the appointed times of ordaining things for eternity, as well as the coming of daytime and the coming of nighttime.” These are dispensations it is talking about. There’s the Magnificat.

Then he says here, “All their assembled multitude is as chaff that passes away.” That’s from the first Psalm, chaff that the wind blows away (Psalms 1:4). This is what will happen to the wicked congregation. “And it shall become a desolation and shall not be found.”

“They shall whisper from the dust,” the Book of Mormon says. “Their mighty ones are no more.” They have changed places there, and all the rest is vanished away like smoke. “All their assembled multitude is as chaff, and it shall become a desolation and shall not be found.” That’s the wicked congregations of darkness.

It says here, “The priest destined for the appointed time of all his brethren shall walk along and strengthen their hands for battle, and he shall solemnly declare to be strong and courageous.” This is exactly what Moroni does. It’s a priestly office to do this. Here we get another one: “The chief priest shall come forward and stand in front of the formation and shall strengthen their heart through the might of God and their hands for his battle.” So this is the same procedure we find in the Battle Scroll (IQM), as we mentioned before—Cave 1, Qumran, Milhemah (meaning the Battle Scroll). This brings all these things to life all of a sudden. Nobody had any idea that this was part of the Jewish tradition. He’s just beginning here. I see the time is up, but now he goes and tells them a wonderful story. We’ll mention this next time. (This is point number seven.) And the next thing he does is very important too. You may be as flustered and confused as I am here because of the richness of this evidence. It’s so compact. There is so much here that we have never looked at before, but it is all there and it all has significance. There are tracers all the way through this, and this is the thing you are supposed to look for that can’t be faked. Think of what Joseph has given us here.
We were talking about the battles and the scrolls. I didn't bring over the book from the other office. I can give you the reference though, of course. We are told in [Alma 46:20] that [Moroni] waves his banner and summons the people to maintain this title upon the land, entering into a covenant with the Lord. In the IQM, the Battle Scroll, in column three, line four [we read]: "to maintain their title upon the land." They make a covenant, and they not only come under the banner but they also sign their names. They all sign their names. When it says they entered into a covenant with the Lord, they did that in Qumran the same way. This was the ancient Jewish practice. Remember, we were talking about the practices that were carried out in the early days before the temple fell. When the temple fell in the days of Lehi, that ended everything. The rabbis didn't like the temple; they didn't want it to come back. The first thing they did, the learned men went and asked the emperor after Vespasian for permission to found a school at Jamnia across the Jordan. He gave them permission and that was the first rabbinical school. The rabbis aren't priests. They teach the rabbinical learning which is another thing. They don't have the rites of the temple anymore. But these people were the covenant people, and they signed up back in those days.

The people run to the banner in their armor in verse 21, and they do that in column four, line six the same way. When they rush to sign up, naturally they put on their armor. They have to be armed. "... rending their garments in token, or as a covenant." That's a very important thing, that rending their garments. This custom of rending the garments and the story of the two garments we'll come to presently. It isn't found in the Old Testament. In verse 21 they tear their garments. There was recently an article by Jonathan Z. Smith called "The Garments of Shame" in which he discusses this old Jewish custom of coming and rending your garments, putting them in a pile, and stamping on them. You say, "May we be trampled on if we break our covenants." That's exactly what they do here. You'll find that article in the journal, History of Religions, 1966, p. 224. It's the same custom we have here. Again, it's not described in the Bible, but it's the old Jewish custom.

Verse 21: "... rending their garments in token, or as a covenant, that they would not forsake the Lord their God; or, in other words, if they should transgress [this is what you call a mystery, when you dramatize a thing and carry it out this way] the commandments of God, or fall into transgression, and be ashamed to take upon them the name of Christ, the Lord should rend them even as they had rent their garments.”

The way Jonathan Z. Smith explains it, they trampled on their garments. In the next verse it says they trampled on them. "... and they cast their garments at the feet of Moroni, saying: We covenant with our God... yea, he may cast us at the feet of our enemies, even as we have cast our garments at thy feet..." So the garments of shame are
both torn and stamped on, the two things they do here. The rending of the garments takes us back to the garment of Joseph, when he was outcast and despised of his brethren. Moroni tells us this story. He recalls an old tale that was known to the Jews; they knew all about it. He says, “. . . let us remember the words of Jacob before his death . . .” You won’t find those words in the Bible. Where does he tell these stories? Well, I’ll tell you where he tells them in just a second. Be patient; don’t leave. “. . . for behold [on his death bed], he saw that a part of the remnant of the coat of Joseph was preserved and had not decayed. And he said—Even as this remnant of garment of my son hath been preserved, so shall a remnant of the seed of my son be preserved by the hand of God and be taken unto himself, while the remainder of the seed of Joseph shall perish, even as the remnant of his garment.”

So half the garment perished and was rotten; the other half was preserved and had not decayed. So he was both sorrowful and joyful at the same time. “Now behold, this giveth my soul sorrow; nevertheless, my soul hath joy in my son . . .” Now there’s a nice contradiction; he joys and sorrows at the same time. This is a classic statement here. Let’s see what Tha‘labī has to say. We have the book of Tha‘labī here. I am very lucky to have it. I have the only copy I have ever seen, although it’s fairly popular. It’s required reading in Moslem universities. I got this in quite fortuitous circumstances.

Ten days before the invasion of Normandy, which I knew all about because I was supposed to (I was the intelligence clerk for the 101st Airborne; we had to be the first ones) I blew every penny I had in George Salby’s shop on Great Russell Street across the street from the British Museum. George Salby is a great big man who has this marvelous bookstore. He has no shelves; he just piles them on the floor like that in great piles. He gets them in that way. He buys whole libraries, and he knows where every book is. It’s marvelous; he can put his hand on any book in the pile. Two Arabists by the name of Howells and Ellis had both died within the month, and he bought both their libraries. So I blew all my money that I had saved in Claremont. I was like a kid in a candy shop with all these things that you couldn’t get anywhere else. It was marvelous, and, of course, Tha‘labī just sent me spinning. The interesting thing is I gave him a check for everything I had. He trusted me, and eighteen months later when the war was over he sent all the stuff to me. Not a single book was missing. He could have got away with anything. He trusted me, I trusted him, and it was a perfect deal. I don’t know whether I’d trust people like that today. I got it all. He sent me the whole library, and I have them—except those I have given away.

When the Persians were converted to Islam (they are the terrible Shiites of today that make all the trouble), they had been fire worshippers before. They knew nothing of the prophets, etc. Islam is based on the Bible. The prophets Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are constantly mentioned in the Koran. They had never heard of them. They didn’t know who they were. So the great Tha‘labī made a famous commentary. This is the accounts of the prophets, how to explain them. His name means fox. He died in the year 1036. He made this survey at the end of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century so the Persians would know what they were talking about when they read the Koran, who the prophets were and what they did.

Where did he get his information? Well, Jerusalem fell at the time of Lehi and again in the time of the Romans. At the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls, they went through the same routine again. As it tells us in the Book of Mormon, Jerusalem has often fallen and been
destroyed and has come back again. This is a routine. After the time of the Romans in the year 70 A.D. when it fell, most of them fled to the one safe place, the very tolerant and receptive Persian Empire. They fled to the Persian Empire at that time and were accommodated there. So there you find settlements of the Jews. What Tha'labi did was to go out and visit these old settlements where he could find the old-fashioned Jews and ask them for stories about the prophets. They would tell him, and he was very careful to document who his informers were. Sometimes he would go back five to eight generations to find out where a story came from. But this is what the Jews used to tell before the fall of the temple, and this is one of the stories that Tha'labi picked up. It's a very important one. He explains this story of the garment of Joseph.

Well, he is talking here about the shirt of Joseph and the two things. This is what he says: “And when Joseph made himself known to his brethren, he asked them about his father. ‘What happened to our father, Jacob?’” He was in Egypt and he was the important man. The brethren had been brought before him, and he said, “What happened to my father after I left?” They said, “He lost his eyesight from weeping.” Then Joseph gave them the garment. He had the good half of the garment with him. That's the part that clung to him and he still wore. Joseph handed them the garment, which is called the qamīs. Our word chemise comes from that. “And this garment was the garment of the Garden of Eden. It had the weave and the pattern of the janna.” That is the Garden of Eden. It is usually rendered just as paradise, before man fell. “It had in it the breath of the garden.” This is important. They believed that garments retained their odor. A person would come to you and say, “You come from Cordoba; let me smell the air of your garments that I may enjoy Cordoba.” The idea is that the air is more important than water. They always talk about the air of a place before they talk about the water—I guess because they didn't have any water. They had varieties of air.

“...so that it never rotted.” It used the word decayed. He saw the part that never decayed. The half he had was the part that “never rotted, never decayed, and its threads never deteriorated. That was its true state.” It kept its true state. There were two parts. “...the remnant of the coat of Joseph which was preserved and had not decayed, whereas the other half shall perish even as the remnant of this garment.” It was decayed and rotten. We'll hear about that one in a minute here. “Joseph gave that garment to them [this is important here:], and this was a garment that had belonged to Abraham.”

The idea of a garment of many colors is an invention. If you look in your Bible every time it mentions many colors the word colors (even in the commentary) is in italics because it is put in there by modern editors. It's found in no ancient source. It's not a garment of many colors at all. A garment of certain marks is the term that's used here. We'll see what it is in a second. “This garment had belonged to Abraham, and it already had a long history.” It's history was lengthy because it went back to the Garden of Eden, you see. That's the garment; it's the only one. Just as we treat the story of Cain and Abel, we trivialize this. We say, “Joseph was the youngest kid, so his father favored him and gave him a pretty garment of many colors.” There is no mention in any ancient source of a garment of many colors. That's an invention of modern editors trying to explain it. But here it was the garment he gave him. It was the garment of the priesthood. No wonder they were jealous of him, they being the elder brothers and he the younger in the patriarchal line coming down from Abraham. This garment had belonged to Abraham and had come down to Joseph instead of to the other brethren.
You always get lost among these little tiny things here. “And he said to them, ‘Go with this very garment and place it upon the face of my father, and his sight will return to him.’” It’s a miraculous garment. “And then come back to me and bring all the family with you.” So they did. This is when the Israelites went into Egypt. They brought Jacob back with them, and the whole family came back to Egypt. Remember the story of Joseph and his brethren. “And when they had turned their faces toward Canaan and finally arrived there, their father, Jacob, said to them, ‘Behold, I detect in this garment the odor . . . .’” Rîha is smell or odor. It’s the same word as ruakh and the English word reek. Reeky is smoke; it’s Rauch in German. They used to call Edinburgh Auld Reekie, because it was a smoky city; they burned coal there. It’s the same word we use. The Hebrew word ruakh is the Spirit, the Holy Ghost. The same word in Arabic is rîha. It’s always feminine. It also means wind. In the Dead Sea Scrolls it has led to lots of controversy because when it talks about the rîh, does it mean spirit or wind? For example, in the story of Abraham in Egypt, an evil spirit has come. Or is it an evil wind? The Jewish scholars don’t like “evil spirit,” so they change it to “evil wind.” It can be read “evil wind” all right, but it obviously means (and they admit it) an evil spirit came upon Pharaoh.

This means “I detect, I perceive, I note.” (He’s blind, you see.) “. . . the odor, the spirit, the smell of Joseph, if you do not think me out of my head from old age and a bit barmy.” It talks about the spirit that is in it, the east wind that has brought it, etc. And this is a very important thing: “When they placed it upon the face of Jacob, he smelled also the smell of the Garden of Eden. For behold there is not in all the earth another garment that has that smell in it.” This is a unique thing; this is the garment. “For there is not in any other garment on earth of the winds of the garden of Eden, unless it is in this one garment.” So you can see why the brethren were so jealous; it was the garment of the priesthood. The commentator says he recognized that it was Joseph’s garment by feeling it first because it had three marks in it.

What they translate as “coat of many colors” is first kêtônet. Our word cotton is related to that. Kêtônet is a cotton shirt. The Hebrew is kêtônet passim. That means it reached down to his wrists and his ankles. The Hebrew actually tells us that it was of adequate length. A garment which is passim means a long garment which reaches down to the wrists and to the ankles. It’s quite different [from the other story]; there’s no mention of color there of any kind. The Vulgate says it was tunicam polymitam, which means it was worked very subtly with extra threads. Polymitam means “extra thread work, special embroidery, special technique.” The Greek is chitona poikila. Poikilos means “tattoed, embroidered, elaborate work.” A derived term of poikila is “of various colors, with spots or dots.” But it means with marks on something. Here it says he knew it because it had three marks on it. He recognized it from the marks. Of course, they couldn’t have been colored marks because he was blind when he felt the marks. He recognized it as belonging to his son Joseph.

Then Judah says, “It was I who took the shirt which was dipped in blood to Jacob, and it was I who reported to him that Joseph had been eaten by a bear.” That’s what caused him such terrible sorrow. He asked Joseph, “Therefore, to atone for that let me be the one to take the sound part to him.” Another source tells us that it was Judah. (I’ll get this right—Monday morning is an awful time. All the meetings, Sunday School lesson, priesthood lesson, fireside all at once and then no sleep.) “It was I who took the shirt that was dabbled in blood and gave it to Jacob and made him cry his eyes out; therefore, it is only right that
I should be the one permitted to take this whole part of the shirt to him that his rejoicing
in receiving it may be as great as his sorrow was in receiving the other, and joy would
follow sorrow.”

Notice that his joy would be as great as his sorrow was. It says here [in Alma 46:25], “Now
behold, this giveth my soul sorrow; nevertheless, my soul hath joy . . .” It’s the same story
he is telling here. The only person that reports this anywhere is Tha‘labî. You won’t find it
in the Talmud. You won’t find it in the Midrash or the Mishnah. You won’t find it in the
Bible. Where did Joseph Smith pick it up? He tells us it was an old story, familiar to the
Nephites. He says here [in Alma 46:24] “. . . let us remember the words of Jacob.” He is
telling the same story here.

Now let’s see what we left out here. Oh, the garment was rent. There’s no tradition
anywhere that the garment was rent, except the Arabs again have a famous story: A
student was working for a master as an apprentice, and they said to him, “Does your
master feed you well? Does he care for you well?”

The student says, “Verily, if my master owned a house full of needles and Jacob came to
him and begged for the use of a needle for one hour that he might sew up the torn
garment of his son Joseph, he would refuse to lend it to him. That’s the kind of man I’m
working for.” The point is that it takes for granted the torn garment that Jacob wanted to
sew up, that Joseph’s garment was torn in two parts. The one part was spoiled, and one
part never rotted. It belonged to Abraham, and it went back to Adam. In the tradition it
was the garment of the garden, and it had the marks on it. That’s why Jacob recognized it,
and that’s why the brethren were jealous obviously. It was the greatest favor he could
possibly give him. This is a great thing. Here we get something in the Book of Mormon
that really “sews things up.”

Then it goes on to his dialogue with death. It says all this happened on Jacob’s death bed.
This is a dialogue between Jacob and death, which is a very important incidentally. It has
to do with another subject. He says, “. . . let us remember the words of Jacob, before his
death, for behold, he saw that a part of the remnant of the coat of Joseph was preserved
and had not decayed.” It uses the very words here. There was no saqîm, which means a
weakening of fiber, a sickness, a breakdown of any kind. “And he said—Even as this
remnant of garment of my son hath been preserved, so shall a remnant of the seed of my
son be preserved by the hand of God.” He makes this comparison. This is the other source:
“The people came running, rending their garments, putting them in a pile and stepping
on them.” That’s Jonathan Smith’s article, which was in 1966. The first person to notice
the importance of this treading on the garments was in 1966. All these things are here,
these old Jewish customs.

He says don’t get the “good guy” illusion here because of this. The remnant that perishes
may even be our descendants, even ourselves. Don’t think that just because we are not
Lamanites this doesn’t apply to us. Verse 27: “And now who knoweth but what the
remnant of the seed of Joseph, which shall perish as his garment, are those who have
dissented from us? Yea, and even it shall be ourselves if we do not stand fast in the faith
of Christ.”

Then the banner is the type of the nation, as we saw before, the type of Joseph’s garment
with the garment of Kawe. In verse 26 it says, “Now behold, this was the language of
Jacob.” They had the written document; it was among the brass plates probably. But that was the story. That’s the way language is always used in the Book of Mormon—as *pah*, “the speech, the lip.” He calls it an old story. He says, “Let us remember the words of Jacob” when he starts out. Then he ends up by saying, “Now behold, this was the language of Jacob.” They had the records.

Then in verse 30 Amalickiah makes the standard move. The dissenting party seeks support in another country, as they do today. Cuba seeks support from the Soviets, and Pinochet seeks support from us. They divide that way. With North and South Korea, one seeks support from China and the other from the United Nations, mostly the United States. In ancient times the terrible general, Joab, went down and conquered Arabia. Hadad was the Arab prince down there. He fled to Egypt and married Pharaoh’s daughter. That Pharaoh was Sheshonk whose other daughter married King Solomon. The three greatest buildings Solomon built were the temple, his own palace, and the palace he built for the daughter of the king of Egypt. They were both sparring to get Egypt’s support in this division. When he [Joab] caused the trouble, Hadad went and married another daughter at the court of Egypt and started stirring up trouble for Solomon. This always happens. You go and make an alliance with a stronger nation, and then there’s trouble. In verse 30 Amalickiah skips out. It’s too much for him. Notice, he’s definitely in the minority. It says people don’t like him anyway.

Verse 29: “And it came to pass that when Amalickiah saw that the people of Moroni were more numerous than the Amalickiahites—and he also saw that his people were doubtful concerning the justice of the cause.” He hadn’t convinced them completely, you see. He wasn’t the popular party anymore. His own people were doubting it. He got the message, and he skipped out. He was an opportunist and a very shrewd man. You see what he was going to do. Moroni “thought to cut off the people of Amalickiah.” The one thing he didn’t want them to do was to go and join the Lamanites, of course. This was a standard procedure. The Lamanites were more fed up on war than the Nephites were. They didn’t want any at all because they had lost to Moroni. Moroni knew that he would stir up the Lamanites to anger. He didn’t succeed in doing that, but he got the king on his side. Then the king started stirring things up. Then all he had to do was bump off the king and take over. We’ll see what happened. [They thought] if Amalickiah goes out and gets the Lamanites with him, we are going to be in real trouble. That was very alarming. Therefore, the only thing he could do was to march out and “cut off the course of Amalickiah in the wilderness” as quickly as he possibly could, while he was still in the wilderness before he had made contact with the Lamanites. “And it came to pass that he did according to his desires, and marched forth into the wilderness, and headed the armies of Amalickiah.” They were cut off, but he skipped out and fled with a small band.

It reminds you of Marcos and people like that. We have dictators do this all the time. What do you do with the rest of them, the ones that had surrendered, that he had cut off? The real troublemaker and a small number of his men got over and joined the Lamanites. Moroni had plenary power; he could do anything he wanted during this crisis until the issue was settled. We are told that Amalickiah’s own people were doubtful as to the justice of their cause, so they were not going to make much trouble. They were going to surrender willingly. They did because they had doubts all along. Only a few held out. They were still the enemy under arms. They refused to make any concessions at all, so the battle went on as far as they were concerned. They continued fighting. He wasn’t executing prisoners of war or anything like that. He was just continuing the battle, as he does later with Zerahemnah. The battle would continue until the opposition was stopped. Whoever
wanted to stop was free to do so. As I said, this was not the killing of prisoners of war or anything like that. “. . . whomsoever of the Amalickiahites that would not enter into a covenant to support the cause of freedom . . . he caused to be put to death [in other words, if you don’t sign the surrender you are still at war]; and there were but few who denied the covenant of freedom.”

The point is they were out to rouse the Lamanites and had only to surrender to be free. Only a small number still held out. It was a very dangerous situation, and he took this desperate action and did overwhelm them. All they had to do was drop their swords and they were all right, but they wouldn’t do it. Then he planted the standard of liberty on all the towers. Was he forcing people to be free? (I used to say Ernest Wilkinson was going to write a book on free agency and how to enforce it.) What he did give them was peace, but it only lasted four years. Then all hell broke out again. There was not a permanent peace; things were still very tense here. The constitution of Benjamin and Mosiah guaranteed absolute freedom of speech and opinion, so they were able to continue here [for four years] with much peace and rejoicing.

Now we have an extremely interesting note here. Verse 40: “And there were some who died with fevers, which at some seasons of the year were very frequent in the land—but not so much so with fevers, because of the excellent qualities of the many plants and roots which God had prepared to remove the cause of diseases, to which men were subject by the nature of the climate.” It says by nature of the climate there were certain diseases, especially fevers, in the land. They were able to get the best of them by many plants and roots. You notice how desperately we are searching in the jungles of Central and South America for roots. We know there are thousands of possible remedies that are disappearing every day. They say every fifteen seconds [another] species of plant disappears forever the way they are cutting down those forests there at tremendous rates to make grazing land for McDonalds. That’s where the meat goes, incidentally. But notice how the Book of Mormon is ahead here with fevers, etc. The plants and roots which God had prepared could conquer the fevers. They were able to control fevers because of the very good remedies they had from these tropical plants. Quinine wasn’t discovered until 1840. Nobody knew that the quinine bark would cure these fevers until then. They didn’t know what could cure them. They didn’t know about mosquitoes or anything else. Again, here we have a wonderful insight. There are these occasional flashes of background in the Book of Mormon, which for the most part concentrate intently on the issues of salvation. But here it just happens to note in passing (it’s good to note) that it was fever country and there were diseases to which men were subject by the nature of the climate, which was tropical and humid. The fevers were held under control by the most excellent quality of the plants.

Consider the astonishing wealth of evidence in this one chapter here. The question immediately arises, can Joseph keep up the pace? We could have spent the whole semester on this chapter with all these things. Can he keep making so many “bull’s eyes,” one after the other, things that nobody would have guessed back then. As I said, quinine, the first remedy to be discovered, was in 1840. But they knew all about this in the Book of Mormon. It was tropical, and they knew what to do about it. For the first time within the last ten years we are suddenly beginning to realize that as those tropical forests go we will lose probably the best remedies possible for many diseases. They talk about curing AIDS and all sorts of things, if we can only have time to test the numerous plants and roots.

Now we have a very important thing. In this chapter of the Book of Mormon four
different cultures are mentioned—four sharply marked cultures, which are hostile to each other. They are all related. We are going to list them this way. First of all, you will find the brotherhoods. We’ll call them that. These are very ancient societies that you will find from the earliest times. The first I’m going to call “the brotherhoods.” That’s what Santillana calls them, for example—the brotherhoods that Newton identified himself with. You recognize them in the Book of Mormon; they flourish. They are the Rechabites, the people that flee out into the desert. But they don’t flee disorganized, just to become desert wanderers, food gatherers, or anything like that. They are organized, and they form a closed society. Of course, this is Lehi and Nephi and Mosiah. Remember, Nephi leaves as soon as they land in the new world and goes out. They are very well organized. They build a temple. They keep the ordinances, etc. They are a brotherhood, brothers and sisters. It tells us how they lived and it describes their acts by the Waters of Mormon. It describes the Waters of Mormon so beautifully. There’s an ecstatic passage about the Waters of Mormon, and there is just such a passage in the scroll about the beauties of the place where they went out to settle. It mentions the trees that grow there, the groves. Remember, it keeps repeating how beautiful it is because there is salvation there.

The people of Ammon were the same way, very well organized. They were living the gospel. They are subdued minorities that are described in the Book of Mormon. They never dominate in the Book of Mormon as the humble followers of Christ. There are always a few humble followers of Christ. You find these everywhere, such as the Egyptian phylai. The knowledge of Egypt was not general. It was not known to [the people]. It was always reserved to the phylai of priests, certain groups of priests. They call them the sês. A beautiful example of that is from the two Petosirises. You will find a couple of dozen passages right out of the Old Testament, way back earlier than that. They won’t accept that. Lefebure, who made a thorough study of Petosiris II, said it was just a coincidence that they taught the same thing. The Egyptian priests were organized, and the knowledge was secret. They had ordinances into which you would enter. It was not all secret. They preached the gospel, but there was certain knowledge they kept to themselves. They didn’t shout from the housetops.

Incidentally, I have written more than one article on each one of these cultures in Gentile journals. On this one I would certainly [include] “Evangelium Quadraginta Dierum,” a study in the Revue de Qumran on the Qumran society, which was just such a society. Then we have other cases like the forty-day ministry of Christ. During the forty days after the resurrection of Christ, we are told he taught the apostles in secret, and he taught them in secret before. They said, why do you speak to us openly? You speak to all the rest of them in parables. Why do you speak to them in parables and speak to us openly in the clear? “He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.” (Matthew 13:11.) It was a closed society with these instructions. They were the brethren and called each other “brother and sister.” They were the humble followers of Christ. These same societies existed throughout the ancient world. The Egyptians are a classic example. They are Hermetic societies. Just how old are they? That’s much debated about. We say something is hermetically sealed. Hermes was the Egyptian Thoth, and in the beginning he taught the books of wisdom. Secret societies of holy men were formed around him. Hermetic literature appeared very suddenly in the fifteenth century and got the Europeans all excited. They thought, this is Hermes; this is the old knowledge that goes back to the beginning. Then in 1613 Casaubon showed that it was probably a production of the Christian period, first or second century, and wasn’t ancient at all. But now we know it
was ancient because it just picked up an ancient thread and elaborated on that. You find Hermetic societies all doing about the same sort of things. It means going back to Hermes, the original wise man who taught in the beginning. I have the whole book of the Hermetic writings. They teach things that are very familiar in the gospel. There’s nothing strange about them.

Then along with that are the Orphic societies. We have the Orphic gold plates, for example. They are very much like Lehi’s story. Brother Wilfred Griggs wrote an article about that. And, of course, we all know about the Pythagoreans, who lived in sacred communities and gave us the Pythagorean theory. They studied cosmology. They all studied these things. They all dressed in white, had common meals, and lived with their families there in sacred societies. They inspired the rage of all the others living around them and were persecuted and exterminated for that reason. They lived in the wealthy, lavish society of southern Italy at that time. Then there was Plato’s Lyceum. It’s always this idea of a group of philosophers or men in the know, those who understand, those who have been initiated. If you don’t understand what they are doing, if you are not in on it or are not interested, you can’t be initiated because you wouldn’t qualify. You wouldn’t want it; you don’t know anything about it.

A good example of that is “The Passing of the Church,” that article in Church History [June 1961, pp. 131-54].² That passed away. The Catholics said the gospel had to be preached from the housetops. There was no initiation; there were no secrets in the early church at all. Well, don’t fool yourself; there were all kinds. After the resurrection he came and taught them. For the first time they knew what he was talking about. Both in 3 Nephi in the Book of Mormon and at the end of Mark, beginning with Moses and the prophets he laid all the scriptures open to them. Then for the first time their eyes were opened. Then they understood for the first time, and this was after the resurrection. We don’t have a word of the sermon he taught them. Anytime you find a very early Christian writing it is almost bound to begin, “This is the secret teaching that Jesus gave the apostles after the resurrection.” The people that have that knowledge call themselves Gnostics (the Knowers). Gnostics are fake Hermetics; they are fake brotherhoods. They did everything to fake. We have a great literature [on them]. The second century is the century of heresy. It’s not the century of enlightenment. Epiphanius has listed 88 sects of Gnostics of that time, each one claiming that it was the original church founded by Jesus and it was based on the secret knowledge that he gave the apostles after the resurrection. They were the Gnostics. This recognized the existence of the brotherhoods always.

Then there are the Seven Wise Men. If you go back to archaic times, there’s the idea that there were Seven Wise Men. They came together once every seven years and compared notes. Then they went out seeking and spreading wisdom, spreading healing throughout the human race. These were the sophoi, the wise men that traveled. They are connected with the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus. They formed a sacred society, and Qumran is mixed up with the sacred society. Many people claimed that they were the Seven Sleepers. They fell asleep in a cave and slept for several hundred years and then came alive again. As I said, in 1964 I went out to Raqim, south of Amman there, with Auni Dajani, who was the head of archaeology for Jordan. We visited the settlement and it was just like Qumran; they had everything there. But I went back ten years later and what had happened? They were building a huge mosque there. They have changed the whole thing, and they say the original Seven Sleepers were here. They have made a great Moslem shrine of it now. It shows how you can make a holy place overnight like that. They have invented the whole thing. But they are called “the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus,” so I don’t think they would be
the Seven Sleepers of Palestine. I wrote a long article on that in the *Revue de Qumran.*

Then among the Moslems you have the same society. They are the Sufis. And remember Abraham had such a society, the 318 which he circumcised and took into the covenant. You couldn’t be a follower of Abraham unless you were taken into the covenant. The Cabala is very important. (You can spell it almost any way you want. They usually spell it with one *l* today.) *Cabal* means to receive—what you have received back from Adam. [They claim] that it is the original knowledge, the gospel preached by Adam, then handed down through Seth to Noah, Enoch, Abraham and right down to our times. This is called the Cabala, the received knowledge that went back to the beginning. They form themselves into closed societies which are very secret. They study very advanced knowledge, astronomy mostly. That’s was you get in the book of Abraham. In the West they flourished as the Cathari, the Bogomils, the Waldensians, etc. It’s very interesting. When I was on a mission I was in the Black Forest most of the time. I came upon a man who said he was one of the Waldensians. He asked me to go out and visit their people. They lived in a little village way out of the way. Even the bus didn’t go there. All the names in the cemetery were French. They were Waldensians who had fled in the thirteenth century and had lived there ever since. They claimed to be a Brotherhood, and that’s why they were driven out. We have these societies in Europe. A book that has caused quite a flurry recently is called *Holy Blood, Holy Grail,* by three English BBC investigators. It goes into that particular subject. You can get it in the Bookstore.

Then in modern times Utopian societies flourished that tried to get back to that. In America they reached their peak in the 1840s. There were half a dozen very much like the Church. In fact, [section 49] of the Doctrine and Covenants deals specifically with the Shakers. They were one of those groups. There’s a recent volume of *National Geographic* on the Shakers. They reached their peak in 1840-50. One of the members of the Church had been an active Shaker, and the brethren were sent to the Shakers to preach them the gospel, but were told, “Don’t let them preach it to you.” Today there are twelve members left of the Shakers. They still have their society. They ate at a common table and had all their things in common, etc. They had all these idealistic ways. They believed that they had to live in complete chastity; therefore, they never married. But that wasn’t why they dwindled away to nothing. They grew very rapidly and were very popular when people wanted to retreat and join and finish their lives with them. That didn’t stop it; they just withered up is all. So many of these, like the Amana Society, are little and rather picturesque today—the Owenites and various model communities in New England. The first spiritualists started out in the same way. They started out in Maine and then they moved to Rochester, New York, right near Joseph Smith. Within ten years they had ten million members. Today there is nothing left of them. They tried to be these secret societies. The most interesting was [led by] a man called Jung-Stilling in the eighteenth century. He got three million acres of land from the Czar Alexander I of Russia for his people. They got themselves covered wagons and started migrating. Incidentally, the three million acres were in Bessarabia on the eastern shore of the Black Sea. It was good land, and they started to go there and do their pioneering. He was going to find a new Zion. There was all this talk about Zion. On the way he had a vision that told him that was not the place. Another people would do it later. They would go in the opposite direction and would be led by a man with his name, Jung. So that ended the movement. He became a very famous mystic at the time.

Even in primitive societies you have fraters and clans. They are divided. The Hopis are divided into the Antelope Clan, the Snake Clan, the Bear Clan and the Turtle Clan. They
have their secrets, their initiations, etc. They are brotherhoods. You find these brotherhoods everywhere. And then you find monastic movements, beginning with monasticism in the fourth century with St. Pachomius and naturally St. Anthony—then going on to Cluny and the Cistercians. They became rich and powerful, but they were closed societies of brotherhood living together, sharing secret knowledge with initiates, etc.

Lehi was contemporary with the Buddha. Everywhere you have Buddhist monasteries all over the East, as you know—the monastic movements of the Buddhist brethren, succeeding the Lamas brethren, who were earlier. They are all the same thing. They live in these great monasteries. They think they are living the life of angels, a heavenly existence, etc. They are the brotherhoods. You find them Christian; you find them Buddhist, and you find them among the Moslems. This is our Type I, the brotherhoods, and they exist in the Book of Mormon. We want to consider the others because they have relevance.

In Alma 47 it becomes clear that there are different kinds of civilizations we are dealing with. We said last time that there are four different kinds. Why should there be four? Throughout the world—down at Lincoln Beach and all over South America, North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa you will find petroglyphs, and the commonest of all petroglyphs is this. That’s the quadrata. What do you think this stands for? It’s the sign of the cosmos. How do you think the most primitive people would be aware of the fact that it should be divided into no less than four parts? Those people are aware of it being on the earth because they look at the sky. What do you learn from the sky? In what direction does the sun rise? The sun goes down in the west and it comes up again in the east. Everybody notices that, you know. But today you’ll notice an interesting thing. This week we have the equinox. The ancients observed very closely the rising and setting of the sun. We know that. All over the world, especially in northern Europe, you find the megalithic stone circles. The Old Testament is full of them. Remember, Jacob set up the circle of twelve stones, which was very important. The covenant between Laban and Jacob was made at the ring of the twelve stones at dawn just as the sun came up. They marked the rising and setting of the sun very closely because it concerned them very much. If you’ll notice, there’s where the sun rose this morning, but tomorrow it will rise up there. Then it will go farther and farther north. Then you get the fixed north star that doesn’t move. Then all of a sudden at the solstice it changes its direction and starts back. This week it gets right in the middle. It’s half way between all the way south that it goes and all the way north. Then when you get up in the north it becomes very marked and very important to notice, because it means a great deal. So the earth is divided into four parts.

What goes along with these four parts, these four directions? Well, what about the four winds. Are there just four winds? No, but we gage them as four winds because that’s the way we can locate them on this pattern—north, south, east, west. There’s a northeast wind and then there’s a north by northwest wind, etc. You divide the windrows up on the quadrata pattern. Everything is in four. Along with that we have the four seasons. They are very important; they are basic.

What about human nature? You all know about that. How many humors do we have, Sister Alburn? Humors are the types of human beings. The four humors, yes. And what are they? Does anybody know what they are? The choleric (that’s bile), the melancholic (black bile), the phlegmatic, and the sanguine. Those are the four tempers. The sanguine is the eager beaver. The phlegmatic is the very opposite. The choleric is the short-tempered person who is hard to get along with. The melancholic person is the sad and brooding person, the lean and hungry type. There are these four types. Nobody is completely one type, but everybody is dominant in one type or the other. We still say that. There’s Type A and Type B. Type A, like me, gets heart attacks, and Type B doesn’t. We divide into types; we always have. That has been done since ancient times. This is the way the
ancients divided it up. We are all mixtures of all four. There’s some of all of them in all of you, but one type will dominate in your particular case.

Far more elementary than the four types are the elements. How many elements are there? What are the four elements supposed to be? Earth, air, water, and fire in their degrees of coarseness. This is very ancient too. The earth is the heaviest, water is next, air is next, and fire is the lightest of all. You go up and up. But there are mixtures. The whole of medieval surgery, based on Galen, was that everybody is a mixture of these tempers. When one of these gets out of hand, when you get too much of one temper or one element, then a person is sick. You have to cure them and bring them to a balance again. So we have the four elements of which everything is composed. What are the four qualities of these elements? Wet, dry, hot, and cold. Everything falls into four, so it is natural that we should have four types of societies. Actually it would seem that there are these four types. They still talk about them. They thought they were brand new discoveries recently when people like Ruth Benedict at Columbia wrote a sensational book which he titled *The Patterns of Culture*. And in the early nineteenth century Kretschmer wrote *The Physical Build and Character* on the four physical builds. There’s the picnic type (the fat type), the athletic type (the balanced type), the kinesthetic type (the long, thin type), etc. So it goes, the four types of being. This was taken as real science all through the nineteenth century. And they are always mixed.

Now the Book of Mormon gives us four societies, and they are sharply defined in the Book of Mormon. They are always in conflict; they hate each other. They are all mixed too. We have some of this in all of us, as Walt Whitman tells us. There are attractions to each type, and there are virtues in each type—attractive qualities and weaknesses and vices in each type. The excess of any of them is ruin. We’ll put the four types on the board that we have in the Book of Mormon here and everywhere else. First I talked about the brotherhoods. That’s a fancy name to give them. This is unique, set apart, something strange. This is the church. These are the people of Israel. These are the chosen people that there are on the earth, an elect and special group. They have information that is not known to others because others aren’t willing to share it. Others view it with hostility.

I call them the brotherhoods because that’s what Santillana and Newton call them. We belong to such a society. It’s not just that you are members of the Church, but being Mormons is something different. That’s it. There’s something that people can’t grasp there and can’t come to terms with. We do our darndest to come to terms with the world. We do everything we can to be worldly. Nothing could be more worldly than a ZCMI catalog or something like that. That’s not just worldly—that’s Babylonian.

There have always been these brotherhoods. You’ll find them within tribes and everywhere else. We talked about the Rechabites, the people that left. They were a special group. In Lehi’s time they were the only people that were trusted to serve in the temple. During a time of troubles only they stood up for Israel. They went out in the desert when the city was so corrupt, lived by themselves, and waited for more light and truth in a family organization. That’s exactly what the people do in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

I have written two rather long articles. One is called “The Companions of the Cave” and was in the *Revue de Qumran*. It shows that there were such societies in the desert long before and long after the Dead Sea Scrolls people. The other one is called “The Gospel of the Forty Days.” That was in the Dutch publication called the *Vigiliae Christianae*. When the Lord returned after the forty days, it tells us at the end of the Gospel of Mark he came
together with [the apostles]. They hadn’t believed in the resurrection. Beginning with Moses and the prophets he went through all the scriptures and explained all things to them. Then their eyes were opened. But we are not given a word of the sermon he taught them. In the Book of Mormon it tells us the very same thing. He asked for the scriptures to be brought. Beginning with Moses he went through everything and made sure it was all there and filled in the blanks. He pulled out the book of Malachi which had been written since they had left Jerusalem. He brought them up to date and turned the scriptures over to them. These were people who had that knowledge that the Lord taught after the resurrection.

For the last fifty years they have been finding [documents]. The Coptic library in Egypt, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and other collections have been found. But a Christian document is almost bound to begin, “This is the secret teaching the Lord gave to the apostles after the resurrection.” The people that [claimed to have] that secret teaching, kept it to themselves and kept themselves in closed societies. They were the people that claimed that secret knowledge. They claimed it, but they didn’t have it. There’s a marvelous passage about that. The earliest church historian, Hegesipus, is quoted in Eusebius as saying as long as there was a living apostle these people couldn’t emerge, but as soon as the last witness was dead, they crawled out of the woodwork. Everywhere everybody was claiming he had the secret knowledge that Christ gave the apostles and he was to be the head. He knew the knowledge, and that knowledge was called the *gnosis*, like our word *know*. The Gnostics come under the brotherhoods. There were many of them. They are the people that know, that had the knowledge. They claimed to have it. Which one of them did have it? Well, Epiphanius listed some eighty-eight different sects, each of them claiming to have it. We have the writings of many of them. The Coptic Scrolls of the Chenoboskion Library [Nag Hammadi] are full of it. We have the whole library here and about five percent of the Dead Sea Scrolls. But this is a large library, and it’s the same thing. They formed these brotherhoods that were very secret. They had prophecy. Sometimes they went extreme. They would go around always dressed in white. They had strict rules of diet. Some of them had strict rules of chastity. They followed the usual mystic societies. You can think of a lot of those. They go back to the earliest times. The *phylai* of Egyptian priests right in the beginning followed this pattern. They shaved their heads, bathed frequently, and wore their white robes. They had their secret language in communicating among themselves in their cosmic teachings. Their teachings were only known to themselves. That’s why we have never been able to read the hieroglyphs since. Today they are just beginning to find out that that’s it. Hieroglyphs were meant for such people as that. They don’t say all that we think they say, especially some of the stories that we thought were little folk tales, etc. But you have this sort of thing.

There is a very interesting and complete writing by an Egyptian priest called Petosiris, who you think just might be quoting the Bible all the way through. In fact, he is quoting the Bible. Then you have the Seven Wise Men that go back to the beginning, the wisest men in the world. They traveled around from place to place taking wisdom and receiving wisdom. They went through the world, always wandering, viewing God and his works, and bringing solace, comfort and healing to the human race. They again went with nothing but a staff and a robe. Jesus is confused [with them]. The statue of Peter in St. Peter’s is a statue of a pretended Sophist. They were common just after the time of Christ. They went around bringing healing to the human race. Sometimes once a year and sometimes once in seven years, they would come together to compare notes and share their secret signs and symbols and all that sort of thing. And we have the Hermetic societies and the Orphic mysteries. The best known of all these is the Pythagorean society.
They gave us the Pythagorean theorem and a lot of other wisdom. Pythagoras was a great thinker at the time of Lehi. They formed their communities in southern Italy and were persecuted out of existence. These people always excite suspicion and fear wherever they go, because they keep to themselves, have these unusual powers, and view the heavens. To Pythagoras we owe a great deal of knowledge. Then Plato followed his pattern with the lyceum. We mentioned the Cathari. They come down to the Middle Ages.

We are talking about the Book of Mormon now. Lehi had such a community. They were out in the desert by themselves. When they settled in the new country before they were here long, Nephi and his people had to break away again because the others had become corrupt. Notice, there was this constant friction. Here we have two different types of civilization and two different attitudes. Laman and Lemuel weren’t just cool to Lehi; they hated his guts. They planned to kill their father. He led them out away from [civilization]. All these years we might have been living in Jerusalem enjoying things [they said]. That takes us to the second type of civilization we have in the Book of Mormon. But Mosiah led his people out, and then Ammon did. Alma especially led them out by the Waters of Mormon. You’d think there was another Qumran there. There they were baptized and took their vows. They lived in a very happy surrounding and farmed, as they should. It was an idealistic community, but the gospel was their whole life. These people are the brotherhoods; they call each other brothers and sisters. Later on in the eighteenth century there were utopian societies everywhere. Beginning way back in 1600 we have the four great utopias.

[Answer to question about the Deseret alphabet:] The great Eduard Meyer, who was the greatest authority on ancient history perhaps who ever lived, was fascinated by Joseph Smith. But it was Brigham Young who was responsible for the Deseret alphabet. Meyer thought the Deseret alphabet was the greatest production of the nineteenth century—not just of the Mormon church. He said that was a mark of pure genius and inspiration. Of course, we didn’t use it. It was simple and practical. It set them apart from the world. It was the last step to have this Deseret alphabet. It’s an important thing. A little while ago you could get Deseret alphabet books in any book store in Salt Lake City. You can’t anymore; they’ve all been snapped up. I used to have quite a lot of them. I’d give them away for presents. I don’t have any more. They are worth something now, collector’s items. That’s true, the Deseret alphabet was a thing that distinctly set them apart. Not only were they [the brotherhoods] devout and religious people, “holy men ye know not of,” as the Doctrine and Covenants says, but they were very intellectual. This was Pythagoras. They studied cosmology and the like. The wise men were sprung from them. We have utopian societies which emphasized all these things. In 1616 there was Thomas Campanella’s City of the Sun, and there was Francis Bacon’s New Atlantis. The classic one was Thomas More’s Utopia in 1525. He gave it the name Utopia, and ever since there have been Utopian societies.

In Joseph Smith’s time there were Utopian societies all over the place, resembling the Church very much in some things. In D&C 49 the brethren were sent off on a mission to the Shakers. It said they have many good truths, but in many things they are mistaken. They wanted to live pure from the world. They lived all together, shared a common table, lived in common houses, etc. In a very recent issue, National Geographic has a long spiel on the Shakers. Their membership today is twelve members. There are two men and ten old ladies. That’s what is left of them. Well, they didn’t marry. They had these strict rules of chastity. But that didn’t keep it from growing. There were plenty of people who wished to join it, not only retire to it. They saw no reason why they shouldn’t live that way. It
grew very rapidly and became very large. It reached its peak between 1840 and 1845, and then it just dwindled away. Today they have this great property. They have all their establishments and their houses. They are very well known. It tells us in this article that Bill Cosby just paid $80,000 for a chair, just a simple wooden chair, because their handwork was so perfect and so beautiful. They were dedicated to perfection. But their concern with these things was materialistic too. A candelabrum sold for $100,000. Well, that’s how rare those things are. It’s the rarity that gives them their value more than anything, because this is the last that will ever be made. These old people now are the last of the Shakers. When they die there won’t be any more left. There were many societies in Joseph Smith’s day like that. There was the Amana society; they are still hanging on. There were the Owenites, and there were all sorts of idealistic societies.

Spiritualism began with a family in Maine and moved to Rochester, New York. They had all these spirit rappings, table movings, etc. It grew very rapidly, and they sent missionaries to Europe. Daniel Home was sensational in the things he could do. Within twenty years they had ten million members. Then they increased to fourteen million members. Today there aren’t any. Oh, you see a spiritualist scattered here and there. This is the way it goes. But Joseph Smith was different. It didn’t go that way at all. It was not a fad. People have this idea of an idealistic society, but it will only work within the gospel. So the work went on.

Within so-called primitive societies you always find fratries and clans. The Egyptian phylais or priests had always lived this holy way. In the fourth century St. Anthony, a rich young man in Alexandria, which was a completely Christian city, saw that the people were living very wickedly. They were not living the way the gospel said they should live, so he went out and became the founder of monasticism, as you all know. St. Anthony went out in the desert and settled there. This spread to Cluny in [France] in the sixth century. Then it went up to England and flourished in the sixteenth century. They became the very rich Cistercians. Then there were the mendicant orders like the Franciscans, the Dominicans, etc. These monastic orders are all brotherhoods. They call each other “brother.” They wear long robes and eat at common refectories, common tables. They practice chastity and go around doing good. They spend their time copying books and engaging mostly in prayer. Some of them are very intellectual. The Jesuits are the classic example of that.

The great monastic systems we think of are the Buddhists. Buddha was a contemporary of Lehi. He started that going. In China, Tibet, and Japan you find Buddhist monasteries with monks in their long robes. Some are Lamaists. They compromised with the Buddhists, so you have the Buddhists and the Lamaists. More Buddhists than anything else live in these monasteries. In Europe or anywhere else they ring their bells and have their dinners. They spend their time reading their books and copy their scriptures. They cultivate their gardens, because they are agricultural people. They support themselves, either by that or by begging. They go throughout the world. We find the monastic orders everywhere, including the Christian monastic orders.

[Answer to question about the Law of Consecration:] Yes, this is supposed to be the Law of Consecration. They consecrate everything they have. They take the three laws of chastity, poverty, and obedience. You are not your own master. We take the vows of obedience, chastity, and consecration, which they call the law of poverty. You don’t have any more property than you need. You have enough to live on and that’s it. They have consecration too. They consecrate everything. Their time, their lives, and everything else are consecrated to the building up of the kingdom. These are very close parallels you
might say. We find these in the cases of Lehi, Nephi, Mosiah, and Ammon. In Alma’s case it is described as such.

Let’s get to the second type of society then. That is what is always called “the world.” We know what that is. (I should have brought along my New Testament). Incidentally, the expression “in the world but not of the world” is not found in the Bible at all. We try to justify ourselves. “We’re being in the world but not of the world.” Oh, no. In the epistle of John he tells us you cannot be in the world without being of the world. Come out of the world. We like to have both today. As Brigham Young said, there is nothing in the world more painful and hard—that will tear you apart like trying to have it both ways at once. In John 14–17, where the Lord is praying in the garden, he says, I pray not for the world but those who have come out of the world. He prays for the apostles and names them. They are all brothers. He prays that they may be one, as he is with the Father. For three chapters he goes on and on in the book of John in which they are all together. This is atonement; this is at-one-ment. But not of the world. [The Savior said] I have called them out of the world, and the world hateth them because the world has hated me. There is hate between them, you see.

[Answer to question about “being in the world but not of the world.”] Oh, I know, some people think you can do both, but you can’t. Oh, there’s all sorts of rationalization if you want to live in the world. That’s what it is, I assure you. This has bothered lots of brethren; I can tell you that. How are we going to come out of the world? This is when we drop the enrollment and have no trouble in overcrowded rooms. As the Lord says in the epistle of John, you cannot be in the world and not of the world. What is the world? We’ve got to define it. It’s beautifully described in Revelation 18 where it describes all the good things that are for sale, the fast transportation, the chariots, the silks and satins and precious things, and the souls of men. You can buy anything. You can have anything in this world for money. That’s what marks this world. The Lord says to the apostles [in John 14:30]: “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” When Satan tells Adam, “I am the God of this world,” he is right. Satan tells the truth about all sorts of things, just as he says you can have anything in this world for money, because he has fixed it that way. You can go into those things.

You can spend your days straightening nails if you will. I don’t think that’s a profitable or a holy calling at all—straightening nails just to be straightening them. It reminds you of Diogenes rolling his barrel. Everybody was so busy in Athens making money. Diogenes just sat and lived in his barrel. That’s all he needed. He sat in the sun enjoying himself. Wise men, including Alexander the Great, came from all over the world to consult him. He was a great problem solver. In the daytime he would roll his barrel from one end of the street to the other. They would say, “What are you doing?”

He would say, “You have to be busy in this town, so I’m rolling my barrel.” That’s like the story of a person who spent hours just straightening nails. You can’t use them again after you straighten them, but he was told to straighten nails all day because that was a good activity. It was an activity with no point. Is life so long that we can afford that sort of nonsense? Well, we won’t go into that.

How is it [the world] defined here? It’s given a name. The Bible refers to it specifically by certain types or codes. What is the type of the world? It is Babylon or Rome. D&C 1:16: “. . . 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.” Of
course, what John is talking about is the Roman Empire. What are the characteristics of this civilization? It’s cosmopolitan, rich, proud, powerful, imperial, acquisitive, success oriented, competitive, materialistic. It’s also licentious, cruel (necessarily), ultra-respectable, sensual. It seeks the four things that both Nephis tell us about. (Maybe I have an interesting thing here. I cling to the Wall Street Journal, so no one can accuse me of being unorthodox. This was a good one from the Wall Street Journal. I didn’t bring it this time. How sad! I left it home; I’ll bring it next time.) It says those four things are power, gain, popularity, and the lusts of the flesh. That covers everything. That covers all we talk about on TV and all we are after.

But how is it characterized in the Book of Mormon? Notice, there’s a contrast, a conflict, between these two [the gospel and the world]. How can you reconcile it? There is a great gulf between them. What is the Book of Mormon talking about there? What is the world in the Book of Mormon? The great and spacious building. Lehi and his people were on the other side, and there was a great gulf between them. You do not mix between them. There wasn’t a common ground between them where they held a marketplace and went out and met on the maidan—set up their tents and swapped back and forth. Though all these are interlaced. It’s true we are in the world, and it’s true there are good things at all these levels to be had. But like the four elements, it’s a case of balance, isn’t it? In the Book of Mormon this is very conspicuous. There is no more striking image anywhere in literature than that of the great and spacious building, which is doomed to fall. The people are finely dressed. They are clever, and they having a gay party. The place is brightly illuminated. They see the people down in the garden as the poor, bedraggled, food-gathering bums back there. They point their fingers at them and laugh at them—anybody who would go out for that sort of existence. They can’t stand it. The great and spacious building was the world. It fell, and great was the fall [1 Nephi 11:36]. Like Rome and Babylon it is doomed to destruction. As I said the word destruction occurs over 400 times in the Book of Mormon. Destruction is the theme; this is such a downbeat, such a negative approach. But it’s for our benefit. We are getting closer.

Question: In Nephi’s dream does the iron rod span the gulf? Answer: No, it doesn’t. The iron rod leads to salvation. It doesn’t span the gulf. There’s a stream of filthy water going along by the side of it. You let go of the rod and you are into the stream. They wanted to get to the other side, but you can’t. The iron rod doesn’t lead to the great and spacious building where we want it to lead. [There’s an interesting story from the days of Solomon’s temple.] The temple rock has been changed a lot. It has been shaved down. It used to be a very steep, high hill. In bad weather it was hard to get up to. There was the sacred way that went up to it. It was like the way up to Adam’s Rock in Ceylon. There was a railing. We are told that it used to be made of iron, but it rotted away with age and was replaced by a wooden railing or a substitute. For old and the sick people to get up to the temple, they used to have a rod. If it was raining to get up the slippery rock, you had to cling to an iron rod. That may be where the idea came from. If you clung to the iron rod, it would get you to the temple. But in time, being iron, it rusted away. That’s one approach.

[The world] is the great and abominable church, which, we are told, is whoever fights against Israel. It’s not just one church. It’s a composite, we are told in 1 Nephi 22, like the seed of Abraham itself. In [2 Nephi 9:39] it makes a very sharp distinction between the cultures. This is one of the most resounding statements in the Book of Mormon. I think it’s the most powerful. If you knew just one thing from the Book of Mormon, this would be the most powerful statement. “... Remember, to be carnally-minded is death, and to
be spiritually-minded is life eternal.” Carnal isn’t just sex. Carnal is everything advertised on TV. It’s all carnal—cleansing products, hairdos, body building, clothes, cars. All that’s carnal, because that’s for external appearance. That’s all concerned with temporal things—shampoos, foods, curatives, investments, money lines. All those things are junk. Those are the carnal things of the world. If you put your mind on them, what’s going to happen? They are all going to pass away. They are all rapidly decaying right now. They are going to collapse, and they don’t do it slowly. Remember, we’re living in an age of extermination, a remarkable time. There have been long times when things have kept on a fairly dead level, and then suddenly there have been these periods of extermination. They hit rapidly. They pile up rapidly because of the cumulative effect. One thing leads to another, like when a ship reaches a certain critical place. Then it sinks faster. It’s the same thing here. “To be carnally minded is death.” You are doomed; you are not going anywhere if you put your mind on these things. Well, what else if there’s nothing else in the other world? Remember that’s what Korihor taught: Every man fares in this world “according to the management of the creature.” (There’s the word management used in the Book of Mormon.) Every man prospers according to his ability, conquers according to his strength, and whatsoever a man does is no sin. Why? Because when the man is dead that is the end thereof. Therefore they lifted up their heads and rejoiced because they could do anything they wanted, and went out to get as rich as they could as fast as they could. This is what he was teaching.

So this is the world we are talking about, and it has a very, very conspicuous place in the Book of Mormon, as you know—this other culture. They are constantly being brought into conflict. Then we have another culture that you may overlook. You notice we oversimplify the Book of Mormon. We say it is the story of the Nephites and Lamanites, the good people and the bad people, the white people and the dark people. It wasn’t that way at all, as you know. More than half the time the Lamanites were better than the Nephites. In this chapter it tells us that they divided up into separate tribes. The Lamanites were one group, and the Lemuelites were quite another group, and the Nephites. There were seven tribes. They always kept it that way.

Now we have the third group. What shall we call these? There are various ways of designating them. They are nomadic or semi-nomadic. They are the people of the steppes. They are the warlords, and you get them in the Book of Mormon. Not just the Gadiantons, but you get all sorts of warlords that organize themselves. Of course, the whole book of Ether is taken up with them. So we will call these the warlords. You notice our friend Amalickiah tries to be a warlord. He can’t get enough following. But in this chapter he goes over and makes himself one, the master of the whole thing. He’s a warlord.

Incidentally, on this thing about the world and what the world is, I’ve written many articles on that. A long one that had quite a run among people was on the Persian and Roman empires in the fourth century. It was called “The Problem of Loyalty.” They couldn’t get anybody to be loyal to this kind of society because everybody was out for himself. Then the one of the passing of the church is on that. It describes the world of the fourth century. I’ve written a number of other things, like “The Hierocentric State.” And I had an article in [1966] in the Western Political Quarterly called “Tenting, Toll, and Taxing.” These are the warlords of Asia. They are very basic in world history. They are a very sharply marked culture. This is the basis of what is called geopolitics, which was conceived by a Scotchman Halford Mackinder, but it became the favorite doctrine of Hitler’s geographer, Haushofer. They called it geopolitics. It’s the plan on which Hitler
intended to conquer the world. He was going to use this. It is that there are the heartland people, these warlords. All the civilizations are peripheral. Here is what they call the heartland. It is shaped like a shield. It’s the area that’s covered with snow in winter. That’s the great Asiatic heartland, the people of the steppes. They are wanderers. They have always lived with a very shaky, marginal economy. If the grass is bad, or if there are bad years, then they have to move. They move on the outside peoples and go to plunder. On the outside here you have the civilizations of the Near East, India, and the Orient. These people all built great walls against them. The limes ran clear across Europe for the Romans to keep them out. Then there was the white wall of the Asiatics to keep them out of Egypt especially. At all times there was pressure on that. In Babylon the pass was very important; they were river people. Here you have the passes, the Khyber Pass, etc. Then the Chinese went to the trouble of building a wall fifteen hundred miles long just to keep them out, these wild people of the steppes. These people of the heartland are nomads and raiders. They are semi-nomadic and have a very solid culture. They’re patriarchal.

This goes back right to the beginning with the story of the Cainites and the Sethians. We are told that Cain became a wanderer in the earth. He went to the land of Nod. Our word nos means “going back and forth.” Cain was banished to the land of perpetual wandering. He became a wanderer because of the wickedness. He conspired to kill his brother and get rich. He wanted the priesthood and all that. The Lord came and talked with him and told him he was doing what was wrong. We get all this in the book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price. He refused to listen to the Lord anymore. He stomped on his heel and walked out on him, because Cain, his wife, and [most of] the people loved Satan more than God in the time of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve could do nothing but mourn before the Lord. They followed Satan, took instruction from him, and got the degree of Master Mahan. The secret of this is how to get rich by taking life, how to convert life into property. When he got it he said, “Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain [Moses 5:31].” So by a conspiracy we are told in the [Pearl of Great Price] he murdered his brother Abel. He planned it all out, because Satan told him how to do it. Having done that, he said now I am free. I got the money I want. Wealth makes you free, as Mr. Forbes tells us. Cain said, “I am free; surely the flocks of my brother falleth into my hands.” So he had them. For that he became cursed. He could no longer cultivate the earth. The earth refused her strength to him, and he became a wanderer on the face of the earth. He became a nomad and a raider.

His descendants are Cush and Nimrod, the great hunters and conquerors, the founders of the first empires—the first cities, strangely enough. They were Asiatic. They became looters (this is geopolitics) and have passion for portable wealth that you can carry with you. It has to be gold, silver, and stuff like that if you are on the move. They have this great lust for jewels. The jewel giver is the chief. That’s how Beowulf starts out. Hrothgar was a good king because he gave out rings. So we have the great lords of the steppes. The book of Ether, which we have left to study, is the classic treatment of this subject. That’s what that is, so we don’t need to go into it here. They were traders and dealers, being always on the move. The classic characters are raiders, robbers, the Gadiantons, Shiz, and Coriantumr.

Now we get this would-be raider Amalickiah. They love splendor and display. Life is a chess game where you are always moving around trying to check the king. That’s the game you find in the book of Ether. The king can’t be taken, but when he’s taken, all his people go over to your side. That’s exactly how the Jaredites do it again and again in the book of Ether. They are managers and administrators; they work at a distance. They are
patriarchal and tribal. Akish, Jared, and his daughter are classic examples [Ether 8]. It goes back to very ancient times. “Hath not [my lord] read the record which our fathers brought across the great deep? Behold, is there not an account concerning them of old, that they by their secret plans did obtain kingdoms and great glory?” [Ether 8:9]. This is how they went about it. These people are very real. These raiders are at the very center of things. Just look at your National Geographic magazines; you'll find out about them. They like the visible wealth and the display. Cattle raiders, tent people, people of the steppes, gamesters. You'll notice there’s something noble about them too. They are chivalric, patriarchal, and adventurous. They have contempt for the people of the periphery that live in the great cities of Babylon, Mohenjo-Daro, Cairo, and places like that. (It wasn’t Cairo in those days, but Memphis.) The city people had their lush, sensuous, and licentious practices.

Of course, these other people, culture number one, are sort of out of the picture with them. Then we come to one that is rather closely related, the fourth type here. We would call them “the nature people.” We used to call them “primitives.” Then they called them “preliterates.” The poor anthropologists have had an awfully hard time finding some real primitives to study. That's what they are supposed to study, and there aren’t any primitives. The primitives are just what’s left over from other civilizations. People have gone back to it again. You can’t find people that you can definitely prove are primitive, or preliterate, or anything like that. You can call them “nature people” because they live according to nature. As Nephi puts it, “We lived after the manner of happiness.” There are these people in the Book of Mormon that aren’t like any of the others, you’ll notice. They live by themselves and have their own ways. They were once called primitives or preliterates. They are the survivors. They are the peasant cultures throughout the world. They are the aborigines. They tell us now—if you have been seeing any documentaries on Australia—that they have been living with their life unchanged for 40,000 years. Now with this generation it all ends. It’s interesting that everything comes to an end in this generation. After 40,000 years it’s cut off like that.

They are our Southwest Indians. They have been living like that. We have Sister Theresa Harvey’s house at Hualapai, the first that was ever dated by carbon dating. It was found to be 800 years old. They have been living in that doing the same things. She revived the pottery business, the old pottery that was used over a thousand years ago. There’s a big dump of it right behind her house there. They have been doing absolutely the same things for a thousand years. Now that is stability. But they are living on nothing. There’s nothing but sand around them. They live on these mesas where they call themselves the Hopi, the peaceful people. They don’t make war. Yet it is the most exciting, most fun place you can imagine. I used to go down there every time I could get a week off, or a weekend even. I’d tear down there and celebrate with the Hopis, because every weekend they have a grand party. They have fun; it’s great.

We read now also about the jungle people who are being driven out by the lumber and cattle companies. The people have been there for thousands of years leading quite satisfactory, full lives. With the Eskimos it’s the same thing. It isn’t that they live in unspeakable boredom in which everything is always the same. Not at all. Their world is imaginative and colorful, not dull or boring. They are very hard working. [The Hopis] have to be to survive on the sand out there. Their stability is marvelous. Of course, they are agricultural. They are the peasantry of the world.

I was on a mission in Germany, and there’s a place called Mickelsburg where they made
the first excavations and found the first pottery. That’s very early Neolithic pottery at Mickelsburg. It was all farming around there in those days. It still is the same way. Across the river on the other side, they excavated some villages. They took the pottery, scraped the inside of the pots, and found out what the people ate. There was soup in there, a mixture of grains, bark, berries, and things like that. It was the very same mixture the people use today. They have never changed that recipe. Imagine! That must be at least 10,000 years. We don’t want to get into the calendar and things like that, but it’s an interesting subject. Naturally, living as they are they are the most visionary and spiritual of people, highly imaginative and very artistic. All these Southwest Indians have their arts of weaving and pottery. When they put on their dances, they are magnificent. Everything has to be properly done. There can be nothing old, nothing dirty, nothing “boughten.” It all has to be fresh and all has to be from the earth. It’s quite a marvelous thing.

We are forcing them to change now. I hope we aren’t as badly as I heard last. Notice, there is a tremendous hostility between us and them. I may read you some court records and things that have come out if I can find them. How we hate them! Actually, the Peabody Corporation is trying to get rid of them altogether. They tried very strongly a few years ago when I was there, to get them all to move. They offered them trailer houses, and they could all go live in Los Angeles. Then they could just strip mine the whole area; that’s what they wanted. When [the Hopis] opposed it, they brought down the wrath of the Bureau of Indian Affairs on them. They are very interesting people. They differ from number one [culture], but they are brotherhoods too. They are always divided into clans. You have the bear clan, the snake clan, etc. The clans are secret. They meet in their kivas and have their secret meetings and initiations. They have their special costumes, special marks, special diets, etc. When the Nephites taught them to read, we are told in Mosiah 24:4–7, they were very smart. They learned to read and became businessmen, which was instant corruption. It changed them completely. The people of Ammon are such a type in the Book of Mormon. They are completely satisfied with themselves.

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TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 3, Lecture 64
Alma 47
Tragedy and Suffering in the Scriptures

Now we are on chapter 47 and some interesting phenomena emerge. You think everything will be an anticlimax after 46, don’t you? Well, you’re wrong. There are no anticlimaxes in the Book of Mormon, at least not many of them. We talked about the four types of civilization, and they are clearly marked in the Book of Mormon. That’s a good mark of authenticity in the Book of Mormon. They are clearly in all history, but none of them is a hundred percent pure. They all mix, but one will always dominate in a particular area. Every one of them has its virtues and its vices. They run the cycle. This chapter 47 is interesting because it brings in a queen. You notice that there are queens in the Book of Mormon, mentioned twenty-two times, but never among the Nephites, just among the Lamanites. The Lamanites have queens. Why don’t the Nephites have queens? What type of society do Moroni and Alma represent? The brotherhood. The ideal is if it could be the brotherhood; the Church is the brotherhood. You will always find the queens among the Lamanites, so this is a very basic thing. People complain, “Why are there no women in the Book of Mormon? That’s unfair.” It’s obviously loaded. Brodie objected to it; lots of people do. Only [three] women are named in the Book of Mormon, but [two] are archetypes of women. The one is Sariah who is the mother in Israel. She is the mother of all the descendants of Lehi, and the other is Isabel. She is the mother goddess. She was worshipped in Central America and all throughout the world. In the Mediterranean and all the American cults the mother goddess plays a very important part. Of course, she is Babylonian and she belongs to that type of civilization. She is the fertility goddess; she is universal.

You notice what Alma tells his son Corianton. Why did you go over to the land Siron and play around with the harlot [Isabel]? She had enticed many away; the youth of the land were all streaming over to Siron. Why would they have to go to Siron to misbehave? It was out of the country entirely—to Siron “among the borders of the Lamanites,” he said. Sûr is the Egyptian word for sheep. But they had to go abroad. That’s strange. And they had to go to this woman. She wasn’t exclusive at all. Everybody went to her; she was the one. Well, she was the mother goddess. The rites of the mother goddess, which always come at particular times of year, are the rites of the hierodules, the sacred prostitutes. Everybody in Babylon, for example, as Herodotus tells us, had to go and have intercourse with the temple hierodules once a year. Every woman before she could be married had to serve as a hierodule. The book of Abraham begins with that. Remember the three virgins that were put to death because they wouldn’t compromise their virtue? They were members of the royal family, and that was a very well-known story. If you didn’t you were in trouble, and they didn’t do it. The abominations, human sacrifices and the rest were pretty terrible. Abraham became a victim. We have that type of civilization. It’s worldwide and it’s ancient. That’s our number two, the Babylonian. Remember what she is called? She is the rich, scarlet woman of Babylon. It’s the old matriarchy [based on] agriculture—very stable, it goes on. All of these have weaknesses, etc. Another of those marks of authenticity in the Book of Mormon emerges where we have the queens only among the Lamanites. They are something different because the model society of the Nephites is that
of the brethren, and that of the Lamanites is number two. You notice the Lamanites are mixed; they are two and three. Three is the warlords. They are mixed here, and they are always mixed around anyway. But you know what the routine is with these.

What happens to the number one societies? You have the pure brotherhoods and Zion. We talked about monastic life throughout the world. You find these everywhere, and they are very clearly marked. They always have the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They share their property, work on the land, etc. They are brotherhoods, and you find them at all times and places. Very ancient, they go back to the Garden of Eden. What happens to them? They are destroyed by vanity every time, because they get the idea that they are too exalted. Leaders aspire to mystical heights and to godhood prematurely. Vanity gets away with them every time, intellectual and spiritual. Like the Pythagoreans, it fools them. They end up in the lodges of the various brotherhoods [such as] the Illuminati. In a work like *Zanoni* by Bulwer-Lytton, a very famous British writer and statesman, you see the vanity of the Illuminati and the Masons, etc. They spoil themselves by getting too high and mighty. They don’t have revelation, but they dress themselves in fancy clothes, have their rites, etc., and become quite spooky after a while. They all go into occultism and that sort of thing. Number one, what we call the “brotherhoods,” always ends up that way.

What happens to number two? They are always overrun by number three. We mentioned that. That’s basic to geopolitics. Number two is your Babylon in civilization which is overripe to fall. With the scarlet woman of Revelations you find the perfect description of that. Who overruns it? Well, of course, the warlords of the steppes. Those in central Asia. The idea in Haushofer’s geopolitics was that “who controls the heartland controls the world.” That’s the central basis from which you attack in all directions. Every time that’s what has happened to those civilizations which are all peripheral, whether it’s Chinese, or Babylonian, or Hindu (Indian, such as Mohenjo-Daro), or Egyptian, or Hittite. They [the people of the steppes] expand and overrun them, and then become absorbed by them. It has happened again and again in cycles. In the year 1200 [B.C.] the whole works was wiped out. There were all those civilizations that were great. In about 3,000 or 3,100 the same thing had happened earlier. Then in 1700 and 1200 it happened. Lots of work has been done on that. They overrun them and mix with them. But what happens to them? They are like a bubble that explodes—they expand so far. Remember, they are a very unstable form of society. They depend on the grass and loot, etc. They are the wandering tribes of the steppes. It’s the Russian and Asiatic model. They expand as far as they can go. Here’s the heartland; it’s shaped like a shield. They went out and invaded the Mongol dynasties of China. The Tartars invaded China and set up various dynasties. The Moguls in India came in the seventeenth century. You find them everywhere in all directions.

What caused the Crusades? It wasn’t the Moslems. They didn’t go to get the holy places back from the Moslems in 1095 when the First Crusade began. They went because the Mongols had invaded, and in 1071 at a great battle they had overcome the Moslems and had taken over and closed all the holy places. They had taken everything over. They were the barbarians from the steppes. They were absorbed too. That was why the crusaders had to go and free the Holy Land and the Holy Sepulcher, because the Mongols had invaded. It’s always these people who come out from time to time. Then what happens? Then their bubble explodes because they are an unstable form of existence. But they also are absorbed. Who built the Taj Mahal? It was a Mogul empire, one of the Mongolians. They had only been there a couple of generations; they were new. The languages of India are like the peeling of an onion. There are eleven different layers. They are all related
languages, but each one came in a different wave. They all came through the Khyber Pass.

So you have these walls—the Great Wall of China, the wall of the Asiatics in Egypt, the *limés* in Europe built by the Romans—great walls to keep the barbarians out. None of them ever succeeded in keeping them out. You have walls everywhere. But they come in and get absorbed, but not all of them. The ways of the steppes go on, and the ways of Babylon go on. The ways of the brotherhoods go on, diluted. Who is the winner in the end? It is number four, the poor old primitives, the people living in the brush—the digger Indians and people like that. But they are exploited and exterminated like crazy because they are helpless. They are being exterminated today. Very few are appearing again. But we know now very clearly that they always re-emerge, because when these others collapse that’s what you go back to. That’s generally conceded today. The archaeologists are looking for primitives, like the Indians. They are not primitives; they are descendants of civilizations that have disappeared.

For example, some of you missionaries may know that the Mayans are still the Mayans. Archaeologists visited them as primitive people. There is nothing primitive about them. They still speak Mayan, but they don’t have the civilization anymore. Everywhere you go there are these people in very small numbers hiding in the outback, like the Australian aborigines. But they have always had greater times before, and they all represent that. “To this favor you must come” in the end. We go back to that. That’s rather extreme, going back to the primitives, but it happens. It happens all the time. It has happened in North America. In Central and North America we have impressive ruins, like Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde, Canyon de Chelly. The magnificent ruins show that their children are still there, but they are now called primitives. Of course, you can’t find a real primitive; there’s no such thing. They are just survivors from other times. So the cycle runs—one, two, three, four. There are others in between. There are various mixtures. This is very clearly brought out in the Book of Mormon in chapter 47.

A question might arise here. You read this chapter and say, “Now, wait a minute. You say this isn’t a let down. This isn’t an anti-climax after that amazing chapter 46 with all that evidence in it.” This has more evidence too, but you might say, “What do these sordid doings have to do with the plan of salvation? What does religion have to do with this?” What do we learn from Amalickiah’s dirty tricks? And boy did he have a string of them. He knew every one in the book. What does this teach us? This is rather a depressing history of religion, isn’t it? Well, just consider this. I’ve been frantically looking over all sorts of old traditions on the life of Abraham. They have been collected. He is the best documented of all ancient persons. Some say he didn’t live. Don’t fool yourself; he was a real person. But what a sad story. It was one prolonged horror of great darkness, as Genesis 15 tells us. His life was a continual trial—the ten trials of Abraham. He lived in a world that was a hell. This has been caught up with recently. In recent years Abraham has had great attention because of new documents, etc.

You notice the book of Abraham catches [this situation]. It begins with Abraham “in the soup.” He is going to be sacrificed. It begins, “In the land of the Chaldeans, at the residence of my fathers, I, Abraham, saw that it was needful for me to obtain another place of residence.” He couldn’t hang on there any longer. He protested with his own family, and his own father wanted him put to death to the mother goddess. It was that bad. They “utterly refused to hearken to my voice,” he said. He protested and was thrown out. From then on he was a wanderer in the earth. He was finally buried in the cave of Machpelah, which he had to buy from the Hittites. He wanted to rent it from them. He
never had anything. He never had a land of his own. He was the wanderer and the stranger everywhere in a world that was absolutely wrecked by blight. There was a drought and terrible times. Remember, the famine waxed sore and they always had to move. They moved into Egypt, got into trouble, and had bad times in Egypt. They moved out to Gerar and had bad times with Abimelech. Then they moved over to Sodom and Gomorrah, and all hell broke loose there. They had a real atomic blast there, a tremendous thing that wiped everything out. The five cities of the plain were all gone. It was an awful time Abraham went through and horrible people he was dealing with. His archenemy Nimrod was trying to put him to death all the time, and the five kings. Everybody was betraying everybody else. He had arguments with Lot. Abraham is not a happy history. It’s a very sad one, the trials of Abraham. He had to undergo those trials. If he was going to have the supreme reward, he had to be willing to face everything and suffer everything. He is the type. You must do the works of Abraham if you would have the rewards of Abraham. We are living in a world very much like Abraham’s world. We have this opportunity when these dispensations come, these great turning points, like Abraham’s. Remember, he was the founder of everything. Everything comes from Abraham, the father of many nations.

He had three wives. One wife was Sarah, who is the mother of all Semites. But he also married Hagar, who is usually called “the daughter of Pharaoh.” She was an Egyptian woman. Ishmael was his son, and Ishmael got the very same promise that Isaac got—that he would be the father of many nations. This mixes in with our Book of Mormon because Lehi was of Manasseh. Ephraim and Manasseh were the sons of Asenath who was the [daughter] of the high priest of Heliopolis in Egypt. She was the pure blood of Ham. She was a princess in Egypt, and we’re descended from her. It’s all mixed up here. Hagar was of Ham and Sarah was of Shem. What about Japheth? Those are the people of the East. The Greeks knew that. Of course, Noah’s third son was Japetus. They were descended from Japetus, who was Japheth. After Sarah died it seemed to be all over. Then he married Keturah, who was a descendant of Japheth. She had six sons by Abraham. He taught them all the advanced arts, sciences, sophistication, mathematics and things that he had exchanged with the Egyptians. They [his sons] were the great founders of Western Civilization. Wherever you go the six sons of Keturah leave their mark, in southern Italy, Greece, etc. These are the traditions.

Once you start mixing genes like that it’s amazing how far you can get around, as you know if you have worked with genealogy. You are related to everybody. It’s just absolutely astounding how you can get related to people. When you start listing what my kids have it’s [surprising]. I had a Jewish grandmother, and that mixes them with Judah. Then there is Scotch, Irish, English, Welsh, lots of Scandinavian, and also lots of Slavic too from the Baltic states. We’ve got everything, including Arabic. If you start looking around you will get these things. It’s not an exaggeration. The Book of Mormon is very interesting in this because we have this simplistic idea that they are either Nephites or Lamanites. Don’t kid yourself. Again, in this chapter you will read that they were not just Nephites and Lamanites. The cultures divided up differently that way.

We discussed this sadness. What do you have in the book of Genesis? You have the Fall, a sad story. You have the Flood, a great tragedy. You have the terrible days of Enoch when he reached forth his arms, wept, and said, “I will refuse to be comforted.” Then the Lord showed him the coming of the Lord later. The Lord told Enoch, worlds without number have I created, “and among all the workmanship of mine hands there has not been so great wickedness as among thy brethren.” This is some world we are on. If you can pass
this test, you are ready for the long haul, but it is a real test. Then what do you get in Exodus? Nothing but suffering and sin and the folly of Israel in the desert. Then he [Moses] gives the five books of the law. He ends with Deuteronomy in which he said, you never listened to a thing I said while I was with you. It will be still worse when I leave you. You’ve never kept the law, and you never will keep the law until the Messiah comes. There are terrible pictures there.

Then in the Psalms it’s all mourning and sorrow, etc. The first Psalm establishes the balance. There’s the balance between the two. It starts out, “Happy is the man who does not sit in the counsels of the wicked, [why are they always dwelling on wickedness this way?] and does not go along with the councils of evil. But he continually contemplates the law, and the law is his joy day and night. And he shall be as a tree planted by a pool of water that bears its leaves in due time and its fruit does not fail. But the evil [he always brings them in] they are like dried and withered trees and fruits and withered leaves, like chaff that the wind blows. God knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish.” There’s the balance of ways, and you have your choice between them. Throughout the Book of Mormon there’s never the promise on the land without the curse on the land. You are going to have to deal with both of them. This is the bad time we are in now. Let that be a comfort to you. You are going through your bad time now.

Then there are the historical books of the Bible from then on: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and Samuel. What do you have there? Stories of blood and betrayal. The stories of the patriarchs are bad enough, but when you get to the histories [it’s particularly bad]. That’s why we know it’s sound, good history. It doesn’t idealize the kings. It doesn’t make our people all heroes and the others all villains, the way the Israelis are trying to do today. Not in that time. It’s frank. It shows David, Solomon, Rehoboam, and all of them as the rascals they were. That’s the bad side of their character, though they were great men all the same. Then we get to the wisdom literature, and we read some of that. “Vanity of vanities,” it’s all nothing. There’s “nothing new under the sun.” There’s “nothing but woe” to man here, who is “born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.” Nothing but trouble.

Then we come to the New Testament where “the light shines in darkness and the darkness comprehends it not.” It’s all a big buildup to the Crucifixion. They won’t accept him; they won’t hear him or anything like that. This is very important. Jesus and the apostles were in the world but not of the world, so the world hated them with a relentless hatred and couldn’t destroy them quickly enough. We say “being in the world but not of it.” If you are of it, it will love you. If you are not of it, it will hate you. If you are in the world and not of the world, don’t expect to succeed in business. You are persona non grata; you’ll never succeed. The Lord says the world will hate you. Abraham was unwelcome everywhere he went. Joseph Smith from the moment he announced his mission was in deep trouble all the time with everybody. The Lord said, who convicts me of evil? If you have nothing against me, why are you so mad at me?

It’s a cultural shock and fear. Whenever the angels appear, everybody is scared to death. John 14-17 is the best example of that. It just keeps repeating that all the time: Whom the world cannot receive. The world seest me no more; I’m leaving it. The apostles say to him, why do you give these things to us and not to the world?” He says, because to you it is given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. All this is in John 14. He says, “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” (John 14:30.) I’m leaving because the prince of this world cometh. If you are not of the world, the world will hate you. He says that’s an
absolute guarantee. He repeats it. John 15:18-20: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own [you would be successful and be elected]: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you . . . If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.”

He says, if I had not done the miracles I’ve done so they could see them, they [wouldn’t] be without excuse. Why do I do this if the world is going to reject me? Because they must be given a chance. But now they are without excuse because they have “both seen and hated both me and my Father. . . . They hated me without a cause.” The prince of this world is judged. “I leave the world and go to the Father. . . . In the world ye shall have tribulation,” etc.

John 17 is very much like 3 Nephi. He goes through this the same way when he prays. Verse 9: “I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; . . . And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee.” So they are in the world all right, but they are not of the world. Therefore, they are hated and they are in trouble all the time. Verse 12: “While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name. . . . the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” I don’t take them out of the world; they have to suffer for a while, he says, but “they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

So it keeps harping on that. The first person who said we can be in the world and not of the world and succeed was a Christian of the third century by the name of Diognetus, who wrote on that. People were worried because the church was getting too popular. As Brigham Young said, nothing could be worse than to be a fine popular church and have the world approve of us. Then we would know we were of the world, a very bad sign. So here we are.

John 15:21: They will be one “that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” But the world rejects them. He said he came to give the world a chance, but now they are without excuse. But we give success as our reason for being in the world. We say, “We are in the world so we can succeed.” But if you are [not] of the world you won’t succeed; they won’t accept you.

This very interesting chapter (Alma 47), a chapter of sordid crimes and misdemeanors. It’s such a contrast with chapter 46, but it’s just as loaded with evidence material as the other. Of course, it’s not the evidence primarily but what we learn from it. We say, “Why did they tell us this sordid story?” Well, the scriptures tell us almost nothing else. This man Amalickiah knows every dirty trick in the book. Anyone who wrote this book must have known a great deal about human nature. Of course, this reminds us so much of Shakespeare because of his tragedies and his king plays, which are plays of betrayal and that sort of thing. Here we have a real Shakespeare villain Iago to begin with, an ambitious person. “Now we will return in our record to Amalickiah and those who had fled with him . . . and went up in the land of Nephi among the Lamanites . . .” They stirred up trouble. Remember that wonderful talk that Brother Maxwell just gave about murmuring [“Murmur Not,” General Conference, October 1989]. He [Amalickiah] was a good murmurer, and it could spread. People want to listen to that, and he didn’t have much trouble doing that. Amalickiah wasn’t able to pull it off among his own people. In Alma 46:29 it tells us that his own people were doubtful concerning the justice of his cause. He was a very, very smooth man, a skillful talker, it says. But still they knew he wasn’t
honest. Boy, you are going to see some tricks now. Some fled with him to the land of Nephi among the Lamanites and they started stirring up the Lamanites to anger by spreading dirty stories and rumors.

It’s very interesting; it said that one of the great trials Abraham had to suffer was the dirty stories they spread about Lot, because of the story of Lot and his daughters. Of course, they were immoral enough. The cities of the plain were destroyed. He said gossip pursued him all his days, even the righteous Abraham. This is the sort of thing you have. Amalickiah had no trouble stirring them up to anger against the Nephites. He fed the king with lies, and the king sent a proclamation throughout all the land that his people should gather themselves together again. They had just finished a war in which nobody won. It tells us the Nephites were just as sorry. There was mourning in all the land. Everything was ruined. They gained the victory, but they knew why they had to suffer. It was because of their own sins. It wasn’t because of the guilt of the Lamanites at all. It’s the usual story. [Alma] had a hand-to-hand duel with Amlici, another person. Notice they have [similar] names. These people are Mulekites; they are not Nephites. This cultural picture is more complex than you think.

He [Amalickiah] must have been very persuasive, but the people were fed up. They got a reaction, and believe me was it negative! Now they were in a dilemma. Here’s the way it was. The people feared to displease the king, and yet they also feared to go to battle against the Nephites. They’d had enough; they were fed up. Incidentally, their terror of going to battle again is a great tribute to Moroni’s great tactical skill. With very limited resources he was able to push them around until they surrendered. Then he would immediately grant them permission to go home with no reprisals or anything like that. All right you take an oath and you go home [he said]. There was no total victory or anything like that. Moroni was very sensitive. The minute he saw the tide turning, he immediately offered terms to the other side for surrender. And often they took him up. He was more respected by the Lamanites than by anybody else because they had to deal with him.

It’s an interesting thing. A recent Civil War historian just pointed out that in all the writings of Lee and Lincoln, neither ever refers to the other side as “the enemy.” It’s the Confederacy or the Union, but they never refer to each other as “the enemy.” That’s an interesting thing, because everybody else was full of it.

Alma 47:2: “. . . they feared to displease the king, and they also feared to go to battle against the Nephites lest they should lose their lives.” Then they actually went on a strike; they refused to do it. It was flat disobedience, a refusal to take orders. “. . . they would not, or the more part of them would not, obey the commandments of the king.” It was a real strike, just like the Aussies in 1917. The Australians bore the brunt of World War II, beginning with Gallipoli when they took a terrible beating. Time after time for three years, they were held out on the British front where the terrible generals just sent wave after wave to slaughter. In 1917 the Aussies finally [went on strike]. They were the best soldiers in the war, but they wouldn’t fight anymore. They refused to go back to the front. They were promised a furlough of just a couple of days, and that was taken back. The British command said, “No, men should be able to take more than that.” So they went on a strike and were all put in jail. If it hadn’t been for a pardon from the king, they would have been in jail to this day. There comes a time when you can only take so much, and these people were fed up. They absolutely refused to go against their enemies. Later on we’re going to find out that Mormon says, I became an idle onlooker. I did utterly refuse
to go against my enemies. He wouldn’t do it anymore.

The king was fit to be tied, of course. They had directly defied his command. That was insubordination of the grossest type. “. . . the king was wroth because of their disobedience.” He gave Amalickiah command of the whole thing. Amalickiah was a very impressive person, and there were some loyalist troops that would follow Amalickiah. This is the usual mixup. This is a very old story everywhere you find it. But the person who wrote this knew a great deal. He was telling a real story. [The king] commanded him that he should go forth and compel them to arms.” A police action, like at Archangel [USSR] when the White Army tried to force the Red Army to oppose the Germans, and it didn’t work. He was trying to do the same thing. The loyalists weren’t strong enough to do it. They were the larger army. But Amalickiah was “a very subtle man.” That’s to say the least. “. . . he laid the plan in his heart to dethrone the king of the Lamanites.” This was a long range plan, and he worked it out beautifully.

This was routine among the Romans, of course. Phillip the Arab wanted to become emperor, and he did become emperor by a lot of plots. You know the stories of Livia plotting to get her son Tiberius on the throne after Augustus was in there—poisoning this person, that person, and the other person and getting all the others out of the way. This is a common procedure, the poisoning of the line to the throne. It’s very dangerous to be in the line to the throne because you are in line for poisoning.

He took the part of the Lamanites who were in favor of the king. He took the loyalist troops with him and he went to Onidah, where the others had fled and encamped themselves. It tells us that Onidah was “the place of arms.” That’s interesting because there is always a place of arms where you go to rally. It’s Nottingham in England usually. It’s like the field of Mars in Rome. You find the Mars fields all over Europe in ancient times. It’s the maidan in the East. The maidan is the field of arms. In England they had the field of Mars in the villages into the nineteenth century, where they had the Morris dance or the Mars dance in the mazes. They went through a drill or sham battle that they used to have. This was the place of arms, the field of Mars and the maidan. They had appointed their own leader and set him up. They knew they were being used here. Verse 6: “. . . being fixed in their minds with a determined resolution that they would not be subject to go against the Nephites.” They weren’t going to do that at all. This, as I said, is a tribute to Moroni. They were scared to death of the Nephites who were a smaller group and not nearly as warlike. So they gathered themselves on the top of a mountain called Antipas. This is a tradition too. After all, why do the Hopis live in the high mesas? Because they don’t want to go to war. At one time they were the most terrible of all the fighters in the Southwest, but they didn’t like it. There are some very interesting legends about this. They took to the mesas where their enemies couldn’t get at them. That was the safe place. There they [the Lamanites] were at the hill Antipas, and you would run a risk to try to take over there. They had appointed their leaders, as the tribes always do. You appoint your leader. You would know your Caesar in the Gallic Wars. When the tribes started marching, immediately the first thing they would do is appoint a leader who was called a king. In the English Chronicles that is met with more than anywhere else. The king is the kyning, or the one who knows. He’s the one who leads you out, and he is chosen. The kings of England are always elected by somebody or other. In the blood line, of course, this led to a lot of trouble, against Henry III etc. When things got pretty bad and the king was incompetent, the barons put on the heat, especially Simon de Montfort in 1265, and they took over. There was never a time when the king couldn’t be deposed, if he was a bad one. That’s the story of Richard II and Bolingbroke, etc.
It’s the same thing here. You put your king in, and they come and go. They do the same thing in the Book of Mormon. Kings come in and kings go out. They are under popular pressure, and there is lots of plotting and intrigue going on. This is a number one intriguier that we have here. This Amalickiah really knew his way around. His intention was to gain favor with the Lamanites because they were the biggest number. That’s the army he wanted to get rid of the king, to “place himself at their head and dethrone the king and take possession of the kingdom.”

Some people just love plotting and planning. That’s what makes so many of Shakespeare’s plays so interesting. The king plays are all plots and plans, all sorts of schemes. That’s why we love spy dramas more than anything else. Almost anything you’ll turn on tonight on TV will be an intrigue and a plot with dirty work going on—along with the violence and the sex, the things that are absolutely mandatory to our lives now. The question arises, is peace possible in such a world? We have this very interesting thing here. This is the way they are going to do it. Verse 10: “And it came to pass that when it was night he sent a secret embassy into the mount Antipas . . .” He wanted to make a deal. Come down and speak with me and we will make a deal here [he said]. The man they had elected to leader was Lehonti. Everybody was onto Amalickiah, so he said, Un uh, I’m not coming down for you, buster. So he invited him again to come down, but he said, no I’m not coming down. The third time Amalickiah said, all right I’ll come and meet you. Don’t be afraid; you can bring your bodyguard with you. You know he is going to get rid of him anyway. But he durst not come down. You notice he knew Amalickiah. As we said, Amalickiah’s own people were doubtful of the justice of his cause. They didn’t trust him all the way. Nobody trusted him, but was he clever. The [fourth] time Amalickiah went up to the mountain, and Lehonti came down with his guards. Then what did Amalickiah do? He betrayed his own men. He had his own loyalist people surrounded by the guards of Lehonti. “. . . Amalickiah desired him to come down with his army in the night-time, and surround those men in their camps . . .” This was their deal. You bring your army down and surround my little army at the bottom there, the king’s army, and I will deliver them into your hands. Then you won’t have to go to war, bother about the king, or anything like that. He would deliver them up into Lehonti’s hands if he would make him, Amalickiah, second leader over them.

They always had not only a king but also a second leader. Among the Romans they had a Caesar and an Augustus, who was a second-class Caesar. Caesars were always being bumped off by Augustuses so they could succeed them. Of the sixty-odd emperors of Rome by far the great majority were assassinated, and they were usually succeeded by the head of the military. A good example I mentioned was Philip the Arab. He was the head of the Praetorian Guard, the emperor’s personal bodyguard. What did he do? In a cute trick he stabbed the emperor and became emperor himself. So Decius, who was with some soldiers up in Germany, came down and got rid of Philip. Then he became emperor, and a great persecutor of the Christians. So this is the world we live in. We are not going to leave this part out of the story. We are all going to see a lot of dirty work. We see it going on around us all the time today, and it gets worse.

Verse 14: “And it came to pass that Lehonti came down with his men and surrounded the men of Amalickiah . . .” So Amalickiah betrayed his own army. He betrays everyone. The king has betrayed his own people to Amalickiah. Then Amalickiah betrayed his army to Lehonti. Then the king’s army became his while he betrayed Lehonti with poison. Now he is going to get rid of Lehonti as the next step in his gradus ad parnassum, as the Romans
call it. These are the steps of authority. You have to go through *gradus honorum*. There are various steps that everyone aspired to. Everybody wanted a career. Everybody wanted to get to the top. They were very competitive, so you get this sort of thing. “. . . when they saw that they were surrounded, they plead with Amalickiah that he would suffer them to fall in with their brethren . . .” Instead of destroying them when they surrounded [Amalickiah’s group] they joined them. So he had a super army now. He had the loyalists he led, and they were also joined by Lehonti’s people, of which he was second in command. But he is not going to remain second for very long, not if you know our dear Amalickiah.

Verse 16: “And it came to pass that he delivered his men, contrary to the commands of the king.” That’s an understatement. So now he is second leader. That’s the meaning of lieutenant, the one who takes the place of the other. *Capita* means “head man or top man.” The other one is the *locum tenens*, the one who holds the second place of the captain, who is the first place. So we have the captain, Lehonti, with Amalickiah as lieutenant. But again he is not going to remain that very long. “. . . Amalickiah caused that one of his servants should administer poison by degrees to Lehonti, that he died.”

Alexander VI, [Rodrigo] Borgia, became pope by poisoning a line of people. Finally, one cardinal stood in his [way], and he poisoned him. Then he became the great Pope Alexander VI. That’s the way you do. You poison a line of people and come in there. We always think of Borgias when we think of poisoning— Lucrezia and Cesare. They worked their way to the top by poisoning.

So the Lamanites appointed Amalickiah to be their leader and chief commander. Amalickiah was now the leader of the whole thing, so what did he do? He marched to the city of Nephi to overthrow his lord, the king for whom he was working. He was the king’s general; now he was going to overthrow the king. But how did he do it? Well, the king came out to meet him, to hail the conquering hero. This happens again. You hail someone coming back. The king came out to meet Amalickiah. He put forth his hand to give him the sign of peace and lift [Amalickiah’s servant] up, a custom they had taken from the Nephites. Notice these cultural exchanges that go on. He got stabbed being greeted. This is the direct method that Richard III uses. And, of course, [Amalickiah’s servants] raised a hue and cry to rouse up the usual suspects. This is what they do in *Macbeth* when they plot the murder of Duncan, the king. Macbeth has risen by degrees this way. First he’s the thane of Glamis, then he’s thane of Cawdor, and then he wants to be king. He is talking about the two guards. The king is sleeping in his bedroom with two chamberlains to guard him. They got them drunk at the feast. He says,

. . . when in swinish sleep  
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,  
What cannot you and I perform upon  
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon  
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt

[especially as we shall raise hue and cry and make them guilty]  
Of our great quell?

*Shakespeare, Macbeth*, Act I, Scene 7

She says, “I’ll gild the faces of the grooms withall, for it must seem their guilt.” (a play on words). She is going to smear them with blood so it will look as if they had committed the
murder. [She says,] These officers will be guilty for the crime we committed, because we will yell, “Look, his servants have killed him.” That’s exactly what happened here. It’s a well-known trick. Then she says, who will dare challenge our authority when we are king and queen. (I’ll think of it in a minute. I always have to wait a minute. I’m slowing down terribly these days. Well, that happens. Old age and that sort of thing.)

Verse 25: “. . . and the servants of Amalickiah raised a cry, saying: Behold, the servants of the king have stabbed him to the heart . . . [and] Amalickiah pretended to be wroth . . .” He gets angry about it and they [try to] round up the usual suspects. It’s a terrible crime that has been committed. “Whosoever loved the king, let him go forth, and pursue his servants that they may be slain.” That’s exactly what you would say. What loyalty this is! Macbeth had to announce that he had killed them because they would know. He says, yet I regret that I did it. Then Macduff says, why did you do that? He immediately becomes suspicious. Macbeth says,

Who can be wise, amazed, temp’rate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood.

Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act II, Scene 3

What man can be temperate and control himself in that situation? I had to bump them off. [Macduff] doesn’t buy that too well. Later on he says, “King, Cawdor, Glamis, thou hast it all, and I fear thou hast played most foulishly for it.” So he’s a typical Amalickiah. Of course, you could say Joseph Smith got it from *Macbeth*, being quite a student of Shakespeare—especially when he was twenty years old, working his head off on the farm. But it is a very common pattern; it happens all over the place. Livia was a very skillful poisoner, as you know. She poisoned everybody who got in Tiberius’s way, as you find out in Livy. Livy writes about Livia.

The servants of the king saw what he [Amalickiah] was doing, and they got out of there. They fled, and that made them look more guilty. They showed they were guilty because they ran away. His plot was working out. They fled over and joined the people of Ammon. That was the sensible thing to do—join these good, peaceable people of Ammon. What a relief to get away from all that sort of thing. Verse 30: “. . . and thus Amalickiah, by his fraud, gained the hearts of the people.” The fraud will do it, you see. His public relations savvy was very skillful. You can win the hearts of the people by fraud. Look at Adolf Hitler. And Shakespeare’s Claudius does the very same thing. You can smile and smile and be a villain, as Hamlet says. And there’s Noriega. You can gain the hearts of the people this way.

Verse 31: “And it came to pass on the morrow he entered the city Nephi with his armies, and took possession of the city.” Now he’s everything, but he’s got to marry the queen. The queen smells a rat too. Now we’re going to have trouble here. It’s quite a career this man has. He’s very interesting. With an imagination like that, Joseph Smith could have written quite a novel. “Therefore, when the queen had received this message she sent unto Amalickiah . . .” Come in and tell me, oh dear Amalickiah, what has been going on. Isn’t it terrible, he says to her. She also asked him to bring witnesses of what had happened. She
was not going to take his word alone. Nobody trusted Amalickiah all the way. She said, bring witnesses and tell me how it really happened. So Amalickiah did. He went to the queen with his witnesses, his stooges, "and they all testified unto her that the king was slain by his own servants; and they said also: They have fled [doesn’t this show that they are guilty?]; does not this testify against them?" Flight always assumes guilt. "And it came to pass that Amalickiah sought the favor of the queen, and took her unto him to wife."

It’s like the opening scene of Richard III. He had just murdered a man, and here is his wife at the funeral. He comes in and on the scene he proposes marriage to her. She knows that he has murdered [her husband] too. He’s such a smooth talker that he actually wins her over. Imagine that! The world is full of rascals. How loyal was the queen anyway, we begin to wonder, her husband being something of a bore? She at least found Richard interesting. "... and thus by his fraud, and by the assistance of his cunning servants, he obtained the kingdom; yea, he was acknowledged king throughout all the land, among all the people of the Lamanites..." Notice the people he ruled over were a complex. It wasn’t just Lamanites. He was a Mulekite himself. The Lamanites were composed of the Lamanites, Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites. They had kept their tribal identity. They probably had different dialects, just as the different villages of the Hopis have different dialects, close together as they are. "... and all the dissenters of the Nephites, from the reign of Nephi down to the present time." We have this complex picture.

It names four different groups here. It tells us in this mingling around the dissenters became the hardest boiled of all. "... they became more hardened and impenitent, and more wild, wicked and ferocious than the Lamanites." The Lamanites absorbed them, and this is what happens. Just as the civilizations absorb the warlord people, so the other way happens too. The warlord people can absorb them, and they make their ways more savage. "... drinking in with the traditions of the Lamanites." In verse 23 it mentioned quite casually that the custom of the king raising the victor to his feet by reaching out his hand was a custom which they had taken from the Nephites. Now here the Nephites are taking customs from them, as they take customs from the Nephites. "... giving way to indolence, and all manner of lasciviousness [they become the more relaxed warlords now, but they are a mixture]; yea, entirely forgetting the Lord their God."

Well, they are not the brotherhood anymore at least. The apostates are the worst here. Then we get a cultural picture again. We see what we would call the primitives. They almost went down to that level, “giving way to indolence, and all manner of lasciviousness.” No self-control particularly. They are no longer warlords here, you see. They are degrading; they are on their way down to what are called primitives. They will become innocent later on when they lose their resources and go back to nature again.

Let’s see, I wonder if chapter 48 will be an anticlimax after this. This was an unpleasant chapter, but this, children, is the world we live in, isn’t it? We have to face these things. Or do we have to face them? We have to know where we are. But what do you do in a case like this? How do you hold your own in this kind of a world? Well, that’s the beauty of it. We heard that at conference. What you do is have prayer, of course. You have direct access to the “Top Man.” You don’t have to go through channels or anything else. A lot was said about that—a lot about the authorities and how we are to respect them, how we are to go through them, what their office is, what our obligations are, etc. We know what we have to do, but always the way is wide open to the “Top Man.” You can go right through for satisfaction. That’s what we are commanded to do. So let not your hearts be troubled by this sort of stuff.
Now we have chapter 48. Do you think this going to be a letdown? This is on another subject, and it’s a “dilly.” It’s on war. Why do we have to bother about that? We’re beyond that sort of barbarism today, aren’t we? Well, I think I can save trouble by reading the introduction to a section on war. I have written 42 pages on strategy and tactics in the Book of Mormon. Recently they had a symposium on strategy and tactics in the Book of Mormon. It was on the art of war, fortification etc., in the Book of Mormon, which is very sophisticated. There were 170 pages devoted to war. Here I notice in the book I have 42 pages just on the strategy and tactics. The best excuse, I think, is in the introduction here. (Some people didn’t like it at all; in fact, something happened about it.) The readers of the Book of Mormon sometimes are disgusted with all this preoccupation with these things. We talked about the sordid business of all the political finagling and the systematic assassinations launched by Amalickiah. That’s not a very pleasant story. Now we come to this. Now we come to the actual engagements. As I said here, I survived three years of military intelligence at every level.

We talked about the four civilizations. Remember how they act in war? What does number one, the brotherhood, do? They are Rechabites. They flee to the desert. They do time and again in the Book of Mormon. They break off and go off by themselves. Sometimes they get overrun, etc. And war is the business of number three, the warlords. They fight until they exhaust their materials. Then they settle around along the edges. That’s what you find around the periphery of Asia, both in China and everywhere else. You notice today that they expand so far and then the bubble breaks [such as] in all the places on the fringe of the Russian empire today—Estonia, Lithuania, Turkey, and Armenia on one side and the Tartars and Mongolians on the other side. Everywhere people are crying for independence now. They break off, you see. Then it has to start all over again. Of course, they are doing the same with our far-flung bases. Everywhere, the nations want to take their bases back and kick us out, whether it’s in the Philippines, in Greece, in Spain, or even Australia and New Zealand. They won’t have “nukes” there, for example. They are loosening the hold on these bases. Do we have any business trying to hold all those bases anyway? That’s the point. That’s the central thing. That’s your warlords. This is the way they do. They make war with their resources. The thing is that they get along with the people who are conquered almost immediately. That’s the whole idea. Well, we won’t go into Clausewitz on this occasion.

Then there is number two—that’s Babylon. How do they do? Well, they have professional armies do their fighting, of course. They have regular professional soldiers, and they stay home. This marvelously illustrated in a chapter soon to come, where in a bitter letter Moroni is just fit to be tied. He is so angry at these people back home who have never had it so good while the army is suffering out there. That’s the way it happens. You ask, “Why does this insanity keep up? Why haven’t we made any progress at all since the Book of
Mormon? Why are we as determined to make war as ever?” Well, it’s profitable. It’s enormously profitable. My business for all of 1944, which was the most active part, was battlefield intelligence. I had to immediately find out what the Germans were up to and report it to where it could do the most good. In the end it went right up to SHAEF [Supreme Headquarters of the Allied European Forces], but first it had to be used at division level, then at corps, and in army groups. But the stuff I got was considered invaluable, pure gold. There was only one team that did that, a three-man team. The first two were killed on D-Day, and that left me as a one-man team. So I had to snoop into everything, and I found out all sorts of things I shouldn’t have found out. The whole thing was being run as a game for profits.

After that during all of 1945, I had my own jeep. Officers couldn’t drive jeeps because “gentlemen” don’t drive. They were very strict about that. So everybody was jealous because I had my own jeep. I could get all the gas I wanted when gas was pure gold. I had to drive all over Germany, France, Austria, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Belgium interviewing and snooping into things. All the time I was finding out things I shouldn’t be finding out, I suppose. I tell you from the beginning the whole thing was operated, controlled, and orchestrated by the same interests on both sides. If you want to get enlightenment on that, read a book by the chief judge at Nuremberg, Joseph Borkin. It’s called The Crime and Punishment of I. G. Farben. I. G. Farben was up to all sorts of things and acted hand in glove (shared their secrets and their profits) with Standard Oil of New Jersey which became the beloved EXXON later on. They had an equal part on both sides in the war. I could tell you stories that would amaze the faculties of eyes and ears, chill your young blood, and cause “each particular hair to stand on end, like quills upon the fretful porpentine.” (it’s porcupine—a pig with spines on it, but Shakespeare uses porpentine.) That’s why we are going to continue to have wars, and it’s bigger business now than ever, as you know. After all, Brother Quayle spilled the beans the other day when he said we knew all along that Star Wars was a dream, but there are enormous profits in it. It’s not going to work, not for a long time at least. But look at the money. Look at the contracts you have, so it’s going to go on. Here we go still operating.

Let’s see what this says here: After surviving three years of military intelligence at every level from company to army group, with frequent visits to SHAEF on the one hand and a muddy foxhole on the other, and reading thousands of written reports on enemy dispositions (I had to make reports all the time when they came in. Then after that in 1945 I was moved from First to Third Army, and then the Sixth Army group. Then I was making reports for the whole front at that time. That was very enlightening too.) We have always been inclined to rush through the military parts of the Book of Mormon as painful reminders of an unpleasant past. I have studiously ignored the war stories myself. “We’ll skip the wars,” I said. Alas, if we only could. The whole point of Alma’s (or rather Mormon’s) studies in the “work of death,” as he calls it, is that they are supposed to be revolting—they are meant to be painful. It is Mormon and Moroni, the tragic survivors of a nation destroyed by senseless war, who are editing this book.

Remember, there’s always this theme of destruction. Why can’t you leave that alone? The Book of Mormon is about as negative as you get, isn’t it? Well, there must be some reason for that. Don’t you get the hint? Why do you think people don’t like to read the Book of Mormon? Why do you think we rush through it? We take speed reading courses so it won’t slow us down, or else we pick our way through it daintily as through a minefield, avoiding all the unpleasant passages of which there are plenty. That will get you through the Book of Mormon in no time if you leave out all the unpleasant passages you
don’t like.

They [Mormon and Moroni] are editing this book, and they have put into it whatever they think might be useful as warning to us. It’s not their purpose to tell an entertaining or reassuring tale. War is anything but glamorous in the Book of Mormon. The campaigns and battles are described not as a writer of fiction would depict ancient warfare with all its excitement and color. (Like somebody writing in early New England. That would be popular. Mark Twain or somebody would write about it.) No, it is not what an author in America in the 1820s would imagine as the gaudy trappings of heroic derring-do. That’s all missing. It is real war that we see here, a tedious, sordid, plodding, joyless routine of see-saw successes and losses—brutally expensive, destructive, exhausting, and boring, with constant marches and countermarches that end sometimes in fiasco and sometimes in intensely unpleasant engagements. The author writes as one would write—as only one could write—who had gone through a long war as a front-line observer with his eyes wide open. Everything is strictly authentic, with the proper emphasis in the proper place. Strategy and tactics are treated with the knowledge of an expert: logistics and supply; armaments and fortifications; recruiting and training; problems of morale and support from the home front; military intelligence from cloak and dagger to scouting and patrolling; interrogation, guarding, feeding, and exchange of war prisoners; propaganda and psychological warfare; rehabilitation and resettlement; (all these things are there and treated deftly and explicitly); feelers for peace and negotiations at various levels; treason; profiteering; and the exploitation of the war economy by individuals and groups—it is all there.

In the part we are coming to later, Mormon and his son are summing up the situation after spending most of their lives in the field—and they hate it. For them war is nasty, brutalizing, wasteful, dirty, degrading, fatiguing, foolish, immoral, and above all unnecessary. It is also inevitable, as long as men are running things, and as long a it is very profitable. So we have this Book of Mormon war business that we’re going to be bothered with. If this were all behind us now [we could relax], but alas how much more is before us. The “nukes” could change all that, but not if it’s more profitable not to use the “nukes.”

So we start with Alma 48. But first the relevant D&C 1:35: “... the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion.” That is war, of course. Peace is going to be taken away. Is there any place which is relaxed and peaceful today? Everywhere is in tension. How is this going to break out? How it going to be solved? The chances of coming to peaceful and friendly agreements based on love, brotherhood, charity, and all that sort of thing get fainter and fainter all the time, don’t they? So that’s the age you happy people are living in. I’m glad I’m clearing out.

We start out with public relations, and Amalickiah was a public relations genius. He knew how to get people behind him. You have to get them behind you in a war, and he is going to do it. Notice how he does it very cleverly. Notice how far the Book of Mormon is ahead of the times here. Amalickiah had obtained the kingdom. He’s got what he wants. Thou hast it all now. What are you going to do? What is your next step? You have to get the Nephites under your thumb too. Why would you want to do that? Why would you want to bring people into bondage? This is another very interesting thing, isn’t it? It’s going to tell here why. We’ll get to that in just a second here, but first of all “he began to inspire the hearts of the Lamanites against the people of Nephi.” You have to get them angry.
Remember, they had been very reluctant. They didn’t want to do this. He has formed his army without any fighting at all. He got the loyalists together with the opposition on Mount Antipas there. They surrounded them and [the loyalists decided] let’s get together here. They were following Amalickiah, and he got himself made king by treason. Then he had it all. Now he’s got to make real war. The first thing is to put the people in mind for it, give them the fighting spirit and make them want it. The only reason he had been able to get what he wanted so far was that they didn’t want to fight. They would do anything rather than that. Now he’s got them where he wanted. Now his big problem is how can we make the next step. “... he began to inspire the hearts of the Lamanites against the people of Nephi; yea, he did appoint men to speak unto the Lamanites from their towers, against the Nephites.”

Notice, how often the Book of Mormon talks about these towers. When you go to Central America or the Mississippi Valley, wherever the old Indian cultures are, [you find these], and also among the Hopis. What is a hogan but a reduced step pyramid. The big one at Hotevilla, for example, has the steps going up to it. Some of them are quite high and have a ladder. So they had their towers. What did they use them for? Some of them are absurd. They just stand there with these high, steep steps. They can be climbed all right, but why wear yourself out going up 150 steps? There’s nothing on the top. Were they all Rameumptoms? Some of them certainly were. They were for announcements, and they were always at ceremonial places. Remember that Alma and Amulek preached at such a place. They were for public assemblies, announcements, preaching, and all the rest. But he had this systematically done from towers. As it were, we would say he had time on the air. He had all these stations that saturated the air with this. They were used as sort of a modern technique. Instead of broadcasting stations he had these towers spread throughout the whole country. They are the same thing as if you had broadcast stations. And he appointed speakers with their set talks. This is exactly what you do in public relations. You take a sample and find out what will sell. Then your people give that spiel. You hear the same program over and over again. You’d think people would get wise after a while, but the funny thing is they don’t. I’m going to give you a talk on rhetoric one of these days, because it plays a very important part in the Book of Mormon. It may be a lie, it might be absurd, it may be unthinkable, but if you just keep saying it, they will go for it. They’ve found that out. We’ve had the same slogans going for years and years. It got to them. After all, if you have the guy shouting through the megaphone all day long and you hear the same message over and over again, you give in to it. “And thus he did inspire their hearts against the Nephites, insomuch that in the latter end of the nineteenth year... having been made king over the Lamanites, he sought also to reign over all the land, the Nephites as well as the Lamanites.” That was the idea.

Why would he want to rule everybody? Remember Alexander the Great who wept because there were not more worlds to conquer. As long as there is something left to conquer, you’ve got to do it. It was the same thing with the Romans, as we said. There was ager hosticus [the hostile earth] and ager pacatus, the pacified earth—Dār al- İslām and Dār al- Ḥarb. The outer world, anything that hasn’t submitted to you, has to be conquered and taken because it’s a threat. You can’t even sleep at night because these people haven’t been conquered yet and they pose a threat to you. So you have to expand your world empire until everybody is knuckling under to you. How do those lines go? “That’s what we have to achieve. Our rule has to reach to the oceans, as far as you can go. And our fame must reach to the stars.”
This is the idea and there is no satisfaction until you rule everything. Then you weep like Alexander because there are no more worlds to conquer. And this was Nimrod. He wanted to be a cosmocrator. There’s an interesting phenomenon that is very important in the books of Abraham and Moses in the Pearl of Great Price. A cosmocrator is somebody who has conquered the world. There have been ten cosmocrators, we are told. The three great ones include Alexander, and Nimrod. You have your pick of the others, but they are men who aspired to rule over everything. Caesar wanted to be that.

Amalickiah had accomplished his design. The first part was to harden the hearts of the Lamanites so they would be willing. In order to do that he had to tell them lies and blind their minds. Then you stir them up to anger. This is the process, isn’t it? Win, win, win. Why do people act this way? As the Book of Mormon says, why do we? We are guilty of the same thing. First you harden their hearts. Then they don’t want to listen to the facts. You blind their minds and they get emotional about it. We get all wrought up and we are ready for war. It’s the silliest thing in the world, but we do it. Hitler was very skillful at that. He was working for the corporations, but he knew how to pull it off doing that very thing. Of course, he used the radio as we use the TV today, and [Amalickiah] used the towers. There’s a very good book by Richard Nixon on that subject called *The Real War*. It shows how that’s done.

Verse 4: “For he was determined, because of the greatness of the number of his people [it turned his head to see his power and glory], to overpower the Nephites and to bring them into bondage.” Why would he want to bring them into bondage? Well, submission is the only form of obedience that a person like that can understand. They wouldn’t obey willingly. That’s what Islam means, submission, but submission to God. Submission to anybody else is wrong. That’s what is called “bondage.” If you submit to God, that’s dandy, but not if you submit to anybody else.

That’s the story of Nimrod. Remember, there was Noah, Ham, and Cush. Cush’s son was Nimrod. He was a righteous young man until he was 25 years old. He became the king, and he had received the garment of Adam, which had been stolen by Ham when they were leaving the ark. It belonged to Adam and Noah had it. We mentioned that garment before, but there is great literature about this garment. Nimrod lost the garment later on, but when he wore it all people and animals assumed that he was a holy man and priest acting for God, and they submitted to him willingly. That was right. But then it turned his head, and he decided to become the great conqueror. Meanwhile, God gave him the bow to protect the human race against the depredations of the giant creatures that roamed the earth in those days—cave bears, mastodons, and things like that—which man was not able to cope with at all in his helpless state until God gave Nimrod the secret of the bow and arrow. It’s a very sophisticated and efficient weapon, more efficient than any rifle. Read a book by Saxton Pope called *Hunting with the Bow and Arrow*. He wrote it at Berkeley years ago. It’s an excellent book showing that the bow and arrow is the most efficient of all weapons in hunting or anything else. It’s not only silent, but a stone arrowhead makes abrasions of the wound. It starts hemorrhages which don’t stop. Even if you hit an animal not in a vital place at all, in the end it has a fatal effect. There are so many advantages to hunting with a bow and arrow. The experiments were made at Berkeley. They shot with high powered rifles into hanging hams, sides of beef, etc. to see which would penetrate. The arrow penetrated more effectively than most high powered bullets. Also it’s silent, cheap, and all sorts of things.

Anyway God gave the bow and arrow to Nimrod to defend the human race, for
protection against their enemies. It didn’t take Nimrod long to discover that he could use these arrows to put the human race at his disposal. It was put at his disposal to defend the human race. Now he discovered that if he turned it against human beings they were at his disposal. He was the boss. This is the famous bow of Nimrod. In the end he went crazy and turned it against God. He challenged God to a fight because he was ruler of the empire. He said, “I’m the creator; I’m the god.” He built the Tower of Babel and went up to the top of it so he could shoot arrows into the sky and kill God. The Angel Gabriel, playing a trick on him, held up a fish. The arrow hit the fish and came back to earth with blood. Then Nimrod went stark raving mad. He said, “See, I’ve killed God; there’s blood on the arrow.”

There are various versions of the story. It is very old and circulates everywhere. So he went nuts. To get rid of him and show his utter contempt, God finally dispatched him with the weakest and smallest of creatures. He sent a little, tiny gnat. It crawled up the nose of Nimrod and started tickling his brain. Well, of course, it drove him absolutely crazy. He had two servants stand on each side of him with hammers and hit him on the head alternately so he wouldn’t be tickled to death by it. If they hit him on the head, he went bonggggg, so that was better than putting up with this gnat. In the end that did away with Nimrod. He is supposed to have founded the first army and the first city. He got civilization going. This is class number two, Babylon. Nimrod was the founder of Babylon. All the old sources will tell you, wherever you get them, that Nimrod founded Babylon. He was the archenemy of Abraham, etc. This is type number two. He had to bring people into bondage; nothing else would do. We say the same thing. Talking about Central American countries, we say, “We’ll make them say uncle.” That amounts to, “Do what we tell them to do. Who are they who dare to defy us?”

Look what he does, that clever man. He appoints chief captains of the Zoramites. You remember from last semester who the Zoramites were, the people who went off by themselves. Very suddenly they had a new religion and everything else. They had adopted some of the prevailing, more ancient customs and religions that were in the country already. That’s rather clear. Remember, Alma tells them they are just model people. They are smart and well dressed; they have dress standards. They’re very pious. Every Sunday they all bear their testimonies. They go up in the Rameumptom and say, “We thank God that we are a blessed people and not like other people.” Then he said they forgot about it the rest of the week. But he said they were the wickedest people he ever knew, because they cry unto thee, O God, and yet their hearts are upon their riches.”

These were the Zoramites who left and went out by themselves. They were living in the area between the Nephites and Lamanites, and they were absorbed by the Lamanites. At the beginning of the long war they asked to become Lamanites. They were officially accepted as Lamanite citizens. They didn’t intermarry though. They were the smartest people and the best warriors. They had the best offices, so they knew all the answers. They had been Nephites. As it tells us, the dissenters were the worst of all, and they were dissenters. So they were the people to trust. He put their captains in charge, who knew what they were doing. They knew all the weaknesses and strengths and the strategy and tactics of the Nephites. It says, “. . . he did appoint chief captains of the Zoramites, they being the most acquainted with the strength of the Nephites, and their places of resort, and the weakest parts of their cities [This is exactly what you would want to know if you were interrogating a prisoner of war. What is this? Does anybody watch the gate? Is it these hours? When do they change the watch? etc.]; therefore he appointed them to be chief captains over his armies.”
He was very shrewd. The same thing is done by modern Third World countries when they invite observers from larger, stronger countries on both sides of the Curtain into Africa, Central America, or anywhere else. They come as observers, but they come in strength. Before you know it they are running the show. It’s the same thing here. The Zoramites were there as observers, you might say. They were the chief captains, the ones in charge of the operation. So he had a pretty good thing going. He knew what he was doing.

Verse 6: “And it came to pass that they took their camp, and moved forth toward the land of Zarahemla in the wilderness.” Now here’s the contrast in verse 7: “...while Amalickiah had thus been obtaining power by fraud and deceit...” Notice, the Book of Mormon puts a thumb right on the thing. They know what it is. The whole darn thing is just fraud and deceit—all this patriotic rhetoric they have been having, all this fervor against the wicked Nephites. We’re going to see what the argument was. They’ve robbed us of our birthright. They cheated—Laman and Lemuel were denied their rights. The people really believed it, and they had been working on that. But it was fraud and deceit. “...Moroni, on the other hand, had been preparing the minds of the people [their minds had to be prepared too. To go against the Lamanites? No] to be faithful unto the Lord their God.” That would take care of it. What a contrast! No hate campaigns here.

Incidentally, the historian who said he searched all the works of Lincoln and Lee and they never mentioned the other side as “the enemy” was Henry Steele Commager. I remembered just after the class; I apologize. You can find it there. That’s interesting. No hate campaigns at all, and this is very strong in the ideas of Moroni. He always refers to the enemy as “our brethren.” That’s the only title he uses to describe the enemy is “our brethren.”

He did a very clever thing. This morning, gentlemen, our lecture will be on defense in depth. That’s what this is on. This is a beautiful example of defense in depth. In September 1938 the German Nazis launched World War II into Poland with great effect using the pincher movement, the blitzkrieg, the double arms. First they would proceed with reconnaissance in force, which was much greater than our reconnaissance. We just used a squad. They used a whole regiment just for reconnaissance, to scout out the land. The men were heavily armed, so they practically had the battle won before they got there. Then they were followed up by the tanks, followed immediately by the infantry. When they struck they didn’t strike the main objective. They struck around the sides. Before they [the Poles] knew it they were encircled. It was an encircling movement. You have them trapped that way. They did that again and again, and it worked almost every time. They used it in Belgium and especially on the plains of Poland.

That’s what Amalickiah was doing. He was going to blitz them. Well, how do you slow down a blitz? You do it by defense in depth. You just put in a lot of little forts along here. You [the enemy] might get through here all right and surround them, but you haven’t taken them. You cannot proceed unless you have subdued them, because otherwise you will have them in your rear. Then they will cut off your supplies and everything else. You can’t do a thing. These must be subdued one by one. That always slows down the blitzkrieg. It has never failed to work because you have these little forts. You cannot feel safe and have this at your back. You have to wipe it up. Or you send the main force to do that. But meanwhile you have to go up here and wait for them. Then you are exposed, because you all have to be together. It’s blitz. That means lightning. It has to move as fast as possible, and you have to be in there. You’ll notice the Lamanites do that again and
again. Their attacks, it’s going to tell us, are by surprise. Suddenly one morning they
found the Lamanite armies were upon them, just like that. In some of these jungles you
can get away with that too.

Here he had his defense in depth, and notice how nicely it’s described here. Verse 8: “Yea,
he had been strengthening the armies of the Nephites, and erecting small forts, or places
of resort [places to fall back on, you see]; throwing up banks of earth round about to
enclose his armies . . . .” They didn’t have the money or the time to build expensive places.
There have been some very good papers on this. I think John Sorenson wrote a paper on
the Nephite fortifications in view of the archaeological evidence. It’s true, the earth forts
were the commonest. There were earth forts along the Mississippi Valley all over the place.
Then they could be improved by stone. It was usual to have timber palisades around the
top to hold them, but not always. They add the timber a little later here, I think. “. . . and
erecting small forts, or places of resort; throwing up banks of earth round about to enclose
his armies, and also building walls of stone to encircle them about [see they added the
stone after the dirt; if you’ve got the time you can do that], round about their cities and
the borders of their lands; yea, all round about the land.”

Notice, all round about their cities and in all the borders of their lands he scattered these
little forts everywhere so that the Lamanite forces couldn’t do anything. They had to
move with caution. It took all the steam out of the charge. They couldn’t bull through any
more. “And in their weakest fortification he did place the greater number of men,” which
made them pretty equal. You want to knock over a weak one quickly. All right, we’ll give
it special support. “. . . and thus he did fortify and strengthen the land which was possessed
by the Nephites.” It was their own country. And you will notice throughout the Book of
Mormon, the battles are always fought on Nephite territory; they never invade outside.
Mormon tells us later exactly why that is. It’s an interesting thing. American battles have
always been fought outside. We’ve never had to do it inside. We don’t believe it really can
happen here because it has never happened to us. But remember, in other countries the
wars have been fought inside of them again, again, and again. That means a different
tactic and a different attitude toward things. You are not so ready to go into it, etc.

Remember the banners that they inscribed. These are the sentiments on the banners. You
might call them “buzz words” because they do excite an immediate reaction. They do stir
up your emotions, like the sight of the flag. It does whether you know it’s just emotional
or not. It always does with me. The Star Spangled Banner always makes me choke up. You
could say I should be more rational. I’m sorry. That’s the way it is.

Verse 10: “And thus he was preparing to support their liberty, their lands, their wives, and
their children, and their peace . . . their God . . . [and] the cause of Christians.” You’ll
notice the thing about this: it’s the intimate things they are supporting. They are not
supporting their resources, their minds, their businesses, their vacations, and things like
that. They are supporting the things that are closest to them, the things that are intimate.
Those are the things that are worth supporting. So many wars have been fought to gain a
good harbor or to open a passage. There’s the famous theory of the Trojan War, for
example. Troy had closed the straits through which Russian grain went to the Mycenean
world. Troy had to be subdued for the grain rights, to let the wheat go through. There’s
something to all of these. Most wars are fought for strategic reasons like that, such as the
Russians in the Crimean War. The terrible lack for the Russians is a warm water port. They
are frozen in for the winter. Their navy can’t operate in most places. That’s why they
fought the Sino-Japanese War. In 1904 they had to take Port Arthur so they would win,
but the Japanese won that war. The reasons we give for going to war aren’t these at all. They are to get ports and strategic routes. The Kaiser wanted Berlin to Baghdad. Hitler repeatedly said he wanted the grain lands of the Ukraine. That’s what he wanted. We say wars are fought for economic reasons, but this is a war of defense. They are fighting for their lands, their wives, their children, their peace, and their God.

Now here is the encomium of Moroni, what kind of man he was: “And Moroni was a strong and a mighty man.” There are few of them, but when they appear they make the difference. Thomas Carlyle’s famous work is on the influence of great men. Is history the influence of great men, or is it just the influence of the masses? Remember, Tolstoy said that great men don’t mean a thing. He talked about Napoleon and whoever was great [and said] that’s not it. It’s the people, the masses, the general movements, the emotions of people that count. Yet the strong man makes an awful lot of difference after all, doesn’t he? An Alexander, a Caesar, a Thutmose III—what a difference they make. And Hitler is a man who counts for something. He was able to stir things up; you have to grant him that. “And Moroni was a strong and a mighty man; he was a man of a perfect understanding [well, now that’s something else; notice he always emphasizes this]; yea, a man that did not delight in bloodshed; a man whose soul did joy in the liberty and the freedom of his country, and his brethren from bondage and slavery.” They were actually threatened all the time. Remember, the Lord had promised that they would have to face this all the time.

Are there people who actually delight in bloodshed? You bet there are. I remember one person, General Johnson. He was a general and only twenty-five years old. He was Max Taylor’s pet. Max Taylor was our division general in the 101st at that time. He later became chief of staff. When I knew him I can’t say we were quite chummy because he was very aloof. But he talked with me a lot. Anyway, his pet was General Johnson. When you get to be a general at twenty-five, you must be pretty good. Well, he was all gung-ho for doing it, and so was Max Taylor. That’s why he had to have a paratroop division and all this sort of thing. There was an assembly hall in a big wooden building up at Ramsgate, the field they took off from. The night they left for Normandy, General Johnson jumped up on the stage with a trench knife. His face was blackened. He held it up and said, “Do you see this knife? Before the night is over it will be red with German blood.” Then he let out the most hideous rebel yell you ever heard in your life. Why didn’t he get to be chief of staff? Because he didn’t last more than a couple of weeks. You start acting like that and you are finished. He got bumped off in Holland. He and Taylor were standing on a canal, sizing up the territory just across from Arnhem there. Along came some .88 shells, and everybody fell flat. But not General Johnson. He stood up there proud as anything, and that finished General Johnson. He was too proud to fall flat on his face in the mud on the embankment. Taylor was fit to be tied that day. Just like Achilles, he sat in the door of his tent and brooded. Nobody would go near him. But there are people who get excited about this sort of thing [killing]—they love it.

Notice he’s a great hearted man: “Yea, a man whose heart did swell with thanksgiving to his God, for the many privileges and blessings which he bestowed upon his people.” He doesn’t complain and sorrow, but he is just thrilled by how good God has been to them, how they have been blessed beyond their desserts. His heart swells with this thanksgiving for the many blessings he had bestowed on his people. “... a man who did labor exceedingly for the welfare and safety of this people... and he had sworn an oath to defend his people [notice, here’s what we find on the banners of the Milhamah, the Battle Scroll], his rights, and his country, and his religion, even to the loss of his blood.” Notice
that’s a worse case. An extreme case is the loss of blood, as it says in the next verse. “Now
the Nephites were taught to defend themselves against their enemies, even to the
shedding of blood if it were necessary [that’s the extreme worst case; hold back as long as
you can; it emphasizes that] yea, and they were also taught never to give an offense . . .”

Nobody gives offense today. After World War I the Germans changed the name of the
War Department to Defense Department. We took the hint and changed too. In my day
when I was in ROTC it was War Department. Now it’s not War Department; it’s
Department of Defense. We just defend ourselves; we don’t make war. It’s all defense
now, whether it’s army, navy, or anything else—no matter what you do. All nations have
done that now. Clausewitz is the classic work, as you know, on the military. He was the
teacher in all war schools. In the eighteenth century he taught the Germans, and his book,
*On War* became the bible for strategy, tactics, etc. You must read it. Anyway, every
nation thinks of itself as being on the defense. No matter how ambitious you are, you
must always approach your people with the attitude, “We must defend ourselves; we are
threatened.” That’s the only way to get action. You never admit that you are an aggressor.
Remember what Hitler said: “In the midst of the deepest peace we have been without
provocation attacked.” Hitler said that speaking of Poland when they had smashed it in a
week. He fooled Chamberlain that way. Everybody thought he would be willing to settle if
people would just give him what he wanted. He was a nice guy if you gave him just what
he wanted. It was true. He was sweet as pie if he got just what he wanted. That’s true with
most of us. So you’re on the defense. It’s just the Defense Department today.

But he [Moroni] really meant it. As I said, [almost] every war in the Book of Mormon is
fought on Nephite territory. As Mormon said in Mormon 4:4–5 when they finally
changed that it was the fatal mistake. Then they were finished; they didn’t have a chance.
He saw, against all that the Lord had commanded, that they would go against them. Then
he said, “But behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the
wicked that the wicked are punished.” Don’t you try to punish anybody, he says. God
wants the wicked to be punished, and he will punish them. But he will punish them by the
wicked.

So don’t think it’s the good guys against the bad guys at all. Whenever Nephites and
Lamanites fight they are equally bad. After that personal duel between Amlici and [Alma]
they fought face to face with the sword and ended that other war, you might say, “This is
right out of *Star Wars*, the good guys fighting the bad guys.” [Alma] appealed to God,
and he was the victor. Then immediately after it says the people realized that all these
troubles had come upon them because of their own sins, not because of the Lamanites.
Even in what you would call a clear-cut case like that in which it [appeared to be] good
guys against bad guys. “. . . even to the shedding of blood if it were necessary . . . never to
give an offense, yea, and never to raise the sword except it were against an enemy, except
it were to preserve their lives.”

Joseph Smith said, “The man who carries a gun or a pistol will someday regret it. I have
never carried anything larger than a penknife [to sharpen a quill pen] with me, even when
I faced the mobs.” I don’t know what happens if he carries an AK 47, an assault rifle that
will shoot twelve shells a minute. Well, you have to have those for hunting, of course.
Those twelve bullets will really finish off a quail; you would really be surprised. He won’t
put up any fight after that at all. There’s a good story about fighting quail, but that’s from
Greece. I won’t tell you that.
This was their faith. Well, how can you do that? How can we expose ourselves, being a lot of wimps on the defensive like this—never to raise the sword, never to stand tall, except to preserve their lives. It was their faith in God. If they did that God would preserve them. They put their faith in him. What if he didn’t? That’s the point: he would if they were faithful in keeping the commandments. That’s the promise that had been given way back in the beginning. It was given in the second chapter when the Lord told Nephi that his people would always have the others breathing down their necks. This is fulfilling the promise that the Lord made to Lehi and his sons: “And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments, thou shalt be made a ruler and a teacher over they 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. 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.” (1 Nephi 1:21–24.) I want them always breathing down your neck. Don’t think you can ever solve the problem by getting rid of the Lamanites. They insisted it was the Lamanite problem. If we can just go out there and knock them out, we will have it all made [they thought]. They came up against that again and again; they couldn’t resist that. It’s the John Wayne solution. The big man with the gun is the solution to the problem. They had to trust the Lord in that. Were they going to do it? Well, do we do it? No, we don’t.

Verse 15: “. . . if they were faithful in keeping the commandments of God that he would prosper them in the land; yea, warn them to flee [fleeing is not a disgrace; they fled], or to prepare for war, according to their danger.”

One morning going along a brick road, I turned aside to headquarters. We were completely disrupted; we were getting out. We lost our shirt, apparently. There was a little brick house by the road, and the whole headquarters, the general and his staff, were down on their knees praying. We were surrounded at that time. That’s the thing you do. Usually, they were all drinking, not exactly drunk. But Colonel Cole was as drunk as a lord when he landed in Holland. He took two pearl-handled revolvers in his hands and said, “Come out and follow me. If anybody wants to follow me, I’ll go up and take S’Hertogenbus.” It was five miles away and was never taken at all. That was the last we ever heard of Colonel Cole. He commanded the 502nd. That was the best crack regiment we had. Colonel Cole was never heard from again because he did that silly thing. He was stewed; he had been drinking too much. He said, “Come and follow me, you So-and-Sos. I’ll take S’Hertogenbus.” Some of them did. We never heard of them again. That’s the sort of thing we have here. The Lord will warn you to defend yourself. “. . . prosper them in the land; yea, warn them to flee, or to prepare for war, according to their danger.” He would let them know. The Rechabite brotherhoods, as we mentioned, were always fleeing anyway—Lehi, Nephi, and all the rest of them.

Verse 16: “And also, that God would make it known unto them whither they should go to defend themselves against their enemies, and by so doing the Lord would deliver them.” That was their DEW-line. We don’t talk about the DEW-line anymore. We had this elaborate system of radar defenses all around the periphery of the United States and up in Canada and Alaska called the DEW-line. It doesn’t exist anymore. I guess we didn’t need it, though it was a big thing. But the Lord will tell you. He’s your DEW-line. He’s your line of defense. “. . . and by so doing the Lord would deliver them; and this was the faith of Moroni [he was a most unusual general, to say the least], and his heart did glory in it; not in the shedding of blood but in doing good, in preserving his people, yea, in keeping the commandments of God . . .” It keeps repeating that he did not like to shed blood. Fire
power is not the solution, strange as it may seem. We found that out. That’s what strategy and tactics are for. Strategy is to save lives, not to take them. What were we reduced to in Vietnam? A completely bankrupt strategy, body count. The whole purpose of strategy is not to have body count, not to lose anybody if you can possibly help it on either side. As Clausewitz said, the whole purpose of your fighting is to have the enemy submit to your will. Once he has the war is over. It’s not to kill him necessarily. There’s no such thing as unconditional surrender. He’ll surrender only on condition of his life being saved. It’s got to happen. Sooner or later you’ve got to come to an agreement. It surprised me that one day after May 7, 1945, when we signed the agreement up in Rheims, we and the Germans became just buddy buddies. We were the best of friends. That had already been going on for some weeks before. I was in old missionary territory. I was talking it up with the people and the soldiers. That’s fraternizing and that’s dangerous. But there were no hard feelings or anything like that. Not at all. After all, the business was interrogation of prisoners of war. Battlefield prisoners were shocked, undone, and willing to tell you anything you wanted to know. It was sometimes embarrassing because they would tell you more than you wanted to hear.

I was a poor interrogator. I interrogated a lot of interrogators. I could never intimidate anyone. You had to be intimidating to be a proper interrogator. They would just laugh at me. I couldn’t get anything out of anybody. All they had to tell me was name, rank, and serial number [according to] the Geneva Convention. That’s all they had to tell me. There were no bitter feelings at all. Usually, prisoners would come in with a sigh of relief. Thank heaven this is over. They had their passbooks, and those passbooks were very instructive. They told where they had been, what the unit was and everything. It was the passbook you wanted, and you could always get that from them. They would write in the passbook [something like]: “This day the war ended for Hans Gelser. Three cheers! I’m going over to the Americans.”

It was the same thing with the Japanese, who are our best friends now, but our economic rivals. It was MacArthur who rebuilt Japan. It was a very wise and generous thing he did. He proved his greatness by reinstating Japan without any rancor. As Lincoln said, “With malice toward none and charity toward all.” That’s the way you have to do it. Well, if you’re going to end that way, why bother killing everybody in the meantime then? Why not decide right at the beginning what you are going to do? I repeat, because it [war] is very, very profitable. There I could a tale unfold, but I’m not going to. It wouldn’t be healthy, actually. Well, we didn’t finish the war story yet, but this is the time in which we are living. I hear a bell. I go. “The bell invites me. Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell that summons thee to heaven or to hell.”

2. Ibid., 291.
Now, you notice we’re not rushing along. But you’re perfectly free to read the Book of Mormon anytime you want to, as fast as you want to. That’s not the idea. I’m pointing out a few things which you would overlook, which you wouldn’t see. These are important things, I think. I know you’ve overlooked them, because I’ve overlooked them for sixty years. The chances are you overlooked them too.

So let’s consider here the encomium of Moroni in Alma here. In Alma 48:16–18 is where he praises the qualities of Moroni:

... this was the faith of Moroni, and his heart did glory in it; not in the shedding of blood but in doing good, in preserving his people, yea, in keeping the commandments of God, yea, and resisting iniquity. Yea, verily, verily I say unto you, if all men had been, and were, and ever would be, like unto Moroni, behold, the very powers of hell would have been shaken forever; yea, the devil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men [notice it’s the hearts he’s after, not the bodies]. Behold, he was a man like unto Ammon [the great pacifist], the son of Mosiah, yea, and even the other sons of Mosiah, yea, and also Alma and his sons, for they were all men of God.

Well, there are some things to be said now about these qualities. This shows the two qualities of Abraham in the vast Abraham literature. It’s very large. Abraham is mentioned perhaps more than any other person in world literature, because he is the father. He’s in the center, he’s the pivotal character of world history, and he’s our father. We all have the blood of Abraham in us, whether we know it or not. Do you know why that is, what the chances are? We mentioned that you could put it on the computer. Nobody knows the time of Abraham, but we know it was one of those particular times of extermination. He lived in a time of extermination. Everything was desolate. It was always dry. He dug wells, and he planted trees that he would never be able to use. The famine waxed sore in the land. He had to move from Haran to Canaan, from Canaan to Egypt and back again, driven wherever he went. Then [he went] to the five cities where it was lush. But suddenly they had fallen in a terrible collapse. Everything collapsed, and then he moved to Gerar and tried to make a living in Gerar. It was even worse—terrible plague everywhere he went, drought everywhere, crops failed, world collapse. It was a terrible thing. Well, we get to take that up in the book of Abraham. But there’s a great literature about that.

There’s a very good work we have here, a massive thing, by Claude Schaeffer, a Frenchman. He got together all the archaeological evidence that covered everything we have [such as] the signs of ruin and decay. They’re periodical: 1700 B.C. was a good
example, 3000 B.C., 1200 B.C., and 600 B.C.—those pivotal times we talk about [that are] so important. Well, at that time the world’s population was really reduced. It was cut down to the nub. People just disappeared. It was one of those times of extermination. The Great Plague in the 1340s wiped out at least half the population of Europe, and in some parts completely desolated the world. But do you notice the promise to Abraham and his children? Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They always lay such heavy emphasis on numbers. Your offspring, your seed, will be as numerous as the sands of the sea. If you can count the stars of the heaven . . . They’re as numerous as the dust of the earth. That’s making it infinite. But why are they so obsessed with getting a lot of descendants, millions and millions? They’re bound to get a lot anyway. Why is this an obsession with them? That’s the trouble with us; we have too many people running around. The earth is overpopulated like a cancer and eating everything up now.

Well, the reason is to repopulate the earth. Abraham had three wives. He took Sarah, but Sarah was barren, so he took Hagar who was of the blood of Ham. Many accounts say she was the daughter of Pharaoh; she was an Egyptian. The Egyptians play a big role here. His wife, Sarah, was the great mother in Israel, mother of all the Semites. She was Semitic. And Hagar was of Ham. Then after Sarah died he took Keturah, and she was of [Japheth]. She had six sons, and Abraham taught them the arts which later became the arts of the West—the mathematics, the science, the architecture, and those things in which Abraham himself was a genius. They spread in all directions, so we have the blood of Shem, Ham, and Japheth being refreshed in all directions. His seed became very numerous, we are told, in all these directions, which means they intermarried with everybody. As you know if you’re a genealogist, we mix with everybody else, and before you know it, we all have the same genes all mixed up together. I don’t think there’s a chance that anybody in the world is without some of the blood of Abraham because he was told repeatedly, “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 22:18), especially his priesthood.

So here we have Abraham going out, and he had two great qualities. I’m going to put them on the board. First of all, they always talk about Abraham’s charity. Charity was dead in the world, and Abraham revived it. There are many examples of that, of course, and charity is translated in the New Testament, in the new revised version as love. “The greatest of these is love,” it says. The Latin word for charity, charis, is grace. It’s cognate with our English word cheer. It’s universal. Charity, love, and grace marked Abraham. His second [outstanding quality] was his immense intelligence, his curiosity about everything. He was a scientist, as we know. Joseph Smith gave us the great astronomer, the cosmologist, so busy and zealous in his study of the stars and structure of things. He gave us a hologram of the universe, etc. We are told that intelligence, or the glory of God, is like light and truth. Of course light and truth always go together. So what we have here is . . . What is the Only Begotten full of? “Mine Only Begotten who is full of grace and truth.” These are the qualities of the Only Begotten Son. If you have these, this is everything. In fact we’re told that in the two great commandments, the first two commandments. The Lord says on two commandments hang all the others. If you keep them, you’re bound to keep the others. The first is “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.” In Deuteronomy it says “… with all thy heart and with all thy soul [nephesh], and with all thy me’od.”

That’s a very interesting word that it uses. It uses me’od, which means oath, which is the same word as the Old English moot, which is mind. The n very often drops out before the
t. But in almost any language you can name, it means mind, so you have to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul [nephesh], with all thy mind. This is the intellect. This is in Deuteronomy 6:5. There are two great commandments. First, you love him, but you love your neighbor as yourself. Now that’s another kind of love. That’s charity or grace. “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Of course if you keep these, you don’t need to worry about the others. If you love the Lord that much and if you love your neighbor that much—thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not lie, thou shalt not commit adultery. You won’t do any of those things if you keep the first two commandments, if they are in your heart. The Lord says on these two commandments hang all the laws and the prophets. If you keep them, [the others] are taken care of. They are grace and truth. And this is grace, with all thy heart, might, mind and strength. “The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth. . . . light cleaveth unto light,” etc.

So the same things are in the first two commandments. They are charity for your fellowman, love. That isn’t an intellectual sort of thing; that you just feel. Abraham often did. Satan often came and reasoned with Abraham and said you’re not being rational about this thing, supporting the people of Sodom, for example. They’re bad people, he says, but I feel sorry for them. Let’s save anyone. And after the battle Abraham was worried sick. He said, there might have been a righteous man killed on the other side, and in that case, his blood would be on my head. It bothered him terribly. What was he to do about that? That’s charity. It’s not particularly rational, but it’s a feeling. Love or charity is spontaneous. As Paul says, you don’t bicker, you don’t calculate, you don’t work it out, you don’t make intellectual plans, you don’t argue about it, you don’t make jesuitical sophistry about it, to reason just how much love is there as the sixteenth-century casuists used to do. They figured all these things out to the fifth decimal place. No sir, that’s spontaneous, it’s free, it’s universal. No self-interest. Love requires nothing in return. You’re not asking for that. It’s not a deal, it’s not an exchange, it’s not business or anything like that. Love is spontaneous. The other is intelligence, which doesn’t make deals [either]. As Brigham Young said “Light cleaveth to light. We love knowledge because it is good in itself, and we make no excuses for it.”

As Irenaeus tells us, there are only two things in which men can excel. They are, of course, in forgiving—that’s grace, isn’t it? You forgive others. But I shouldn’t forgive him—he did this or he did that, or it wouldn’t do me this good. No, you don’t ask that at all. The Arabs have a saying: “The brave man never asks the odds; the generous man never asks the price; the good man never asks questions.” You just forgive. If you forgive, that is grace. And you repent. To repent is honest thinking. It’s close, critical analysis of your own behavior. Intelligence, you see, is problem-solving ability. That’s the way it’s defined by William James and others. That has been the standard definition of intelligence by the psychologists—problem-solving ability.

But what do you need to solve problems? That’s a moral quality. You can’t cheat; you must be honest. You don’t anticipate the answer unfairly. You don’t get it out of the answer book. Problem-solving ability is a moral quality. It’s the capacity to be strictly honest, which is very rare. Intelligence is examining your own inadequacy. The first thing you ask when you’re confronted with a problem is where am I failing? What don’t I know here? Where have I broken down? Where am I inadequate for this? That’s what you deal with, not how much have I got or what’s my degree. That has nothing to do with it. The thing you’re interested in to solve the problem is where you’re weak. It’s a humiliating process, the progressive exposure of your own ignorance as you go on and on. [Joseph]
Scaliger was perhaps the greatest scholar of modern times (he died in 1608). When he went into the ghetto in Rome to chat with the children so he’d learn Hebrew offhand, the scholars laughed at him. They held him in contempt. We just don’t do that sort of thing. They are mere children. What can they tell you? [they said]. Well, they knew more Hebrew than he did. He learned it, and the others never did. That’s our haughtiness. Ian Linforth, an old teacher of mine at Berkeley, was at the head of the American School in Athens. He said in the British school there, all the time he was there, he never heard any English students speak a word of Greek. They had to construe it. They had to translate it. You never read it. You didn’t treat it like that; just children talked languages and things like that. We treat it as sort of an abstract exercise, and so they never get very far.

Problem-solving ability is necessary for repentance. Intelligence is a process of progressive repentance. You repent of your mistakes you make. You repent of your stupidity, and you have to keep doing that all the time, because we don’t get to first base. Otherwise, you’ll never break through to anything. Remember, the great scientist when he finally sees the light almost invariably says, “What a fool I’ve been. It has been staring me in the face all this time and I didn’t see it.” The stars have been sending us the same hints for thousands of years, and we fail to respond to them. They are there all the time. It just depends on your being able or willing to see them.

Moroni, it tells us here, is both smart and magnanimous. Notice those are the two qualities. He’s smart; he always bamboozles the enemy. He runs circles around them, and he is also generous with them. They’re never the enemy to him. They’re always his brethren. He always stops the war the minute he sees the tide turning, the minute they start weakening. As compared with our “me” generation—they’re smart but selfish. If you’re so smart, why aren’t you rich? This is an article from a recent psychological journal, *Psychology Today*. It’s about rich people and has titles like this: “What Good Are the Rich?” It asks here, “Are we drowning in wealth?” And this heading says, “One of the sad ironies is that the people who get hooked on money tend to consider themselves very smart, cool-headed, and rational.” But which is the smart thing in the long run? It gives the example of Boysky here, etc. The me generation: Boysky, Milcken, the Helmsleys, etc. [This reminds me of] the smart dealer and the widow’s cow that Brigham Young talks about.

Abraham saw where real happiness lies. This is it. Notice that Abraham doesn’t subdue his ego at all. He doesn’t wipe himself out in the *nyeti nyeti* or anything like that. The second verse of the first chapter of Abraham is one of the most marvelous condensations you will find anywhere. This is Abraham’s life already summed up in that second verse, and the world he lived in. It’s a long one. You have to stop for breath. It’s one sentence, that long verse.

Abraham 1:2: “And finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me . . .” He’s not ashamed of wanting happiness and peace for himself. That’s what you do. Don’t fool yourself. Don’t say oh, I don’t want anything for me at all. I just want to suffer. No, that’s not it. “. . . I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same.” So he only wants these blessings so he can administer them to others. To administer means to hand on, to spread around, to be in charge of distribution. So that’s what he wants. He wants these blessings because he’s told, remember, “in thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the world be blessed.” He’s the greatest pronouncer of blessings who ever was. Wherever he went he would pronounce blessings. The Lord tells him, as I commanded Adam to give my blessing to the animals—
and Adam passed it on to Noah—so I now command thee. You do the same thing, and he did. He took great care of the animals and birds. He was always much concerned for them. " . . . having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge [notice, he wants righteousness and knowledge, but more and more; it’s progressive; he doesn’t stop there] and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge." He wasn’t satisfied with where he was.

The stories of the childhood of Abraham are the most interesting things. He was always asking questions, always researching, always doing remarkable things, and getting himself and his family into trouble. They had to move out, much the same life as Joseph Smith. He was very precocious. And incidentally, this is not a mythical hero. What do typical, mythical heroes do? They’re strong and brave and they have big muscles and they fight bad people. Never is any physical prowess or characteristic of Abraham mentioned—never his strength or his endurance or his formidable appearance or anything. Always just his intelligence and his kindness. Those are the two things that go together wherever we see him.

" . . . one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations . . . " That’s what he wanted to be, you see. You say, how ambitious, what an ego! Not to be worshipped by them but to help them and give them something. He wanted the priesthood so he could pass it on. " . . . and desiring to receive instructions [he was humble; he had to know how he’d go about it] and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers [so he could hand it down]. It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me. I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood according to the appointment of God unto the fathers concerning the seed.”

He sought for the appointment so he could administer “the appointment of God concerning the seed.” His fathers had turned from their righteousness—they wouldn’t listen to him or anything like that. He was in a bad world. They utterly refused to listen to his voice.

So we have Abraham here. That’s where his real happiness lay. There’s the famous example, the story we all know, about the man who was very smart and congratulated himself on making such a smart deal in Luke. That’s a good one. All these things would be marginal notes and footnotes in a well-edited Book of Mormon. For example, in every verse of this text I have here. This is just the Nestle edition, which is not the completest by any means. They just run down the margins with references to other scriptures that say the same thing, where they overlap, because it’s all relevant. It’s all just one book—Old Testament, New Testament—it all hangs together.

“And he spake a parable unto them, saying . . . “ There was a certain man who possessed a very fertile piece of land, a very profitable estate or farm. He went around and inspected it and he was very smart. He thought it all out. He was a very shrewd businessman, and he figured it all out in his mind, saying to himself, “What will I do now? It seems I don’t have any more room to stow my present harvest, so what can I do? I’ll tell you what I’ll do. I’ll tear down the whole establishment and I’ll rebuild the whole thing on a much grander scale—much bigger. Then I’ll have room to stow everything I have along with all
my other property too. That’s just the thing. Then I can save myself,” he says. “Now, my friend, you’re as rich as Midas here. You have vast goods laid aside for many years to come,” he says. “Retire, take it easy from now on. Make a rest. Eat and drink and enjoy yourself.” And God said to him, “You’re an absolute idiot [aphrōn, meaning no brains at all]. This very night I will demand your soul of you.” So he dies.

There’s a palace outside of Jordan. It belonged to the Dajani family, and they took us out there to see it. It was a palace built in the ninth century. A king spent twenty-seven years building it to be the perfect palace, and it had every luxury you can imagine. It had hot and cold [water]. It had tepidariums because it was built on the Roman fashion, and even the guards had special rooms for themselves and their lady friends. There was a theatre. It was the works. Twenty-seven years he spent building it. And the night he was to dedicate it, he was going to have the party of parties. Everybody was going to be invited. But there was an earthquake, and the palace was completely destroyed and lies in ruins today. Nobody goes back there anymore. There it is, a huge place. And he had a heart attack and died the same night. So that was a moral for the Arabs. This is the sort of thing the chief built for himself. Shebam was a big place south of there. I always think of them after. Last time the minute I left the class I thought of the one who said that Lincoln and Lee never referred to the other side as “the enemy.” That was Henry Steele Commager who noted that.

So we have the me generation. We’re smart but selfish. Wilford Woodruff said there’s a common misconception of the Latter-day Saints, that since God rewards the righteous with prosperity, the rich must be righteous. He said they have that in their system. Will they ever get it out?

Now, I’m going to talk about war here. I was outraged to find out they were going ahead with this manuscript. This is on Clausewitz and the Book of Mormon.¹ This is Book of Mormon warfare, and it is relevant. I’m going to put Karl von Clausewitz on the board. I mentioned him before. [He wrote] the standard work on war. You can’t do anything without Clausewitz. He’s the one that everybody quotes, because this is on the general principles of warfare—not strategy and tactics. It deals with them, but this has to do with how wars go on and the very nature of warfare. It’s called On War. It was the classic work, and the Book of Mormon reads as if it were taken right out of Clausewitz, But there was one thing wrong with it. The marvelous thing is the timing of these things. I think they’re great. You’d say Joseph Smith lifted the whole story of Moroni, the whole warfare in the Book of Mormon, out of Clausewitz. But Clausewitz was published in 1833, too late for the Book of Mormon. They’ll argue about that, of course, but no—he didn’t use Clausewitz. It had limited circulation until it became very popular. Clausewitz was very active in the Napoleonic wars, and he gives us the principles, the principal maxims on war. He breaks it down to the great maxims of war. The most famous saying of his that everybody knows by heart is, “War is therefore a continuation of policy by other means.” It is carrying on political disagreements between nations, ideological, etc. Policy by other means. He is strictly a soldier dealing with the technical side, only with how war is conducted, yet he’s not only going to talk about the causes in the background, here he spills the beans. This points directly to the causes, a continuation of politics.

The Book of Mormon begins with war in Jerusalem, and ends with war at Cumorah. In between there are a lot of wars. They all deal with political ambition. You don’t have to go to Egypt, Babylonia, or Jerusalem to illustrate this, because we see territorial ambitions in
such Book of Mormon characters as Zerahemnah. They want to make themselves leaders of men and nations. Remember, Amalickiah wanted to lead everything. Once you start out, you don’t know where to stop, like the Hitlers of the world. Zerahemnah, Amulon, Amalickiah, Ammoron, Laman, Nehor, Zeezrom, Korihor, and so forth—all those are men that started great wars in the Book of Mormon out of personal political ambitions. They wanted to get ahead. They started out with political parties and ended up uniting bodies in war such as the great coalitions of Amalickiah we’ve just been seeing about. We don’t need to comment as far as the present world is concerned what is the Cold War, but present politics being carried on. It is a political movement on both sides, political systems in conflict.

Another saying of Clausewitz is “War belongs not to the province of the arts and sciences but of social existence.” It would be better to liken it to business competition; that’s what it is. Remember the warlords—what is their purpose? Why do they keep being warlords? Well, it’s for loot, of course. That’s the grandeur, that’s the king. The opening lines of Beowulf are a typical example. The warlords of the steppes live on booty and loot. They plunder the rich cities of the plain. They come down from the hills and plunder the cities of the plain. They’re always in motion, so naturally their wealth has to be transportable wealth, whereas the sedentary cities have to have sedentary wealth, like architecture and art, literature, libraries, and things like that. They are stable. But people on the march have to have wealth which is portable. So what is it? It’s gold, silver, and jewels—everything that counts with them. They collect it.

We see this in the National Geographic. You see the tribes of the steppes where the women all carry the family wealth in gold and silver coins around their necks. That’s why the Chinese put holes in the middle of their coins, so they can string them. That’s the Manchu tradition, not the Chinese. The Manchus came from the other side of the wall, just like all the rest of the people, from the center, the heartland. They go out and plunder the rich, luxurious, decadent cities on the outside and bring them fresh blood and ruin at the same time. So this is portable wealth. They place value on it, and also things they can carry with them. That means they excel in mathematics, which they do in their heads, and the heroic literature which is always recited from memory. It is [from the] the heroic age. So they have heroic literature and gold and silver—the splendors of a royal court with the king bestowing gifts upon the lords who supported him. He goes out and plunders, and he gains followers by giving them gifts. They get more gifts by going out and plundering more. It works, and it has worked for ages and ages. It’s still the same way, in fact. A large work was published in Frankfurt a few years ago that said the ancient state was a closed corporation for the purpose of plundering neighboring communities or societies. That’s where the wealth was, and it still is. Hitler kept saying, “If I only had the Ukraine, all that grain. If I only had the Ploetsi oil fields, because that’s where the Russians got their oil. That’s what he was after. It was plunder they were after.

What do you think the English are after when they go out with their land pirates and sea pirates? Buckminster Fuller wrote some very good things about the land pirates and the sea pirates. The sea pirates are those who occupy the periphery and have all the harbors and coasts. Who wins? The great world wars have always been between the land powers and the sea powers. The Trojan War was that sort of a thing. The Mycenaeans came in their thousand ships, and Troy is well inland. It dominates the plains. It was the same way, the land pirates and sea pirates. So far the sea pirates win most of the time. They can block them up.
Well, Clausewitz says, “War belongs not to the province of arts and sciences, but that of social existence. It would be better to liken it to business competition.” He was in the Napoleonic wars. This was first published in 1833, so it was when he was teaching in the Kriegsakademie. It was in the 1830s. Quoting him, “It’s like business competition, more like politics. It may be regarded as a kind of business competition on a great scale.” Well, Clausewitz was writing back in the eighteenth century during the Napoleonic wars. His main study was wars of the eighteenth century, wars of princes and kings following the grandeur. The idea was you have to be grand and rule the world, the prince's business. It’s a contradiction of terms to say there's such a thing as a kinglet. To be a king you have to acknowledge no limit to your rule; otherwise, you're just a dependent if you don’t rule everything. So every king has to rule everything. Any enemy on his borders is a threat to him, a challenge to his supremacy, and so he has to make war on his enemies. This went on, and it went on terribly. The wars of princes following the grandeur of Louis the Great. It was all-important to be grand. You had to annex as much land as you could. Why? Like the partition of Poland between Catherine and Frederick, between Austria, Prussia, and Russia under Catherine the Great. As Frederick the Great said, she wept but she took. They had to annex as much land as they could because you grab not only the resources but in that time it was important to grab all the people because they made up the army for grabbing more land. They were the peasants, and they automatically fell to you. That's the Asiatic system. It’s a chess game—the winner take all, and without any hesitation. This is best represented in the book of Ether. We’ll get to that anyway. They [the peasants] strengthened your army, aggrandized you, and made you greater. You could expand more. They strengthened you and enabled you to make further sweeps. This occurred throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Well, most of all in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—it was really wild. And everybody grabbed as much land as they could, the princes doing it in the interests of the state. It was ratio status, which justified anything. We would say “national security.” It was really ratio status and would justify anything.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the great industrial barons were after the same thing, land, because along with that came raw materials and cheap labor and markets. That’s why they wanted colonies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. England grabbed a third of the world because it provided raw materials, cheap labor, and markets. And so it went on—territorial wars. Clausewitz continues: “Moreover, politics is the womb in which war is developed. It is business on a great scale.” Nothing describes it better these days than that. And so we don’t need to explain that. And then he says, “Disarming the enemy—this is the object of war and the abstract, the final means of attaining a political object, forcing the enemy to disarm.” We’ve always disarmed the enemy after every war and then immediately armed them again. Disarming the enemy is the object of war. Not to destroy them, because you can profit greatly. After all, the Germans and the Japanese were the most enterprising people in the world, after America at that time. Now, they’ve left us behind. But disarming the enemy was the object of war and the final means—that’s what you’re really after.

In the Book of Mormon Moroni often requires the enemies to lay down their arms. This happens again and again, and he lets them go home. There are no reprisals. The war always takes place on Nephite soil. If they just go home and promise they won’t come back, that’s all he ever asks of them. No reprisals or anything similar. In the 44th chapter of Alma and the 15th, 20th, 52nd, 37th, etc. The test comes when they lay down their arms. Then you know your will has dominated over theirs, and they know it too. So Clausewitz says “The disarming of the enemy is the object of war.” Moroni was satisfied
when the enemy laid down their arms. Likewise the French and Indian wars, the Mexican War, and the last war. When the Germans and Japanese laid down their arms, the war was over. That’s all it took. That’s what ended the war.

Clausewitz’s next maxim is an interesting one too: “The aggressor always pretends to be peace-loving [see, we’re always on the defensive] because he would like to achieve his conquest without bloodshed.” Hitler would have been glad to take all of Europe without any bloodshed at all, if they had let him have what he wanted. Anybody would do that. “Therefore aggression must be presented as a defensive reaction against the aggressor nation.” Your aggression is always represented, according to Clausewitz here, as being a defense action. You’re just defending yourself. They are the aggressors, according to that thing of Hitler’s. Nobody ever attacks. You’re always just on the defensive. After World War I the German office *Kriegsamt* changed its name to *Wermacht* (“defense power”), and we changed our name, War Department, to Department of Defense. We’re just defensive now, that’s all. Both sides must take a defensive position, whether they’re aggressors or not.

We see good examples in the Book of Mormon in the case of Giddianhi and Lachoneus. We’ll get to them. [Giddianhi and others] were the heads of the robber armies. The fact that they could have robber armies that could overthrow governments [is disturbing]. Now we’re getting something of that in the Medellín, the same sort of thing. Here’s a gang of robbers that can actually defy governments, including our own, and get away with it. It’s happening more frequently. That’s from the Book of Mormon. And that always happens in Book of Mormon lands; that’s the tradition down there. The Book of Mormon trains you up to all this sort of thing. Giddianhi writes to Lachoneus in 3 Nephi 3:9–10: We wouldn’t bother you except you’re infringing on our rights of government, our ancient society which is old and venerable. You have been the aggressors against us [paraphrased]. And the Lamanites always had that legitimate charge. They always would explain how Laman and Lemuel were robbed by Nephi and his trickery. They really believed it.

Since the loser must always submit to the winner, each side is always fighting for its freedom, because if you lose, you’ll lose your freedom. So we’re always fighting for freedom, no matter which side you’re on. I don’t want to submit to you, you don’t want to submit to me, so I’m defending my freedom and you’re defending your freedom. We have a Defense Department operating at present all throughout the world, where we feel we need to be defended in bases everywhere. Quoting Clausewitz again: “Those who belong to the profession will always look upon themselves as a kind of guild,” So it’s a profession, a corporate guild. “A closed corporation must exist more or less in every army.” That’s true. “Military virtue is a quality of standing armies only.” And yet it’s the citizen soldier who does all the fighting most of the time. That’s why you have this cult. What other business requires you to wear a special outfit all the time and decorate yourself with visible symbols of every remarkable or praiseworthy thing you ever did. You can’t do anything praiseworthy without putting a ribbon or a medal on. That’s a strange thing. Of course, in Europe they just cover themselves. It’s marvelous how they can do it. Every time you turn around you pin another medal on. This is true, though.

This is interesting: It is professionalism which guarantees ongoing tradition, but it’s also a very dangerous thing. Now Clausewitz says, “It is impermissible, even harmful, to leave a great military event to purely military judgment [don’t leave it to the army, for various reasons]. The influence in the Cabinet of any military man except the commander in
chief is extremely dangerous,” because they have their own interest, their own purpose, etc. And as they disagree with the government, they have the power to take over, which happens in Central America again and again. If you have the strongest army, you take over the government. Then you are the government. That’s what Noriega did. He lost the election, but he had the army and he had enough force, so he took it over. So here it is, he says, that’s why “it’s impermissible, even harmful, to leave a great military event to purely military judgment.” The influence in the Cabinet of any military man other than the commander in chief, who has to be represented, is very dangerous, because then it’s very easy for them to take everything over.

“It is not the business of military men to meddle in higher politics of state. The chief military commander is the only one who should be in the Cabinet. It is harmful, impermissible, for the military even to participate there, because they have their own interests and they do things differently and impulsively. When you have the power and want to go ahead [you say] let’s go ahead. Well, we’ve just seen this last week an interesting example of that. We still have the fog of war there to deal with. But Noriega was finally taken and held. We could have gone in and taken him but we didn’t—the military didn’t. They got their wires crossed. It always happens. He’s going to talk about that. Wars are always messed up. Nothing is going to go straight in them. This is absolutely basic with Clausewitz and important too.

A good example of the last, though, is Moroni getting on his high horse when he writes to Pahoran, remember? He speaks as a general in the midst of war. He blows his top and writes some very indiscreet letters. And he’s absolutely wrong, the great Moroni. He doesn’t understand what’s going on back home. He’s writing to Pahoran about conditions he isn’t aware of at all. He’s going to take over, he says. We’ll come and seize the state—we’ll expel you. I’ll march with my men and we’ll unseat you, he says in Alma 60. I’ll just take over the government myself. Pahoran writes and says, you just don’t understand what’s going on. Pahoran is very wise about it and doesn’t take any offense. He says I admire your great heartedness; that’s the way you should be. Then he explains, and then Moroni apologizes and they work very closely together from then on and are able to mop up the war. They finish it up. They just work hand in glove after that.

The first maxim is that [war is] “politics by other means.” The second maxim is “war is thus an act of force to compel our adversary to do our will.” That’s what you want, not to eliminate him. “War is nothing but a duel on a larger scale.” That’s Clausewitz again. And, of course, that’s what it is in the Book of Mormon. Remember in this chapter here, it was entirely a personal thing between Moroni and Amalickiah, and it climaxed with Amalickiah threatening to drink Moroni’s blood. They’re that worked up. It’s a personal feud between the two, and it is so between the generals.

In Normandy General Taylor wanted me to go over to the German colonel and invite him to tea in the manner of the seventeenth and eighteenth century wars. He actually did, so I got my uniform on, got all dolled up and went over to invite the colonel. He was holding Carentan, and he held it. He didn’t lose it. The Germans called General Taylor “the last gentleman,” so he had to do the glamorous, romantic thing and go over under a white flag and invite the colonel to tea. Well, it was called off at the last minute when all hell broke loose over there.

We talked about Colonel Cole the last time who went off to take S’Hertogenbus. He led
the only bayonet charge in World War II. That was the same week when they took the bridge at Carentan by a bayonet charge. They didn’t need to take it by a bayonet charge. We left a lot of casualties. Machine guns work very efficiently, better than bayonets, but the 502nd actually took the bridge at Carentan in a bayonet charge. He thought we were going to go right through the way they did in World War [I]. It didn’t work that way.

It is an act of war to compel our adversaries to do our will—a duel on a larger scale. It’s personal. Alma fights Amlici face to face. That’s a duel, but they represent the forces. Amalickiah swears, as I said, to drink Moroni’s blood. Of course the classic is Shiz versus Coriantumr when they both exterminate each other. We still do the same today. We try to destabilize governments which we do not favor. We personify them in their leaders. The leader or whoever is in charge becomes the villain, and it becomes a personal duel between this president and that president whichever they might be, and they take it very personally. Reagan took things very personally.

Clausewitz goes on to say, “If the enemy should choose the method of great decision by arms, our own method must on that account be changed against our will to a similar one.” If they’re going to fight, we’ve got to fight. What the enemy does, we must do. We must on that account against our own will adopt a similar method. Moroni repeatedly found that the enemy had copied his equipment and his tactics. In war, armies always look alike. They always do, of course. We must copy their methods. If you have a helmet that’s superior or a gun that’s superior, it’s only a matter of weeks until the other side has the same thing, because they can’t allow you to enjoy that advantage for any length of time. So the two sides look just alike. The Germans had very good tanks, the Mark IV, far better than a Pershing, so we quickly had to change ours from a Pershing. The Russians introduced the Shpatovka, and it worked very well. Then the Germans had it, and then we got the bazooka. The German gray uniform was superior to ours in World War II because it was less visible. All uniforms look alike now. Everybody goes around in camouflage. The first time those camouflage things were used was when parachutes were made with that leaf effect on them, and we wore that kind when we landed, not in Normandy but in Holland. The second time we had learned our lesson. So it always ends up [that way]. If they have something good, you can’t let them enjoy that advantage very long. You have to have a gun just as good. Their 88s were far superior to what we had, so we immediately had to counter with 150s and things like that. So what the enemies do, we have to do—change to a similar one. “If the enemy should choose the method of the great decision by arms,” we can’t do anything but reply the same.

Moroni repeatedly found that the enemy had copied his equipment and tactics. That’s what made the war draw out for fourteen years, because every time he got something good, the Lamanites would do the same thing. He couldn’t fool them anymore with that trick with lines or the fortifications, or the falling back, or the leading into a pocket. They caught on very quickly and did the same thing, so the war dragged on.

In another place Clausewitz says “In modern times the armies of European states have arrived very much on a par in discipline and training.” Again, that’s the same thing. They have to mount up. This is what we’ve been doing for the last forty years. We can’t allow the Russians to get an edge on us. If they have a certain kind of missile, we’ve got to get that kind of missile. If they have more tanks, we’ve got to get more tanks, and this goes on all the time. And their submarines. Always this balancing—we’re playing this game all the time. And it’s enormously costly, because each side knows the other wouldn’t dare use those missiles because it would all be over for both sides if they started doing that. That’s
rather silly, isn’t it, but this is the way Satan does. Peace will be taken away from the world and the devil will have control in his own dominion. [Satan says] I will take the treasures of the earth, convert them into cash—gold and silver—and I'll buy up kings and presidents, popes and priests, armies and navies and rule with blood and horror. This is what’s going on. It hasn’t relaxed in the least after all these years. It’s pretty sad that the Book of Mormon should be so cruelly relevant in our own time, isn’t it. It’s hard on us.

So, he says, you can see why we can’t allow the enemy to get a new gun. If it’s a Shepatovka, we immediately copy it with a bazooka. The Mark VI panzer was awfully good. We countered with a Pershing. We can’t allow them to hold an edge, so armies very quickly come to look very much alike. Hence the duel in which the parties are necessarily equal. There will be very little difference between them when they meet, and that’s very destructive. When the Lamanites tried to encircle the Nephites with the same wine tricks the Nephites had tried, the Nephites then tried other tricks. But the tricks didn’t work anymore, because the enemy knew them all by heart, and both had adopted each other’s method.

Continuing on the idea of the duel of equal parts, Clausewitz writes “The ruthless user of force who shrinks from no amount of bloodshed must gain an advantage if his opponent doesn’t do the same.” War is war, he says, and don’t try to talk about civilized war or the rules or the laws of war—that’s ridiculous. It’s a contradiction of terms. If there were rules or laws, you wouldn’t fight. You’d talk about it. When you start scratching and biting, it’s because the rules don’t hold any more. You’re not paying any attention to them. So you must be ruthless. Now Teancum and Amalickiah typify this. Well, Lehi, Moroni’s second in command, is a good example. He was a holy terror, but Teancum was the worst. Teancum was Lehi’s chief of staff, and Amalickiah typified the principal on the other side. It’s always the wicked against the wicked in the Book of Mormon, never the righteous against the wicked. It’s a duel between Amlici and Alma. We mentioned that before. Wasn’t that a good guy against a bad guy? When the war was over, they mourned terribly because they were convinced the war had been because of their wickedness. They had brought it on themselves. They weren’t fighting bad guys as good guys after all. As Mormon counsels, Don’t worry about the wicked. Behold the justice of God will overtake the wicked, and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished [paraphrased].

Clausewitz describes the old-fashioned wars as punishment wars. We can’t afford that luxury now. We must copy the enemy if he’s bloody-minded, but the Lord gives a rule right at the beginning of the Book of Mormon. The second chapter [1 Nephi 2:23] says, the wicked Lamanites will “have no power over thy seed except they shall rebel against me also.” When they fight it’s because they’re both rebellious against God. Otherwise, there’s going to be no fight. “They shall have no power over thy seed except they rebel against me also.” I’ll keep things going. That was the agreement, and it’s repeated throughout the Book of Mormon.

Clausewitz says, “Because we’re so equal, the wastage of our own forces is always the greater, the more our aim is directed toward destruction of the enemy forces.” The more we are determined on destroying them, the more we will be destroyed, he says. That’s a rule to follow. I used to have an old teacher at UCLA in a boxing class. He used to say, “The first rule is, if you want to hit, you gotta take a chance on getting hit.” He was a little Irishman. It’s the same thing. If you’re going to destroy the enemy, you’ve got to take a chance on getting destroyed yourself. There’s no way you can do it from a position of safety. In other words, the harder we try [the worse it gets], which is represented by the
Book of Mormon’s total extermination story, Shiz versus Coriantumr—they exterminate each other. Although such a thing can never happen, according to Clausewitz, we know that such a thing can. It isn’t kill or be killed, which is used all the time in the infantry. Teancum is an example. Teancum was a general just like General Johnson who stood up in the canal and refused to duck—he was too proud. He was bloody minded. As I say, if you get to be a general by the age of twenty-five, you must be pretty gung-ho. And he was but didn’t last long, any more than Teancum. He got himself killed because he was always going out on those sprees.

And the Nephites and the Lamanites too. The Lamanites’ society became completely disrupted at Cumorah as well as the Nephites’. What a wastage. The Lamanites lost at the battle of Cumorah just as much as the Nephites. Remember, they were scattered, and there was nothing but one revolution throughout the whole land. Moroni said, I don’t know when it will end; it’s just endless, and it didn’t. So, you must risk your own forces at whatever cost. If you’re going to destroy you must [risk being] destroyed. You must accept that, says Clausewitz—that’s the rule.

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 3, Lecture 67
Alma 48–49
Clausewitz’s Rules of War

We ask why dwell on the savagery of ancient wars, of all things, in this enlightened age? The answer is because we haven’t changed one bit. It’s exactly as it was before. I came out by the same door wherein I went. This is one of the great lessons of the Book of Mormon—that we don’t improve, we don’t get any better at all. Today most men are as dense as they have ever been, and no matter how far back you go in time, you’ll find people just as enlightened as any alive today. The picture never changes; the balance never changes. That’s a sweeping statement, but it’s true. It’s especially illustrated here in the case of war. We are talking about this, and we’re using Clausewitz whose work was published in 1833. He died in 1831, but he was in all the Napoleonic wars. He was important. During the last decade of his life, he was the head of the Kriegsschule, the great Prussian war school in Berlin that built up the tremendous Prussian war machine. He wrote this classic work which was in three volumes when it came out, On War, and he talks about it. It’s as if Joseph Smith had studied it very carefully, but, as I said, 1833 was too late for him to get hold of it. So we can’t accuse him of that. This happens again and again, that Joseph is saved by the bell. You might say, “Well, he got it from this, he got it from that.” Mrs. Brodie insists that he got some things from the View of the Hebrews [Brother Nibley said Indians], although it was written two years after the Book of Mormon came out. Joseph Smith stole it from that. The resemblances are so close that we can’t deny it, even though it came out after the Book of Mormon.

Well, anyway, let’s go back to our friend Clausewitz now and we’re quoting him, just as if he were quoting from our present chapter, Alma 48. “In the lower ranks the spirit of self-sacrifice is more required than in others.” You regulate the policy. The general is at a distance, and we expect others to sacrifice. Alma 49:10–11 Amalickiah did not come down out of the land of Nephi at the head of his army; “he did not care for the blood of his people.” He managed things back there like the modern major general. Such an attitude so shocks Moroni. When he writes to Pahoran [Alma 60:7], “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?” Yes, we can think of it; that’s the way we do things. We don’t care for the lives of those on the front—that’s true. After all, only 8 percent of the armed forces saw action in World War II, but the other 92 percent were necessary. All they were was a backup for the whole thing. The whole purpose of the army is that cutting edge—search and destroy. Everything else is a backup for that, so they’re all in it together. But they don’t consider the ones at the front.

One of the most striking things happened at about 2:00 o’clock in the morning. I had a little tent over a foxhole on a Dutch canal. I was marking a map in it. There was a terrific racket on the canal down the way. All these British guns were just blasting away. I wondered what that was—somebody trying to cross the canal, obviously. The so-called enemy were on the other side. In a few minutes into our tent burst some kid dressed like a Dutch worker, all soaking wet. He had just swum the canal with all those guns blazing at him, and he got across. He flopped down on the straw in the tent. For a minute or two all
he could do was say, “I know there’s a God. I know there’s a God. I know there’s a God.” Yes, we know there’s a God. Well, he’d just swum the canal. He had been in the medics and had been captured and been on the other side. The Germans had shifted them around with groups—they had the upper hand all around. He pretended to be deaf and dumb; he’d point to his mouth wherever he went. But he observed very carefully wherever he went. They had marched them [the prisoners] all over the place. He got away and swam the canal. He came back loaded with this information. So I trotted right over to Major Danahay and said, “Now look, this kid knows everything.” And so they immediately got him out. I said, “This is going to get you a promotion. You’ll get a three-week furlough for this. They’ll really reward you for this.” So he went with his information. They took him clear back to Brussels. I think a lot of intelligence officers got promoted on the strength of his discoveries.

I saw him about four or five months later in Namur. I said “Did you ever get your three weeks’ pass?” He said, “I didn’t get one pass at all. I had to go right back the next day.” See, they didn’t care about him. He provided them with all this information, which was invaluable, and got nothing for it. Well, why should he? He had to go back again. This goes on again and again. This is notorious in armies. As [Clausewitz] says, “In the lower ranks, the spirit of self-sacrifice is more required.” And with Amalickiah it was the same thing.

Then he goes on with the third rule, good old Clausewitz: “We can never introduce a modifying principle into the philosophy of war without committing an absurdity.” War is war, you see. The point is, war is an act of force. There is no limit to the application of force. To talk about civilized warfare and rules of warfare is ridiculous. If you’re civilized, you don’t start swinging, scratching, biting, and gouging eyes and all that sort of thing. [In war] you do everything you can to hurt the other person—that’s the idea. You’re no longer discussing things. You’re no longer civilized at all, instead of continuing the discussion. And you try to kill the other person. There’s no limit to that. So he says, to introduce a modifying principle is an absurdity. You can’t modify it. There’s no limit to the application of force once that’s the policy.

Alma puts it very well when he says they had exhausted all resources and he says, “Whatever evil we cannot resist with our words, then let us resist them with our swords.” If words won’t cut it, then swords will cut it. Then when you start swinging swords, you’re not particular. You’re not careful not to hurt anybody. You’re all out. But he says hold out with the words as long as you can. “Whatever evil we cannot resist with our words, then let us resist them with our swords.” There are no more rules, and the Lord says the frequent expression, “Cursed shall be the land unto destruction.” (Alma 45:16.) It goes on and doesn’t stop until that.

So brushfire wars are out of the question. At the end of World War II, the generals were very discouraged. There was a gloom. Right at the end I was transferred to the 6th Army Group under General Devers, in Heidelberg. That was the big army group headquarters. I had to make out the daily intelligence reports there. That was a busy job. You could cut the gloom with a knife. The war was winding down too fast. It meant the end of quick promotions. It meant the slowing down of careers. They thought some of them would have to be out of the army altogether and go back to selling washing machines. They were colonels, etc. And it had been a lark for most of them. Then they discovered the concept of brushfire wars. It was General Taylor, more than anyone else, back at division, when he burst in one day in high glee. He had been over to Washington. He was back, and he was
so excited he could hardly contain himself because they had discovered the concept of
brushfire wars. And he was more responsible for taking up the wars in Korea and Vietnam
than anyone else, because he was chief of staff at the time of Korea. But at this time he
was only a major general, head of the division.

[They felt] we could always have these little wars where we can go in and mop up and get
our promotions. We can get our practice. We can keep in drill. We can always keep
pressure on Congress for more money because these are going on. It’s ideal. We could
have these little wars going on, no great risk. We couldn’t lose very much. It’s good
practice to send out officers to get practice, etc. But it doesn’t work that way, and
Clausewitz says why it doesn’t work that way. This is a quotation and it’s a very good one.
He says, “War and peace are ideas which fundamentally can have no gradations.” You
can’t say there’s a little war and a bigger war and a bigger war. Once it starts, it’s all out.
And he goes on, “We must never lose sight of the absolute form of war.” War is an
absolute. See, you don’t have it in degrees. You can’t have a little one, just as you can’t
slightly murder a person, or a person can’t be slightly pregnant or something like that. It
doesn’t go that way. You go all the way in these things. He says, “Rather the image of
absolute war must constantly hover in the background.” It’s going to be absolute. And
this is the Book of Mormon. After one of their great victories, in fact their greatest
victory, Alma announced to the people [Alma 45:10–11], “I perceive that this very
people, the Nephites . . . shall become extinct.” That’s putting it pretty strong. This sort of
thing goes all the way.

So good old Clausewitz continues, “In pursuing the aim of war, there is only one means,
combat.” As I said, it’s search and destroy; 92 percent are all backing it up. The whole
effort is what happens on the front, the zone of contact there. “And all effects that are
manifested in war have their origin in combat.” Well, that’s what it is, naturally. Moroni
in combat returned the sword to Zerahemnah, who didn’t want to discuss it. Zerahemnah
had surrendered but he was still defiant, so Moroni said, if you’re not going to talk, here’s
your sword back; let’s continue to fight. That’s the only solution unless you choose to
make the covenant. He invited him to take it back and continue, but Zerahemnah was
doing it only as a trick, as we shall presently see. Unless you choose to make a covenant of
peace, you just have to go on fighting. Military combat is the only effective way, the
pursuance of only one means. “All effects,” says good old Clausewitz, “manifested in war
have their origin in combat.” As Moroni handed Zerahemnah his sword back again in
Alma 44:10–11, he said, “Behold, we will end the conflict.” If you don’t want to discuss it,
we’ll end it, so we will fight it out. He invites him to do that.

Quoting Clausewitz, “The only reason for suspension of military action is to wait for a
more favorable moment to attack.” Things aren’t going your way, so you want to stop
fighting for a while and recoup your gains. When Zerahemnah put up his sword, he was
merely waiting for a favorable time to strike back. He told Moroni quite frankly to hand
him back his sword, and then he added, “We will not suffer ourselves to take an oath unto
you, which we know that we shall break.” Zerahemnah was at least that honest. He said,
I’m not going to take an oath because you know I’ll break it and I know I’ll break it. And
then he got his sword back. As soon as he got it back, he made a surprise lunge for
[Moroni] before anybody was expecting it. He suspended action for a more favorable
moment for attack. He held it up and they were discussing things. He took his sword back
and wheeeeft. He took a pass at Moroni, and instantly Moroni’s bodyguard took a swab at
him and cut off the top of his skull. And he went off and lived the rest of his life missing
his roof. We don’t hear of him again. He may not have lived very long, I don’t know. He
could have had a brass plate or something put in there. They did in those days. That happens in Alma 44:12. So the lull in the battle is the time to be scared.

There was a fatal mistake when they landed at Anzio. They were going to do this in January 1944. They were going to leapfrog, so they landed at Anzio under General Scott, the 32nd Texas Division. They didn’t find any opposition. There were just two German battalions there. Germany never expected that. They were caught completely by surprise, and it was marvelous. But what did Scott do? The most foolish thing in the world. He said, well, it’s calm now. I’m going to wait here for a few weeks, build up my forces until I have real strength and then lunge inland. That’s what they were going to do. Well, the minute Hitler heard about that, he sent everything he had down to Anzio. They built up and just pushed them back into the sea again, nearly wiped them out completely, because he waited and waited. He said, well, more fatal action. When things are quiet, that’s the time to be scared. And that was the fatal mistake.

And again from Clausewitz: “The destruction of the enemy’s armed forces is the foundation stone of all actions in war, the ultimate support of all combinations.” As I say, your 92 percent is your backup. The ultimate support of all combinations is the destruction of the enemy’s armed forces. Well, that’s what it comes down to. That’s why military careers run in families. That’s almost invariably the rule as they reach high command. And they have no illusions, either. The best sermons you’ll ever hear against war and the cruelty and brutality of it come from generals. Taylor, after every operation, would deplore what had happened and would say it was a ghastly thing. Why do we have to be into this? But this thing is passed down in the family, so it gets to be quite a respectable, taken-for-granted sort of thing. It doesn’t turn their stomachs anymore. It’s just the way you live. For a civilian to come in cold out of something else and suddenly see people gouging eyes out and things like that, it’s pretty horrifying. That’s the Vietnam experience, because they were brought in so suddenly.

The theme is destruction, and the armed forces today extend to everybody. [France became] a nation in arms with Napoleon in 1850. That’s why he said Napoleon is the real war master. He’s the one who gave us war in its purity, he says. The gentlemen’s wars were still fought in Napoleon’s day, but now everybody gets wiped out. The words destruction and destroy appear 534 times in the Book of Mormon. Destruction is a theme, and nearly always it’s in connection with the word war. But why with war? We’re told that war and plagues and pestilence and famine all go together. But wars are the part you bring on yourself. You can’t plead innocent victim, as you can with famine and plague—they just happen. You invite war. The army is always told that our mission is to search and destroy. So Clausewitz says, “The soldier is levied, clothed, armed, trained. He sleeps, eats, drinks, and marches for one purpose only, merely to fight at the right place and the right time.” That’s the only reason for his existence, just to fight at a particular time and place. He has the idea that’s his only purpose anyway. So you can see why the higher brass don’t care much. They live in considerable luxury, but the rest of them don’t.

There’s a famous poem about Frederick the Great at one of the worst battles. They were getting hit very hot and heavy. His guard of which he was so proud started falling back under a terrific hail of pressure. And Frederick rode up in front of them and said, “This is treason; you’re running away.” Whereupon one of them said, (they called him “little Fritz,” an affectionate term) “Fritz, this is not treason. I’ve had enough today for fourteen cents.” Fourteen pennies a day is what they got paid. He’d had his fourteen pennies worth, so he was running away. Of course it’s an enormous difference [between the ranks]. I
don’t know whether I should tell you this. Well, there are too many stories I shouldn’t tell, but this is a good one. I won’t tell it though.

Quoting Clausewitz again, “If we speak of destruction of the enemy’s forces, we must expressly point out that nothing obliges us to confine this idea to physical forces.” The whole thing is to break his will. If he’s willing to surrender, then the war’s over. That’s all you want, to have him do what you want him to do. Your will dominates over his. In the Prussian Kriegsschule and the German Generalstab the whole theory is will. It’s the German philosophy. The philosopher who took them to that more than anyone else was Treitscke (again, it’s one of those things I’ll think of in a second). But the Germans are always talking about will—the iron will, the will that dominates everything. Hitler was obsessed with that idea. It’s the German will, der deutsche Wille that wins through in everything. The title of Schopenhauer’s great work is The World as Will and Representation. The will is everything. He says the whole thing is to dominate the enemy’s will, and once you’ve done that, you’ve won. So the psychological part is very necessary. We try to break the enemy down psychologically as well, but of course it was Clausewitz who introduced the doctrine of Schrecklichkeit. This is marvelous in the Book of Mormon. This comes out beautifully. Remember how the Lamanites would get themselves up and paint their faces red, wear lambskins around their loins, shave their heads, and make themselves as ferocious as possible? He introduced Schrecklichkeit, which means making yourself as terrible as possible. Hitler’s saying used to be: Better a terrible ending than to live in a terror without ending. So he plunged into it. This was the excuse. But Schrecklichkeit is to be terrible. Make yourself as terrible as possible. Intimidate the enemy. Do everything you can. This became an important German technique, important in the blitzkrieg. When it breaks out you have to be absolutely overpowering, show yourself to be unmerciful, just wipe them out, etc. And look terrible. Make yourself look as impressive and terrible as possible. So you get all these bells jingling and drums and all this chanting together—the old Germanic tradition. That’s a tradition to keep things alive. And it’s profit, because it’s for loot, and that’s the push behind it in the modern world too. But they had that war spirit; they loved it. Some people just love that sort of thing. It is “fun.” This is a thing that’s terrible to admit, but it is exhilarating. Compared with other things, there’s nothing like it. It’s a terrible thing to say, but it’s true. There must be another form of exhilaration. Of course, there is. Remember, “to be carnally minded is death; to be spiritually minded is life eternal.” This is being carnal-minded at its peak. Everything is physical, raw, and violent.

But there’s the mental side of it. This is an interesting phenomenon. I’ve never talked about war in this class before, but this one thing I have told: I had the privilege of entering certain villages where I had tracted. I took my bicycle out. President Tadje was very indulgent. All along the Rhine in those villages on the Rhine plain, I took my trusty bicycle to go out and tract in the villages all alone. It was hard. It was grim. The Calvinist villages were the toughest. The Catholics were next. The Lutherans were rather kind. But it was rough. It was a clash of minds, you see, because immediately these people were tremendously hostile. I went through the same village with a carbine, dashing from door to door, and it was so much easier. I would think time and again, this is so much easier than trying to confront these people eye to eye. Shooting at a distance was much nicer and much safer.

That reminds me of something that happened in Karlsruhe. We haven’t gotten over this, you see. For a short time during a conference in Karlsruhe, I went and tracted along right by the big church where there’s a main street. It parts there and leads right out to the
Odenwald forest. There was this butcher shop there. I went to the butcher shop, and I started giving my voice of warning. A gigantic Hessian woman had a fit. She ran to the back of the shop and came out with a huge cleaver. She said, “Don’t you tell me we’ll ever be destroyed,” because I had told her on impulse what Brother Ballard told me when he set me apart for the mission. He said, “Tell these people that they will be destroyed by fire from heaven,” of all the strange things to tell them. And I told her that. Well, year later I was driving by late at night. An officer—I think Van Patten—was with me. Officers couldn’t drive jeeps, but I could. I had my own jeep, and that was great. I was driving down the same street in Karlsruhe, in the bright moonlight, and it was all in ruins. It had all just been wiped out by fire bombs from the English planes. They just wiped it out. Fire from heaven destroying it. Suddenly I ground to a halt and jammed on the brakes. He said, “What’s wrong?” We were right in front of that shop. That was the butcher shop where the woman came out raving, waving the cleaver and yelling, “Don’t you tell us we’ll ever be destroyed by fire from heaven!” And all you could see was the framework of the door there. But it was the old butcher shop in complete ruin. It had been burnt out totally. So these things are fulfilled. We’re not living a million miles away from the Book of Mormon. It’s disturbing. Of course, our weapons are more efficient now. We wouldn’t have left the doorframe standing today.

This Schrecklichkeit is a big thing. Making yourself an object of utter terror is beautifully described in the Book of Mormon on various occasions: Enos 1:20, Mosiah 10:8, Alma 3: 4–5; and also the Gadiantons in their various trappings make themselves look very ferocious. They make themselves and their uniforms as hideous as possible, like the trappings of the barons of the Middle Ages, when they wanted to keep the peasants in their place. Like the Ku Klux Klan, they make themselves look hideous and mysterious. The German word for enemy is Feind, which is our word for fiend. And it’s the same thing with our word hostile. Hos is the same as host and ghost. A ghost is an alien being from elsewhere. A host is someone who receives someone. And guest is the same word as ghost—these are all cognate. The guest comes in, and he is a stranger from abroad. And he’s also hostile, because there’s this alienation. So Feind, the German word for enemy, is the same word for fiend. It’s someone of an alien spirit, someone out of your world. It’s the satanic host. In the Middle Ages they’d get themselves up in these tremendous outfits and cover themselves completely with these enormous antlers or horns or wings—mostly antlers and horns. They would make themselves look absolutely hideous and were objects of terror when they’d ride through the land—to each other and everybody else. [They had] chivalric trappings because they were [members of] orders and mysteries. To wear that outfit you had to belong to a mystery, and that was your sign. The Teutonic order began with the temple—the Templars, the Hospitalers, the Knights of Rhodes, the Knights of Malta. Finally, up in the Baltic there’s the Jomsburg. They were all secret organizations, and they were all exceedingly rich. They all plundered, and they did all this sort of thing. They made a mystery and a cult of war. This is the point. But this part of it is still there, because they’re the only people that still wear special uniforms. They don’t dress like anybody else. They set themselves apart from the rest of society, and they don’t think like other people either. You don’t expect them to. Those things you expect of them.

Well, these shows we put on are not very impressive. On July 4 to celebrate in 1944, they had over 5,000 planes fly over Normandy all in one bunch. They flew right over us. The peasants looked up for a minute or two and that was all. They weren’t impressed. Those things aren’t impressive at all. Special effects just won’t cut it; that’s all there is to it. The real thing is what counts, and that’s to be spiritual minded. That’s when you know what’s real.
Well, anyway, as Tolstoy tells us, war is a crashing bore. All night long you pray for it to be day; all day long you pray for it to be night. And that’s the whole thing. But you can use *Schrecklichkeit* to make soldiers an object of terror. We mentioned that. It didn’t work. The Nephites went down on their knees and started praying, and the Lamanites thought—ha. It’s our terrible appearance. It has absolutely paralyzed them—we look so terrible. But it wasn’t that. They said, you must be kidding; we were just praying. This is the positive action, not defensive. The armies of Giddianhi, with red on their foreheads, lambskins on their loins and all that nonsense thought they were praying because their fierce appearance paralyzed the Nephites, but it was only because they were supplicating the Lord for his protection. That’s in 3 Nephi 4:7–10. We’ll get to that yet.

There’s a fourth point, one on which Clausewitz lays a very heavy emphasis, namely this: “There is no other human activity that stands in such constant and universal contact with chance as does war.” That’s his main principle. “He who undertakes war must renounce every absolute certainty of result.” You never know how any operation is going to turn out. I was briefed up to the eyebrows for months on what the Operation Overlord would be in Normandy. I had to go down and brief every company just before it, when they were all in the marshalling area and nothing could leak out. My business was to tell each company what they were supposed to do and what they would be running into—what they could expect. I wouldn’t tell them the time and the place exactly, but I did what the general told me to do. It was a painful assignment, going down to all of them. The idea was that I should know what was going to happen. But I can say that nothing happened as it was planned or expected on D-Day. And that’s the only thing that saved us, when the whole company of the 52nd was dropped 55 miles away from their targets. Well, that was absurd, but it was the one thing that won the day, because the Germans wondered—what in the devil are those people doing? What is their plan?

They had our plan absolutely down cold. The first person [from the other side] came out from behind a hedge with his hands up, happily smiling. He said “Why didn’t you come yesterday? We were expecting you yesterday.” And then I very quickly got a mimeographed order that had come from the 109th, a holding division on the coast, the coastal defense division. There was the plan all laid out exactly as we were going to do it, but it was for the day before, June 5. But it was the weather that forced us to change. It wrecked our plans, but it wrecked their plans too. But when you start landing whole companies 55 miles away, they don’t know what you’re up to. They don’t know where to concentrate their forces to counterattack. They don’t know what you’re doing. The whole thing was that way. Everything was a mistake. Nothing turned out. And, as I say, that’s what saved us. It was Hitler who won in Normandy, of course. He had all the armored forces he needed. He was holding panzer divisions back in Paris because he was absolutely determined that we were going to invade on the Le Havre Peninsula. We had an awful plan for invading there. The original one was Operation Rheinchen. It was to invade Le Havre on March 15, and it was absolute suicide. Everybody heaved an enormous sigh of relief when it was called off. The general, of course, had to put on an act, though. He turned over the sand table. He threw down his hat and stamped on it to show his indignation. He was so gung ho he had to go through with this operation, which, as I say, was absolute suicide. But when it did go off, Hitler thought we were going to land in Le Havre, so he kept everything back. No, we’re going to send it to Le Havre—you just wait ’til it happens [he said]. That gave us a chance to get a hold; otherwise, with the greatest of ease they could have pushed us back in the sea with no problem at all, because for a whole week after landing we got no supplies at all because of the awful weather. It was horrible.
We have some good examples in Alma 49. Notice the Lamanites were very clever. They had the Zoramite commanders. They knew everything that was going on. But they supposed they would be an easy prey for them. Notice [Alma 49:3–4]: “. . . they supposed that it [the city of Ammonihah] would again become an easy prey for them. But behold, how great was their disappointment.” It didn’t turn out that way at all. “Behold, the Nephites had dug up a ridge of earth . . .” Verse 5: “Now at this time the chief captains of the Lamanites were astonished exceedingly . . .”. Things weren’t going their way at all. Napoleon said, “A general must never be surprised.” Well, our generals are always being surprised, and so was Napoleon. Surprise is the main element. That’s what strategy is, to achieve surprise with overwhelming strength at a particular time and place when you’re not expected. There you have your chance. So they were exceedingly surprised at the greatness of their numbers.

Verse 6: “. . . they had also prepared themselves with shields, and with breastplates.” Notice in the eighth verse: “But behold, to their utter astonishment, they were prepared for them, in a manner which never had been known among the children of Lehi.” There’s the genius of Moroni. He did something new. He did something surprising, and that’s what makes a great commander, to have ideas of his own and to think of something new. And that’s what makes the army such a drag, because they always fight the last war. I told you about Colonel Coles who insisted on a bayonet charge on the bridge at Carentan, because that’s the kind they had in World War I. That was the same Colonel Coles that went off to take S’Hertogenbus singlehanded. He insisted in fighting the first world war. Well, they all did, as a matter of fact, because it was the only war they knew. That was the textbook they had to follow. You like to talk about it and correct your errors. Give us another chance. Then you regard the next war as giving you another chance, but it isn’t. It’s a totally different ball game technically, geographically, and everything else. So here we have it.

This is a good example of it in Helaman 1. Coriantumr marched right into the center of Zarahemla, the capital city of Bountiful, and took it, catching the Nephites off guard. He surprised the Nephites. But in the end, he caught himself in a trap. They had been expecting him on the outside, and they had a protective curtain around the city on the outside. So he was trapped once he got in there. He had to surrender; he had been surrounded. Everybody surprises everybody else. When he tried to get out of the land, he found that the Nephites had pulled all their defenses on the periphery, and he couldn’t get out. Everybody surprises everybody else in war; nobody is sure of anything. So he made this famous statement—these are all famous statements of Clausewitz: “Warfare is therefore a chameleon, a strange trinity [three things make it up]. It’s composed of first, the original violence of its essence; secondly, the hate and enmity which are to be regarded as blind natural impulse [see how important it was for Amalickiah to take a few months stirring up hate and natural passion for a war, because the people couldn’t get it otherwise]; and thirdly, the play of probabilities and chance which make a free activity of emotions.” In other words, war is a madhouse.

Everything on the land [during the Normandy invasion] was based on the windmill near St. Mère-Église, which was the first town taken. That was by the headquarters company, the one I was in. Of course you know what happened. They went over and bombed the daylights out of it before we came, and there was no windmill. It had absolutely disappeared, of course. Yet everything was to be judged by the windmill. There was no windmill. This, as I say, is absolutely typical, as he says here, “the strange trinity.”
Those climactic pages of Mormon describe the final windup. Mormon prays for God to destroy his own people if they don’t change their ways. They’re so hopeless. “I saw that the day of grace was passed with them,” he says. The Nephites had reached the point of no return. Mormon simply wished them to get it over with. There’s nothing more terrifying or more vivid or to the point. Like today’s wars in Lebanon and in Central America. They’re madhouses. They’re crazy scenes. Quoting Clausewitz again: “War, of all branches of activity, is most like a game of cards.” Again, only in Hollywood are we absolutely sure that the good guys will win. That’s the quintessential plot of the John Wayne [movie]—it’s vengeance, and he always catches up with the bad guys, and of the Green Berets and all those things. This is the theme. The second most famous phrase from Clausewitz (next to the one that “war is politics by other means”) is: “Three-fourths of the things upon which the action of war is calculated lie hidden in a fog of uncertainty.”

This is the famous fog of battle. You never know what’s going to happen. It’s like Marshall Saxe. Getting prepared for one operation, General Max Taylor gathered us around in a ring. He said, “You want to know where you’re going? Well, once Marshall Saxe . . .” He was the great general who won the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745. In wars of succession in the mid-eighteenth century, they were professional armies and generals there, but it was just shifting sides back and forth. They were like a lot of mercenaries. But Marshall Saxe was going to lead this great thing into Fontenoy. He was briefing the officers before the battle. One of them said, rather amused, “Marshall, your knees are knocking together.” And he said “Yes, and they’d knock a lot harder if they knew where I was taking them.” But by a coincidence I found out later on after Taylor told us that story, that the very place he was taking them was where Taylor was taking us. I don’t know whether he knew that or not. That’s the very place we were going in the lowlands, right down in Zon there, right in Brabant. That’s where we were going to land, on the sand there. His knees were knocking together, because you don’t know what’s going to happen, you see.

When the battle begins, nobody knows anything. Did you see the front page today, for example? To show how our technical advantages change everything—they don’t change anything. The Atlanta shuttle has been delayed again, indefinitely delayed. Why? Well, they’ve spent hundreds of millions of dollars. They have a huge staff of well-trained scientists working on it. They’ve been months planning this takeoff, and now they have to call it off for a while because the computer isn’t working. Now, if you don’t think that could happen in a war, you’re very much mistaken. Computers don’t always work. But after all that, the computer isn’t working so they can’t send it yet. And it’s the same thing here.

I was attached to the British Second Army in this thing they called the Operation Market Garden when they went up to Arnheim. Within ten days at the most they threw away all their automatic weapons. They were no good at all. They were all full of mud and sand. The barrels were all jammed, so they just threw them away. They went back to sticks, stones, and rifles, the usual thing. No more automatic weapons. Nothing would work. So we always go back to primitive war.

There was a very bad night at a place called the Operation Market Garden where there was a castle, a 14th-century castle that Louis XIV had refurbished as a rest home for his officers up in the Netherlands. Everybody was always trying to take the Netherlands. See the Netherlands is the cockpit of Europe, and this is where all the battles take place. These are
the plains [from which] you roll into Germany, into France, depending on which way you go—into Holland, into Belgium. It’s always the Netherlands. It always has been. And this was there. What was I going to say? Well, I can quote some Shakespeare at this point. [Laughter] Look, he gives the best account of war of anyone, far better than anyone else. When Green says Shakespeare is the best historian, he’s quite correct. This is before the great battle of Agincourt in Henry V. That was a tremendous thing because they won against the most appalling odds. It was in 1415, which was a long time ago, but the picture hasn’t changed at all. So here you are in the lowlands of northern France and the Netherlands—they go together of course. The Netherlands were France at one time. Henry V came over with his army.

Now entertain conjecture of a time
When creeping murmur and the poring dark
Fills the wide vessel of the universe.
[Isn’t that good? There’s this flat countryside, the heavy trees and the farms.]

From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night [smoke and stench]
The hum of either army stilly sounds,
That the fix’d sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other’s watch:
[See, it’s so still you can hear the hum of either army, all subdued at night. You can almost hear the passwords on the other side, they’re so close.]

Fire answers fire, and through their paly flames
Each battle [that’s battalion] sees the other’s umber’d face:
[I told you that armies look exactly alike, and they do. And in the stilly fires their camps are so much alike, the other army’s your own.]

Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs
Piercing the night’s dull ear; and from the tents
The armourers, accomplishing the knights,
[That means they’re outfitting the lords, because they’re going be in it the next day. Boy, are they going to lose that battle. Ten to one superiority, too]

With busy hammers, closing rivets up,
Give dreadful note of preparation:
[What’s going to happen tomorrow with all this clank, clank, clanking?]

Shakespeare, Henry V, Act III, Scene 6

We didn’t hear the neigh of horses, but you could hear the roar of motors. We were so close. We would lie there on the damp flat land with a ground fog over it. On the one side was the Waal, this huge extensive river, a vast sheet of water as it goes toward the sea. There was British artillery all on the other side. And on the other was the Rhine; we were caught between them, and all these canals and the ground fogs. The sound would carry miraculously at night, so you could lie there and listen. You could hear the Germans moving in. You couldn’t hear the armorers clanking with their hammers, but you could hear very clearly the armor of the tanks moving in, their clanking into position. And the Germans made phonograph disks which they would amplify and beam in our direction. We’d get the impression that whole armies were moving in. You could hear all this yelling and all these trucks. Some of it was real and some of it was fake, but you could hear it very
plainly. So you could hear the clank of armor just as you could hear the clank of armor then. And you could hear even coughs sometimes when it was very still, but most of the time it was terribly noisy. Then what happens? Oh yes, then there's a homely touch, because there was a farm. Where I was stuck for so long right next door. They had turkeys and chickens, and it was very homely. They carried on life as usual, you see. This is an interesting thing. And so [Shakespeare] says,

The country cocks do crow, the clocks do toll,
And the third hour of drowsy morning name.
[It’s getting along. It’s homely. You’d never guess where you were. You hear the country cocks crowing and the clocks tolling. Now here are the French:]

Proud of their numbers and secure in soul,
The confident and over-lusty French
Do the low-rated English play at dice.

You notice Shakespeare introduced terms that were never used before, and we’ve used ever since. He has done more for the language than any other—he and the English Bible. Notice, he’s talking about “low-rated” and things that sound so very modern. The French were overconfident and the English were rated too low, just like teams in a league. They were taking bets on how the battle would go on the next morning and trying to pass the night—nobody was sleeping, you see.

And chide the cripple tardy-gaited night,
Who, like a foul and ugly witch, doth limp
So tediously away. [Will it never be morning?]
The poor condemned English,
Like sacrifices, by their watchful fires
Sit patiently, and inly ruminate
The morning’s danger; and their gesture sad
[You can bet they would, outnumbered, hopelessly, the way they were.]

Investing lank-lean cheeks and war-worn coats
[They’ve had a long campaign, and they’re just bushed, you see—had nothing to eat]

Presenteth them unto the gazing moon
So many horrid ghosts.
[That’s what they look like. Now we have an essay on leadership. The great leader was Henry V. They say he would have been England’s greatest king if he had lived, but he died quite young, just six years after this happened.]

O, now, who will behold
The royal captain of this ruin’d band
Walking from watch to watch, from tent to tent
Let him cry, Praise and glory on his head!
For forth he goes and visits all his host;
Bids them good-morrow with a modest smile,
And calls them brothers, friends, and countrymen.
Upon his royal face there is no note
How dread an army hath enrounded him.
[He doesn’t indicate fear at all. That’s what he has to do. He keeps up the morale of
everybody."

Nor doth he dedicate one jot of colour
Unto the weary and all-watched night.

[He hasn’t slept. He’s been up all night, but he doesn’t dedicate one jot of color to that. He’s still cheerful.]

But freshly looks, and over-bears attaint
[That would need some explanation. It means by sheer will power he overcomes all temptation to yield and go to sleep or relax. He just holds himself in with an iron will.]

With cheerful semblance and sweet majesty; semblance.
[He’s putting it on, of course. It’s semblance. He has to keep everybody’s morale up.]

That every wretch, pining and pale before,
Beholding him, plucks comfort from his looks:
A largess universal, like the sun,
His liberal eye doth give to every one,
Thawing cold fear. Then, mean and gentle all,
Behold, as may unworthiness define,
A little touch of Harry in the night.

[See, I’m unworthy of displaying this. And then he points, and then there’s a dumb scene showing Henry going around visiting the troops and seeing this sort of thing.]

... Yet sit and see;
Minding true things by what their mockeries be.


He was a true leader. He went around everywhere cheering everybody up, never letting on, etc., and it did pay off. And then at the end, the only one who pays off is the Duke of Burgundy. The Duke of Burgundy is the constable of France, and he’s the peacemaker. He brings Henry and Charles VI of France together. In a marvelous speech he tells them [Act V, Scene 2]: ‘I brought you together “face to face and royal eye to eye.” In that case should I be disgraced to suggest that peace might be a good idea?’

Why that naked, poor, and mangled Peace,
Dear nurse of arts, plenties, and joyful births,
Should not, in this best garden of the world,
Our fertile France, put up her lovely visage?

Why shouldn’t we have gentle peace again in this garden of the earth, our fertile France? Why do we just tear it up? Well, Henry took things over, but he soon died. Charles VI went mad the same year. The one who was in charge of everything was the Duke of Burgundy. So it was the peaceful man that won after all. Burgundy got enormous gain by that.

Well, so it goes. Oh my land, the time is up. Too much time groping for lost words. That’s what happens with old age. “So from day to day we ripe and ripe and then from day to day we rot and rot.”
TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 3, Lecture 68
Alma 49–50
Clausewitz’s Rules of War
World War II Memories

I don’t want to get morbidly engaged with this military stuff, but it has got me quite excited. I’ve been having dreams and everything else. We were talking about the “fog of war.” The main reason is that the Book of Mormon sets this forth so beautifully, so clearly, so succinctly. One hundred and seventy pages is quite an essay on war, but it treats every aspect. It doesn’t leave anything untouched and it’s marvelous. Everything is in context. If you keep your eyes open, you’ll see this. He has been talking about the fog of war. This is very typical in the Book of Mormon. This that Clausewitz says is also an admonition to us: “War is the province of chance. It increases the uncertainty of every circumstance and deranges the course of events.”

[It’s like the Robert Burns’ poem] “Of Mice and Men.”

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o’ mice an’ men
Gang aft a-gley,
An’ lea’e us nought but grief an’ pain
For promis’d joy.

Still thou art blest compar’d wi’ me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But oh! I backward cast my e’e
On prospects drear!
An’forward tho’ I canna see,
I guess an’ fear!

We can’t see what’s going to happen, but we can be afraid—lights out, this sort of thing. This is the best laid plans of mice and men, famous line of Burns. This is so, more than anywhere else, in war where you can very well guess it would occur. Clausewitz says, “Differences of opinion are nowhere so great as in war.” Look what it did when Mark Clark wanted to take Rome out of pure vanity, and General Alexander wanted to catch and trap the German Tenth Army up in northern Italy. Clark had to have his satisfaction and take Rome, which was not defended. The Germans promised they wouldn’t defend the holy city, and they didn’t. He had his glory, but it let the whole Tenth Army get up there to Normandy. It was a very foolish thing to do, but it was because the two generals disagreed and the vanity of it. [Then there was] Monty versus Ike and Monty versus Patton as much as anything.

This is an interesting thing. I have a quotation here from B. H. Liddell Hart, who is by far
the best known military commentator of our times. He has written more and he has been quoted more than anybody else—all through World War II, as well as World War I. He goes way back there. He says, “I used to think the causes of war were predominantly economic.” Well, there’s a lot behind that too—they are economic. Everybody profits by them, except the poor civilian who fights them. He goes on, “Then I came to think that they were psychological. I am now coming to think that they are decisively personal, arising from the defects and ambition of those who have the power to influence the current invasion.”

This is certainly the Book of Mormon position. Behind every war there is some powerful personality. In this case it is Amalickiah and in another one Moroni. It’s a personal duel. It becomes so personal between Amalickiah and Moroni that it becomes a matter of drinking blood and this sort of thing. That’s what it is, he says, after all these years. He has been writing for fifty years on military affairs. Liddell Hart, an Englishman, has finally come to the conclusion that it is derived from the personalities. It is personal ambition, etc. That’s an interesting reflection. I just came across that the other day.

So we have this: “The strength of character leads to a degenerate form of obstinacy.” We have a beautiful case of it here. We are on Alma 49 and 50. When we read them presently you will see that all these cases are well illustrated, like when they refuse to give up the fort until all the officers of the army are killed off—utterly stubborn, this sort of thing. During World War II] in the rain after Bastogne they fell south to straighten out the line and remove a bulge. General Taylor was ordered to fall back a mile. He said, “Gentlemen, the 101st only advances; it never goes back.” He immediately turned on his heel, stomped out of the room, went back and ordered an advance of another mile. It completely threw things off, but this is the stubborn will and character that gets people promotions. But it “leads to a degenerate form of sheer obstinacy,” he says. “Arguments among the staff are terrible.” (Moroni versus Pahoran; Patton versus Monty and Eisenhower). General Bradley said, “I never knew a general who was happy,” because when you get up there it’s all fierce competition and everybody is shooting for the top spot. Everybody is out gunning for everybody else. The feelings run very high up there—the things they say about each other, etc. Then they write books afterward, because it is so highly competitive. They never agree on any plan or project or anything else. On that subject Clausewitz concludes, “We shall soon feel what a dangerous edifice war is, how easily it may fall to pieces and bury us in its ruin.” [This happens] even up to the moment when you think you are winning. After Moroni settles everything, then bingo comes a terrific counterattack, like the Bulge, that catches them completely off guard. It’s a dangerous thing. We mentioned Agincourt last time.

This is of extreme importance: Clausewitz says, “Decisions are based on reports, all of which have been lies, exaggerations, and errors. Most reports are false, and the timidity of men gives fresh force to lies and untruths.” The fog of war includes misreports of what happened, etc. What [you say] happens is what you want to have happen, because you want to believe in the untruth. I could give many examples of that. He’s frank and honest in this. He says, “This difficulty of seeing things correctly is one of the greatest sources of friction in war among the commanders.” Thus Moroni has no idea what is happening to Pahoran, and Pahoran the same way, you see. What does a general do in a case like this? He says, “War in its plan is so often thwarted by the unexpected.” Of course, that’s the nature of it. Napoleon said, “The first duty of a general is never to be surprised.” But you are always being surprised. You can’t help it. You don’t know what’s going to happen.
“War . . . is so often thwarted by the unexpected that it must be left to talent.” It must be left to a person who has the talent for it. Frederick the Great and Napoleon had genius, of course—and Eugene, Marshall Saxe, and so many of them like that. The great generals were all eccentric geniuses. In fact, they only won wars by breaking rules. The most prestigious metal in Europe is that which was given by the Austrians in the middle of the seventeenth century, and it remained right down through World War I. It was the Maria Theresian, the medal of Maria Theresa, which you got for some brilliant achievement and success while you were breaking rules. So there was a catch to it. When you got the Maria Theresian, you had to be shot afterward because you disobeyed the rules. This is military thinking and it’s true. So don’t covet the Maria Theresian, because after you get it you have to be taken out and shot. It’s a great honor, of course, but you shouldn’t have done it. It was against orders that you won the battle. That’s the way we have to follow the rules. We’re so often thwarted by the unexpected.

Then he says this: “For that reason there is no other business in which a theoretical guide is more useless.” Less use can be made of a theoretical guide [in war] than in any other business. You can’t use the _vade mecum_ [guide]. I must tell you another one. I’m sorry but this must come out. I notice that Camp Ritchie is in the news today. It has now been exalted to Fort Ritchie. That’s where we trained very secretly, up in the Blue Ridge Mountains right at Camp David. There I was for many months. There was one fellow who had come from Washington who was always slightly drunk. His name was Mr. Tucker. He came to brief us on absolutely top security, the most secret things of all. He talked about a wonderful woman by the name of Miss Crawford, who knew all the answers. She knew more about the war than anybody in existence. If you could only know what Miss Crawford knew . . . We heard a lot about the mysterious Miss Crawford. Then months passed and I went to London to the war office. I went to Hyde Park Corners which was the military intelligence headquarters there with the British. From Hyde Park Corners we were reassigned, and where did I get assigned to? I got assigned to the great Miss Crawford. So I turned up at Whitehall first thing in the morning with my pass, all my identification, and everything. At nine o’clock in the morning I went up to Miss Crawford’s place there and waited. She didn’t show up until ten o’clock. Then she bawled me out. “Well, I know nine o’clock is the hour, but we don’t come at that time.” That wasn’t the proper time to come in the British way of doing it. Then at eleven o’clock everybody would go up to the roof and stand in a long queue clear around the building to wait for their tea. You waited and had your tea at eleven o’clock. Then at twelve o’clock you would come down, and it was time to go to lunch. This was the way they ran it. Well, do any of you watch “Yes, Minister” that comes on Sunday nights over Channel 7? It’s very good, and it’s exactly the way they do that. It’s just as crazy as “Yes, Minister.” It’s a British comedy, a running spoof on the high government in Britain—not only how human they are, but how silly they are. Well, this is the sort of thing that went on.

Miss Crawford bustled in. She had a huge mop of frizzy red hair. She was an old maid and very, very fussy. She said, “Now what did I do with that?” Our job was to compose the _vade mecum_ which was the British handbook. It had to be used by everybody. It was a bright red book but very top secret. They made it as conspicuous as possible with a brilliant red cover. They called it _Invade Mecum_. It was a pun on _vade mecum_ “Come with me.” _Invade mecum_ means “Invade with me.” It was supposed to give you all the essential data. What we were working on was the place, positions, and strength of the German units. You could follow them best by following where their commanders were vacationing, or where they were moving, or when they went to a meeting. You could follow the high brass of the Germans if you could follow the newspaper reports and the
popular magazines with their pictures in them. That was our sole source of information. She would just go through the newspapers and the magazines. She would clip them out, and all her information was kept in a shoe box. It was all messed up, and she would go through trying to find things. She had no filing system or anything. This is the way we composed the *vade mecum*. This is the way we kept our thumb on the pulse of the German army—little Miss Crawford there with her red frizzy hair going through a shoe box full of scraps. It’s too funny for words.

So Clausewitz says, less use can be made of a theoretical guide than in any other business. No, you can’t have a handbook for war, and yet there are manuals for everything in the army, as you know. But for this you can’t have a manual, though they try to use them. So Clausewitz says throw away the rule book. It depends on the genius of the commander. Here’s a thing that just came out in the paper on Friday. “Warriors Keep Fighting Edge in Peace Time.” It talks about that, because an army’s purpose is to [be aggressive]. You’re not big, tough and strong just to defend yourself. You have to have some purpose for that. We have to keep flexing our muscles and exercising all the time. The army will go to pieces unless it has activity. As Brigham Young says, just as surely as we have those weapons we are going to use them. There’s only one way to use them, and that’s the real thing. They just itch for that sort of thing. We won’t talk about that now. It’s what you learn in Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*, that wars go on. Clausewitz says the thing that is most surprising about war is that it’s surprisingly simple. [This just keeps taking me back to the Book of Mormon all the time. He’s got it all in; he’s got the spirit of it too.] . . . and that it [war] fools everybody. He says the most intelligent person is not going to be the greatest general. You want a man with a steady character who thinks very simply and very directly, like Suvarov or U. S. Grant. They were not complicated, nervous, ambitious men like Max Taylor or Frederick the Great. They are the ones who get through the long wars. They have an instinct for what is the right thing to do.

Here’s another of Clausewitz’s main doctrines, a central doctrine of strategy and tactics. This is basic. He says it’s hard for people to believe this, but the defense is a stronger form of making war always. “It’s contrary to the prevalent opinion, but the defensive form of war is the abstract stronger than the offensive. Absolute defense completely contradicts the conception of war.” If you are just on the defensive, you are not waging war. You are just sitting there. To wage war is to go forward and wage war. Marshal Foch was the one that would always go forward. And General Foch was losing everything, hand over foot. He would say, “We’ve lost another ten divisions. My plan is to attack.” So he would attack every time. With that policy they wouldn’t have any army left. “All the time that elapses falls into the scale in favor of the defender.” Any lawyer knows that. If you can draw out the case longer, the better it is. Put off the confrontation as long as you can, but, of course, every defensive, according to experience, will have to change to the offensive sometime because that’s what war is. It’s extremely important always to bear in mind that the only advantage which the offensive possesses is the effect of surprise. If you are on the offensive you must effect surprise, because he is ready for you otherwise. Of course, that’s the great trick that was pulled by the two thousand sons. They surprised the daylights out of the Lamanites who were following. They never expected them to turn around like that. You have to be the innocent aggressor, yet you must make a surprise attack on someone else. It’s a very interesting thing, a contradiction here.

I have to refer to Max Taylor because he was the general of the division. Not only that, he later became chief of staff of the whole Army, Navy, and everything else. His grand passion was the “reverse slope,” as if it were a new discovery. I had to preach “reverse
slope” morning, noon, and night or the general wasn’t satisfied. The reverse slope was that you wouldn’t dig in on the top of a hill, like Bunker Hill, and look over the approaching enemy, giving you an advantage. He was coming up at you. Not at all. What you would do is get at the bottom of the hill and wait for him to come across the ridge. Especially that was so with armor, because they make a fine profile against the sky. That paid off magnificently. That’s what saved the day at Bastogne, because in one morning they were able to knock off forty-four tanks as they came across the hill. There was no way they could escape. They had to come down into Bastogne there on this bare hill. As soon as they would pop up [we would hit them]. In the 327th artillery we had the new imported 44 anti-tank guns with long barrels. They were effective against anything. We just knocked out all their tanks. It was the same thing with troops. You can’t hide your profile on the top of a hill. It sounds contradictory, but it’s remarkable how well it worked. Of course, in Holland it didn’t work too well. Everything was dead flat.

Another conclusion from Clausewitz, “A negative effort must prefer a bloodless decision.” The less blood shed the better. That was Moroni’s feeling. “The only advantage of the negative object though is to delay a decision.” That’s cold war. He says there’s no point to cold war unless it leads to hot war, which it will always do. “It’s a game to switch to war after all. You can stall all you want, but everything is subject to the supreme law, the decision by arms. When it is actually demanded by the enemy such an appeal can never be refused. Accordingly, among all the objectives which may be sought in war, the destruction of the enemy’s forces always must be the one that overrules all the others.”

So no matter how you spar, no matter how you wait, no matter how long you delay, no matter how strong your defensive position, this will be your objective. Sooner or later, you must destroy the enemy. For Moroni destroy meant they would just agree to go back home again. This is the idea of the war. The personal war is the game of chess. Once the king is taken, nobody is particularly loyal to him. Nobody was particularly loyal to Amalickiah at all. They were suspicious of him yet. He got himself in that position, but as soon as he disappeared the people had no objection to giving in. Moroni said, “Well, go back home and promise you’ll be good after this, and they all went back.” That happened after the last war. We didn’t worry after the armistice was signed. The Germans and the Japanese didn’t bother us. This leads to a policy adopted by the Generalstab in World War II, which is the Blitzkrieg. You must get it over with and get it over completely. And it came from Clausewitz. “No conquest can be finished too soon. Don’t drag it out.” But wars always do drag out. Six-week wars always turn out to be five-year wars. They say, “This will be over in six weeks.” They always say that at the beginning. At the Battle of Bull Run they said, “This will finish that off.” Well, it just started four years of war. They always say the same thing. When it began in August 1914 they said, “This will be over by fall.” It always turns out to be years. He said, “No conquest can be finished too soon. Spreading it over a greater period of time makes it more difficult [of course it does]. A speedy and uninterrupted effort toward a decision is essential to an effective war [go and just keep going until you have finished it off]. Until it takes place nothing is decided, nothing won, and nothing lost.” You may be winning up until the last minute. Then something will happen and you’ll be defeated. This happens in the Book of Mormon too. “The end crowns the work. War is an indivisible whole, so how often defeat has been snatched from the jaws of victory.”

He said it must be an uninterrupted effort, and there is the catch. If it drags on beyond a certain period, it can’t be uninterrupted. You have to stop and take your breath. You have to stop and regroup. You have to stop and resupply. You have to do something. So unless
you win that first blow then you are in for a long haul. And nobody has ever yet won the first blow. That’s what they tried at Pearl Harbor. But there are always the slip-ups, always the delays. They didn’t finish off the navy; they didn’t know that two carriers were still out to sea, etc. That was a great blow. That was the nearest thing to the blitzkrieg that the Germans and Japanese were practicing at that time.

At Cumorah both sides lost, and it was a long war. This would be inconceivable to Clausewitz who said, “Once the great victory is gained, there should be no talk of rest, pausing for breath, or consolidating, but only pursuit.” Well, the Nephites were chased for fifty-five years. The Lamanites never let up that relentless pursuit, but was an off-and-on sort of thing. That’s the fatal flaw. Every campaign has to slow down somewhere, as everybody did in World War II, etc. We could have pressed the attack to an early finish, but we ran out of supplies. Patton was going great guns. Nothing was stopping him, but then there was no gas. Everything ground to a halt and that was that. You can’t get very far with tanks that way. Patton couldn’t get gas because Monty wanted it. There’s your clash of personalities. Monty wanted it for his northern campaign. He wanted to go through Belgium. He got it and stalled down there. [Clausewitz says], “Beware of confusing the spirit of army with its morale. The highest spirit in the world changes only too easily at first check to depression.” Nobody knew that better than Moroni. He saw that no matter how great the fury of the attacking enemy there was a time when there was hesitation. Then immediately he would propose conditions, and usually they would take him up on it. Zerahemnah didn’t; he said we will go on fighting. There is always a check that comes in the Book of Mormon when the tide turns suddenly. You have to sense when that time has come, and some men can do it.

Clausewitz’s last principle is important. “War is never an isolated act. In the real world war never breaks out suddenly and does not spread immediately.” Here we are going to have to disagree with him. He saw this in the princes’ wars and the gentlemen’s wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries fought by professional armies. But the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with the nation in arms, beginning with Napoleon, is something different, and for a good reason which he applies, “Human organizations have, because of their inefficiency, always fallen short.” This is the answer. It’s the human factor that is always going to spoil everything. You are not going to get your ideal war or anything else because human organizations always fall short. Well, that’s an understatement. We are seeing that a lot recently. What about this fall in the market on Friday? Which of the geniuses foresaw that. We weren’t warned about a 200-point drop in the market. Human organizations always fall short. There is bungling, misunderstanding, and deficiency. You never get things mobilized instantly. He said, “These deficiencies operate on both sides and become a modifying influence.” Hitler won D-Day for us because he refused to mobilize and send his armor to Normandy. He wanted to send it to LeHavre.

But war is a raid. When Zoram went out, he said it was to obtain those who had been carried away captive into the wilderness. Wars are raids anyway. Zoram’s original purpose in going out was a raid to bring back captives in the wilderness, as Abraham went against the four kings. Lawrence’s whole war was a ghazw. The Arabs call it a ghazw. Our word raid is from the Arabic ghazw. “As long as we live we shall ghazw,” they say. It was a matter of raids, but it was effective war. You strike, loot and take what you can. But Zoram’s whole purpose was to get them back, as we read in Alma 16.

Clausewitz has something to say that amuses us here, I think. This is good and sounds almost comical today. He said, “If wars of civilized nations are far less cruel and
destructive than those of uncivilized nations, the cause lies in the social conditions of these states internally and their relation to each other.” We didn’t just destroy cities wantonly or things like that, the way the barbarians used to do. No, we would never burn a city or palace. That’s out of the question. Or just kill citizens. We’d be very careful never to shoot a civilian or anything like that [irony]. Well, civilian loss is far greater in war than anybody else now.

The various documentaries on TV show us that “primitives” and animals do fight. They fight all the time, but they know when to stop. It’s a sort of exercise. They never badly hurt each other, because that would spoil the game. They know when to stop, but we don’t. That’s the difference. Neither did the warlords of the steppes. They are what Clausewitz had in mind when he talked about the barbarians and how they wage war. But we are civilized; we wage civilized warfare today. As I said, that’s humorous. Good joke. We should all be rolling on the floor. He was thinking of certain wars in Russia. He said, “They are unthinkable in our society because you can’t exterminate a whole nation. A thing like that is out of the question.” People have tried to do that. That’s exactly what Genghis Khan and Kubla Khan did, exterminated whole tribes and whole nations. That’s the expression used in the Book of Mormon. When the time comes that the voice of the people shall choose iniquity and fall into transgression, they would be ripe for destruction. When the cup is full they shall be swept off from the face of the land. Ye shall become extinct is the prophecy that is given after one of their happiest wars. Then Clausewitz says, “Since Bonaparte [the people in arms were unknown before him] it has approached much nearer to its real nature, to its absolute perfection.” The Napoleonic wars were real wars. He burned everything in the way; he didn’t spare anything. Then he is in ecstasy about this: “The most violent element of war, freed from all conventional restrictions, broke loose with all its natural force.” This is the way it should be.

Mormon said, “And from this time forth did the Nephites gain no power over the Lamanites, but began to be swept off by them even as a dew before the sun [Mormon 4:18].” A very powerful expression. There’s nothing left. Everything is swept away as the dew before the sun, combing the land. It wasn’t just a spot engagement here and there that would lead to a conference between the rulers, or something like that. No, it was a total thing. The most violent element of war, like a violent natural force, like a plague sweeping a nation, appears when, “freed from all conventional restrictions, it [breaks] loose with all its natural force. It is a natural phenomenon. There are no more artificial or other restraints. War is much nearer to real nature in absolutes,” he says.

Operation Barbarossa in June 1941 was when Hitler entered Russia, and they were to destroy absolutely everything. Within two weeks they had taken a third of Russia, the most vast country in the world. The gobbled up a third of it with total destruction, as fast as they could go. Clausewitz was wrong too because he didn’t have the nuclear bomb. He couldn’t conceive of the scale of wars today or the arms production or the nature of some weapons. He said this, “In the great combats we call wars there is usually no hostile feeling of individual against individual.” That’s very true. I told you last time that General Taylor wanted to invite the colonel who was defending Carentan to tea. He said, “I admire him. I admire what he has done. I want you to go and invite him to tea.” Well, we called that off. The Germans resented that sort of thing. The colonel didn’t get the point. The first person we interrogated was a person who was very badly wounded. He refused to say anything. He was very proud and just died.

He is going on here. We were talking about emotions being wrought up. “National hatred
becomes more or less a powerful substitute for personal hostility of individuals. Where this is absent the hostile feeling is kindled by the combat itself where an act of violence will excite us to the desire to retaliate and be avenged.” Well, the violence starts, but you have to whip it up first. You know that wonderful passage where he tells us how Amalickiah had special speakers go to all the towers throughout the country and whip up emotional resentment against the Nephites, to get the people worked up until they were willing to go to war. They were very reluctant after a long war, but this time he used that technique just like using TV. He kept hammering away at it with these speakers from the towers [Alma 48:1–3].

Here’s an interesting statement from General MacArthur. Now there’s a great personality. We have him to thank more than any other person for the sensible, amicable settlement of the Japanese question after the war. This is General Douglas MacArthur writing in 1957 when that tension was on: “Our government has kept us in a perpetual state of fear, kept us in a continuous stampede of patriotic fervor with the cry of grave national emergency. Always there has been some terrible evil to gobble us up if we did not blindly rally behind it by furnishing the exorbitant sums demanded. Yet in retrospect these disasters seem never to have happened, seem never to have been quite real.” Well, you can make them happen—that’s the point. It’s a self-fulfilling sort of thing, as in the case of Amalickiah when he set up the towers and got the people all whipped up into a passion. So the Book of Mormon is right on track here, isn’t it? Once [war] starts, then there’s the desire for revenge. This is the big thing. And the Book of Mormon ends in an orgy of revenge. “Vengeance is mine [saith the Lord], and I will repay [Mormon 3:15]. In Mormon 4, against all the Lord had taught, they went out for revenge. He said, “But, behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished.” You will not [get] revenge. That was the theme. Remember, Mormon said, when I saw that against all the Lord had taught them they were determined to avenge themselves upon their brethren, from that time I did utterly refuse to go against mine enemy. I became an idle onlooker to record these things for your benefit. So they must be for our benefit.

The good guy sees his friends cut, and so he seeks vengeance. That’s the dominant theme by far on TV every night now, as you may notice. You have to have a motive for going. You can’t just go out and shoot somebody. That would be very bad. You have to have some reason for shooting so the [viewer] is all excited and wants to see these people get their comeuppance. They must do something very wicked at first. The pattern is to start out with some grave crime being committed against the innocent, crimes of violence. The private eye’s best friend gets shot. It’s a routine they work over and over and over. Then the rest of the play is seeking for vengeance. That’s what keeps us interested. Will he get the vengeance? Will it catch up with him? That’s what makes all the great tragedies interesting from Oedipus to Macbeth. Is this going to catch up with him? Revenge is the whole thing. Mormon said in Mormon 3:9: “And now, because of this great thing which my people, the Nephites, had done [when they won a great victory against all expectations], they began to boast in their own strength, and began to swear before the heavens that they would avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren who had been slain by their enemies.”

Well, what nobler motive can there be than to avenge the blood of their brethren? With that Mormon lays down his arms. He resigns as commander and says he will have nothing more to do with them. He utterly refuses to be avenged on his enemies. For one thing the Lord has absolutely forbidden them to go seeking vengeance. So Mormon said in
Mormon 3:14–15: “... behold the voice of the Lord came unto me, saying: Vengeance is mine, and I will repay.” Well, where does that leave us today, short of Zion?

Turn to Alma 49:6. There’s no better known maxim than that generals always plan the next war in terms of the last war. They always fight the last war because that’s where their experience is. That’s where they can correct their mistakes. They talk it over and endlessly argue what they would have done, what this person should have done and that person should have done. The English are great on that. That’s exactly what happened here. Notice this neat touch here in the verse 6: “... they supposed that they should be privileged to come upon them as they had hitherto done; yea, and they had also prepared themselves with shields, and with breastplates [they were getting ready for the other war, the war that they had hitherto been victorious in]; and they had also prepared themselves with garments of skins, yea, very thick garments to cover their nakedness.” Notice, they had matched the Nephites’ armor. All the things they had hitherto done they were doing now, but that wasn’t enough because Moroni was ahead of them. Moroni was a real military genius. In verse 10 it tells us that Amalickiah stayed back at the base, confident in a quick and easy victory. “He didn’t care for the blood of his people. That happens too. Notice the insight of verse 11. You don’t just go to war by improving the army that way and by improving the defenses. That wasn’t it at all. He shook up the whole administration of the government. Notice, he was given plenary powers here to do this thing in this crisis. So he shook up the government from top to bottom and got things moving. “... for Moroni had altered the management of affairs among the Nephites.” It wasn’t just the military preparation. He altered the management of the affairs. It was a government shakeup, probably from top to bottom. That is very important if you are going to be efficient. Once you have lost a war you can’t have the same duds back home. “... the Lamanites were disappointed in their places of retreat and they could not come upon them.” They retreated back into the wilderness; they always had this nice wilderness to fall back on. Then his chief captains thought they could make the city of Noah an object lesson in verse 13: “... they marched forward to the land of Noah with a firm determination; yea, their chief captains came forward and took an oath that they would destroy the people of that city.” They were so mad because they had been turned back.

That’s exactly what the Germans did in 1914. They were going to make an object of Antwerp. That slowed them down long enough for the French to make some resistance and set up the battle of the Marne. The Germans are great on swearing oaths, and they will destroy something [in that way]. In Lidice, a village in Czechoslovakia, every man, woman and child was killed just in revenge because one of the SS personnel was killed there. This is what they are doing here in verses 13–17. They took an oath that they would destroy the city. The man says here, “The supreme test of generalship is to have the enemy play the game your way.” Moroni was very good that way. He made Amalickiah do just the things he wanted him to do, while Amalickiah thought it was his own idea. That’s generalship when you can do that. This is possible to have the enemy play your game, making just the moves you want him to make under the impression that he is being very smart on his own. Moroni did just that. The attack on the city of Noah was according to his desires. They were drawn off. The city of Noah looked weak, and this is the one they would attack to take their vengeance and make an example of it. That’s exactly what Moroni was counting on. He knew his psychology, a very shrewd man here. Verse 15: “And now, behold, this was wisdom in Moroni; for he had supposed that they would be frightened at the city Ammonihah; and as the city of Noah had hitherto been the weakest part of the land, therefore they would march thither to battle.” And [Moroni’s] two
generals were Teancum and Lehi, and they were “terrors.”

The Lamanites came to the city of Noah and they were again disappointed. That was terrible. He had devised a new ingenious type of defense for the city, a new type of gate for the Lamanites. They [had taken] their oath to wipe out the inhabitants of the city of Noah, so they made these savage, repeated assaults on the city. It was silly. There’s a description of siege and fortification. Verse 20: “Thus they were prepared, yea, a body of their strongest men, with their swords and their slings, to smite down all who should attempt to come into their place of security by the place of entrance.” They got trapped there because it was an L-entrance. You couldn’t go in directly. At the place of entrance Moroni had devised a clever kind of gate. This is the arch perversity of attacking strong places that can’t be held. Arnheim is the classic example there in our war, I think. “... but behold, they were driven back from time to time, insomuch that they were slain with an immense slaughter.” They began to dig down their banks and they were swept off by the arrows. All the chief captains were slain, and more than a thousand Lamanites were slain. What stubbornness! “... there was not a single soul of the Nephites which was slain.” They had the advantage of that battle.

This happened. Going over to Holland it was discovered that the Germans had a number of panzer divisions there. They had armored divisions resting, recouping, and rearming at Arnheim. It was the worst place for light airborne troops to assault. They were to take that bridge. General Browning was the British commander there. He asked Monty, who was living in his trailer house way back in Brussels, how long will we have to hold that bridge? He was to go in suddenly and hold the bridge. Montgomery snapped at him; he was always mad at him. He said, “Twenty-four hours or two days the most. We’ll be up there before that if you can hold on.” He said, “We can hold on for two days or four days, but I think you have chosen a bridge too far.” That’s what gave the name to the movie. That made Monty very mad. But General Sir Miles Dempsey came down and gave us a little pep talk. He came to headquarters and we all stood around him. He said, “As soon as you land, get off the road as soon as you can. I’ll be coming down those roads with my tanks abreast, forty miles an hour.” There were these little narrow Dutch roads with big ditches on either side to drain them. One tank might get by. All you had to do was have one 88 and you could block the whole thing, which is exactly what happened. Two weeks later we hadn’t seen a British tank; they hadn’t come in at all. That was Sir Miles Dempsey. He was the husband of Daphne Du Maurier who wrote that famous novel Rebecca. These were illustrious people, you see. They had to be; they were aristocracy. But they had that confidence. “Get off the road as quick as you can. We’ll be coming down two abreast, forty miles an hour.” Two weeks later a British tank lumbered in, and we kidded the guys. It was a communications tank. It had no weapons or anything else. The fellows with it had browning guns, and they were all filled with mud and sand. They said they just used them for effect. It was much later that any more tanks came in.

There we were up at Arnheim. We had only five miles to go then. It goes back to the most famous British guy who was called “Ultra.” That was Sir Stewart Menzies who became the boss in the James Bond novels, 007. He was a real man. He was getting information at this time, and he sent back reliable information. But Monty gave orders that the information should only come to him, that Eisenhower should not find out about it because he might call the thing off if it looked too bad. It did look much too bad, so we were not supposed to get it. The night we were to leave we hopped into the jeep with Captain Kipnis. He was the nephew of Alexander Kipnis, the famous bass. Everybody is related to everybody in genealogy. We dashed down to Southampton to SHAEF, to the
big headquarters, to find out about the information we had heard. Actually, there was the Ninth Panzer armored division, the Tenth Panzer, and the Second SS Panzer—three big armored divisions right where this group of paratroopers was to land. And they were supposed to take a bridge against that opposition. We didn’t know they were there. We didn’t know what was there, and we wanted to find out. We dashed down late in the day and came in. A typical Oxford don was sitting at the desk there at SHAEF headquarters. We said, “We have to know where we are landing; we are going tonight.”

He said, “Well, I can give you the information, but you will have to ask it through proper channels. I’m not going to give you that now.”

The captain said, “Yes, but we are going tonight. We have to land there tonight. We want to know what’s there.”

“No, these things have to be done in proper order. We have to do this. We haven’t been given any order to let this material go. You’ll just have to wait for it. We can let you have it in a week, two weeks maybe. If you put in your request now, we can let you have it in a week.”

While Kipnis was arguing with him, I slipped around and went through the door into the map room. An old friend of mine from Camp Ritchie was there. He let me take what I wanted. I got these maps and photographs, stuffed them under my coat like this, and buttoned the coat. That was the information we wanted. That’s the only way you could get it. This is the way things are done. It’s right out of that scene “Yes, Minister.” The same sort of thing is done. There they were with all this. They had an SS division. They had everything under the sun resting up there. They didn’t want to let anybody know, because if we knew we’d call it off. Monty always wanted this dagger thrust at the heart of Germany. We would just go through there. General Sir Miles said, “Two days at the most and we will have it all won.” Two days! It went on until about December 10. It began September 16 and was still going on in December. We were beaten. We just had to pull out. Nothing came of it. It was a complete collapse. So I know what it’s like to be on the losing side.

This is very good stuff here. They were swept off by stones and arrows. Then the Lamanites fled and went to inform their king. Back at headquarters Amalickiah had a tantrum. Heads would roll. Boy, those high level tantrums are something. The general enjoys the luxury of getting very, very mad. They absolutely become purple with rage. Verse 27: “Yea, he was exceedingly wroth, and he did curse God, and also Moroni, swearing with an oath that he would drink his blood.” Notice the psychology of that is like the Medellín, the Ayatollah, the Hezbolla. This is the type of psychology we never had until today—the idea of going all the way. The only solution they have is to murder. This man is insanely obsessed with this sort of thing. Until we got tangled up with the Moslems we didn’t really know what that meant, to get so bloody minded as that. But we have it today in the world.

Believe it or not, he [Moroni] won the war, and they had great peace and prosperity after because of their “diligence which they gave unto the word of God . . .” I’d say we’ll come down to earth next time, but I’m afraid we won’t. We’ll just dig in deeper. This next chapter is marvelous because this takes us back home during the war—how people not in the military behave during times of great stress.
Well, the trouble in San Francisco [a major earthquake on October 17, 1989] shows us certainly that things can get rough in this enlightened age. Of course, later on the Book of Mormon has a great deal to say about that sort of happening. Now we are dealing with the war sort of happening. We don’t want to linger on it too long, though the Book of Mormon, we notice, spends a lot of time on it. There’s a reason for that. As I said, we can read the Book of Mormon anytime, but there are some things that must be pointed out here. One thing that impressed me (I didn’t get it until this time around) concerns our four societies. Right here we are dealing with two mentalities and two societies—the Babylonian and the brethren. They never achieve the brotherhoods completely, and they never go completely Babylonian. Rarely does a society go 100 percent [to one type], but societies do get pretty bad. Moroni describes his own people (you think they’re the nation, after all) as the poor and outcast of Israel and compares them with the rent garment of Joseph who was sold into Egypt. Such are the traditions of the brotherhoods. And his opponent in this particular bout is Amalickiah, about whom we are told a good deal. [We learn] about the nature of these people in Alma 45:24. They were those who had achieved great wealth and considered themselves nobility. They were the would-be overlords, the powerful, the well-born. They called themselves the king-men because they wanted a king. Their culture is Babylonian, so we have these two. Throughout the Book of Mormon these two are in conflict, but not just these two.

The Book of Mormon scene is laid in America, North and South—a different story in each one. We have here the perennial Latin American history, which has been what, of South and Central America? It has been the rich, the arrogant, the landlords, the hacienderos attempting to take and hold by force what they think is their own. They are always staging coups, and they have to. There’s always this conflict, you notice, in Latin American history. These people are claiming superior birth, constantly attempting to hold their position by force, and usually succeeding. They stage coup after coup if necessary against the great majority who live as poor outcasts in the land most of the time—the campesinos, the paisanos, etc. Always between these two, it is still here.

In North America you don’t have that, you notice. You have another contest. You have pioneers grabbing all they can take, everything up for grabs. Not all of them are idealists. Then you have a very truculent white father in Washington. [George] Washington was the most benevolent of all toward the Indians, but since then the policy has been very truculent. So we have the other two. We have the warlords against the primitives or the nature people. They live the closest to nature and depend on nature. As you will see in that great work published by the Smithsonian on the subject, almost eighty percent of the Indians at the time of Columbus were cultivators. They weren’t hunters at all. They were farmers all up and down the Mississippi, all over the Southwest, and all over New England. They raised corn, watermelons, pumpkins, and things like that. It’s understandable why when Washington [the U.S. government] has interfered in Central America, we have nearly always taken the side of the warlords. The two cultures on the
lower scale, the warlords and the primitives, are engaged in the same contest as the two upper ones—Babylon versus the brethren.

The Book of Mormon scenario seems to support the final conclusion of Liddell Hart, whom we mentioned last time; namely, that the real driving force in the struggle lies with the abilities and ambitions of certain outstanding individuals. That’s certainly the case here. We are told again and again that the two armies have no quarrel with each other, anymore than we did with the Germans and the Japanese. Our quarrel was with Hitler, and a personal feud between Hitler and Churchill. In this case Amalickiah has the well-known desire to be cosmocrator. He wanted to rule. He wanted to be king of everything. It didn’t make any difference whether it was Nephites, Lamanites, or anything else. He had his plans to take it all in, and he went step by step. He had it all planned out, and he worked it out very carefully, very skillfully. Now he is commanding a huge army, but he is no longer commanding the Nephites because of this abrupt setback they had at the point we reached where they couldn’t take one town. That made all the difference in the world. The Book of Mormon is telling it like it is, even to this day then. That’s why it behooves us to pay attention here. I think I’d better follow along here to save time. I’ve never done this before, but I’ll follow the handbook [the Book of Mormon] here. We got down to [Alma 49:23] where they couldn’t take this one place. The chief captains were all slain, and more than a thousand of the Lamanites were slain. There wasn’t a single soul of the Nephites that was slain. Well, that was a great disappointment. Why should they give up there? They were way ahead, but the campaign completely collapsed.

Campaigns do collapse. Churchill’s great Italian campaign completely collapsed. After tremendous expenditure and great superiority it went to nothing. It was the same thing with the Market Garden thing into the Netherlands—Monty’s dagger thrust at the heart of Germany. After the tremendous expenditure of arms and everything else, it went to nothing. We just had to fall back and nothing came of it. These things can happen after one rebuff. Just because they couldn’t take Arnhem, back they went. The whole thing collapsed. We had army divisions in there, paratroopers, and everything else, but it didn’t work at all. It was the same thing here. They couldn’t take this one city, the city of Noah, so the whole thing collapsed. The Lamanites all went back home. When they saw that their chief captains were all slain and they had no more leaders, they fled into the wilderness. They went back to inform their king, Amalickiah, what had happened. Notice, here in verse 25, “Amalickiah, who was a Nephite by birth.” His army is Lamanite now. He has this huge Lamanite army behind him.

Using Lamanites for a career is perfectly normal. Who were the Swiss guards of the pope? No Catholic can be in the pope’s Swiss guard. They all have to be Protestant because that means they can be trusted just for pay and pay alone. They’re not interested in politics or anything else. We use the Contras to do fighting down [in Nicaragua]. We are not getting in there at all. And the Varangian guards were the backbone of the defense of the Byzantine Empire. The Varangian guards were recruited from the Russians and the Goths. They were a mixture of barbarians, and they were paid. They ran the country and put emperors in and out, just like the Praetorians did in Rome. And the Mamelukes ruled for centuries in Egypt. They were nothing but slaves who had been liberated when they became Moslems and trained as soldiers. They couldn’t be Egyptians. They were the palace guard, but then they ruled the country until 1811 when Muhammad Ali in one night had a massacre, and they were all slaughtered. That ended the rule of the Mamelukes, but they ruled until that happened. It very often happens that a person rules by an army that isn’t his own people. That’s the only kind he can trust. They will accept
pay and reward and nothing else. Nothing else holds them.

When Amalickiah found that the whole thing had flopped, he took that as a personal affront and got angry. He blew his top. He screamed and ranted and had a tantrum, as only a general can. Verse 27: “Yea, he was exceedingly wroth, and he did curse God, and also Moroni, swearing with an oath that he would drink his blood.” See, it’s this personal rivalry between the two. But he fell back. They had to lick their wounds for a while. There was a period of peace and prosperity that only lasted five years. Then in chapter 50 things were too good to be true. Moroni knew that, so he went right on preparing. After all, this was not a real stop. The army was still intact, and Amalickiah was still determined to use it. Moroni went on fortifying things and commenced the standard fortifications—the ditches, the palisades, the top of the timbers the height of a man, the pickets, the lookout towers, and the places of security—all these things in the first part of chapter 50.

Then there is this salient. It’s impossible to draw a map of this, except that you know that there was a main line running from east to west. There was a salient out here in the east. There was a sea here and a sea here. That’s as much as we will dare to say. He had to straighten this out and did it very nicely. This is very nicely expressed in technical terms here in verses 7–8. First of all it was necessary to move a dangerous salient over on the east coast. The area was cleared of Lamanites. Notice, they drove all the Lamanites who were in the east wilderness into their own lands. They were soldiers, and they had just settled there. They drove them out because they were going to straighten the line here, which made it easier to hold and much easier to defend. You can’t have flanking or anything like that. Then he settled his own people there and colonists from Zarahemla.

Verse 9: . . . he caused that the inhabitants who were in the land of Zarahemla and in the land round about should go forth into the east wilderness . . . and possess the land.” The reason was, as it says verse 8, “And the land of Nephi did run in a straight course from the east sea to the west," a much easier line to defend. But he was no fool. He wasn’t going to have a Maginot Line there, so he straightened it out. You can see that would be a very dangerous salient otherwise.

Then he went on with his fortifications, “fortifying the line between the Nephites and the Lamanites, between the land of Zarahemla and the land of Nephi, from the west sea, running by the head of the river Sidon.” (If that’s the head of the river, I suppose it’s the source of the river. Well, it may be the head of the river where it empties. Sidon goes the other way, I think.) The Nephites possessed all the land northward of the land Bountiful. South was the Lamanite country at this time. Bountiful was the one strong place that the Lamanites almost never could take. They [the Nephites] held onto that to the bitter end. Moroni’s confidence was building up, his armies increased daily, and he began the foundations of a city. This is his building in depth, you notice. He founded cities everywhere. Can you found cities so quickly and easily? Verse 14: “And they also began a foundation for a city between the city of Moroni and the city of Aaron, joining the borders of Aaron and Moroni [notice, they joined the borders together]; and they called the name of the city, or the land, Nephihah [a very interesting ending there]. And they also began in that same year to build many cities on the north . . .”

Well, if you know the Hopi record and the Zuni, that’s exactly what they do. It’s hard to believe. You go to Moenkopi and it looks just exactly like Walpi, but Walpi has been there for a thousand years and Moenkopi was only founded in 1906. They move them all around. Awatovi was destroyed in the sixteenth century. They rebuild them and move all over; they are constantly moving. They move up to Pima. The claim of the Navajos is
that they had all the Anasazi territory at one time. They were all over the Southwest, and they kept moving their settlements. They talk about the mystery of why you can find something like Chaco Canyon. Why did they leave it? Well, they would just get up and leave and go from one place to another when things became difficult. It could have been weather or something like that. The point is that they were very ready to move and resettle. They are very stable because they build towns. They are the Pueblo, the city people. But they do move and resettle, and they do like to spread out and form different settlements, sometimes large and sometimes small. That’s what he [Moroni] is doing. A city is anything with walls around it, anything defensive.

Verse 15: “And they also began in that same year to build many cities on the north . . .” So it went. The Lord prospered them extremely. They were blessed with a post-war boom in verse 18, “and they became exceedingly rich.” Again, isn’t that too sudden? No, after every war people become very rich all of a sudden. You can see why. Because there is increased supply and demand after everything has been destroyed. There is lower population and less population pressure. Everybody can profit a lot. There are lots of deals around after a war. But we never learn this [lesson] in verses 19 and 20. Back to the old lesson. How often is this repeated in the Book of Mormon? “And thus we see how merciful and just are all the dealings of the Lord, to the fulfilling of all his words unto the children of men. . . . Blessed art thou and thy children; and they shall be blessed, inasmuch as they shall keep my commandments they shall prosper in the land. But remember, inasmuch as they will not keep my commandments they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord.”

Of course, now there had to be a land squabble. This always happens. You can’t hold them to that. Then here’s a comment on the enemy. Don’t blame the enemy. Don’t blame Hitler. In 1927 I was on a mission in Ludwigshafen. That was a great ammunition center, and it was all very secret. They were working like crazy there. The arrogance of the French was unspeakable. The French soldiers would insult people and do things they didn’t need to. It was very silly. President Tadje used to tell the missionaries all the time, “I’m expecting to see you all in uniform before long.” Hitler wasn’t even heard of then. He wasn’t the one who pushed us into it. It was all building up to that because of the injustice of the Versailles settlement. This is what happens always, and here [verse 26] the quarrel had to be, naturally, about a boundary. We are always quarreling about boundaries.

And here in verse 22 is a very interesting racial thing. We talk about [the people] being either Nephites or Lamanites. “And those who were faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord were delivered at all times . . .” That’s a wonderful thing to know. The others were fated to go into bondage or “to perish by the sword, or to dwindle in unbelief, and mingle with the Lamanites.” Large numbers dwindle in unbelief and become Lamanites. When you see a Lamanite, there is as much Nephite blood as anything there; it’s all over the place. They are all descendants of Lehi.

This is a surprising thing just one year after they’ve had the big war: “But behold there never was a happier time among the people of Nephi . . .” in these great days of insecurity. When were the greatest days of Athens? When the city was all locked up; when they were having the plague; when they had to have the long walls between the harbor and the city because nothing was safe outside; when all Greece was united against them under the leadership of Sparta; when they were losing their shirt. They had lost their empire because of their overweening ambition and wickedness toward cities like Miletus, etc. This was their greatest and happiest period. There’s something crazy about this. They are living
high, so to speak. This [peace among the Nephites] was to last for only four years. They
were living in dangerous times. Amalickiah was working hard all this time to build up his
forces back there, just as Hitler took lots of time. But it worked fast just the same.

Here’s an episode. In the twenty-fourth year came a land dispute about boundaries. These
are common. The big one has been going on ever since the boundaries were made. They
have been changing all the time between the Hopis, the Zunis, and the Navajos. They are
fighting about their boundaries, as the Indians are [today]. The tribal territories are very
touchy matters. If you are in the wrong territory, you can be killed on sight. In the
twenty-fourth year there was this contention concerning the land of Lehi and the land of
Morianton. Here is the standard scenario: “. . . the people who possessed the land of
Morianton did claim a part of the land of Lehi; therefore there began to be a warm
contention between them . . .”

My friend Paul Springer was a city commissioner in San Francisco and lawyer. A big oil
company was going to build a building in San Francisco. They found that the building
next to their lot extended out an inch beyond the property line. They said, “You must pay
for that inch, and we will charge a million dollars.” Well, that was a lot of money at that
time. They said, “No, we won’t. We’ll just shave the inch off.” But they didn’t shave it off;
they shaved two inches off. So Richfield couldn’t go on and make a building without
going all the way, so they had to buy that other inch. They didn’t shave one inch off so
they wouldn’t have to pay for the land they trespassed on, but they shaved two inches off
so that the others, in order to build at all, would have to trespass and move over here. The
buildings had to be together. They charged them two million dollars for that and collected
without any trouble, though it was a dirty trick. There is so much dirty work that goes on
about lands. We all know that; we’ve all seen westerns.

The people who were in the land of Lehi fled to the camp of Moroni and asked for his
assistance, and he cut them [Morianton’s people] off. Again it’s back to the personality of
the person. It’s this Morianton. Notice in verse 35 that he spoke to them with flattering
words. These men are always skillful speakers and good salesmen. That was Morianton. He
told them they should flee to the land which was northward, but Moroni cut him off, and
Morianton couldn’t get away with it. When they found that the people of Lehi had fled to
the camp of Moroni, they were exceeding fearful that Moroni would chase him. He
decided, we’ll move out—we’ll move up north to the land of waters. Maybe it was the
central valley of Mexico, which was full of water at that time. Moroni was able to find out
about that because of a maid servant of Morianton whom he had beaten—a nice character
reflection on his hot temper. He fell upon his maid and beat her much. A horrible man,
this Morianton, but a very capable man. She fled to the camp of Moroni and told
everything. Moroni said it was time to cut him off, so he headed him off at the borders of
the land Desolation. He didn’t do it but he sent Teancum, who was really gung-ho. He
was a great one; he was terrific for small operations like this. But he was too hot headed
and ferocious for most [encounters]. The people had been led by flattering words.
Teancum slew Morianton and defeated his army and that was that. They all went back.

Verse 36: “And thus were the people of Morianton brought back.” A happy ending. They
made a covenant. That means they had a ceremony by which they received them back
again. “. . . they were restored to the land of Morianton, and a union took place between
them and the people of Lehi; and they were also restored to their lands.” Notice, the leader
makes the difference. Once Morianton was removed things were taken care of.
Here’s a puzzling thing in verse 38. Here was a very righteous judge. Nephihah had served in perfect uprightness before God, but he refused to let Alma take possession of the records. Why would he do that? Well, because Alma had given them to his son Helaman six years before. His son was head of the church. Alma had a different calling. Alma had laid down his commission to become a missionary. The point is why would he refuse to let Alma the great take possession of the records? Alma was an important government official, but if we go back to Alma 37:2 it tells us how Alma had conferred the whole thing upon his son Helaman six years before. There’s no mystery there. You might think you find catches in the Book of Mormon and say, Joseph Smith must have slipped up here. Why would a great judge refuse the records to a great man like Alma who was responsible for them? Because Alma had passed them on. That was legal now.

The son of Nephihah filled the judgment seat with an oath and ordinance. His name was Pahoran, and he’s a famous man here. So we get to Alma 51. We waltz along here. Soon Moroni had to face the most dangerous coalition of all, for the king-men had united again with those of high birth and all the others who sought power and authority over the people. They wanted to make some change in the laws, and Pahoran wouldn’t change them. They wanted to change them in their favor, so they decided to make a coup. Verse 5: “. . . those who were desirous that Pahoran should be dethroned from the judgment-seat were called king-men, for they were desirous . . . to establish a king over the land.” They staged an election instead, and the king-men lost. There was nothing wrong with their having an election and challenging the government at all. They could do that. The thing is when they lost the election they took to arms. They wouldn’t accept the majority verdict. If you look back at Alma 45:24 these are the same people, and Amalickiah is the same old character. “. . . because of their exceedingly great riches; therefore they grew rich in their own eyes, and would not give heed to their words, to walk uprightly before God.”

They didn’t just form another party. They wanted to run the government, which is exactly what Amalickiah wanted to do. He wanted to be everything. They were “gathered together against their brethren . . . And now behold, they were exceedingly wroth, insomuch that they were determined to slay them.” (Alma 46:1–2.) It was going to be all out; it wasn’t just going to be an election. Here [in Alma 51:7] an election was forced on them but went against them. “. . . the voice of the people came in favor of the freemen . . . Now those who were in favor of kings were those of high birth [here we are again], and they sought to be kings [everybody thought he was in the royal line because they were all related to the king]; and they were supported by those who sought power and authority over the people.” A coup is what they were after.

Amalickiah had again stirred up the Lamanites. Amalickiah wasn’t here. These people were among the Nephites. Amalickiah was on the other side, but he had his Lamanite army and he was stirring them up again. He “gathered together a wonderfully great army.” The best interest for these people once they had lost the election would be join with Amalickiah. So they plot with him, and from this time on they are plotting against the country. Verse 12: “Yea, even Amalickiah himself did himself come down at the head of the Lamanites.” This time he did. Notice, it no longer says, “Amalickiah, the Nephite, who is leading the Lamanites.” Now Amalickiah is the leader of a Lamanite army. He has identified himself completely with the Lamanites, and he is leading them. It’s his personal army again, like the Mamelukes, or the Varangians, or the Praetorians. The king-men were glad. They were aware of what Amalickiah was doing, and they wanted to give him support. Now that it was time to arm again—Moroni had been getting ready for them all the time—they [the king-men] refused to cooperate. They wouldn’t have anything to do with it.
Seeing everything “going to pot” here, Moroni was exceedingly wroth. He had a hot temper too, you know. “His soul was filled with anger against them.” These people, what are they doing here? When Moroni saw all his work threatened by the same elements with whom he had been forced to deal before, it was almost more he could stand; “yea, he was exceedingly wroth; his soul was filled with anger against them.” He knew that the people were solidly behind him and by popular vote received a special power to go against those king-men and pull down their pride and nobility.

In the meantime they had armed. They were arming to support the Lamanites and went on the attack. This passage has been misunderstood. Verse 17: “And it came to pass that Moroni commanded that his army should go against those king-men, to pull down their pride and their nobility [his army marched against their army; it was going to be a pitched battle] . . . the armies did march forth against them; and they did pull down their pride and their nobility, insomuch that as they did lift their weapons of war to fight against the men of Moroni they were hewn down and leveled to the earth.” Only when they were fighting in the field; that’s all. They were not executing them because they were the wrong party or something. “As they did lift their weapons of war to fight against the men of Moroni they were hewn down,” but those that didn’t were taken prisoner and held in the prisons. They weren’t shot. They were held in prison because there was no time to try them. The emergency was too great to have trials at that time. There were four thousand of those who were hewn down. You would expect the leaders to be eliminated, but they weren’t. They were cast into prison. There was no time for their trials at that time. They were not killed. This was a military not a political contest. The prisoners of war were not killed.

Verse 20: “And the remainder of those dissenters, rather than be smitten down to the earth by the sword, yielded to the standard of liberty, and were compelled to hoist the title of liberty upon their towers.” That sounds like an oxymoron, doesn’t it? They were compelled to be free. They were compelled to have liberty. No, the point is here that it must be one flag or another. They had chosen decision by arms and they had lost. Well, the winning side hoists its flag. They were supposed to have been Nephites. These were the ones who had agreed and given up. This was the policy Moroni always followed. They had gone back to being supposedly good Nephites. How reliable, I don’t know. Their officers were kept under guard. Those that were slain were all slain in battle as they raised their arms to fight. So the victor’s flag goes up, of course. “And thus Moroni put an end to those king-men . . . and thus he put an end to the stubbornness and the pride of those people who professed the blood of nobility; but they were brought down to humble themselves like unto their brethren, and to fight valiantly for their freedom from bondage.” They joined in after that. This has happened before too.

While they were having all this trouble just among themselves, Amalickiah was building up a tremendous army. Now the Lamanites came into the land, caught them completely by surprise, and overran everything. Well, where is Moroni’s skill? Where are his preparations? They overran city after city here. They were small and hadn’t been completely built yet. Notice, this is what happened: Amalickiah took possession first of the city of Moroni and drove them slaying many. They fled from one city to the next and threw everything into confusion. The army would come along and take possession. It was a real blitzkrieg. Verse 24: “And those who fled out of the city of Moroni came to the city of Nephihah.” It was like check dams up the canyon. They think they will hold back the flood, but they are a bad thing because they are weak dams. The one that breaks first doubles the force of water. It comes down and easily breaks the second and then breaks
the third. They have stopped check dams in California, which used to be a policy, because they just made flooding worse. One of the little dams is bound to break, and that just doubles the mass of water behind it. Then it goes down. “... the city of Nephihah; and also the people of the city of Lehi gathered themselves together, and made preparations and were ready to receive the Lamanites to battle. ... Amalickiah would not suffer the Lamanites to go against the city of Nephihah to battle, but kept them down by the seashore...”

Notice, he had to hold back some in reserve. You have to have a reserve. This reminds me so much of the night of December 16, 1944. I was in charge of the intelligence. The 101st had gone into a rest area at a place called Moursmelon, just behind the Belgian lines there. I had to keep up on the situation. Everybody was resting. It was all over. Nobody thought it was serious, but it was very serious. I could see it coming for several weeks. That night all of a sudden the Germans were at Malmedy, Visé, and all these places. They were here and here. Well, how did they get there? The general and everybody were absolutely amazed. I wasn’t amazed. I had been telling them that for weeks. I knew how it had built up. In the Battle of the Bulge they achieved complete surprise. They had twelve panzer divisions and twenty-nine normal divisions all break through at once. We didn’t even know they were there; they kept such secrecy. The signals were there all the time, and we wouldn’t take them. This is the way it happened. They had Manntaufel’s Fifth Army, and he was something. They had Sep Dietrich’s Sixth Army. These were the last fighting force that Hitler had, and he was going to throw them into one place on the line where we had four divisions spread out. We had them spread out at an average of twenty-eight miles to the division front. Well, the normal division front should be four to five miles at most. We had each division holding twenty-eight miles because we said, “Nothing is going to happen there. This is the Ardennes; they can’t come through the Ardennes, these woods, etc. Everybody felt perfectly secure. I didn’t—I felt very nervous. I told the general, and he always complimented me about that afterward, “Well, you certainly called your shots that time.” But it didn’t do any good then.

About two o’clock in the morning a captain staggered in with his face all muddy and his uniform torn and black. His whole company had just broken and scattered. There was nothing left of them at all. That was the first we heard of them [the Germans]. The next morning they had to go out and get all the men into these big gondola trucks and haul them out to hold Bastogne. That was one of the great epics of the war, the holding of Bastogne against all these German divisions. It caught them by complete surprise for no reason at all. Of course, there was beautiful security. They had everything, and they moved by night with bicycles.

The day before we got nervous [and thought] they are not sending us any reports. There hasn’t been any reconnaissance here. They haven’t sent any scouts out or anything else. So we went down to the Seventh Corps. They said, “Well, don’t bother us; we are going to move tomorrow. We are packing our maps and things.”

“Well, what about the 109th Division, the line here? They just moved in. They were holding the main line that Runstedt was going to break through. They had only been in Europe for two weeks. They had never seen any action at all. They were a brand new division that had just been formed. The general was a fat little redheaded guy with great arrogance. They were there because it was a rest area. They put them there and said, “This is the quietest area on the front. We won’t have to do anything. We are going to fall back in a week. We are just here to rest, because this is a place where they won’t have any
action. They have no experience; therefore, this is the best place for them. Of course, it was the place to which the Germans were going to direct the whole attack. It was wild. [Brother Nibley put an illustration of the fortifications on the board.] They would move just by night, and all night long they moved in wagons and bicycles and pushed baby buggies—everything that wouldn’t make a noise. We had scouts and people would come over and tell us, “They are moving this way by night, and they are moving this way by night. Where are they moving to? Here they put up fortifications. Well, obviously they were going to come through here and protect their flanks. This was where they were ganging up all their force. It was very obvious.

As Hitler was hip on astronomy, a favorite date of his was December 17 when other things had happened in his life. So I predicted that on December 17 there would be the big breakthrough there. Because of reports we had a pretty good roster of the units that had gotten together there. They were going to drive through with all this army to Antwerp and cut off twenty to thirty American divisions, because they would completely run out of gas there. They were throwing in twenty divisions plus twelve panzer divisions. It should have worked, but it didn’t work because everybody blundered on both sides. This always happens. But our generals did show great skill after the fighting began. They were no fools. I think they outwitted the Germans actually. They should have known better than to try to go with tanks through those muddy paths in the Ardennes. They were narrow roads in hilly country with woods. They were bound to stall anyway. But the way they met and caught off was rather skillfully done.

This is what happens here. Why would he catch the great Moroni by surprise? Well, he didn’t. He came in with this force and he just bowled over one city after another. Verse 26 says, “And thus, he went on, taking possession of many cities, the city of Nephihah, and the city of Lehi, and the city of Morianton, and the city of Omner, and the city of Gid [you can imagine how the panic would spread among the Nephites], and the city of Mulek, all of which were on the east borders by the seashore [that’s the place where they tried to strengthen it]. And thus had the Lamanites obtained, by the cunning of Amalickiah [who was a darn good general], so many cities, by their numberless hosts, all of which were strongly fortified after the manner of the fortifications of Moroni; all of which afforded strongholds for the Lamanites.” They were their forts now. All that work had been done just for the benefit of Amalickiah. He had all these strong places, which would serve him very well. The Nephites were going to have an awful time trying to take them back now. That was one of their main things. After all, how were they equipped for siege operations? Moroni had fixed it perfectly so the cities couldn’t be taken, though they were taken. Now he had to take them again.

Verse 28: “... they marched to the borders of the land Bountiful, driving the Nephites before them and slaying many.” It’s quite a scene with the people fleeing from one city to another and coming in in droves. You see this all the time with everybody hiding in the same place. This Teancum, who had slain Morianton, was great. Verse 31: “But behold he met with a disappointment by being repulsed by Teancum and his men, for they were great warriors [Teancum has a very crack force here]; for every man of Teancum did exceed the Lamanites in their strength and in their skill of war [man for man they were very experienced], insomuch that they did gain advantage over the Lamanites.” But, of course, they couldn’t fight a pitched battle, so very cleverly he started Indian warfare, avoiding pitched battles. That’s one advantage of an airborne. You can’t form here; you scatter all over the place. That gives you a great advantage. The Germans resented it very much. They’d say, “You don’t fight fair; you fight from behind trees.” They were very
bitter against the 101st. It wasn’t healthy to be picked up.

Verse 32: “. . . they did harass them, insomuch that they did slay them even until it was
dark.” They worked in the night. They fought Indian fashion and avoided a pitched battle.
They pitched their tents in the borders by Bountiful, and Amalickiah pitched in the
borders by the land Bountiful. That’s the Nephite strong point on the east coast there. If
they can take that everything is theirs. “. . . when the night had come, Teancum and his
servant stole forth and went out by night, and went into the camp of Amalickiah.” This is
reconnaissance, scouting, and patrolling. This has happened. Sometimes a high officer
wants to go out himself and look things over, and then something happens. They were
sleeping, overcome by the heat of the day. At the beginning of the next chapter we read
that it was the new year, which means they were in the tropics. On New Year’s Day they
were overwhelmed by the heat. We have seen several references to that already. Teancum
put a javelin into [Amalickiah’s] heart and returned again. You hear a lot of stories like
this. Several weeks before they entered Rome, Mark Clark drove all over downtown Rome
as an officer in his uniform in broad daylight. Nobody recognized him. He inspected the
city and drove out again. In the same way the New York Times put a test to our security.
They had three or four fellows dress up as German submarine officers in their uniforms.
They talked nothing but German and rode the subways all day. They walked around New
York loudly talking German in Nazi uniforms with swastikas and everything. New York
being what it is, nobody paid any attention to them. They thought it was some gag or
something. Security is really a joke when you come right down to it. It can be so easily
broken, especially with these bombs in tape recorders and things like that.

They had lost their commander now. When the Lamanites woke up they were completely
shaken up. They had to readjust because the commander had been killed. It was the first
morning of the first month, so it was in the wintertime and yet it was hot. It was
subtropical at least. Teancum was ready to give them battle. So they not only found their
commander gone, but they found Teancum all ready to attack. What would they do?
Well, they were scared. They didn’t surrender because there were too many of them. They
could put up quite a fight. Teancum didn’t intend to attack them. There was no time to
readjust, so they fell back on the city of Mulek. I suppose that was a sensible thing to do.
The city of Mulek was one of the most strongly defended cities, we learn. The brother of
Amalickiah took over. He was just as ferocious as Amalickiah, and he was filled with desire
for revenge too. This is the reason Teancum didn’t do more in verse 5: “. . . seeing the
enormity of their number, Teancum thought it was not expedient that he should attempt
to attack them in their forts.” These are dangerous circumstances. You notice this is very
bad here. Teancum strengthened his own positions. He dug in and awaited
reinforcements from Moroni. That was the best thing for him to do, because he had a
small force but a very good force. Moroni was pinned down on the west coast and could
offer no assistance. The Nephites with their inferior numbers were being forced to fight
the war that all commanders dread, a war on two fronts. Moroni was on the west coast
and Teancum was on the east coast, so he couldn’t help him because both of them had
their hands full. That’s the thing the German war college said you must always avoid no
matter what happens.

[Ammoron] made the most of his advantage by sending a strong diversionary force to
occupy Moroni and, if possible, split the Nephite forces even more. He was going to pin
Moroni down while harassing them everywhere and keeping them off balance.
[Ammoron] made sallies and infiltrations from numerous Nephite strong places held by
the Lamanites. So they had the advantage all over the place here. It says in [verse 14] that
things were looking very serious for Moroni: “And thus were the Nephites in those
dangerous circumstances in the ending of the twenty and sixth year of the reign of the judges,” just after they had celebrated a victory five years before. So what are they going to do here? Well, this was a real challenge for Moroni, and he was equal to it. He was very shrewd in how he operated here. First he ordered Teancum to sit tight (remember, he was on the east coast and had a good position anyway) on his sector while harassing the Lamanites as much as possible. That’s what he was good at. And keeping a sharp lookout for any chance opportunity opening to do them real damage. That’s the order he gave them in verse 10. Seek every opportunity to damage them as much as you can. This is one of those underground operations like the Maquis, like the Underground, and like the Resistance in France and other occupied countries. [He was told] that he should be faithful in maintaining what he had, but at the same time not miss any opportunity to damage. We have already seen that Teancum liked to operate at night when he could be more effective with his mobile, highly trained force.

Here’s a neatly authentic touch here: At the same time he was instructed to take and keep as many prisoners of war as possible with a view to future exchange of prisoners with the Lamanites. The addition of one man to the Nephite forces meant a lot more than one man did to the Lamanites. They would exchange them on a man-to-man basis, as it says in verse 8. He followed up these instructions with “orders to make an attack on the city of Mulek and retake it if it were possible.” And this is a very authentic touch that Teancum decided it wasn’t possible, so he didn’t obey the order. He was allowed some discretion; he said, “if it were possible.” (verses 16–17). Teancum made all the preparations to make an attack on the city of Mulek, but what did he find out on scouting and patrolling? He saw that it was impossible and gave up the enterprise.

Then Moroni came with an army to the land Bountiful in the latter end of the twenty-seventh year, and they had a council of war. The chiefs came together then. Bountiful is far enough away from the Lamanite forces to be safe, so they went there and held a top level council of war to study the situation. It was agreed that the first thing on the agenda was for the united forces of Teancum and Moroni to take Mulek, which was the eastern anchor of the main defense line (verses 18–19). But how could they take this major city? It was the most strongly fortified. It was the object they all wanted. Well, the first step was a logical one. They used the ancient custom of warfare, which was allowed. You challenge them to come out and meet you on a fair field. I treated that at some length in an article in the *Western Political Quarterly*, this coming out to challenge, etc. The Nephite commanders issued such an invitation to the comfortably ensconced Lamanites who refused to come. Of course, they would have been silly to do it, so they naturally refused.

During the ninth crusade of St. Louis XI of France, they were in Morocco. All his knights in armor faced the city all dressed up in full armor all ready to go. They formally challenged the Moslems to come out and fight as they looked down from the walls. The Moslems were the originators of chivalry, so to speak, because they always used those methods. That was part of their tradition too. They were very bloodthirsty but chivalrous. Naturally they refused because the hot African sun was beating down in the desert there. Here the army of St. Louis was all lined up in heavy armor in the hot sun. First one person would fall from a horse, and then another, and then another. The whole army was wiped out by the sun. They didn’t have to lift a finger. Of course, they wouldn’t come out and fight under those circumstances. Very sensible. (What did I do with the water? I’m working on another project these days, and I can’t remember my own name. The other project is going very well. That’s no comfort.)
They wouldn’t come out, so what was he going to do now? Well, he tried something else. He tried to decoy them out. Our very mobile and able Teancum allowed the Lamanites to discover a task force of his moving along the coast right in full view of the city. They gave it chase, of course. When they were out chasing [Teancum’s force], Moroni slipped in behind them into the city and overpowered the defenders. Since it was Moroni he characteristically spared them all. He didn’t put any to death who yielded up their weapons (verses 22–25). Then having settled the city with the people on his side, he immediately started out chasing the Lamanites along the beach. They took the coast route on the heels of the Lamanites. The Lamanites were chasing Teancum and his small force. So we have Teancum being chased by the Lamanites, and the Lamanites being chased by Moroni. You see what’s going to happen now. This is what made the difference now. As a secondary division, a small Nephite force under the terrible Lehi had issued out of the main base in Bountiful and met them head on. They were confused by the new development, and they decided to go back to Mulek where they would be safe. Naturally, they turned around and came back and found [Moroni] coming up behind them. It occurred to them with shock that by dashing forth from that city they had left it lightly defended. They had better get back to Mulek before it was too late (verses 27–28). So bent only on reaching home base in safety the exhausted Lamanites with Lehi hot behind them ran smack into Moroni’s army. That was enough; they all surrendered. That was the last straw (verses 28–32). They fled in much confusion. They could not obtain the city of Mulek, and Lehi’s men could overtake them because they were fresh.

Verse 30: “Now Lehi was not desirous to overtake them till they should meet Moroni and his army. . . . And Moroni commanded his men that they should fall upon them until they had given up their weapons of war. And it came to pass that Jacob, being their leader, being also a Zoramite, and having an unconquerable spirit, he led the Lamanites forth to battle with exceeding fury against Moroni. . . . [he] cut his way through to the city of Mulek.” But it was already occupied by Moroni’s men, so he couldn’t get in there. A furious melee followed.

“. . . Moroni was wounded and Jacob was killed. And Lehi pressed upon their rear with such fury with his strong men, that the Lamanites in the rear delivered up their weapons of war.”

Here’s Moroni with his usual magnanimity: “Now Moroni seeing their confusion, he said unto them: If ye will bring forth your weapons of war and deliver them up, behold we will forbear shedding your blood.” So they threw down their weapons, but there were many who would not. They were taken and bound and compelled to march to the land Bountiful, where they were building up a huge stalag. They were getting a lot of prisoners of war, and they need them so they can exchange them for their own people and get the Nephites back.

I didn’t realize the time. We are not getting very far with these laborious campaigns, are we? We’ll get to another subject still.
TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 3, Lecture 70
Alma 52–54
The Prevalence of Warfare

Oh they rode on and they rode on
And they waded through blood up to the knee.
For all the blood that’s shed on earth
Stained the streams of that country.

[Scottish ballad; source unknown]

That’s what you think when you read these chapters of the Book of Mormon that are everlastingly strategy and tactics. What kind of religious book is this that goes on telling us who moved where and what forces go where? Why the purely technical side? Well, these are the games men play, and there’s a purpose for putting them in here. Why these games? Is this to be the nature of our probation, waging battle? Back to Liddell Hart’s statement on why we do it. We mentioned the three reasons before. He thought at first that wars are caused by economics. That has long been held by everybody in modern times. Then he decided the cause is psychological. Then he finally decided it all came down to certain individuals; certain ambitious individuals are the cause of war. This is the clear-cut pattern that emerges all through here, isn’t it? Without those leaders such as Ammoron and Amalickiah, and for that matter without Moroni, you are not going to have these wars. But they go on all the time because of ambitious men. This is an interesting thing. Why should we be told this? Because we are in it deeper than ever before today. We could ask, what is the ultimate form of folly, and why do we do it? Well, Hart is right. In these chapters we are repeatedly reminded that power is the thing they are after and that it is ambitious individuals eager for power. John Adams, the second president of the United States, said, “Power always thinks it has a great soul and vast views beyond the comprehension of the weak, and that it is doing God’s service when it is violating all his laws.” We get that.

The supreme law that we should never violate is in Ether 8:19. You have general orders and then you have special orders. General orders are orders that always apply. You have to know your general orders by heart. But in certain emergencies a person with the right authority can override them with special orders. There are certain things you don’t do. Take this one, for example: “For the Lord worketh not in secret combinations, neither doth he will that man should shed blood, but in all things hath forbidden it from the beginning of man.” There is a sweeping general order. Nephi was told to cut off Laban’s head, and he was extremely reluctant to do so. He rebelled against that. But that can only come from the Source. Only the person who gave the order can rescind it. In this case this is the [general] order “. . . but in all things hath forbidden it from the beginning of man.”

So what is this to us? Well, look where we stand today. I’m going to read you something from a military manual I have been reading, a very interesting manual. This is what we
read here. This is since World War II. “In the last four decades since World War II the United States has participated in more wars, caused more casualties, and lavished more money on war and arms than in its entire history up until then. Between 1945 and 1975 was a period during which some 120 wars were recorded globally [that’s the world we live in]. The United States participated directly in 27 wars and indirectly in 36 other wars. Even now, out of the 40 odd current [1988] wars raging over the Third World, the United States is involved in over one-quarter of them. If one was to judge its involvement on the basis of its arms supply, then involvement is even greater. For instance, out of the 41 countries at war today the United States is the major supplier of arms to 21 and the not-so-major supplier to 18 others [that just about covers them all]. In all from 1972 to 1981, relative years of American innocence, its military assistance to countries engaged in war was $51 billion, or roughly the same as India spent on its defense during the same period. Today, no country is keyed for global war, whether nuclear, conventional, subconventional, or low intensity, as the United States. It has ready at literally a moment’s notice not only nuclear forces but conventional and special forces for projection to any corner of the globe to coordinate and direct its forces for war. It has parcelled out the globe into regional, unified military commands, an arrangement to which no other country has resorted. To sustain global interventions, in addition, the United States maintains a world-wide web of alliances, bases, command control, communications and intelligence facilities, prepositioned forces, and logistics establishment. The array of military facilities, much on the lines of previous global empires, is buttressed by security and assistance programs and proxy forces, which in essence are an economy of forces, a measure to expand U.S. influence and ease armed interventions.” Have an economy of force, and let other people do it.

“At present it has nearly half a million armed personnel abroad in some 333 military installations in some forty countries. In addition, 241 thousand men straddle the globe afloat in U.S. navies ready for war. To reinforce these overseas troops, the United States maintains on a permanent basis in the continental United States a wide spectrum of reserves. The centerpiece of the reserves is the Rapid Development Force (RDF) which gained prominence first in the rapid deployment task force and since 1983 has been the central command, whose regional responsibilities now span 17 countries in Africa and West Asia. It needs to be remembered that although the central command has regional command responsibility, the forces under it and the doctrines that guide them have global dimensions. It is not entirely coincidental that almost a complete range of our RDF forces took part in the Granada war. On these and other forces for global war the U.S. spends every two years almost the same amount it spent on the entire Second World War [every two years today when we are not at war we spend as much as we did in all of World War II; it’s an amazing thing]. In addition to fighting wars which, according to one estimate, added up to over 100 years of American wars since 1945, the United States has used its armed forces to interfere in Third World countries on over 260 occasions through acts of invasion, threats of invasion, blockades, demonstrations of military force, surveillance of sovereign states, and other similar acts of war euphemistically labeled as ‘coercive diplomacy’ or ‘force without war.’"

So it goes on. We are still engaged in this sordid business, you know. The Book of Mormon is a reminder of that. But there’s more to it than that now. What is this to us? As we are told in Matthew 26:52, he who takes up the sword shall perish by the sword. The Book of Mormon teaches us that certainly. But why this form of probation? Must we spend so much time on earth doing this particularly silly and futile thing? It’s very expensive and never gets anywhere really. Because the operation has been turned over to
Satan, naturally, the common enemy. Remember section one [of the Doctrine and Covenants]: “The time is not now but is near at hand when peace shall be taken away from the earth and the devil shall have control of his own dominion.” He works best there, as a matter of fact. He is permitted to try and tempt us with the four things that we see every day around us, the four things that are mentioned in [1 Nephi 22:23]. In 3 Nephi 6:15 they repeat the four things that we shouldn’t seek for but everybody is out for (gain gets power and power gets gain): Gain, power, popularity, and the pleasures of the flesh (the lusts of the world). Of course, that’s what makes up your TV programs—the power, the money, and the popularity which we all seek. Then we want to enjoy gracious living and all the rest that goes with it.

As Brigham Young says, Satan is doing his mission manfully. I will not criticize him. He is carrying out what he should be. He’s supposed to really tempt us, and he is doing it very effectively. He takes the resources and treasures of the earth and converts them into cash for easier handling—gold and silver, which have always been the standards since the earliest times that we have any records of. He buys off armies, navies, popes, priests, presidents, and kings. He buys them up and buys wars for all of us. So he’s going to go on practicing the old thing. We should get wise to it by now. After all these years we are no better at all. We are in the same state of mind, even worse. We have less wisdom. Was there ever such addiction to war as we see on TV today and in the movies? We are compulsive war junkies. The younger generation idealizes the most depraved of beings. The soldier of fortune will kill anybody, and he doesn’t worry about who he’s killing, doesn’t even think about it. These four things I just mentioned lead to the one thing, which is extermination. “To be carnally minded is death.” That’s being carnally minded. It’s sickening that at this late date we should turn to this old, weary nightmare. Will we never snap out of it? Well, the world has never snapped out of it.

There are four things that Joseph Smith deplored. He said you should never be guilty of four things, and they are what make up careers today. There are two a’s and two c’s. The first is to aspire. He said, an aspiring spirit is from the devil. Satan aspired and that was his fall. Don’t aspire. Of course, that’s our competitive spirit, to aspire to be number one, etc. The second is to accuse. Devil means accuser, (Gk. diabolos). He’s called “the accuser of his brethren.” Remember, Adam said, “I do not accuse thee,” speaking of Satan. The Lord be thy judge. I will not bring a railing charge against Satan. He brings charges and accuses; he is always the accuser. There are many stories told about that. The book of Job begins with Satan in heaven challenging the Lord to put Job to the test. He accuses Job of being weak and says he will fall. He accuses, we are told in the Talmud and elsewhere. He doesn’t accuse falsely; he tells the truth about people and their weaknesses. He wants God to test them. He’ll accuse this one and that one. The accuser of his brethren is devilish. Never accuse anyone. So never aspire and never accuse. But if you are going to get ahead and aspire, you start out with an anti-something campaign. Then you get public favor. That’s the way you’ll be able to aspire, by accusing somebody. You can accuse all sorts of people of things.

Then the others: You should never contend. When the Lord comes to the Nephites in the Book of Mormon, the first thing he says to them [3 Nephi 11:28–29] is there shall be no more contention among you about my doctrine as there has been in the past. Contention is not of me but of the devil. We do not contend. As the scripture says, you can say “Yea, yea and nay, nay.” Whosoever is more or less than this is of the devil. I can point and bear my testimony and say, “That is so.” Or I can say, “That is not so.” That’s all I can do. I can’t twist your arm and make you believe it. I may convince you by showing, by
demonstration. All contention is of the devil, he says. So don’t contend; there is no need to contend. That can spoil things quicker than anything. The last one is to coerce. You [shouldn’t] coerce, but that’s what we do. We give orders to everybody and back them up with force. We tell everybody what to do. So we coerce, we contend, we command—we do all these things. This is the atmosphere in which we live. This is the spirit that surrounds us of contention, of ambition, of rivalry, of strife, of accusation. No wonder there’s no security or anything else. Everybody goes out for his thing, and [in doing] it he feels there is something quite devilish about it. Only the Book of Mormon can get us out of this hole. That’s the interesting thing; that’s why we have it. The word power occurs 639 times in the Book of Mormon. Can you imagine that? What an obsession power is, after all. Of course, there is the power of God. The powers are divided equally.

The world has no solution. The Book of Mormon is grim because our condition is grim. Well, all the world’s great literature is grim. That’s the only kind that wins the Nobel Prize. I was wondering what world literature to cite today. In Greek tragedy you always run up against a stone wall and that’s the end. This life is a dead end. In Oedipus Rex he says, “Oh, human race, how I account you equal to exactly nothing.” The chorus always bemoans the human fate, and there is no getting out of it. The first lines of the Iliad are “We’re caught like rats in a trap. There’s nothing we can do about it.” I think Matthew Arnold brings us up to date on the theme with his great “Dover Beach.” The end of it is as follows:

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

That’s our situation, and that was just before World War I. He was right. He was looking over the Straits of Dover and saw the lights of France on the other side. But then he had a heavy, foreboding sense of gloom; you’re not going escape from this sort of thing.

I brought along something. There is one passage I like; it amuses me. It’s from C. P. Snow who wrote his novels about the great scientists of Cambridge in the 1930s when they had just discovered that the atom wasn’t solid. Cambridge, which was Newton’s school, was the center of the great breakthrough in science in the early part of the [twentieth] century. Here you have the great ray of hope, etc. He was writing about that. “The tone of science at Cambridge in 1932 was the tone of Rutherford [who discovered the structure of the atom]—magniloquently boastful, creatively confident, generous, argumentative, and full of hope [he was the great scientist of science fiction]. Science and Rutherford were on top of the world. Worldly success—he loved every minute of it—flattery, titles, the company of the high official world. He was superbly and magnificently vain as well as wise, and he enjoyed his own personality.”

So here is the great lovable scientist of science fiction here. What more could you ask? Then he goes on. “He enjoyed a life of miraculous success, but I am sure that even late in life he felt stabs of sickening insecurity [this is strange, isn’t it?]. Does anyone really
imagine that Bertrand Russell, G. H. Hardy, Rutherford, Blackett, and the rest were bemused by cheerfulness as they faced their own individual fate. In the crowd they were leaders. They were worshipped, but by themselves they believed with the same certainty that they believed in Rutherford’s atom that they were going after this life into annihilation.” That’s the point. When you get to the stone wall, that’s the end. It’s a one-way trip. They were going nowhere, going after this life into annihilation. “Against this they had only to offer the nature of scientific activity [that would keep them entertained] and its complete success on its own terms [the Nobel Prize is great, but]. In itself it was a source of happiness, but it is whistling in the dark when they are alone.”

Everybody has to face that. This is the peak of success. You’ve got the answer. Science has given the answers, and the answers have great finality—there is nothing more. Well, no scientist should be given an answer that is as final as that. That’s as if if the last data were in. Since then it has been a new world. This is the time when the head of the Physics Department at Harvard said to his students, “There’s no point to going on and taking graduate work in physics. The work has all been done.” It was the same thing with Professor Linforth, the foremost Hellenist at the time. I had him for lots of seminars in Berkeley, and he said, “Oh, there is nothing left in ancient history. The work has all been done.” He hadn’t looked at anything. But the thing is that we are caught here. We are trapped unless something can get us out of this situation. To make it worse we spend our time fighting each other. But this is where the Book of Mormon takes off. How can anything good come out of this shambles? In the Book of Mormon we are in a shambles all the time. Just read the newspapers; we are in it today the same way.

Did anything good come out of Nazareth? Remember, “the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not.” The world in which the Lord found himself was a world of intrigue and bitterness. There was great prosperity, etc., but a lot of nasty people walking all over each other—not only the Scribes and the Pharisees, but the elders, judges, and Romans. Everybody was playing tricks on each other. They were making deals, etc. It was a terrible world he was in. What happened? In the year 70 A.D. the whole thing was utterly wiped out, just completely destroyed. The Romans did a thorough job, far more thorough than we ever thought before. They just tore it all down to bits. And during all the time Jerusalem was being destroyed the Jews were busy fighting [among] themselves, just like the Nephites. They were always taking it out on each other.

But the light is the reality. The light shines in the dark. The light was there first. How can you say that? It’s darkness if there is nothing there. But the light shouldn’t be there. If it is there at all, who turned it on? When did they turn it on? If darkness is the fundamental nature of things (the black hole), then the light has no business being there. It doesn’t exist until we think of it. That’s the new anthropism. The world’s wisdom gives only one side to the picture. That’s C. P. Snow’s great scientist. But in no other writing is the other side of the picture presented so clearly, forcefully, and convincingly as the Book of Mormon. It’s just as if it were preparing us. It’s like saying, I’ve got good news and bad news. I’m going to give you the bad news first. I’m going to give it to you hot and heavy. I’ll give you all the bad news. But then I’m going to give you the good news, and you would be surprised. It makes all the bad news look like nothing. You just forget everything once you get to the good news. Let’s read on so we can get to the good news in the Book of Mormon. It’s going to be there sometime.

The Lamanites were trying to made a dash out of Mulek to follow Teancum’s army. Then [Lehi’s] army zeroed into them from Bountiful. Then Moroni’s army was down in the
southwest, and he moved in behind them. They were hopelessly trapped and surrendered. There are some things to comment on in Alma 52:32. It was up to them to decide when to quit. “And Moroni commanded his men that they should fall upon them until they had given up their weapons of war.” As soon as they gave them up, that was it. There was not extermination here. Then notice the good old Zoramites. They were all Nephites to begin with; therefore, they were apostates and were very bitter. Jacob wants to go on fighting. The Lamanites don’t, but he does. He led them “with exceeding fury against Moroni” and cut his way through to the city of Mulek. Then there was a terrific melee. Moroni was wounded and Jacob was killed, and that ended this particular war.

Verse 36: “And Lehi pressed upon their rear with such fury with his strong men, that the Lamanites in the rear delivered up their weapons of war [this is just under the walls of Mulek] . . . Now Moroni seeing their confusion, he said unto them: If ye will bring forth your weapons of war . . . we will forbear shedding your blood.” He always does that. There is no Rambo in Moroni. You notice Teancum doesn’t do that. So they threw down their weapons, but they were many who refused to do it. They weren’t cut down. They were taken and bound and compelled to march to the land Bountiful, where they had to build a huge stalag to hold them. They put the prisoners to work on that, and he apologized for having to do that. Moroni always wanted to play fair. They set guards over the prisoners. Remember, these Lamanites armies were vast compared with theirs. What do you do with them? Well, they set them to burying the dead first at all the scenes of the battle. Then they marched them to Bountiful and put them in a stalag under guard. It always made me nervous to see two MP’s with tommy guns conducting three or four thousand Germans down the road. They didn’t even have automatic weapons then. How could you guard prisoners like this? Well, that’s a serious problem, he tells us here. They finally can’t do it and just let them go.

They went to the city of Mulek. He gave it to Lehi to hold, and he went on. Lehi was a man like Moroni, much beloved by the people. In verse 3 they finished burying the dead, and “they were marched back into the land Bountiful; and Teancum, by the orders of Moroni, caused that they should commence laboring in digging a ditch round about the land, or the city, Bountiful.” They called it the land or the city. They were city states, just exactly as it was in Israel. [Brother Nibley tries to think of the Amarna Letters, but can’t until later.] Early documents from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries B.C. speak of the “land of Jerusalem,” just as the Book of Mormon does. It says the Lord would be born in the “land of Jerusalem.” That has been taken as a great slipup on the part of the Book of Mormon. Jerusalem wasn’t just the city; it was the land around it—just as Athens was all the land of Attica and Sparta was all the land around it. They marched them back, and they commenced digging and making the fortifications. They are standard—the breast works with the timbers on the top encircled [the city]. The Indians in the Mississippi Valley had the same type of structures, and they did it over large areas.

Verse 5: “. . . and in this city they did guard the prisoners of the Lamanites . . . Now Moroni was compelled to cause the Lamanites to labor, because it was easy to guard them while at their labor.” You can watch them that way. But that wasn’t included in the “Geneva Convention,” and he apologized for it. Notice, he had to be compelled. Well, why is it wrong to make prisoners do some work? It’s the type of work they are doing. They cannot be forced to fight their own people. They are participants in the war if they are doing this. But now we know that anything you have them do helps the war effort. Usually prisoners just stay around. They can refuse to do any work at all if it will help against their side. He had three victories here. He got the stronghold of the Lamanites
[Mulek], and he built a stronghold to take care of his prisoners. He solved three problems in one. Then he went on preparing. Especially providing food was an important thing.

Then this is what happens in verse 8. You would think things would be going well, but what spoils it? Their own silliness. “And now it came to pass the armies of the Lamanites, on the west sea, south, while in the absence of Moroni on account of some intrigue amongst the Nephites [Moroni couldn't be there. What he wanted to do then was move to the west and hold them there, but he couldn't], which caused dissensions amongst them, had gained some ground over the Nephites.” That allowed the Lamanites to win some because the Nephites had to start fighting among themselves, having contentions. “And thus because of iniquity amongst themselves, yea, because of dissensions and intrigue among themselves they were placed in the most dangerous circumstances.” That always happens that way. We get the human element here.

Incidentally, you notice how easily people in arms quarrel with each other. That’s the theme of the *Iliad*. The chiefs and the lords are always struggling, always jealous of each other’s mete of honor, etc. That goes all through the *Iliad*, which is a military epic. And all through the others there is much striving because of ambitious people. This accounts for a very important phenomenon in the army. The things they do seem superficial to us. It was Leopold von Anhalt-Dessau who invented the *Manual of Arms* in the middle of the eighteenth century. It’s a perfectly artificial. It has no useful function whatsoever, but it is very necessary to have them do these drills, cooperate on these things, and do these things together here. We have to have these constant reminders of rank. It’s absolutely necessary to have almost reverence for rank. Otherwise, how soon jealousy would break out in open defiance, and you can’t have that. We have to salute on all occasions. The Germans don’t salute off duty in their army, the Russians don’t, and the British don’t. If a fellow is an old college friend in the army, there’s nothing to that—it’s great. But in our army you salute off duty. We are very strict there because we need it more.

About the third day in Normandy we were having a very bad time. Finally, somebody got through from the Navy. It was Tom Hungerford who had been a student of mine at Claremont. We immediately embraced. In fact, he had been a student in a one-man class. It was in this little farm house we were trying to hold on to by the skin of our teeth. He brought in some artillery from the sea because we couldn’t get any. They [the weapons] were very accurate and very valuable. So here came Tom Hungerford who was our connection with the Navy. But they were quite upset when I talked to Tom Hungerford as an equal. They didn’t like that at all. We don’t talk to officers that way. He had got to be quite a high officer in the Navy.

This reminds me of another story which is too good to miss. A very good friend of mine was George Allen. He’s a Pennsylvania Quaker, and his family owns the oldest bookstore perhaps in America on Walnut Street in Philadelphia. He had an identical twin brother, and they joined the Army together. They did everything together. You know when you are assigned certain things. They came to a certain point and one brother was assigned to a certain camp and the other one to another, just like that. That’s the way it happens. At the end of the war my friend George Allen, who was very active and got bronze stars, was a corporal and his brother was a colonel. They were identical twins, and one wasn’t any smarter than the other. But after three or four years one was a colonel and the other was a corporal. Well, that’s the way things go. That’s the way the cookie crumbles. What can you do about it? But these artificial things have to be done. You have to set up an artificial situation. This is necessary to keep people in line, the salute and all that. Otherwise, armies
would quickly fall to pieces in personal factions because they would start intriguing. There is so much bitterness, etc. That’s why once you got in the LST to go back to England again, to have a round of ammunition on your person was a court martial offence. The officers were scared to death of anybody who had ammunition. There was a lot of fragging that went on in Vietnam, and there was quite a bit in the European theater that we don’t talk about.

It was because of iniquity among themselves [the Nephites] that they were in the most dangerous circumstances. They [armies] have to preserve this discipline against great odds, so they have these artificial things. That drill did a great deal of good, although it’s very artificial. Why do you walk this way and turn that way? It’s the Manual of Arms, etc. Leopold von Anhalt-Dessau died of an apoplectic fit when he learned that his twelfth or thirteenth child was learning to read. That was the kind of man old Leopold was. “Old powder face” they called him.

Here’s a peaceful story about the people of Ammon. Notice that they were Lamanites, just as the Zoramites were Nephites. They really switch characters with verse 10 here. “... who, in the beginning, were Lamanites; but by Ammon and his brethren, or rather by the power and word of God, they had been converted unto the Lord.” Notice how the Book of Mormon uses that doublespeak from time to time. He catches himself and says it was really by the power of the word of God. It wasn’t Ammon. They always specify this way. They sort of demur here. It tells a story at two levels. We are always reminded in the Book of Mormon that the Lord was behind all these things. It wasn’t Ammon that converted them. That’s not so. We talked about the Greek chorus before. Well, a Greek chorus comments on the play and tells us what is really going on. The superficial play is before your eyes, but what is really going on is something deeper than that. The positivist says, “We’ve seen everything there is.” When Hamlet asks whether Gertrude sees his father or not, she says, “Nothing at all; yet all there is I see.” Well now, is that true? She is speaking truly when she says she doesn’t see anything, but is she right when she says, “I see everything there is”? That’s what we say all the time. We say, “I don’t see anything at all.” That’s the positivist position—if I don’t see it, it doesn’t exist. “Nothing at all; yet all there is I see.”

Especially the Egyptians view the momentary event as just a shadow of something. Alain de Lille’s famous poem says everything we see is just a reflection in a mirror. It’s not the real thing. There must be whole generations of causes behind it, something building up behind. This is just a superficial reflection for the moment. It’s fleeting and passes. Every creature in this world is like a book and a picture, as if we were looking in a mirror. So we have these things. The greatest play I think I’ve ever read is Oedipus at Colonus by Sophocles. I just looked at it, and I didn’t realize how great it was. It just bowled me over completely. He makes it so perfectly clear that all the play, everything you see, is just a shadow theater. The oldest of theaters is the shadow theater in the Far East, etc. The old shadow theater was the Garden of Eden theater. That was the theme of the shadow theater. In Arab countries an old man travels around with a show box, a monkey, and his donkey. He has a shadow theater that he puts up and people all watch. It’s the Adam and Eve story. I have a rather interesting book I picked up in Damascus; you can’t get another copy of that one.

So the momentary event is merely a type. The unique events in history are lost forever. The only reason we have any history is that things happen over and over again. We talk about the recurrent events in the Book of Mormon. There are recurrent events all the
time. It’s these recurrent, typical events that can mean something to us and we can rely on. If it has happened before it will happen again—that’s the way we are. So there’s this by-comment as if you had a commentator there, somebody special to point out that this isn’t the real thing and explain how it is. He is the hry tp, as the Egyptians would call him, the commentating priest, the priest that explains what is going on. In the temple he is the paralemptor, the person who stands at your elbow and explains to you the ordinances and gives you the words you are supposed to speak. We have paralemptors in the temple too.

Verse 11: “. . . for they had taken an oath that they never would shed blood more.” Remember, the Lord said he had forbidden it in all things. But when they saw the danger and saw that their benefactors were in such terrible trouble and they could help, they were about to pitch in and help. When they saw the afflictions that the Nephites bore for them, they were moved with compassion and were desirous to take up arms in defence. But they were stopped cold. Both Helaman and Moroni said nothing doing; we are not going to do that. “. . . they were overpowered by the persuasions of Helaman and his brethren.” Now, Helaman needed their help the worst way, but he said it is better that we lose than that you break your oath. “. . . and his brethren for they were about to break the oath which they had made. And Helaman feared lest by so doing they should lose their souls.” That was more important. Do we have such integrity today? The point is you must not cheat, even if it means you’ll lose. We can’t conceive of that—do anything to win. There’s that wonderful story in the Clementine Recognitions. We won’t stop for that though. (I’m remembering and forgetting so fast today. Everything comes and everything goes.)

So they were about to break the oath, and then he said it was better [to lose] than losing their souls. That sounds positively absurd to us. Why would they lose that chance for help? An interesting theme would be sportsmanship in the Book of Mormon. Moroni plays a sporting game all the time, and the enemy doesn’t. Remember Zerahemnah when he was talking to Moroni and lunged at him with his sword. He got the top of his head cut off as a result of that. Jacob, who was leading them [the Lamanites] after all the rest had surrendered, decided to charge. Laman and Lemuel bullied poor Nephi, tied him up, and beat him up. There are some very poor sports in the Book of Mormon to say the least. Then there’s Amalickiah and his long list of dirty tricks. He never played fair at all. That’s the way he won. But there are people in the Book of Mormon who are very sporting and always play fair. Moroni is one of them—that’s his greatness, and Nephi the same way. The good guys play fair and the bad guys don’t in the Book of Mormon. But there’s a very sharp distinction made. This is a typical example here, this idea of sportsmanship moving them to compassion. Back in Alma 52:37 I noticed an example when Lehi pressed upon the Lamanites with such fury from the rear. “Now Moroni seeing their confusion, he said unto them: If ye will bring forth your weapons of war and deliver them up, behold we will forbear shedding your blood.” Well, in the confusion was the time to finish them off and never have to bother with them again, but he didn’t. And it’s the same way in Alma 53:5 where it says, “And this city became an exceeding stronghold ever after; and in this city they did guard the prisoners of the Lamanites.” He has to apologize. He guards them and makes them labor at this unpleasant labor because he is compelled to. He has no choice there.

These Ammonites had many sons who were just babies at the time, and they hadn’t entered into the oath. Of course, they were free to do what they wanted. When their parents were told not to do it by Helaman, they assembled themselves together. Helaman was the one who did the persuading. In his integrity he was the one who persuaded their
parents and saved their oath. Naturally, the boys would choose him to be their leader. Here’s the man we can depend on; he’s the one that practically appointed us to this calling [they may have said]. They called themselves Nephi's. They were Lamanites, but they were not ashamed to call themselves Nephi's. Notice how with the Zoramites, Nephi's become Lamanites, and the Ammonites become Nephi's. We are not talking about pure blood. I had a very important talk yesterday with a man who is president of a mission in Mexico. That’s a big problem down there, this race business because of this trouble that Brother [George] Lee raised.

Verse 16: “. . . they called themselves Nephi's. And they entered into a covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephi’s.” There were two thousand of them who took an oath to protect the Nephi’s from bondage. This is another interesting thing. All day long there was a constant bringing in and interrogating of prisoners [during World War II]. You get them fresh when they’re all shaken up and have just surrendered, and they will tell you anything. It’s an interesting thing that the kids who came from the villages and believed what they were told wouldn’t tell anything. But the big tough SS men, who had taken their solemn oath to the Fuhrer, would spill their guts. They were eager. The tough ones always cracked first. It wasn’t the ones you would expect to. The kids were still idealistic; they really believed it. So I wouldn’t question them at all. I wouldn’t have anything to do with it. That’s why I was fired. I wouldn’t press people like that.

So there were two thousand of them, and they are going to go through with it now. Believe me, they are! They chose that Helaman should be their leader. He was the one who told their parents they shouldn’t lose their souls. [They thought,] Now there’s a man we can follow. There’s a man we can stick to. He is going to be honest all the way. A study in integrity is the Ammonites. Of course, the boys to him were true in all things because they saw how true and faithful he was. Verse 20: “. . . they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted. Yea, they were men of truth and soberness.” The opposite of that is trickery and excess. They weren’t men of trickery and excess, but of truth and soberness. That’s the one quality you want, of course. If you have people you can count on, then you feel good. Brigham Young used to say, with eight men I feel far better than if you put an army behind me and I couldn’t trust them. This happens again and again.

So Helaman marched at the head of them. They wanted him and they got him. Whose advantage was this? Ammoron was the brother of Amalickiah and just as bitter as Amalickiah. He was going to avenge him. Ammoron sent a letter to exchange prisoners. Here is the temperament of Moroni, a very good commentary on Moroni. He is short tempered, and he is the most tactless person you can imagine. He’s perfectly honest. That must be one of the things that makes him so tactless. This shows you that Clausewitz is right when he says a military man should not make decisions of government. Moroni is one dimensional; he goes straight ahead. Moroni desired provisions and he desired to strengthen his people. He wanted to exchange. The exchange would be to the Lamanites’ advantage. All the Lamanite prisoners were soldiers. But because of the Lamanite sweep through the country, they had conquered all the women and children too. They had to feed them, and they didn’t like that at all. They wanted to get rid of them. The prisoner exchange would be to their advantage. They would get rid of these Nephite women and children who weren’t doing them any good. For every family they sent back, they would get a fighting man back. So an exchange would favor them. So he [Moroni] wrote this letter to him. This isn’t his most tactless letter. He is going to beat this in other letters.
Alma 54:5: “Behold, Ammoron, I have written unto you somewhat concerning this war which ye have waged against my people [notice that it’s personal], or rather which thy brother hath waged against them.” There is always this refrain. He invites them to repent and withdraw their armies. He is carried away already. He preaches. “Behold, I would tell you somewhat concerning the justice of God . . . ” I would tell you that, but you won’t listen. Well, he goes ahead and tells him anyway. He has to unburden his soul. “. . . repent and withdraw your armies . . . Yea, I would tell you these things if ye were capable of hearkening unto them [can you suggest another approach than this?]; yea, I would tell you concerning that awful hell that awaits to receive such murderers as thou and thy brother have been [he has to insult his brother too], except ye repent and withdraw your murderous purposes, and return with your armies to your own lands.”

This is Moroni’s weakness; he must go all the way. He will not compromise his position. He is not a diplomat. He is like Brutus—a plain, blunt soldier. So he says things like this, and this happens all the time. He says, “But as ye have once rejected these things . . . I may expect you will do it again.” (Remember, Zerahemnah said cynically to [Moroni], you know if I swear an oath I’ll break it. They agreed on that too.) [Moroni said,] Except you withdraw he threatens you with utter destruction. “But behold, it supposeth me that I talk to you concerning these things in vain; or it supposeth me that thou art a child of hell.” He is using the soft sell here, isn’t he? Moroni cannot restrain himself, so he tactfully says, “Thou art a child of hell.” Therefore, I will close my epistle telling you, to hell with you.

Do you think he is going to get a deal on these terms? “. . . I will not exchange prisoners, save it be on conditions that ye will deliver up a man and his wife and his children, for one prisoner.” If you don’t do this, I will arm my children. He tells him, you can run but you can’t hide. “. . . it shall be blood for blood, yea, life for life; and I will give you battle even until you are destroyed from off the face of the earth. Behold, I am in my anger . . . ” He is—he is ranting here. He admits to a terrible temper here. George Washington had a terrible temper too. You think of Patton here too the same way. Unrestrained, he just let himself go. There was no tact to him. [Moroni said] “But behold, if ye seek to destroy us more we will seek to destroy you . . . Now I close my epistle. I am Moroni; I am a leader of the people of the Nephites.” That’s the way you terminate here.

You say, this is crazy. Why do we do this? No, this is perfectly routine. He is just following accepted procedure for generals. This is the stichomythia or stichomachia. You can call it either one. In epic literature, whether it’s Homer or whether it’s the Aeneid, the heroes or leaders of the hosts always before the battle have to stand up and at least spiel off a whole book, sometimes two books, of imprecations against the enemy—tell him how often he has done wrong, how evil he is, and the terrible things you are going to do with him. Then he comes and replies. This is the stichomythia. Before the battle you exchange insults to get yourself worked up so you won’t be just cold blooded murderers. When you are good and hot and fired up, then you are willing to slaughter anything. But this is routine. The stichomythia is represented in every Greek drama where there is a major confrontation between the kings. Seven against Thebes is a typical example. There’s the army of Thebes, the army of Eteocles, and the army of his brother. The two are fighting each other to the death, and they kill each other—the same sort of thing we are going to get in the Book of Mormon. Both armies destroy each other.

A stichos is a verse. It’s just a short speech. But that’s immediately followed by a short speech from the other side. You say something, and then he says something. Where you
get that today is if you happen to revel in world-style wrestling, or whatever they call it. They spend most of time swearing at each other and saying what I’m going to do to you when we meet next week. They tell you what a coward you are, what a slump and what a dolt. I’m going to tear you limb from limb and you won’t have that championship belt when I get through with you. Then the other guy talks back. In these artificial voices they scream and rant at each other. It’s high comedy, you know. That’s what they do. That’s stichomythia. Or stichomachia is when you fight at it. Stichos is a verse, and mythia is you recite it to each other.

That’s what this is. He has to do this because then Ammoron writes him back a letter that’s just as insulting. He says just the same things, is just as mean about it, and threatens to do the same things to him that he has threatened to do to [Ammoron]. So we are in the human comedy over our ears here in the Book of Mormon.
What does the word paradox come from? What does it mean? We use the word a lot. It has a double meaning. Para means "by the side, off side, off course, on the side.” It’s like paramilitary or paramedics. They are not all the way—they are para. And *doxa* is a Greek word that means appearance. So a paradox is a thing that is not as it appears. You would expect it to be different. *Doxa* is connected with dogma the same way. *Doxa* is appearance or expectation. So it’s not exactly what you think it would be.

There’s something wrong here. How does the smartest man of all the Nephites write the silliest letter of all the Nephites, an idiotic letter? He is bound to defeat his purpose in writing it. That is a paradox, but it can be explained, namely by the letter that Ammoron writes back to him. He writes back the same sort of thing. They both want to deal. It’s very much in the interest of each one to exchange prisoners. Moroni needs them badly, and Ammoron is tired of feeding a lot of Nephite women and children which they conquered in the cities. That’s not getting them anywhere, so they both want to exchange. But the deal falls through completely when Ammoron replies in the same terms. When he saw the epistle he was angry too. Remember, Moroni said, “I am in my anger.” So they engage in this *stichomythia*. We were talking about that last time.

This gives the case of the Lamanites. They have a case too supposedly. Alma 54:16: “... I am the brother of Amalickiah whom ye have murdered. Behold, I will avenge his blood upon you, yea, and I will come upon you with my armies for I fear not your threatenings.” Well, that’s exactly what Moroni had said to him—we’re not afraid of your threatenings. I’ll come upon you with my armies, and you will become extinct. “For behold, your fathers did wrong their brethren, insomuch that they did rob them of their right to the government when it rightly belonged unto them.” Laman and Lemuel were robbed [according to Ammoron] because they were the older brothers. Then he makes a reasonable suggestion, just exactly as Moroni does. If you’ll do what I want you to, then we can settle this very nicely. “... if ye will lay down your arms, and subject yourselves to be governed by those to whom the government doth rightly belong, then will I cause that my people shall lay down their weapons and shall be at war no more.” That’s a nice way to end the war—just give us that. Well, that’s exactly the proposition that Mormon put forth. “Behold, ye have breathed out many threatenings against me [and he did] and my people; but behold we fear not your threatenings.”

This is just routine; this is the sort of thing you would expect. I will grant the exchange of prisoners gladly, but if you won’t agree to our terms “we will wage a war which shall be eternal ...” That’s the policy of the Moslems, to wage an eternal war until all the world has submitted. Islam means submission. Then it’s *Dâr al-Harb*. They are in a state of rebellion and must be subdued, so the war never stops. That’s the Roman doctrine of *ager hosticus* and *ager pacatus*. The empire of peace is the *Pax Romana*. Everybody [must]
settle down; the world has to be that way. They can’t trust anybody else. It’s dangerous to have people out there who are not taking orders from you. That’s what imperialism is. Impar is the unequal one, the one who dominates the whole thing. When people are par, they are divided into equal sides, but the imperator is the one who is impar. That’s Max Radin’s theory, at any rate.

Verse 21: “And . . . God whom ye say we have rejected, behold, we know not such a being . . . And if it so be that there is a devil and a hell, behold will he not send you there to dwell with my brother whom ye have murdered, whom ye have hinted that he hath gone to such a place? But behold these things matter not. I am Ammoran, and a descendant of Zoram, whom your fathers pressed and brought out of Jerusalem.” Now he gets heated up. Remember, toward the end of his letter Moroni said, “I am in my anger.” He says here, “And behold now, I am a bold Lamanite; behold, this war hath been waged to avenge their wrongs, and to maintain and to obtain their rights to the government.” So the Lamanites really thought they had a case. You always do in a war. He presents his case here and ends up saying they’re angry. We say it’s a paradox that they should write such stuff, but this is really a formality.

We haven’t talked about the language of the Book of Mormon, but it is formulaic. You notice it follows in formula. We used to make fun of the many times “it came to pass” is repeated. Well, in Egyptian you have to begin a sentence like that. There are some writings, like the story of the two brothers or the story of the foredoomed prince, in which every sentence begins with the formula “it came to pass” or “it came to pass after many days.” Every sentence begins that way, and it was required. In classical Arabic you can’t begin a sentence cold and just say, “He went to town.” You have to say, “Behold, he went to town,” or “verily, he went to town,” or begin with and. You have to begin with something to soften people up. In Arabic, inna, behold is the most common word. In Hebrew it is hinneh, “it came to pass.” You must put it in at the beginning of a sentence if you are going to begin with a noun. You can’t say, “The man was rich.” You have to say, “Behold, the man was rich,” or “the man, he was the one who was rich.” They have these formalities which you must follow. The whole ancient world, medieval world, and modern world are bound up in these, not just customs, but strict rules—rigid forms and formalities.

We thought we had broken away from that, didn’t we? With the Industrial Revolution, Darwin, and modern science we weren’t bound by old forms, strict rules, strange dress, and customs that required us to do things in certain stiff and predictable ways which bound ancient society. This was John Dewey’s doctrine, that we had broken away from all of that. We were free from all that—the superstitions, the prejudices, and the narrow prescriptions of past societies. Of course, he couldn’t have been more wrong, because we have adopted even more of them now. Remember White’s book on The Organization Man, the successful man in business? You have to dress for success, wear the right tie, belong to the right family, go to the right church. In many corporations you have to marry the right people. They won’t let you succeed unless you do that. You follow a formula. You are in a uniform all the time, and you have to think the same way. You have to use the same jargon that’s used by the others, the same slang that is current at the time. It’s very rigid and very demanding. We thought we had escaped from that, but we’ve become more formalistic than ever. The most formal of all has to be the military. We see why that’s so.

Incidentally, this is Moroni writing to Ammoron. Why are there so many words in the
Book of Mormon with mor in them? Well, that’s a favorite Egyptian word, mor, [along with] Amon. The most recently found really valuable papyrus is the story of an Egyptian general by the name of Morira, and he did some wonderful things. And it has some supernatural elements in it too. This [the use of mor] is very common. The Egyptians used it a lot because it means beloved, good, everything nice and desirable. Moriamon means “beloved of Amon.” That’s the Vandier Papyrus, published in 1985. It’s a very interesting story about this general who lived back in very early times. So this military behavior is the most rigidly formalized of all. In the Book of Mormon everything is so formal, but we are just as formal. For one thing it’s a great saving of effort, isn’t it? It’s a great advantage to have the grooves already marked and stay in the grooves. But there is a danger to that. The military is a good example there again. We have it here, especially in the case of the two thousand young men. Military behavior is the most rigid, the most formalized, and the most traditional. It must be, and it is here. Remember, we have had this in the Book of Mormon before. When Moroni is besieging a city, he invites the people to come out. They are comfortably ensconced inside the fortified city. He invites them to come out and fight in the open field. Well, they would be idiots to do so. But by the rules of war he is required to do that, so he does it. Sometimes they do.

Then again, they would make their agreements on the field. They would agree, as in the battle of Cumorah, for example. The chiefs of the other side agree on the time and the place of the battle. Well, why aren’t you a smart general and catch the other fellow off guard when he is not expecting you? That’s the best thing to do, a surprise. But that’s playing naughty—you don’t do that. [During World War II] the prisoners objected very, very strenuously because we were the first people to wear these camouflage suits. We scattered out all over the place. There’s no unity when you scatter all over the place in landing. Shooting from behind trees and things like that, we didn’t have formal trenches and weren’t formally organized. They said, “That isn’t fair; you can’t do that.” They called us devils and said, “This is wicked and immoral. You are not bound by the Geneva Convention.” It was very dangerous to get picked up, because they didn’t like that. They said, “You are breaking the rules.” As we said before, if you are going to start fighting forget about rules. The only thing to do is to win in that case.

But these unbreakable rules, traditions, and iron discipline have to be, because nothing is more dangerous and unpredictable than an armed band. You give them a lot of weapons and everyone has the curse of Nimrod on him. It’s up to him to decide who shall live and who shall die. Only God can decide that. But if you give me a gun, I can decide who will live and who will die. What power that gives me! Nimrod had that power, but God gives it to no man. We’ve seen that before. It’s forbidden to shed blood. So this iron discipline is necessary. Soldiers are necessarily hot headed; that’s what they get paid for. Remember Shakespeare’s soldier? He’s a mercenary. In Shakespeare’s day everybody was a mercenary.

As You Like It, Act II, Scene 7

[They’re] impetuous and fierce. Of course, there’s a lot written about the swaggering, braggadocio soldier. The earliest Roman comedy we have is Miles Gloriosus of Plautus. He’s a Roman soldier, but he swaggers around. He’s a dangerous person because he has to show off all the time. Really he’s quite a coward, just like Falstaff. Falstaff is the immortal
soldier of fortune who goes around on either side. Prince Eugene, the greatest general of the eighteenth century, fought on either side. It made no difference to him. In this case you have to have this absolutely iron, rigid discipline. You didn’t need it with the two thousand sons. That’s an interesting thing, these agreements on the field and this formality.

Not only are armies unpredictable, but remember what Clausewitz said. “Of all human activities, none is so completely under the control of pure chance as war.” Nobody can decide in the end. That being the case, what are we to do about this uncertainty? One rule is: Whoever goes to war doesn’t know what he is doing.” That’s literally true. If you go to war you don’t know what you are doing, because war more than anything else is under the domain of chance. You never can tell how it is going to turn out. Who ever figured out right how it was going to turn out? They thought the Civil War would end at Bull Run. They thought it would end at Charleston, etc. It went on for nearly five years. There were terrible things in the Civil War, and they were always predicting when it would end. So it is here. Most armies are very hard to regulate, so they break down. As soon as looting begins, no army has any control at all. Pilet Ville in Paris is a good example; we won’t go into that. But you can’t keep soldiers from looting, and they don’t pretend to. They will always pick up something. In the British army it’s a scream; they have no discipline. In the field you can wear anything you want and do anything you want. After all, a soldier is free. He’s as much armed as the general is. He can do his own damage. Not only the barbarian hordes.

When the Roman Empire broke up, all of Gaul suddenly was taken over by the Gaudi. These were free raiding bands that would go around picking things up. Later on in the terrible fourteenth century, which Froissart tells us all about, [there were] the free companies. Everywhere free companies were organizing themselves about some leader. Then they would go through the country looting, pillaging, and taking what they wanted. Sometimes he [the leader] would settle down, take a castle, and set himself up as the lord there. Many a great house was started that way, just by freebooters. It was the condottieri in Italy. It was the same thing all through the Renaissance and Shakespeare’s time. They are traditions that go back to the old barbarian tribal raids, raiding each other. But it is all very unpredictable, so you have to have this iron discipline.

The worst of all was the Roman army. To get the great Roman Empire you had to have a real iron discipline, and they did. It was their great army that did everything. But more than half the emperors were deposed by the soldiers and put in by the soldiers. The man who promised them the most pay got elected emperor, and they proceeded to wipe out his predecessor. This happened not once, but more than thirty times. It began right at the beginning [of the empire]. The Praetorian guard was the most trained of all and the emperor’s personal guard. After murdering [Caligula—Elagabalus was murdered later], they rampaged through the palace, found Claudius hiding in a closet, and made him emperor. He didn’t want to be emperor. Then you go down the line. In an intrigue with Livia, they got Nero out of the way. He wasn’t doing them any good. Then came three men in a row: Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. Each one was richer than the other, and each one promised the army higher pay than the other. Galba was rich and promised them high pay, so they put him in. But when Otho promised them more, they put him in. Vitellius was extremely fat and extremely rich and he promised them a lot. They murdered his predecessor and put him in. Then this [happened again] when Decius got rid of Philip the Arab and when Philip himself got rid of Gordian III. The army got rid of Elagabalus, and [earlier] they got rid of Antoninus Pius who was a very good emperor. [It was] always for
this same reason. There’s a long list of them. They got rid of some obnoxious ones too, such as Commodus and Caracalla. It’s a dangerous thing.

Incidentally, I just remembered something I wrote down this morning. The typical exchange of insults before the battle is a common literary device that is required in epic literature. But it was really done. In the Zend Avesta it’s this case. In the Aban Yasht, Acht the sorcerer comes with a huge army. He’s going to besiege the city of the wise men. He says, “I’ll lay it flat unless you can answer thirty-three riddles.” So he puts the riddles to them. The wise men answer the thirty-three riddles, and then they give him three riddles to answer. He can’t answer them, so he is flattened by a situation that is too much to handle. So he loses out. This is the common thing, and the classic case of this is Queen Bilqis, the queen of Sheba, and King Solomon. There’s a vast corpus of legends on this, and the best source of this is our good old pal Tha’labi whom we quoted before. He tells how when the queen of Sheba, the queen of the South, marched against Solomon with her huge army, Solomon said, “Well here, we are going to make a settlement.” So they exchanged riddles. First of all he sent his jinns. He said, “Here comes the queen of Sheba. I’m going to convert her to Islam. So you’d better go under the ground to her palace and steal her throne [she was on the march in her camp] and bring it here. Steal all the things you can. Rob her blind before she becomes a Moslem, because after she becomes a Moslem she will be sacred and I can’t touch her stuff.”

We have the same thing. We believe the Ten Commandments apply only to the good guys, the people we like. They don’t apply to the people we don’t like. Thou shalt not murder and thou shalt not lie. Well, if you don’t like the person that’s different [laughter]. That’s what King Solomon did; he wanted to plunder Sheba. When she came up she had some riddles for him, and he had some riddles for her. They exchanged riddles and she won. She made a monkey of him. That’s the Shulamite in the Old Testament. This is the tradition. We have the story of [Cyrus] and Tomyris. Cyrus was the great king, the conqueror of the world. There was one nation he hadn’t conquered; that was the Masageti far in the north under Queen Tomyris. So he went up there. She asked him not to do it. She said, “It will be foolish; you’ll destroy yourself if you do this. God doesn’t mean that one man shall rule all the earth.” She invited him to a banquet. He had tricked and killed her son in battle. At the banquet they exchanged riddles. She won and cut off his head. She put his head in a bag full of blood, shook it around, and said, “You wanted to drink blood; now have all the blood you want.” That’s the story of Queen Tomyris. But the idea is that she was the riddling queen. I have a long article on this with at least a dozen queens by the name of Tomyris that do the very same thing. So this is a formal sort of thing—the exchange of riddles before a battle.

Then there’s the story of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. You go to the underworld and have to answer certain riddles. In other words they put the riddle in the place of the battle. The basic idea of this stichomythia is to absolve the ones for the crime and plunder they are about to commit. With this deadly rivalry, you work yourself up into a lather. You justify what you are about to do. You exaggerate the evil intent of your enemy and the necessity of your destroying him. “Oh, destroy them or they will destroy you.” This is what Ammon talked about when he went out to preach to the Lamanites. [Some of the Nephites] said, well, you’re crazy—the only way to deal with those people is to destroy them or they will destroy you. But Ammon wouldn’t have any of that. This is the idea. You have to do this to work yourself up.
On the other hand, maybe you can avoid it. You have your misgivings. It’s a very expensive thing. Since war is all chance you may lose. So why not settle it a different way? It’s all a war of wits anyway. The smartest chieftain usually wins the battle, so why not play the game of chess. That’s why chess was invented on the steppes of Asia by the constantly raiding tribes. Central Asia is a land that has no natural boundaries, so everybody is always raiding everybody else and trying to determine who is infringing on who else’s tribal boundaries. This is especially so in Arabia, as we see in that great work, the epic of the Bani Hilal. It’s very much like the Book of Mormon in these war scenes. There were no boundaries, so they were always raiding each other. Well, that’s very expensive, because when you win you’re supposed to exterminate the other side. They did that. Genghis Khan started out doing that, but he found that was very wasteful. Why not have the other side just submit to him and add to his army? That’s what happened. So he rolled up a tremendous force and was able to conquer everything. He was the greatest conqueror of them all because of that. So these people said, “Well, let’s play a game of chess instead, and the winner take all.” The winner does. The king is checkmate. Shah mat means he is dead. Mat in all Semitic languages means dead. The Shah mat means the chief is dead, so you take the army. You pick up everything. You pick up the pieces; you don’t wipe them off the board. You want to keep as many on the board as you can. You want to spare as much as you can because, as the Book of Mormon shows us and as Liddell Hart tells us, wars in the end go back to personal conflicts. Remember when Amalickiah was dead in his tent, the people woke up New Year’s Day, and the war was over as far as they were concerned. Moroni let them go home. He doesn’t bind people down or exploit them because it’s a purely defensive war he is fighting. There is such a thing.

Every soldier is bound to ask questions, and this is another thing. The main thing is that they should not ask questions. You know the story of the [six] hundred in the Crimean War, “Theirs not to reason why. Theirs but to do and die.” But there comes a point when you have to reason and ask yourself the question, “Is defending his property worth my life?” [As one hired soldier said], “I’ll accept the fourteen pennies, but I’m not going to risk my life anymore today.” That is Moroni’s challenge to Pahoran. After all, he says to them, is this going to go on? Can you sit on your thrones in thoughtless stupor surrounded by thousands who are not doing anything at all but living it up? [paraphrased]. This was the picture at Zarahemla. While we out here are suffering you are not even supplying us with food. You are not giving us anything [in this letter we are soon to read here]. Well, that’s the idea. The soldier in the end kicks over the traces. He has no right to write this sort of thing to the heads of government. Moroni had been given great powers, but he challenges Pahoran on this very idea. As Clausewitz said, a common soldier is expected to make the self-sacrifice. He doesn’t expect any promotion or anything like that. In the British army a common soldier can never be mentioned in dispatches. You have to be an officer to be mentioned. You might save the day or win the war, but you’ll never be mentioned in the newspapers or dispatches unless you are a member of the right family. It’s all families. I remember Sir Miles Dempsey coming out and giving us a lecture on that.

A good example of that was at Eindhoven. Phillips Radio used to be the biggest radio [company] in the world. It began at Eindhoven in Holland. Well, that’s where we landed from the air. Near Eindhoven was this big house, an estate with a long brick wall around it. It was a huge estate that belonged to Phillips. Also, Kipnis, who was head of our three-man team, was related to the great [operatic] bass, Alexander Kipnis. He could get anything. Boy, what a wheeler dealer from Chicago. Right away quick we got Phillips’
own private car. It was the “Red Devil.” The Dutch underground had hidden it in a haystack. So we got it out. It was brilliant red and had real onyx trimmings and a front-wheel drive, which was fabulous in those days. Everything was custom made on it. It was the fastest thing in Europe. We dashed all over the country in it. It would have made a marvelous target. They had painted a huge white star on the hood so we wouldn’t be bombarded from the air. Then we went at it, and some amazing things happened. Well, the general got jealous of it, and he took it over. That thing could outrun anything. As I said, it would have made a marvelous target. I was very glad to get rid of it.

Anyway there was this house. The first thing you would see when you came up to the gates of the estate was a big sign saying, “Off limits to all German military personnel.” Of course, it was in German. The Germans occupied there. So nobody touched it. The fighting went all around it, but nobody went inside there. When we and the British Second Army came in, they put a big sign up, “Off limits to all British military personnel.” We couldn’t go in either. So this man lived it up inside while the war went on around him. And he got rich selling to both sides. It made no difference. The English were as good a market as the Germans to him during the war. So he sat in the middle getting rich on both sides while these kids slaughtered each other. I say “kids,” because many we came against were fifteen and sixteen years old. For this particular area the Germans had scraped the bottom of the barrel. They were just little kids; it was shocking. The average age in the paratroops was eighteen at that time. Twenty was the limit. You couldn’t be more than 5’ 8” either because they said tall people broke their bones easier. In those days they had different rules. But there we were slaughtering each other. There was some terrible fighting all around there, and the guy could sit home having tea with either an American general or a German general. It made no difference. This is the way it is, so the common soldier begins to ask, “Now, wait a minute. What am I doing this for?” That’s dangerous. You mustn’t ask that, of course. But we have this situation in the Book of Mormon right now.

In Alma 55:1: “... when Moroni had received this epistle he was more angry, because he knew that Ammoron had a perfect knowledge of his fraud.” After all, what would you expect? Notice, it was a personal thing. He was mad at Ammoron; he wasn’t mad at anybody else. He knew that Ammoron knew this was just P.R. as far as he was concerned. He said, “I will not exchange prisoners...” The deal falls through, of course. This is the point. It would have been to the advantage of both of them, but it was a personal huff on both sides. This happens quite often. “I will seek death among them until they shall sue for peace.” That’s the way he is feeling. Ammoron wouldn’t sue for peace either. Each one was trying to be more stubborn than the other. “We’ll show him.” So everything fails when you lose your temper. But, as I said, this was required by custom to go through this idiotic routine. But our routines are just as idiotic. We do the same sort of thing. [They were looking for a descendant of Laman and found] “one of the servants of the king who was murdered by Amalickiah.” Remember when Amalickiah wanted to marry the queen in the manner of Richard III? One of those servants was in [Moroni’s] employ. He knew what was going on, and he came over and told the Nephites. The Nephites were guarded in the city of Gid. That’s where they were kept prisoner. [Moroni] wanted these prisoners back. How are they going to get them back? Well, use the old wine trick. [The descendant of Laman and his men] said, we have escaped from the Nephites, and we have taken their wine. Don’t worry, they are not going to refuse that wine. Guard service is the most boring thing in the world. Nothing must happen if you do your duty. They can’t escape, and everything is quiet. So you are just bored, and it goes on day after day after day. The chance for a little party is not to be turned down. “They received him with joy,” because
he had wine.

He does a little psychology on them in verse 10. “But Laman said unto them: Let us keep of our wine till we go against the Nephites to battle.” Here they were just drooling for this wine. They were going to get it now no matter what. “For, said they: We are weary, therefore let us take of the wine, and by and by we shall receive wine for our rations, which will strengthen us to go against the Nephites.” We’ll get plenty for [fighting] the Nephites. In the British army for every action they always passed around rum. You always had an opportunity to drink rum. It tastes terrible; I don’t like it at all. This was to fortify you, I suppose. You were supposed to drink rum before every operation. Verse 13: “And it came to pass that they did take of the wine freely.” Soldiers on duty do get drunk. I could tell some lurid cases of that. People at headquarters were drunk. Remember, Colonel Cole was as drunk as a lord when he went out to take S’Hertogenbus.

When they were all drunken, he sent to the city of Gid and cast in weapons of war. They were in a sleeping drunk. “When in drowsy sleep their drunken natures lie, what cannot you and I perform on the unguarded Duncan?” said Lady Macbeth. This is what happened [in Alma]. They drugged the guards. They said it was especially potent wine. While they were asleep they cast the weapons over to the people inside so they could fight their way out. It was all done in a profound silence. I’m sure it was not a Laurel and Hardy silence, but sometimes you can’t keep the silence too profound. But this is another thing—how easy it is to spring surprises, as I mentioned before about the Battle of the Bulge. For weeks and weeks the Germans built up two huge armies within five miles of our front lines. We didn’t want to believe it; that was all.

Now here you have good old Moroni, the sport. He plays by the rules all the way through, so we can be sure that these insulting letters were by the rules too. Verse 18: “But had they awakened the Lamanites, behold they were drunken and the Nephites could have slain them. But behold, this was not the desire of Moroni; he did not delight in murder or bloodshed . . . and for this cause he might not bring upon him injustice, he would not fall upon the Lamanites and destroy them in their drunkenness.” He does not want to be guilty of injustice. Like Clerk Saunders, “Tis shame to slay a drunken man.” It was a perfect time to wipe them out. This would solve our problem right here. He wouldn’t do it because it wasn’t a decent thing to do. They were drunk and asleep. You can’t kill people like that; it isn’t right. That’s Moroni—he always wants to do the right thing.

Verse 22: “Now behold this was done in the night-time [wouldn’t you know], so that when the Lamanites awoke in the morning they beheld that they were surrounded by the Nephites without, and that their prisoners were armed within.” Thus they saw that they were overpowered when they came to. “. . .their chief captains demanded their weapons of war, and they brought them forth and cast them at the feet of the Nephites, pleading for mercy.” This is what Moroni desired; he wanted to take more prisoners for exchange. Verse 24: “Now behold, this was the desire of Moroni. He took them prisoners of war . . .” The Nephites joined the army of Moroni, and this was a great strength to his army. There were a lot of prisoners there, and he also got more prisoners for exchange.

He set the Lamanites whom he had taken prisoner to labor in strengthening the fortifications of the camp. He had to excuse himself for that; it was justified because of the pressures of time. Notice verse 27: “And it came to pass that they did, notwithstanding all the intrigues of the Lamanites, keep and protect all the prisoners whom they had taken.” They protected them as well as keeping them. The Nephites began to be victorious. Many
times the Lamanites attempted their tricks. They tried the wine trick, but the Nephites were onto that. You adapt very quickly when they try to pull it a second time. Remember the well-known maxim: “If he fools you the first time, he’s a rascal. If he fools you the second time, you’re the rascal.” They could not be taken with snares anymore, and no poison. The Lamanites had fortified the city of Morianton and made it exceedingly strong. This is a stalemate, and you can’t allow a stalemate.

The first rule for German officers is, “It’s better to do the worst thing possible than to do nothing.” That’s a surprising thing to say, but that’s because it’s so paralyzing. I mentioned these rules before. They have to be so rigid in the military to keep armed men from going off in all directions, doing their own will, breaking up into bands, etc. We’ve said repeatedly that it has to be so rigid. What do you do? In this case it paralyzes initiative in the German army. As you get to be an officer, you get higher and higher for not saying yes, but for saying no. You become less daring, less original, more conforming, more willing to say, “Yes, Sir,” lick the boots, and all this sort of thing. That gets you to the top. In the officer class people wouldn’t act unless they had the approval of somebody else. They didn’t want to offend anybody. They didn’t want to do anything that wasn’t just according to the book. This lack of initiative among the officers paralyzed the German army. This was a thing they were always trying to beat. They were doctrinaire and preaching, “It’s better to do the worst thing than to do nothing. Do something.” Time and again they wouldn’t do it. They hadn’t received orders. Nobody told them what to do. Then, on the other hand, if a soldier becomes too independent and acts on his own orders [he could be shot]. The solution to that was the Maria Theresian. Let him act on his own, but shoot him if he didn’t keep the orders.

So they couldn’t have this dangerous stalemate here. Alma 56:1: “And now it came to pass in the commencement of the thirtieth year . . . Moroni received an epistle from Helaman, stating the affairs of the people in that quarter of the land.” He tells the story of his two thousand sons here now. They have another kind of discipline. Verse 3: “. . . the sons of those men whom Ammon brought down out of the land of Nephi—now ye have known that these were descendants of Laman.” These two thousand sons were good Lamanite boys. They kept their genealogies, as the ancients did, and they were descendants of Laman among the Lamanites. We read of descendants of Zoram and descendants of Ishmael, etc. They saw that their parents were about to break the covenant and go to war to help the Nephites because they needed their help so badly. Notice in verse 8 Helaman said, “But I would not suffer them that they should break this covenant which they had made . . .” He established integrity. He wouldn’t let their parents break their oaths, and [the sons] are not going to break any oaths of theirs. They weren’t required to take an oath, but they took one spontaneously. They kept it because they knew Helaman was one they could trust.

The Japanese colonel at Port Arthur had a company commanded by his son. The company was in danger of being destroyed unless they could pass through a particular civilian area, which would be brought under artillery fire. This was in 1904. According to the rules of war, civilians were sacrosanct; they couldn’t be slaughtered. So he knowingly allowed his own son to be killed and his company to be wiped out rather than kill any civilians. That’s inconceivable now when we zero in on civilians. They’re first. We send the Air Force over the city and wipe it out—let them have the firebombs first of all. What a world we are living in now. We’ve come a long way since 1904. Moroni’s integrity was perfect and Helaman’s was. He had shown it in this case. He wanted their help very badly, but he said, do not break your oath. I forbid you. You must not break that oath you have
taken. When these young men saw that, they said, there’s a man who does what he says. We’ll follow him. And they do.

They went to the city of Judea to assist Antipus. Notice the Old World names in the New World here. (Half the names in upstate New York are classical names, aren’t they? [The cities] were settled by a lot of classically trained Dutch people.) Verse 10: “And I did join my two thousand sons . . . to the army of Antipus,” so he could strengthen it. His army had been greatly reduced by the Lamanites. “And the Lamanites had also retained many prisoners, all of whom are chief captains, for none other have they spared alive.” Notice, he says the Lamanites didn’t take prisoners of war. They just spared the captains for exchange. That’s very different from Moroni’s practice. Notice he sends a map with the letter. “And now these are the cities of which the Lamanites have obtained possession . . .” Of course, with anything like that he’d have to send a situation map. He lists the cities: Manti, Zeezrom, Cumeni, Antiparah, Judea. It’s quite a list. “. . . and I found Antipus and his men toiling with their might to fortify the city.”

Verse 16 illustrates another point of Clausewitz. “Yea, and they were depressed in body as well as in spirit, for they had fought valiantly by day and toiled by night to maintain their cities [they had to work by night to make up the fortifications that had been cut down, and they had to fight all day]; and thus they had suffered great afflictions of every kind.” Notice that Clausewitz says spirit is not the same as morale. Their [spirits were] low, but they were determined to go on fighting. This little force gave them great hopes. Their morale was high. Their spirits were low. They were exhausted, but they weren’t going to give up. That’s the difference between morale and spirit here. Spirit is first in a long battle. The Lamanites were compelled by the orders of Ammoron not to come out against Judea. He told them to lie low and not do anything against Judea. [The Nephites] were favored of the Lord. Here again is a case of chance. Ammoron was foolish not to have commanded them to attack then, but he didn’t. Chance plays a great part. This saved our necks. They might have destroyed our little army if they had attacked then. Then was the right time for him to do it, but he didn’t do it. Hurray for us! As Clausewitz says, war is a game of chance.

Verse 21: “Now we were desirous that the Lamanites should come upon us; for we were not desirous to make an attack upon them in their strongholds.” Well, Clausewitz again. The defense position is always the strongest. We wanted them to attack us; we didn’t want to attack them. Though you would think that war until Clausewitz’ time was always attack. Then they did reconnaissance to find out what the situation was. “. . . therefore we were desirous, if they should pass by us, to fall upon them in their rear, and thus bring them up in the rear at the same time they were met in the front [they were in a quandary]. They durst not pass by us with their whole army . . .” Good old Ammoron is boxed in now. He has the strongest army, but there are minor forces on every side he could move in. You can analyze it here.

Verse 27: “. . . there was brought unto us many provisions from the fathers of those my two thousand sons.” He didn’t know what to do, so they were waiting. In the meantime they were receiving reinforcements and provisions. They wanted that more than anything else. Then two thousand more men were sent from Zarahemla to join them. When the Lamanites saw their forces increasing, they began to get very nervous. They began to be fearful and said, we’ve got to put a stop to this. This gave Helaman an idea how they were going to break the deadlock. Verse 29: “. . . they began to be fearful, and began to sally forth [trying to stop these supplies from coming in] . . . to put an end to our receiving
provisions and strength. . . . Antipus ordered that I should march forth with my little sons . . .” Calling them little sons is interesting, isn’t it? I know some of you have taken Russian here. Not only in the novels but in the army today, the colonel always calls the men *ditya*, little children. We call them boys and things like that. But that has been traditional for hundreds of years, and it’s the same thing here. He calls them his little sons. He uses the caritative. In English we have to use the word little with everything, but other languages have these caritatives, these diminutive forms they use. Other languages are rich in these. That’s one of the things in which English is impoverished. We always have to use little this and little that, but they have a special word for the little one.

They are going to act as if they were carrying provisions, that this is just a provisional force, not military or anything like that. They start marching along the coast like that, so he knows they will come out and try to stop them. That’s what they are going to do. Then he can try that old trick and have somebody follow them. Verse 34: “And now, in the city Antiparah were stationed the strongest army of the Lamanites.” It was too strong to be taken, like the city of Mulek here. So they saw this band going along the coast with provisions in verse 36. They were too good to lose; they couldn’t let them get away. So they chased us [Helaman’s group], and we ran away in front of them, always northward. “And thus we did lead away the most powerful army of the Lamanites.” They thought it was really a pushover, an easy thing to get this out of the way. They saw the army of Antipus pursuing them, but they kept right on after us [Helaman’s group]. That would be the best thing to do. Then it was night, and they didn’t overtake us. Before dawn the Lamanites were pursuing them again. They were not strong enough to contend with them. “I would not suffer that my little sons should fall into their hands; therefore we did continue our march, and we took our march into the wilderness.” It’s a running away. Nobody dared turn either direction. The two thousand, the big Lamanite army, and Antipus’ littler army that was chasing them were all going in a beeline up the coast. Nobody dared turn to the right or the left—they just kept going.

Verse 40: “. . . thus we did flee all that day into the wilderness, even until it was dark.” That kept on the third day of the seventh month. Then he said, how about it, kids, have you had enough running away? They would do anything rather than run away anymore, because they hadn’t come out for that. They’d had enough of that. “Therefore what say ye, my sons, will ye go against them to battle?” He really unleashed them. In verse 56 it says they fought with such miraculous strength they did frighten the enemies. The seasoned Lamanite soldiers had never seen anything like this. This is what happened in 1948 in Israel. Those Jewish kids could never fight because they were always the underdogs wherever they were. They had been underdogs so long. They were completely surrounded by a huge Egyptian force and a huge Syrian force coming in from all directions. They just wiped them out and terrified them. These soldiers had never seen anything like that. They were absolutely dedicated, and that’s what you have here. They fought with such miraculous strength that they frightened the Lamanite soldiers. So they delivered themselves up and said, we give up; we can’t fight this. Helaman tells why they didn’t [fall]. He talks about them. Verse 45: “. . . never had I seen so great courage . . . Father, behold our God is with us, and he will not suffer that we should fall . . . we would not slay our brethren if they would let us alone.” There’s no rancor here. Good old sporting Helaman is even more strict on this than Moroni is. They had never fought before. “And they rehearsed unto me the words of their mothers . . .” They told me what their situation was.

A terrible battle had commenced. When they came up behind, the battle between Antipus
and the Lamanites had already begun. The enemy was already engaged, so they're attacked from the rear now. The army of Antipus was exhausted and just about to give in, and Antipus had already fallen. They began to fall and give way, and the Lamanites were pursuing with great vigor. That was just the time for Helaman's force to strike from the side. That's exactly what you do. You hold your cavalry away on the side. This was Alexander's and Caesar's pet way. You have a block of elite troops on one side. The hypaspes of Alexander the Great and the Golden Shields would come in when the battle was going this way or that way. Then was the time to hit with that. It hit with a thunderbolt, and that made all the difference. It's the timing. You always have to hold something in reserve. At the Battle of the Bulge we didn't have anything in reserve. We didn't even have a filing clerk in reserve; we had nothing being surprised like that. At the same time the Russians had eighty-five divisions in reserve. They saved our necks time and again.

So they delivered them up as prisoners of war. This was Moroni's policy. He surrounded them "insomuch that they were compelled to deliver up their weapons of war and also themselves as prisoners of war." Not one of the two thousand had fallen. They fought with such miraculous strength it frightened the enemy. There was no place for the prisoners. What could they do? So they sent them to the land of Zarahemla.

Alma 57:1: "And now it came to pass that I received an epistle from Ammoron [he wanted to make another prisoner exchange here; they were not getting anywhere with prisoner exchanges], the king, stating that if I would deliver up those prisoners," which they had lost in that battle . . . They would only deliver them up on exchange of a Nephite family. Ammoron refused, "But the people of Antiparah did leave the city, and fled to their other cities . . ." Verse 4 is the turning point of the war. From now on everything starts to slow down and go downward. There's a psychological point when you can tell which way it is going to go. That will sometimes come quite early and sometimes quite late. The war can drag on for years, and yet you know how it is going to turn out. It's an interesting thing. The German officers—those that we got and those we tuned in on with the radio—knew when the turning point of the war had come. Already just after the invasion of Normandy, they knew it was over. Yet the war went on. That was 1944; it went on until May 1945. It didn't need to, but that's the way things go.

Verse 4: "... and thus the city of Antiparah fell into our hands." In the twenty and ninth year, they received a supply of provisions and then six thousand men, "besides sixty of the sons of the Ammonites who had come to join their brethren, my little band of two thousand." They wanted to get the city of Cummi, so they surrounded Cumeni by night, a little before [the Lamanites] were to receive a supply of provisions. They camped around the city and slept upon their swords. What kind of a trick would they pull on them now? How could you bring them out? He couldn’t conquer this very strong, independent city, so he used another very good trick. [The Nephites] camped so close to them, right under their noses. They couldn’t let that go on. In the first place, it would cut off their supplies. In the second place, they could be easily handled. We can’t let them camp right in front of the gates here [the Lamanites said], so they had to come out. That’s all they wanted, and they dragged them into the usual traps.

We can’t go on with warfare forever. We come to other grim matters presently.
What we’re supposed to do is read the Book of Mormon, isn’t it? So we are doing it. Wait a minute. Are we stuck in the mud of an eternal battlefield here? It looks that way, doesn’t it? I’m trying to break loose. I jumped the gun last time in my eagerness to bring it to a close, but this is a very important part, how wars close. A thing that keeps recurring to me all the time is how much this is like the Hundred Years War, which began in 1339 and didn’t end until well into the middle of the fifteenth century. The battle of Agincourt in 1415 was practically a carbon copy of the battle of Crecy, which was 75 years before. The same war just went on for over a hundred years. We have to stop these things. We may have reference to that later, but let’s go on here.

Notice this nice psychological study. We are in Alma 57:28. Everything is winding down now, and they are going to get fooled. This is the interesting thing. Every sign is that the war is ending up. Moroni is going to get it all over with and have a wipe-up operation. It doesn’t work at all. The whole thing collapses, and Moroni is fit to be tied because his whole great plan has fallen through. He isn’t as great a general as he thinks he is, or something. “. . . we did inquire of Gid concerning the prisoners whom they had started to go down to the land of Zarahemla with. Now Gid was the chief captain over the band who was appointed to guard them [this huge amount of prisoners] down to the land.” As they were taking them toward the city of Ćumeni (a very good ancient word which belongs to the Mediterranean), they got news that a huge Lamanite army was already attacking Ćumeni. The guards were obviously disturbed. The prisoners noticed there was tension among them, so this was their chance to break out. Remember, they were not guarding them with automatic weapons—they just had swords. Verse 32: “. . . our prisoners did hear their cries, which caused them to take courage; and they did rise up in rebellion against us.” This was when they realized that the Nephites were in distress. This was a blessing, actually. They ran in a body on [the Nephites’] swords, and the remainder broke loose and escaped. But that’s what they wanted; they didn’t have to have them anymore. They rushed on to Ćumeni, which they couldn’t have done otherwise and arrived there just in time to rescue the town. So that was a good thing—you never know.

Then the next object was Manti, which was the big objective. What could they do? None of their tricks worked. Alma 58:1: “. . . they remembered that which we had hitherto done [so we couldn’t pull any fast ones like that]; therefore we could not decoy them away from their strongholds.” So now they settle down to a long wait. They say the war should be over by now. What’s wrong? Now this long and painful wait starts, and it’s the biggest trial of all. They waited for provisions from Zarahemla, but they were just a little trickle. They weren’t getting any at all. The Lamanites were receiving great strength from day to day on their part. This is beginning to look bad. What about ending this war? The Lamanites began sallying forth against them, taking courage and giving them a bad time. They waited and waited many months. They were just stuck in this particular place for many months. Remember what Clausewitz said? The longer a war drags on, the greater the losses and the greater the uncertainty of what’s going to happen. It’s a terrible thing,
and wars have that habit of dragging on whether you like them to or not. This inaction became terrible. He said, we received two thousand men [and food], but that’s all we got. This is all the assistance we received. The same thing happened just before the Bulge when Patton ran out of gas. His whole charge just ground to a halt. Why? For political reasons. As we learn here, it was politics. Churchill wanted Monty to get the glory of ending the war. They had that dagger thrust north into the heart of Europe. He wanted to give all the gas to Monty, and Monty was bound down. He didn’t make any progress at all. That’s what happened. Needless to say, Patton didn’t like it at all. There were terrible political squabbles about that.

Notice verse 9. Why don’t they send more strength to us? We don’t know what’s going on here. At least we don’t want to be in the dark. What kind of information? “... therefore we were grieved and also filled with fear, lest by any means the judgments of God should come upon our land.” Perhaps we are not going to win after all, [they said]. They resorted to prayer, and they waited. That was a great consolation. “... he did speak peace to our souls, and did grant unto us great faith.” This is the real test, these long waits you have to go through. Then they had a new plan that I mentioned last time. They went forth against the city of Manti with everything they had. “... and we did pitch our tents by the wilderness side, which was near to the city.” This was a provocation; it was right near the city. On the morrow [the Lamanites] sent their spies to see what was happening. They were afraid that if we were to settle down there, we would cut them off from their support. They were receiving more support, and [the Nephites] were camped practically under the gates. They had to do something to stop this. So now they were forcing them to come out. It tells us in verse 15 that they thought it would be an easy operation: “... they could easily destroy us with their numerous hosts.” There would be nothing to it. So that’s the way they were able to draw them out. Gid on one side and Teomner on the other, had on either side a path through which they were to go. Naturally, when they come out the army camp there is going to retreat, drawing them out again—the usual thing.

This is done over and over again. The reason the battle of Poitiers was won is that the Black Prince hid his banner so that nobody could see where he was. He hid all his men in some bushes on a hill at Poitiers and gave the impression that he had run away. Then the whole French force decided to take off after him. They were on either side and they did the very thing that was done here. It’s an old trick and it works. “... I caused that Gid, with a small number of men, should secrete himself in the wilderness [it was a high willow underbrush typical of that part of France, and there were a lot of vineyards nearby. Anything to slow down the attack; it worked very well too], and also that Teomner and a small number of men should secrete themselves also in the wilderness.” They were on the other side, so [the Lamanites] would go between them. But that isn’t the main point. Verse 17: “Now Gid and his men were on the right and the other on the left. ... I remained with the remainder of my army, in that same place where we had first pitched our tents.” They were still taunting them and trying to get them to come out. The others were all in place; now they were ready for their squeeze-play here. “... I caused that my men ... should retreat into the wilderness.” Of course, now they follow.

The Lamanites did follow with great speed, and we did pass right between Gid and Teomner and went right on that way. So they closed the way behind them. “... Gid and Teomner did rise up from their secret places, and did cut off the spies of the Lamanites that they should not return to the city.” They ran to the city and took possession of it. Then what? We took our course towards the land of Zarahemla. When the pursuing army saw they were going toward Zarahemla, which was the big one, they wouldn’t dare follow.
They feared a trap then. This must be something—this has been too easy. “. . . they were exceedingly afraid, lest there was a plan laid to lead them on to destruction [what were they going to do?]; therefore they began to retreat into the wilderness again.” It had been a strenuous effort, so they slept that night. While they were sleeping, the Nephite army they had been chasing went around behind them and back to the city which was ready to receive them. So the city of Manti was in their possession when they came back. Verse 26: “. . . I caused that my men should not sleep, but that they should march forward by another way towards the land of Manti. And because of this our march in the night-time . . . we did arrive before them at the city of Manti [we out-marched them]. . . . by this stratagem we did take possession of the city of Manti without the shedding of blood.” When the armies of the Lamanites arrived near the city and saw what had happened, they were filled with great fear. All they had to do was the usual thing—take off to the wilderness and be gone. Now the war seems to be over, this ranging around and wanton destruction. Verse 31: “. . . our fathers and our women and our children are returning to their homes.” Notice, everybody is going back home again now. They know the game is over. Everybody knows who’s going to win, so they are starting to relax. But that’s a very dangerous thing to do.

This is Helaman’s letter reporting in verse 34: “Now we do not know the cause that the government does not grant us more strength; neither do those men who came up unto us know why we have not received greater strength.” What’s going on there? Is it inside political fighting? “We do not desire to murmur,” he says, but “we fear that there is some faction in the government, that they do not send more men to our assistance”— which is exactly what it was. In fact, they had taken over the government. Notwithstanding the weakness of our armies, we believe that the Lord will deliver us out of the hands of our enemies, [he said]. The Lamanites have fled back home to the land of Nephi. Remember, the land of Nephi was a Lamanite land. “But behold, they have received many wounds.” It’s not a happy situation. They have been there a long time, but it’s slowing down.

Verse 41: “. . . that ye may have success in obtaining the possession of all that which the Lamanites have taken from us.” That’s what the issue is, to get back that which the Lamanites had taken away from them. This was not a war of aggression, but just to take back the territories. That’s the way [fighters in] ancient wars did; they seized territories. The object of ancient wars and the wars of the Middles Ages was not to have battle, but to avoid battle. For example, Edward III would go over to France to reclaim his lands which the French king had just run over. What would happen? He would destroy everything in sight. He’d spend months, and there would be no pitched battle. He and the French king wouldn’t engage each other—they would avoid it. What was he doing? One region, such as Anjou, now belonged to France, so the best thing he could do was to destroy it. That’s the way he got at his enemies, destroying everything they had. So he destroyed all the villages and all the crops and killed everything. They did that for months, ranging around like that with no intention of having a battle. Then he would go back to England with a great fanfare of banners flying and have a great celebration. At that time a large part of southwestern France belonged to England. Then the French king would come back, overrun the land, and do the very same sort of thing. It was wild. And that long war ended up in what? Organized crime—just exactly as we go into the book of Helaman from this. Without a break we go into the organized crime of the book of Helaman. So this is the issue.

After Moroni had read this letter of Helaman’s, he rejoiced greatly that they had been holding their own. And he announced it to the land round about. He immediately sent an
epistle to Pahoran to strengthen Helaman. He said, why don’t you give more forces to Helaman? This was the first letter he sent to Pahoran. Then the war is virtually over, so he has a master plan to wind it up. That’s what he is going to do. He’s going to roll up the whole front and end it all. Various people had great plans like that in the last war, and they didn’t work. Notice it tells us that was what it was [verse 4]: “. . . he began again to lay a plan that he might obtain the remainder of those possessions and cities which the Lamanites had taken from them.” There were a lot of these cities, so he was going to roll up the front and take them one after another. The key city was Nephihah. He wanted to make a clean sweep. From there he intended to go to the city of Moroni and the city of Lehi and the city of Morianton, which had been attacked by the Lamanites. They had driven a lot of Lamanites out of cities so far. What did [the Lamanites] do? They went over and joined the Lamanite army and made it stronger. They didn’t all go home; some of them did. We’ll see more of them start going home. They had come over and joined the Lamanites in this part of the land, so they were having a buildup. This is just like the Bulge. It’s a long, big buildup, and it catches them completely by surprise. It catches the great Moroni by surprise.

Verse 7: “. . . by the command of Ammoron [there’s that rascal again] they came forth against the people of Nephihah, and they did begin to slay them with an exceedingly great slaughter.” All of a sudden it was just like the Bulge, a massive breakthrough that caught them completely by surprise and rolled over one city after another. The people would flee from one city to the next, and they’d all gang together and flee from that one. It was a brilliant success for Ammoron. “. . . the people of Nephihah were obliged to flee before them; and they came even and joined the army of Moroni.” They were building up on each side.

Moroni was wrong. Verse 9: “. . . he supposed that they would easily maintain that city.” He had not left Nephihah sufficiently defended. He thought it would be strong enough to hold its own. The Lamanites were weakened; they had lost their morale. Things were running down. We can relax [they thought]. Remember the 110th Division which was new. It had only been in Europe two weeks. It had never had any combat and knew nothing at all. All very green, it was covering twenty-eight lines of front. Two lines from a dozen German divisions, including three powerful tank divisions, were just two miles away there. They fooled us completely. It didn’t fool me, but that didn’t do any good. I made out a situation map and told them what was going to happen, and it did. I knew even the day. A special day with Hitler, who followed astrology, was December 17. I said, “The 17th of December is going to be a breakthrough. The sixth paratroop will come through here and the tenth panzer.” This is what happened here. Notice that Moroni was fooled. He supposed that he would easily maintain the city, because you want to believe that. We didn’t want to go. We went down to Corps that day to find out if they had any maps. They said, “We haven’t sent anyone on patrol because we are moving tomorrow. Can’t you see we’re all packing this stuff? [They were packing everything.] Don’t bother us; we are going away. We are going to retire and go into a rest area.” That’s what happens.

Verse 11: “And now, when Moroni saw that the city of Nephihah was lost he was exceedingly sorrowful [his pet project], and began to doubt, because of the wickedness of the people.” You have to blame someone. As Clausewitz says, you always have to blame somebody in a war, and it’s always possible to find somebody. He blamed the wickedness of the people, and his chief captains stood around nodding agreement. “They doubted and marveled also because of the wickedness of the people.” The staff agreed. But then he took
the next step and blamed the government. “And it came to pass that Moroni was angry
with the government.” He didn’t know who the government was. They had been
completely replaced by a lot of rascals. Then he wrote again to the governor who was
Pahoran. If you think his letter on the exchange of prisoners to Ammoron was tactless,
this one breaks all the rules for lack of tact. But it isn’t. There’s a point to this letter, you’ll
see. It makes pretty good sense, after all. He wrote to Pahoran “who [was] the chief judge
and the governor over the land, and also to all those who have been chosen by this people
to govern and manage the affairs of this war.” He said, you have been chosen to manage
the national defense, and you are not doing it. As a matter of fact they weren’t. Verse 2:
“For behold, I have somewhat to say unto them by the way of condemnation . . . ye have
been appointed to gather together men, and arm them with swords [and protect the
country] . . . against the Lamanites, in whatsoever parts they should come into our land.”
But you are not giving us any support, he said. Our men have suffered exceedingly. “. . .
great has been the slaughter among our people . . . while it might have otherwise been if
ye had rendered unto our armies sufficient strength and succor for them [you could have
stopped all this]. Yea, great has been your neglect towards us.”

He has a picture of people quite prosperous back home, as he describes them later on.
What’s wrong here? Verse 6: “. . . we desire to know the cause of this exceedingly great
neglect; yea, we desire to know the cause of your thoughtless state.” Then he says he
knows the cause already—because you are sluggish, reluctant, incompetent, and
everything else. He jumps to a conclusion. This is a marvelous passage, isn’t it? “Can you
think to sit upon your thrones in a state of thoughtless stupor [Moroni gets some good
digs in; this is humorous], while your enemies are spreading the work of death around
you? Yea, while they are murdering thousands of your brethren—Yea, even they who
have looked up to you for protection [what are you giving them?] . . . . But behold . . . ye
have withheld your provisions from them [well, had they withheld them?] . . . . And now,
my beloved brethren—for ye ought to be beloved; yea, and ye ought to have stirred
yourselves more diligently for the welfare and the freedom of this people; but behold, ye
have neglected them insomuch that the blood of thousands shall come upon your heads
for vengeance . . . could ye suppose that ye could sit upon your thrones, and because of
the exceeding goodness of God ye could do nothing and he would deliver you?” You
could trust in him like they did at Salonika, the last of the great Turkish overthrows. The
people at Salonika thought God would bless them and couldn’t possibly lose. Well, they
were wrong. They had a secret weapon that could wipe them out, but the enemy had it
too. They didn’t know that.

Verse 12: “Do ye suppose that, because so many of your brethren have been killed it is
because of their wickedness?” It’s their own fault if they are poor. We say things like that.
It’s their own fault if they have bad luck. It’s their own fault if they get beat. No, it is your
condemnation. Then he says an interesting thing. This seems to be a settlement that
makes everybody unhappy: “For the Lord suffereth the righteous to be slain that his justice
and judgment may come upon the wicked.” He lets the wicked go ahead and be wicked so
that he can punish them, but the righteous take a beating in the meantime. “What kind of
justice is that?” you say, Well, that’s the way the world goes. This is the point he makes:
They are not lost because they are slain; you think they are. “. . . but behold, they do enter
into the rest of the Lord their God”—as we saw from the case of Alma and [Amulek]
viewing the burning of the women and children. That looked like such a terrible thing,
but Alma said, “Don’t stop it.” It’s not as bad as you think. For the righteous it isn’t bad at
all.
Verse 14: “And now behold . . . I fear exceedingly that the judgments of God will come upon this people, because of their exceeding slothfulness.” That’s a crime. Not to do anything can be sinful. As I said, the first rule of the Generalstab to any officer is, “Do something. It’s better to do the worst possible thing than to do nothing.” That’s a very strong thing to say, but that’s the slogan because you must do something. And slothfulness. Are we exceedingly slothful today? Well, in what regard are we exceedingly slothful? What are we supposed to be finding out? “. . . yea, even the slothfulness of our government, and their exceedingly great neglect towards their brethren.” Well, we are certainly neglecting our brethren. This is a self-centered, me generation. It’s an interesting thing that this is a tendency in the country. This is the thing that would happen. We were taking off for one operation at Ramsgate at night. The permanent cadre, the staff that were there, were having a big party. They were having a binge, a great old time. They were nearly all drunk. Our boys got out to load onto the C-47s, the Dakotas, these slow, lumbering old things. They were good work horses but not very fast. They would come in at 55 miles an hour. Anyone could blast them out of the air. They [the permanent staff] lined up on either side and shouted as they went down, “Good-bye, suckers. You’ll be sorry.” They were laughing their heads off. But I knew they were secretly envious of these boys. They knew [the boys] were doing what they should be doing. They [the staff] all got drunk that night, and some terrible things happened as a result that I found out later on. Overnight in passing through a place, I was billeted with a gang of that same crew from Ramsgate. They told what happened to them that night; we won’t go into that.

Verse 15: “For were it not for the wickedness which first commenced at our head, we could have withstood our enemies.” Again, you notice that civilization always dies at the top. [We have the attitude] I’m doing all right, me first. I was in Athens a few years ago, and the colonel in charge of the base there at Athens had just joined the Church, a very good man. They had just had a psychological test in brainwashing, which was a big thing in those days, because there was so much brainwashing in various parts of the world. They tried it on the Greek soldiers, and they tried it on the American soldiers. They could never brainwash the Greek soldiers; they could never shake a Greek at all. They felt loyalty to each other. They felt a brotherhood that was very strong. With the Americans it was a cinch. They had to show each individual it was to his advantage. Of course, it was an imaginary situation. But they offered them strong inducements in their own interest—a promotion, money, or the best rations (assuming they were prisoners of war). He said the Americans would tumble every time. For their own particular interest, they would be willing to sell out anyone. That was very, very disturbing. But you couldn’t get the Greeks to do it no matter what you did. Can we be true and faithful if it’s the “me first” generation? I’m glad the 80s are coming to a close. I don’t think it’s going to last.

So civilization always dies at the top. You can’t say it dies at the bottom. You can’t say the great unwashed, the rabble, are responsible for the overthrowing of anything. They are always there. The Lord said, the poor you have always with you. If you want to practice your charity, you are free to do it, as he said to Judas. But if there is failing at the top, then a civilization will decline. The bottom is dead level. You don’t have to worry about them; they are always there. You always have the riff-raff, inner cities, and things like that. But when the people at the top lose their integrity [there’s trouble]—“the wickedness which first commenced at our head.” That’s where it begins.

Verse 16: “Yea, had it not been for the war which broke out among ourselves; Yea, were it not for these king-men [this politics business] who caused so much bloodshed among
ourselves; yea, at the time we were contending among ourselves, if we had united our strength as we hitherto have done [this never would have happened. It’s the personal factor again]; yea, had it not been for the desire of power and authority which those king-men had over us . . .” It’s the desire of certain individuals for power, office, and authority. Without that we’d have had no trouble at all. “. . . yea, if we had gone forth against them in the strength of the Lord, we should have dispersed our enemies, for it would have been done, according to the fulfilling of his word.” The word is not always fulfilled? No, he said [God’s] word is always conditional. If you had kept the commandments, we would have had no trouble at all. We would have dispersed our enemies without trouble.

Verse 17: “But behold, now the Lamanites are coming upon us, taking possession of our lands [all of a sudden] . . . and this because of the great wickedness of those who are seeking for power and authority, yea, even those king-men. . . . For we know not but what ye yourselves are seeking for authority.” This is written to Pahoran and the government. Well, he doesn’t know. He admits he doesn’t know, but now he assumes he does and talks to him like a Dutch uncle. This is just a suggestion though. He knows something is very wrong, and this is what it naturally is. Remember, he’d had a lot of experience already with these king-men. He knew how they operated. He knew what the situation was, and he knew their strength and their appeal. “We know not but what ye are also traitors to your country . . . ye are surrounded by security, that ye do not cause food to be sent unto us, and also men to strengthen our armies. Have ye forgotten the commandments of the Lord your God? [he starts lecturing them like this] . . . Or do ye suppose that the Lord will still deliver us, while we sit upon our thrones and do not make use of the means which the Lord has provided for us?” He changed the person there [to we]. You notice, the Lord is not going to come and rescue you while you sit on your throne. He has provided you with the means. I’m reminding you that you have the means, and what we want is that.

Verse 22: “Yea, will ye sit in idleness while ye are surrounded with thousands of those, yea, and tens of thousands who do also sit in idleness . . .” Everybody wasn’t out at war at all. It wasn’t the Nephites versus the Lamanites. This was a relatively small army going out and doing this thing. Four thousand men was as much as they got—two thousand was quite a host, when they could get them. Tens of thousands stayed at home. “. . . while there are thousands round about in the borders of the land who are falling by the sword, yea, wounded and bleeding?” He makes it as dramatic as possible. It’s a rhetorical question, of course. “Do ye suppose that God will look upon you as guiltless while ye sit still and behold these things? [inactivity can be a crime here] . . . the inward vessel shall be cleansed first.” I’m talking about you, he says. This was a well-known proverb of the time. What we call cosmetic improvements should wait—the dress standards, the campus. Mormon tells us that it’s the inner part of the vessel that comes first. We don’t care much about that, but we are great on the outer part of the vessel here. The covenants that we have made come first. We like to say, “It’s the little things that count.”

Here’s an interesting item that came from the newspaper on Saturday. This is Lebanon today. You know what’s going on—everybody is shooting up. The two factions never stop shooting. “While shells slammed into Beirut Saturday night, the moneyed elite of the Fara Club, an hour’s drive from the burning city, dined and danced the night away to the strains of ‘Whatever Will Be Will Be.’

“They are like people from another planet” [this is just the way our friend Moroni is writing now], said one West Beirut resident, who had suffered months of artillery
bombardments in a city without power and short of food and water. [Well, that’s exactly Moroni’s situation, isn’t it? What do the others do?] At the mountain resort the conflict seemed a long way off, even though the Syrian front lines were only two miles away. In the swimming pools, on the tennis courts, in the expensive French restaurants Lebanon’s smart set is displaying its traditional zest for life as if nothing had happened.” They go on living it up while all these people are dying around them—exactly the situation in the Book of Mormon. Strange coincidence, isn’t it? Strange people and strange land. Remember, these are the same stock as Laman’s people. “Can you imagine [it sounds like Moroni talking, doesn’t it?] that with this sort of madness we are still building ski resorts?” said the hotel manager, Nicholas Katan. Katan feels the club proves a point—that Lebanon must prevail however bad the situation on the streets of the battered capital. ‘If we did not have this, we would have disappeared a long time ago,’ he said. It’s the psychology of keeping up the morale. At least 760 civilians have been killed and 3,000 wounded in the past five months of madness—as Syria, backed by the leftist and Moslem militia allies and Christian army commander Michael Alloun [who is the worst] forces sought to destroy each other. The Fara Club, a chalet development northeast of Beirut, boasts three restaurants, two bars, a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a squash club. For those able to afford $300,000 a lot to buy land and build a chalet, it’s not a bad place to sit out the war. It has its own roads, garage, wells and generators, and enough supplies to last a thousand people for six months.” So within a few miles, within easy hearing distance, there you are. It’s the same thing going on that we have here. It happens in our world. How selfish people can be. How selfish we all are, aren’t we? They sit in idleness while thousands die. These people have no food; they have nothing. There’s no power or anything in the city. Yet these people don’t give it the slightest concern. They are living the “life of Riley” up there. They’re rich. They’re buying property and building chalets up there. It’s absurd. As the manager of the hotel said, “Can you imagine it?”

Now he stirs them in verse 24: “. . . begin to be up and doing . . . it will be expedient that we contend no more with the Lamanites until we have first cleansed our inward vessel, yea, even the great head of our government.” Now he brings accusations. I noted in Alma 49:11 that Moroni himself, before he launched out on these great enterprises, had altered the management of affairs among the Nephites. It was a big political shakeup to put things in order before he started out for his big defense project. Now he wants to do it again. We have to clean house again, he said, “the inward vessel, even the great head of government.” He had been authorized to do it before. He had been given plenary powers, and he did it. Now he is going to use those powers and reorganize the government if he has to. It’s not as crazy as you think. “. . . I will leave the strength and the blessings of God upon them, that none other power can operate against them.” So he’s going to leave his men under the strength and blessings of God, and he’s going to go to town.

Verse 27: “And I will come unto you, and if there be any among you that has a desire for freedom . . . even a spark of freedom remaining [he gets caustic here], behold I will stir up insurrections among you [that’s a fine way for the general to talk, isn’t it?], even until those who have desires to usurp power and authority shall become extinct.” Notice he doesn’t specify. Whoever it is is what he’s saying here. They are the ones he is after. He says, I’m going to put them out of operation. “Yea, behold I do not fear your power nor your authority [he has a lot of certainty here] . . . and it is because of your iniquity that we have suffered so much loss.” Whose iniquity? He is not charging anyone in particular here, but whoever it is who has caused this—you who have desires to usurp authority. “. . . the time is now at hand, that except ye do bestir yourselves in the defense of your country and your little ones, the sword of justice doth hang over you; yea, and it shall fall upon
you and visit you even to your utter destruction. . . . except ye do administer unto our relief, behold, I come unto you, even in the land of Zarahemla, and smite you with the sword [this is open rebellion he is promising], insomuch that ye can have no more power to impede the progress of this people in the cause of our freedom. For behold, the Lord will not suffer that ye shall live and wax strong in your iniquities to destroy his righteous people,” He is hotter than a firecracker here. “Behold, can you suppose that the Lord will spare you and come out in judgment against the Lamanites [now he makes a case for the Lamanites; they are not the bad ones, after all], when it is the tradition of their fathers that has caused their hatred, yea, and it has been redoubled by those who have dissented from us [they have gone over and joined the Lamanites], while your iniquity is for the cause of your love of glory and the vain things of the world?” [The Lamanites] thought they were fighting for a cause of some sort. They are less reprehensible, but you are just ambitious. You want to be big shots [he said]. That will do it.

Verse 33: “Ye know that ye do transgress the laws of God, and ye do know that ye do trample them under your feet. Behold, the Lord saith unto me: If those whom ye have appointed your governors do not repent of their sins and iniquities, ye shall go up to battle against them [the guilty parties] . . . . And behold, if ye will not do this I come unto you speedily; for behold, God will not suffer that we should perish with hunger [this is a desperate situation; they are perishing with hunger]; therefore he will give unto us of your food, even if it must be by the sword [we'll come and take the food if we have to have it]. Now see that ye fulfil the word of God . . . . I seek not for power, but to pull it down.” We find out a little later that he retires at the age of 39. He could have become the dictator of the country. He was the national hero. He never raised a sword again. He died at the early age of 47, apparently from wounds because he went through a lot of things. He just lived eight years after he retired. Soon after Moroni had sent this epistle to the chief governor, he received the answer from Pahoran.

Now I’m going to talk about the Bar Kochba Letters, a very interesting thing. In [1961] they found the Bar Kochba Letters. Bar Kochba was the great hero who was going to deliver the Jews from the Romans in 130 A.D. That’s where these letters come from. (It is sometimes spelled with ch and sometimes with k.) This is the way Yadin spells it in his book on the Bar Kochba Letters. In the Cave of Letters in [1961] they found documents from farms. In the extreme end of the Cave of Letters on the north side of the Naḥal Hever [that’s the very deep gorge, very much like Rock Canyon; I’ve been up it] between 3:00 and 4:00 o’clock in the afternoon of 15 March 1961, Professor Yadin put his hand into a crevice in the floor of the cave and lifted out a goatskin bag containing a woman’s materials for mending her family’s clothes on their sad and forced vacation [they were hiding out there not too far from Jerusalem]. Stuffed away under the stuff at the very bottom of the bag was a bundle of papyrus rolls in a cloth. Among those was the deed to a farm at En-gedi, etc. Bar Kochba is the great hero of the Jews. Is he a real historical figure? Yes, he’s real because we have letters actually signed by his hand, that were found in that cave.

This is what he tells us. This is the situation. They weren’t getting any help from the Jews at headquarters up north at En-gedi. Why weren’t they getting any help? Bar Kochba’s war, like Moroni’s, was a holy war. A “Messianic war” it is called, with fanatical concern for the temple. In the struggle for liberation the hero found his hands full, dealing with all kinds of people and problems [these are the letters of Bar Kochba]. For one thing he found that “some of the wealthier citizens” of the city were “evaders of national duties” [we’re
right back in Moroni’s position] in his day, as their ancestors had been in the days of
Nehemiah (Nehemiah 3:5). Specifically, they were “disregarding the mobilization orders
of Bar Kochba” [they weren’t joining up at all], who became exceedingly angry and issued
dire threats against them, including the death penalty.” (Compare this with Moroni in a
like situation; I quote some of these things we’ve just been talking about here. Bar Kochba
had to deal with just such characters, and he did it in the same way Moroni did.) To the
“brothers” (he calls them his brethren, just as Moroni does all to whom he writes) in the
city of En-gedi he personally wrote a letter in Hebrew that survives to this day: “To
Masabala and to Yehonathan; bar Be‘ayan, peace. In comfort you sit eating and drinking
[doesn’t that have a familiar ring?] from the property of the House of Israel and care
nothing for your brothers.” You don’t give any care at all.

If this had been discovered before Joseph Smith’s day, you would say, “What obvious
plagiarism. That’s so gross—it’s just too apparent for words.” But wars are very much alike,
I’m afraid. They use the same expressions here. “You care nothing for your brothers” is
Yadin’s translation of the Hebrew letter. It’s clear Hebrew to read. Moroni says, “Can you
think to sit upon your thrones in a state of thoughtless stupor . . . while they are
murdering thousands of your brethren.”

If this sounds shockingly severe, the provocation was terrible. Moroni, like Bar Kochba,
was holding on by the skin of his teeth. “Whatever we may think of Bar Kochba’s harsh
tone [this is Yadin commenting on Bar Kochba’s letter] it is quite clear that Yehonathan
(an important leader) was not the most loyal of subordinates.” He hadn’t been able to
trust him, and there were others like him in high office, especially as things grew worse.

This is the difference between them. The secret of Moroni’s success was his essential
gentleness. He brought the Lamanites around actually as soon as the king was dead.
Remember shakh is the shah and måt is the word for dead in all Semetic languages. The
Germans call it Schach; we call it chess. The Russians call it shakh mat. They give it the
whole name: “The king is dead.” Once the king or the shah is gone, you have all his men.
So your object is not to wipe out as many pieces as you can on the board but to save as
many pieces as you can. That’s where your skill is, because that army is going to be yours
when you win. This is the Asiatic policy of shakh mat which becomes the great game. The
secret of Moroni’s success was his essential gentleness. He always called a halt to the
fighting the instant the enemy, whom he called his “brethren,” showed the least
inclination to parley. But Bar Kochba carried through with his threats, and that was his
undoing. He could have won if he hadn’t done that. He didn’t follow the policy that
Moroni did, who became immediately softened when he read the letter of Pahoran. He
immediately understood what was going on then. But here we have this on Bar Kochba: It
has often been said that Bar Kochba’s undoing was lack of such a redeeming quality.
[Quoting Yadin:] “His brutality, according to some sources, was manifested in the way he
killed the revered Rabbi Eleazar of Modi’in . . . who Bar Kochba suspected of betraying the
secrets of Bethar (a city under attack) to the Romans.” Remember, they were attacking
cities and besieging cities. He suspected that a certain rabbi had betrayed him in a city, so
he put the rabbi to death. The rabbi hadn’t betrayed him. It’s a Book of Mormon situation
very much here, isn’t it? “This cruel act, according to the same sources, caused Bar
Kochba’s death and the fall of Bethar.” He lost his case because he was cruel.

This is a part that’s very interesting. When another leader, Galgoula, was called to task for
holding out supplies, including a cow, he wrote to his superiors to explain: “Were it not
for the Gentiles [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 didn’t go to you [with the food].” We’ve been held up. The Gentiles have blocked our way. They’ve taken over, and we couldn’t get to you. I want you to know this lest you get the wrong idea and say that it is out of contempt that I did not go to you.

Moroni said the same thing of them, and Pahoran replied just as Galgoula did, “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 freemen that they have not come unto you. . . . in your epistle you have censored me, but it mattereth not; I am not angry . . .” So this is exactly the same situation again. The food couldn’t get through. I want you to know why so that you won’t get mad and censor me for it [he said]. These parallels are not only striking—sometimes they are positively stunning. You wonder, where has Joseph been to pick up all this information about how things were done in those days?

Then we have the letter here in Alma 61: 1: “Behold, now it came to pass that soon after Moroni had sent his epistle unto the chief governor, he received an epistle from Pahoran.” This is interesting. Why hadn’t he heard from them long before? He immediately explains why. There’s a state of complete crisis—not only complete insecurity, but everything was totally disrupted, the communications and everything else. He tells the situation. I, Pahoran am not mad at you. “. . . I do not joy in your great afflictions, yea, it grieves my soul. But behold, there are those [plenty of people] who do joy in your afflictions [you are right when you feel that something is wrong], yea, insomuch that they have risen up in rebellion against me [very serious], and also those of my people who are freemen.” They are extremely numerous. They have taken over the government. “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 had a complete takeover]; for they have used great flattery [What is flattery? Remember: promises, hyperbole, good guys, standing tall, greatest civilization. That’s flattery], and they have led away the hearts of many people [by that sort of talk], which will be the cause of sore affliction among us; they have withheld our provisions, and have daunted our freemen [they couldn’t get through] that they have not come unto you.” They have blocked the way so that they couldn’t come to you. It’s not only intimidation, but they have taken over everything.

Verse 5: “. . . I have fled to the land of Gideon. So they had to flee out. He wasn’t even in Zarahemla when the letters came. “. . . I have sent a proclamation throughout this part of the land . . . they are flocking to us daily, to their arms [there was a backlash; it had gone too far] . . . insomuch that those who have risen up in rebellion against us . . . do fear us.” They’ve gotten so numerous now. The backlash is beginning to be noticed. “They have got possession of the land, or the city, of Zarahemla; they have appointed a king over them, and he hath written unto the king of the Lamanites, in the which he hath joined an alliance with him.” They are in cahoots with the Lamanites now. Things are going to look very bad. This war isn’t going to end the way we thought, unless something is done in a hurry. Just when you think everything is going right, this is the sort of thing that can happen. You never can be sure. They are in an alliance with the Lamanites, and their idea is to partition authority later on. But you know perfectly well that [Ammoron] is going to take over the whole thing when he can. That was Amalickiah’s idea. “. . . and he shall be placed king over this people when they shall be conquered under the Lamanites.”

See, the Lamanites were not politically minded, but they were looked to as a power base
for ambitious individuals of either side to keep things stirring up and supply them with forces. “I, Pahoran, do not seek for power [you think I do, but I don’t any more than you do, he says], save only to retain my judgment-seat that I may preserve the rights and the liberty of my people. . . . We would not shed the blood of the Lamanites if they would stay in their own land.” It is all fought on their [Nephite] territory; they do not have troops abroad or foreign bases or things like that. “We would not shed the blood of our brethren if they would not rise up in rebellion and take the sword against us.” They didn’t do it for being on the wrong side because they just meet them in battle when they take up the sword.

Verse 9 is very strong. Pahoran says, I don’t ask for power. He talks about liberty and being free. It isn’t rhetoric, because he says in verse 12: “We would subject ourselves to the yoke of bondage if it were requisite with the justice of God.” It isn’t just rhetoric to say, “Freedom, freedom” and all this sort of thing. All people use that line. But he says, we would subject ourselves to the yoke of bondage to the Lamanites if it were the will of God, “requisite with the justice of God.” If he should command us to, after all this talk of liberty.

It’s very interesting. Thebes was one of the great free cities of Greece, as you know. It had been under a dictator, and they finally threw the dictator off. Everybody went around saying, “Thebes is free—puke where you want to.” It’s a vile thing to say, but that’s the idea. That’s all it meant to them. They used a stronger word than that. Liberty always begets boredom if there is nothing that goes with it. This is a phenomenon you will commonly find in the military. Spoiled, rich young men like to be drafted. I’ve seen them enjoying themselves for the first time in their lives when they weren’t just bored stiff. They liked to be told what to do. They liked to have to get up at a certain time and be smart and do certain things. They enjoyed it thoroughly. I know the son of one of the richest men in San Francisco. He thought it was great. The first real fun he had ever had in his life was this discipline, because he had never had that. He was just bored sick. This is a very interesting thing. What is your freedom? What is your liberty? To enjoy discipline and the imperatives of necessity.

He continues here. He has a plan. “Therefore, come unto me speedily with a few of your men,” whatever you have and we will join up. I have a few provisions for them. I can help you out with that. Verse 17: “Gather together whatsoever force ye can upon your march hither, and we will go speedily against those dissenters.” We’ve got to get rid of them first, he says, because they own Zarahemla. We’d have nothing to win in the war. They had to spread the war. This was no longer politics. They had spread it abroad.

Notice this: It’s their own city of Zarahemla that is completely controlled by [the rebels], but he says, would that be the right thing to do? After all, they have taken it over. “. . . for I was somewhat worried concerning what we should do, whether it should be just in us to go against our brethren.” They still have conscience. As Moroni does, so does Pahoran here. They have taken up arms and been very aggressive, but he doesn’t know whether it’s right to go against them or not. But you said, “the Lord hath commanded you,” so I think it is clear. He has given us the signal. We will go then in that case. But he hesitated, just as Moroni often hesitated whether it be the right thing to do. “. . . that liberty wherewith God hath made them free.” Is this a special kind of liberty? What kind is it?

I see we’ve come to the next one. I thought I would be through with wars today, but we go to another kind now. We’ll get to Helaman next time, and then the great crime story.
We love crime today. We batten on it, so we are going to get plenty of crime. As Joseph Smith said of the mobs, they want mobs, and they'll have plenty of mobs. After the Saints were driven out, then the real bad mobs came—the Bushwhackers, the Jayhawkers, "Bloody Kansas," and all the rest of it.

The plot thickens now as we get closer and closer to home. We are in Alma 62. Of course, Moroni was very, very glad and relieved to receive Pahoran’s letter. I wonder if he felt cheap or something when he found out he had been completely wrong after all the shouting, raving, and ranting against Pahoran. His heart was filled with exceedingly great joy to find out that he wasn’t a traitor, as he thought he was. He really jumped the gun that time. But at the same time “he did also mourn exceedingly.” Moroni is something of a manic-depressive, isn’t he? He’s an overachiever, he’s a military genius, and he only lives a very short life. He just wears himself out, I think. He’s that sort of person. We get these beautiful character delineations in the Book of Mormon. We learn that things are often wrong with the world, but [we should] be careful how we place the blame. We don’t want to do things like that. After all, who raised Noriega to power?

Here is the sacral state. They had “rebelled against their country and also their God.” You can’t rebel against the country in a sacral state [without rebelling against God]. This is a religious state, like Israel. You don’t divide the state from the church. (In Utah it may be different.) The war isn’t up yet. They are going to have a mopping up operation. Verse 3: “. . . Moroni took a small number of men . . . and gave Lehi and Teancum command over the remainder of his army.” He said, I’m leaving them in your trust. I’m going to go out and join Pahoran, and we’ll clean up here. “And [again] he did raise the standard of liberty in whatsoever place he did enter.” This is traditional; the standard attracts people. Notice it says, “And it came to pass that thousands did flock unto his standard.” The Egyptians used the same word for standard that they used for rallying place or great ceremonial center. The word is \textit{išt}. It’s usually written like this. As we find in the old pictures, it’s a mound with megalithic stones around it. The \textit{išt} is a sacred meeting place. This is the standard, and they would have the bird or one of the forty-two emblems of the tribes there on the standard. But the standard brings you to the meeting place, and it does here. It was the same thing in England. The king would raise his banner at Nottingham, and all the people would have to come. We find out in the sagas that when you received the heror, the war arrow of the king, you must come to his presence within three days or be banished for three years from the kingdom. This was a universal rule in the ancient world.

So thousands flocked to his standard. They were still observing these things. These things show remarkable uniformity, don’t they? We’ll find that right down to our own times they do. Verse 6: “. . . and uniting his forces with those of Pahoran they became exceedingly strong, even stronger than the men of Pachus.” Pachus is a very interesting name. It’s perfectly good Egyptian and means “he who is praised.” It means a person who is “praised, blessed or favored of God.” Mohammed means the same thing.

They went to the land of Zarahemla against the city and met the men of Pachus. “And behold, Pachus was slain and his men were taken prisoners, and Pahoran was restored to his judgment-seat.” And everything was as it was before. (There’s a very interesting poem.
I must find it and read it to you someday. It’s very good.) Also the king-men were put in their place and “whosoever would not take up arms in the defence of their country, but would fight against it, were put to death.” They were still resorting to arms. It was not because of their political views they were put to death, but they were still resorting to arms. It was speedy execution. Moroni and Pahoran, having restored peace to the land of Zarahemla, were free to send an army of six thousand men and aid to Helaman. It’s interesting that the average army throughout ancient times and the Middle Ages for expeditions was between four and eight thousand men. You notice in the next verse another army of six thousand men. That’s the standard. The 101st Division only had seven thousand men in it. The average division has twenty-seven thousand. They had to cover the same front as the full division. “And he also caused that an army of six thousand men, with a sufficient quantity of food, should be sent to the armies of Lehi and Teancum.” So they were being supported everywhere. As I said, this can almost be called mopping up operations.

Verse 14: “. . . Moroni and Pahoran . . . took their march with a large body of men towards the land of Nephihah.” Remember, Nephihah was the one [Moroni] wanted to take and then was so disappointed. He was going to roll up the whole front. He got Nephihah, which was their strong point. Then Ammoron ran over it and wiped it out, and other cities along with it. So now they have to get back Nephihah. This is rather typical: As they were marching they ran into a large body of Lamanites. They had a fight and “slew many of them, and took their provisions and their weapons of war.” The rest of them gave in willingly. Notice, the war is over. Everybody is fed up with it. “. . . they caused them to enter into a covenant that they would no more take up their weapons of war against the Nephites [then they trusted them]. And when they had entered into this covenant they sent them to dwell with the people of Ammon, who were the peaceful people. This pleased them very much. They were fed up; they didn’t want anymore of this. As we see in verse 27, “. . . many of the Lamanites that were prisoners were desirous to join the people of Ammon and become a free people [that’s the idea of being free; you’re not free if you are in arms all the time]. . . . they were in number about four thousand who had not been slain.” This is a nice touch. No hard feelings here. You can see the tension is off now. Nobody is out for blood or anything like that.

This happened [in World War II] too. I remember a very interesting incident down in southern Germany when we were moving down there toward Berchtesgaden. The 101st Division delivered it you might say. Before we got there, there was busy traffic at a road, and everything was jammed up with tanks, etc. And out directing the traffic were an American captain and a German major, working together in perfect harmony. They were from opposite sides, but it made no difference. The traffic had to be moved, and so they moved it. There was a jam factory a few miles from a place called Vergel where we were hiding out in the basement of a grain elevator. Our boys would get jam on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and the Germans would get jam on Mondays and Wednesdays. We agreed on that. There were no hard feelings there. What did we have against them, after all? It was the battle of the chieftains. We’ll get to that presently.

So Nephihah was the big thing. They pitched their tents near the city of Nephihah. Of course, the Lamanites didn’t come out again. This is the last time they pull a trick. Verse 20: “. . . Moroni went forth in the darkness of the night, and came upon the top of the wall to spy out in what part of the city the Lamanites did camp with their army.” They put grappling irons over the wall and got into the city. “. . . Moroni caused that his men should march forth and come upon the top of the wall, and let themselves down into that
part of the city, yea, even on the west.” There’s always an unguarded spot. No matter how well you think you have a place defended, there’s always a weakest spot. There’s a weakest spot in everybody’s armor. There’s a weakest spot in any defense you want. It never fails; you can count on that. This is what happens here; there’s a spot that isn’t watched. That’s what the game of chess is about. [You think] I’ve guarded everything. Everything is taken care of; you can’t touch me. Suddenly, he’s got your king, just like that.

I was reading [the writings of] Arthur Clarke, the first man to discover the principle of radar in World War II. He wrote that if you had a million computers, and every computer made a million moves a second, how long would it take to play all possible games of checkers on a checker board? Just checkers, not chess, or three-dimensional chess. It would take three hundred billion, billion years to play all the games. It can be worked out very simply as factorial. You can see it comes out at that. I think I got the figures right. Anyway, it is very high. It would take lots and lots of time. Since the universe is only supposed to be ten or fifteen billion years old, three hundred billion times a billion years is quite a while to go on with a game. It would get boring by about that time, I think.

They found this [weak spot] on the west where the Lamanites hadn’t camped (you can’t be everywhere) and let them down by their strong cords, all within the walls of the city. When the Lamanites woke, they found the Nephites were inside the walls. They were only too happy to run away and get out of the walls. They fled by the pass and found themselves surrounded. [The Nephites] took a lot of prisoners; there was no great fighting here. These are the ones that said, please let us go off and join the Ammonites and we’ll be only too happy to do so. “. . . many of the Lamanites that were prisoners were desirous to join the people of Ammon and become a free people.” So the climate had certainly changed, and the word had spread that Moroni allowed them a way out. It was cheerfully granted to them according to their desires, verse 28 tells us. “Therefore, all the prisoners of the Lamanites did join the people of Ammon [wasn’t that nice? And these were the bad guys?], and did begin to labor exceedingly [they threw their hearts into it; this is the life; they appreciated what they were getting], tilling the ground, raising all manner of grain, and flocks and herds of every kind; and thus were the Nephites . . . relieved from all the prisoners of the Lamanites.” This is exactly what runs through the whole history of the ancient world in any country. The same thing goes on entirely. I have some cases to mention in a minute here. You’ll see this.

Verse 30: “. . . therefore Moroni went forth from the land of Nephihah to the land of Lehi.” When the Lamanites saw him, again they became frightened. The tide had turned, and their morale was shaken. “. . . Moroni and his army did pursue them from city to city [it’s a rout now], until they were met by Lehi and Teancum,” those two terrible commanders. Then they gave up—they’d had enough of it. They fled to the land of Moroni and gathered all in one body. This is what they do—the redoubt. You always fall back on a redoubt. That’s what Hitler did. All the plans for the last few months of the war were to fall back on one great redoubt, one great center, and make that their standing point. They would stand and make that [hold]. That was to be in the Austrian Alps at Berchtesgaden. The [Lamanites] gathered together all in one body. That’s the worst thing you can do, of course, but it’s all you can do. It’s psychological; they get together for support. We could see for months before that the German armies were all falling back to this one point, a big redoubt in the Austrian Alps. It didn’t work.

Verse 33: “Now Ammoron, the king of the Lamanites, was also with them.” The king in the center, like the battle of Flodden Field [1513] where the Scots all gathered closer and
closer around the king, until finally they died out as Walter Scott said, “a fierce but fading fire.” That’s called the “shield wall,” and it goes back to the old Norse practice. It was regular in every battle. It’s the same as the Asiatic principle. You must form a shield wall around the king; he must be the last to go. Many a battle ended with fierce combat around the shield wall, which they usually broke through. So the Lamanites were encircled. It was checkmate. The king was checked. He can’t be killed; he has to be checked.

Now it’s back to the personal element. There wouldn’t have been any of this if it hadn’t been for men like Ammoron. Teancum was a hot head, and “he was exceedingly angry with Ammoron [he took it as a personal grudge], insomuch that he considered that Ammoron, and Amalickiah his brother, had been the cause of this great and lasting war . . .” And they were, actually. If they hadn’t been there to get things organized [it wouldn’t have happened]. Remember, as Liddell Hart tells us, it comes back to individuals, after all. It came back to Hitler, after all. Until Hitler was eliminated in the Berlin bunker, the war would go on. “. . . Teancum in his anger did go forth into the camp of the Lamanites, and did let himself down over the walls of the city. And he went forth with a cord, from place to place, insomuch that he did find the king; and he did cast a javelin at him, which did pierce him near the heart.” But at the same time it cost him his life too. He awakened the servants, and they pursued Teancum and slew him. So now we’ve got checkmate. The war is pretty well over by now. But you have to get to the heart of the nest. Some sociologists have written that humans are like ants. The queen is the brain and the heart. As long as the queen is defended at the center, you have the ant hill. But as soon as she is eliminated, they become completely disoriented. They go and join the next queen they can find. Are we built like that? Apparently we are. It’s the ant heap.

Then Moroni marched forth and drove them out of the land. “. . . and they did flee, even that they did not return at that time against the Nephites.” So they were out now, and Moroni had won. Look at what has been going on at home. Are these the good guys? Verse 40: “And there had been murders, and contentions, and dissensions, and all manner of iniquity among the people of Nephi; nevertheless for the righteous’ sake . . . they were spared.” This is a basic principle of the Talmud. The Lord saves the wicked and everybody else. For the sake of the righteous, he lets the show go on because there might be some who will repent. We know the famous story in the Bible of Abraham pleading for Sodom and Gomorrah. Mr. Kaplan mentioned that yesterday. Abraham said, if there are fifty righteous will you spare it? Yes. Ten? Yes. This was sparing the wicked cities for the sake of the righteous people who are in them. He says that’s the only reason he is holding back his hand today, because there are enough righteous people to justify it. It’s a well known principle. “. . . because of the prayers of the righteous, they [the others] were spared.”

Here is a very interesting psychological note. Who is to blame for our circumstances? We use this for Vietnam [veterans] a lot. We say, “He’s wicked, he’s hardened, he’s insane because of the war.” But it works both ways, as it tells us here. You can see this a good deal. Verse 41: “But behold, because of the exceedingly great length of the war [you can hold on a lot, but it breaks you down] between the Nephites and the Lamanites many had become hardened [but notice] . . . and many were softened because of their afflictions [it had the opposite effect on others; they became softened, so don’t blame the circumstances for how you react], insomuch that they did humble themselves before God.” Those are the two ways you can react. You can become hardened, or you can become softened. Could you say they really won? They had been beaten so many times and suffered so much. That’s the trouble [with the United States]. We have always come in at the end of world wars, have only been in a short time, had great success, and been able to call the shots. So
it’s had more of the hardening effect.

Verse 42: “. . . he returned to the city of Zarahemla; and also Helaman returned to the place of his inheritance; and there was once more peace established among the people of Nephi.” They have talked about victory celebrations before in the Book of Mormon, but there is no victory celebration mentioned here. This is very interesting. Here it tells us, “And Moroni yielded up the command of his armies into the hands of his son, whose name was Moronihah; and he retired to his own house that he might spend the remainder of his days in peace.” He could have been dictator. He was the national hero, of course. He could have been king. They had just had a king. The king-men had taken over the city and run things. The people were used to the idea of a king. The judges hadn’t been in forever. This is only forty years of judges, after [nearly] six hundred years in the country. They were perfectly willing to accept a king, but this 39-year-old hero was not a dictator. Remember, he said, “I seek not for power but to pull it down.” He didn’t like that, and he didn’t like the shedding of blood. So this is truth and not rhetoric when he says it. Moroni was a great man. And nobody loved to retire and put on his civilian clothes more than George Washington did. He was a civilian through and through.

Notice that peace was established among the people of Nephi, but it would only last seven years. Imagine that—how sad. The whole thing will break out again on a different level with lots of crime mixed up in it. This reads like the end of a novel. It tells us what happened to the characters and how they ended up. They lived happily ever after. This is the last we see of these. After that seven-year gap it’s going to be a new crowd that emerges.

Verse 44: “. . . it had become expedient that a regulation should be made again in the church.” The church had been considerably shaken up at this time. What had been going on back there? Remember, the king-men had been in control. Their crowd had been running everything. They had driven out Pahoran, the chief judge, and usurped the throne. Everything had been shaken up, which, of course, would include the church. The church had to be practically reorganized here from the ground up. Helaman and his brethren went forth to declare the word of God just like missionaries—from the field to the field. “. . . unto the convincing of many people of their wickedness [this is the point—to show them that what they had been doing was wrong], which did cause them to repent of their sins and to be baptized unto the Lord their God.” The people were repenting and being baptized all over again, convinced of their sins. It says in verse 46: “. . . they did establish again the church of God, throughout all the land.” They had to refound the church, practically from the ground up. This happened in Europe where the church had been out of contact during the two world wars. In a very short time under their various leaders, they got strange doctrines and strange practices. There were terrible fights over who had authority. You might expect that; they had to straighten things up after the war.

The government was restored too. They had to choose new judges to replace the old ones that had been put in by the king-men. Verse 47: “And their judges, and their chief judges were chosen. And the people of Nephi began to prosper again in the land [there was a real post-war boom]. And they began to grow exceedingly rich.” Next we come to one of the very favorite passages in the Book of Mormon. People like to quote this a lot to show that you can be rich without being oppressive or any of the things that rich people shouldn’t do, because they weren’t spoiled by being rich. “But notwithstanding their riches, or their strength, or their prosperity, they were not lifted up in the pride of their eyes; neither were
they slow to remember the Lord their God; but they did humble themselves exceedingly before him.” The word humble is *humilis* which means “level with the earth.” They were level, and they were equal. They were rich as a people, but it wasn’t one above another. They were not divided into classes. This comes later, as we soon learn, but not now. That’s fine. We can begin to grow rich as a people, and we should. Brigham Young said, more than once, “I could make this people the richest people on earth.” And he could have. He was certainly our ablest economist, perhaps the best businessman in American history. The way he could manage things, he could build up a personal fortune like that. But he paid no attention to it. He said, “I would not walk across the street to make a business deal with anyone.” But he couldn’t help getting rich.

Anyway, they weren’t lifted up. You don’t have to be selfish. They were rich because they were humble and they were equal. But they had to work at it, and it’s only going to last four years. “And they did pray unto the Lord their God continually [you have to work at this sort of thing], insomuch that the Lord did bless them, according to his word, so that they did wax strong and prosper in the land.” So they had a post-war boom here.

Then this is the new generation. It’s no longer Helaman. It’s Shiblon, which is a good Arabic name. It means young lion. A very popular name in Israel is Ari, which means lion. He took possession of the sacred things, and he was a just man. Then the old order changed here. Moroni died at the age of forty-seven, just a few years after he retired. “And thus ended the thirty and sixth year of the reign of the judges.” He died of wounds possibly. He pushed himself too much, I’m afraid.

What’s the thing to do next? Colonizing, expanding, business, explode. Now they have to increase. They really expand. They are not going to just stay there and get rich and prosperous without spreading out in all directions seeking new lands, investments, etc. That’s what they do. Alma 63:4: “And it came to pass that in the thirty and seventh year of the reign of the judges, there was a large company of men . . . five thousand and four hundred men, with their wives and their children, departed out of the land of Zarahemla into the land which was northward.” They were settling new lands. Remember, our frontier has always been toward the west. Theirs was always toward the north and the east, but mostly pushing toward the north. We know where they landed on the south coast of Peru and came north. They have been moving north all along. [This group] goes as a company. Individuals have been going out. We read very often about groups that went out to explore, and some of them didn’t come back. They found strange things, etc. They have been moving around. “And it came to pass that Hagoth . . .” A very interesting name, you see. He has a Mycenaean name—you’d expect that. Remember, in Lehi’s day Israel was full of Greeks. The Egyptians were in occupation. Egyptian weights and measures and the Egyptian calendar was used. And the whole twenty-sixth dynasty was supported by Greek mercenaries. They occupied all the coast towns of Palestine in the time of Lehi. He was used to them, so you are going to get occasional Greek names in the Book of Mormon. He was an adventurous, curious man “and built him an exceedingly large ship, on the borders of the land Bountiful [we are always told that’s the far north on the seashore], by the land Desolation.” Notice that Bountiful and Desolation are together. There’s your coincidentia oppositorum.

Remember, before the war the priests would stand out before the army in the Battle Scroll, point to the enemy’s land and curse it as desolation, as *hormah* or *horeb*. They would bless the land of Israel as the land of plenty, the blessed land, and the land Bountiful. So you
have Bountiful and Desolation right together here. It was a desolate land; you can be sure of that.

They launched it into the west sea, so they are on the Pacific Coast here—by the narrow neck. Well, that’s misleading, because, as you know, at Panama the Panama Canal runs into the Atlantic on the west side and the Pacific on the east side. Remember, there’s that bend in the peninsula, and you enter the canal on the west side and go out on the east side in the Pacific. It’s turned around; people don’t realize that. It happens to be by the narrow neck, so we can’t say definitely this was the Pacific or this was the Atlantic. It turns back on itself for a short space right at the narrowest place. He was a real entrepreneur; you can see that, and also Corianton, the youngest son of Alma. Remember, Alma blessed his three sons, Helaman, Shiblon, and Corianton. He rebuked Corianton; he was a wild kid. Remember, he went over to the harlot in the land of Siron and played around. Alma had a secret liking for him, because he had been the same way himself. Here’s Corianton again living up to character. He’s a big time entrepreneur. When they settle these places up north, he decides to supply them in the manner that Sam Brannan and Brother Hammond supplied the people during the gold rush and got rich at that—not on the gold, but on supplying the fools that were hunting for it.

Verse 7: “And in the thirty and eighth year, this man built other ships.” The first ship came back with reports saying there were great times up there. They got more people to go with them and set out for the land northward. This boom was going on, and things were opening up in the far north. They went there, and they never heard of them anymore. This is the idea of race scattered everywhere. Don’t be too simple. They are going to mingle with all sorts of people. “And we suppose that they were drowned in the depths of the sea.” Well, they could have reached the islands. That’s what Heyerdahl showed. He left from Peru on the Kon Tiki[a primitive raft] and showed that you could cross there. It could have been done in those days. We know now from the legends of the people of the islands that they were capable of making these amazingly long sea voyages, navigating with almost perfect accuracy to a spot by the stars, the winds, and the currents. They knew things like that, so they could get along. These people disappeared, and they didn’t know where they went. Verse 9: “And it came to pass that in this year there were many people who went forth into the land northward. [They went by land; this was the frontier]. And thus ended the thirty and eighth year.”

In the next year Shiblon died also. Then Corianton was the next son, but he didn’t become [high priest] because he had gone away. He was in business. He had gone forth to the land northward in a ship to carry provisions to the people who had gone forth to that land. It’s like the story of Brother Hammond. He joined the Church in Hawaii. Then he came to San Francisco and was one of the first people to settle there. When the gold rush came, he soon discovered that he could make far more money by selling supplies in the gold fields of Sacramento than he could seeking gold himself. He and Sam Brannan entered into a partnership and got rich. Sam Brannan was the richest man in California.

But the Lord told [Hammond] to go [east] and join the Saints in the valley. Brigham Young wrote to him. He went to Mormon Island and set up and started to sell stuff there. He had a huge covered wagon which he loaded with all sorts of goods, which sold immediately because you couldn’t get anything there. He’d make a thousand dollars a day, and that was really something. The gold was very rich too at Mormon Island in the Sacramento River. He said he had a dream one night. The dream told him to get going and join with the Saints. He said, no, I can stay here and make a lot of money. Then
think of all the good I can do for the Church. I’ll use it to bring the Saints here. The next night he had the same dream, and a great flood of hot lava and filthy water came rushing down the river. The people went on panning gold and paid no attention to it, and it swallowed them up. People were scrambling to escape, and he barely escaped. The third night was too much, so he sold out and came to Utah. He used to say, “Don’t ever get the idea that your duty is to get rich to help the Lord. The Lord has all the money he needs. He will take care of that. Don’t worry about that. You do what he tells you to do.” Of course, if he tells you to get rich, that’s a different thing. But we use that as one of the Articles of Faith here, which it isn’t. But Sam Brannan was the richest man in California, and he died a broken man. I think they made a film about that.

Verse 11: “Therefore it became expedient for Shiblon to confer those sacred things, before his death, upon the son of Helaman, who was called Helaman, being called after the name of his father. Now behold, all those engravings which were in the possession of Helaman were written and sent forth among the children of men throughout all the land.” There are two National Geographic magazines I should have brought along. One of them is the October 1989. For the first time now it appears very clear that the Mayans did keep extensive written records. They didn’t think so before. They thought they were just the symbols of kings, but it seems they had written records. Of course, not many books have survived. He gave them the sacred things, the tiponi. This is very interesting. They’re mentioned later; we’ll talk about them later. “Nevertheless, these things were to be kept sacred, and handed down from one generation to another.”

This is another type. You have the national treasures all the time. Wherever the Hopis travel, they have the tiponi. It’s a big box with the sacred objects in it—certain corn things and certain vessels. The Hebrews traveled with the Ark of the Covenant, which had the sacred things in it. It had the scroll of the law, the lulab, and various other sacred objects in it. And the Japanese have sacred objects that are handed down from the emperor to his son. They include a sword and a mirror. These are the sacred objects that are handed down from early times. People usually have them. I remember what they are [among the Hopis]. They have certain kachinas and corn emblems. They have something very much like what the Hebrews had, something like a sheaf of corn bent over and tied—very simple, very primitive sort of things in there that have been kept from the earliest times. These people had the sacred things too. We get them later when Mormon’s father hands them over to him.

Verse 14: “. . . there were some dissenters who had gone forth unto the Lamanites.” Notice, here we get this racial complication again. Lots of people had gone over to the Lamanites. And they did a silly thing. They stirred them up to anger against the Nephites. There were these hotheads still going. They were able to raise a numerous army against the people of Moronihah, but it didn’t work. They were driven back.

Now we come to the book of Helaman where really serious developments take place. After just seven years “there began to be a serious difficulty among the people of the Nephites.” We begin that way, with a serious difficulty. This history is never very happy, is it? No wonder people don’t like reading the Book of Mormon. There’s not much happy talk. Long wars ruin everything. The people are fed up with war, so now they take to organized crime instead. I suppose that explains it. The question is who should have the judgment seat. Pahoran had died. Now who would have the judgment seat? There were three sons of Pahoran named Pahoran, Paanchi, and Pacumeni. Paanchi is the one indisputable Egyptian name in the Book of Mormon. Nobody can ever dispute that, either that Joseph
Smith could have invented it or that it could not be pure, 100% Egyptian, because Paanchi [Piankhi] was a very important person in Egyptian history, just before Lehi’s day. It means “Amon is my life.” And Pacumeni and Pahoran mean the person is a Syrian. That’s what an Egyptian would call a person from northern Palestine. These are familiar Egyptian names. These are not all of his sons; he had other sons. But they did form three divisions among the people. So they had an election, “... Pahoran was appointed [he was the oldest] by the voice of the people ...” They went for him, and Pacumeni gave in. He conceded the election. But Paanchi would not concede the election.

There’s quite a story about Paanchi [in Egypt]. His son was Herihor. His father was Korihor. There’s another Book of Mormon name. Paanchi founded a dynasty. His father was a high priest. He wasn’t brave enough to take the Pharaoh’s title to himself, but he gave the Pharaoh’s title to his son, Paanchi. He became the first Pharaoh of that dynasty.

This Paanchi doesn’t concede. He was exceedingly wroth. He was going to use flattery again to get the people to rise up in rebellion against their brethren. So there was more civil war after only seven years. He was condemned to death for that. People didn’t want any of that. This was rebellion. But some people were angry and backed him up. They hired a professional hit man to get rid of Pahoran. Verse 9: “... they were angry, and behold, they sent forth one Kishkumen, even to the judgment-seat of Pahoran, and murdered Pahoran as he sat upon the judgment-seat.” We are told that he was very expert in this sort of thing. Then, having done this murder, “they all entered into a covenant [here’s another brotherhood, one of those negative brotherhoods], yea, swearing by their everlasting Maker [they are a religious brotherhood], that they would tell no man [they have their oath of secrecy] that Kishkumen had murdered Pahoran. Therefore, Kishkumen was not known among the people of Nephi for he was in disguise at the time he murdered Pahoran.” Kishkumen and his band covenanted together. They covenanted and swore by their Everlasting Maker. It was a solemn bond among themselves, and they were all crooks. Then they mingled themselves very respectfully among the people. This is the way to get away with it. Great criminal enterprises are highly respected sometimes at various levels. You don’t know mingling in the streets in England if they are members of the IRA or members of the Hezbollah.

In Greece there are very eminent grave robbing families. Everybody knows they’re grave robbing families. They’ve agreed they never tell their secrets, but everybody knows who they are. This colonel I was talking about was in charge of the opening of a new aerospace center east of Athens at Tanagra. When they starting digging they discovered a grave with Tanagra figurines, which are extremely valuable. Immediately, they stopped the whole operation. There was a huge Tanagra cemetery that had been worked for generations by certain very dignified families. They invited us to dinner and discussed their enterprises. They were professional grave robbers. In Egypt it’s the same way. Some eminent families have been professional grave robbers for generations. It’s handed down from father to son. They showed them a very easy way of finding where the people were buried. They couldn’t figure out where these graves were. Why did we miss them? It’s the easiest thing in the world—just prod the ground with a rod, and where it goes down in soft ground there’s a grave. They are finding graves all over the place. But the fact is that we have all sorts of people walking around amongst us now, don’t we. Some make themselves known, like the “skin heads.”

Pacumeni was appointed chief governor over the people. Eight years after the last war, the Lamanites take advantage of this disruption. Then there’s another war. These secret
societies become very important in the Book of Mormon. I talked last time about the 
White Company. It was mostly English but included others; the leaders were English. It 
operated in France because of the disagreements between the kings of France and 
England as to who could claim which territories. The White Company was organized to 
go and snatch everything they could, and the king would pay them off. The White 
Company was enlisted by du Gueselin, the great hero of the French. He went to the aid of 
Henry the Bastard, who wanted to become king of Spain instead of his brother who was 
Pedro [Peter] the Cruel. He was a notoriously cruel king. The other side was supported by 
John the Bad of Navarre. These were the kind of people involved—King John the Bad, 
Pedro the Cruel, etc.

Although he was very unpopular and his brother was very popular, Pedro the Cruel was 
supported on his throne by Edward the Black Prince, the son of Edward III. The Black 
Prince was the one who left no trail but a trail of blood. He would hire himself out to 
anybody. He took his forces and they had a terrific battle between du Guesolin and the 
Black Prince. At the age of sixteen the Black Prince had performed sensational, and he 
became the hero of Europe, except on the other side. The question was who was to be the 
hero of Europe. It was purely between these two men and their companies. What on earth 
would bring Edward down into Spain fighting for Pedro the Cruel? Money. He was 
offered 250,000 gold crowns if he would do it. Not only that, but all the land and cities he 
could grab for himself on the side that didn’t belong to the king. This was the kind of deal 
it was. Of course, Pedro didn’t pay him a penny; he was a crook anyway. But he did it for 
money. And what was du Guesolin. He was just hiring himself out. He would have hired 
himself to the other side. There was the White Company on the other side. Some of you as 
kids may have read Conan Doyle’s famous novel *The White Company*, one of the best 
boys’ books ever written about the company that went down into Spain at that time. 
These companies would hire themselves out, and they were all over the place. They were 
not only characteristic of that century, but in every century you find them like that.

What happens when they go so far? They plunder and clean up everything, and life 
becomes impossible for the poor peasants. They have to supply everything. They have no 
rights or anything like that, so they revolt. Just after this in the 1370s, the peasants started 
revolts under a certain Jacques and became the Jacquerie. It spread all over. They 
organized into roving bands. They were dislanded peasants. They didn’t have any lands, 
homes, or anything else. Everything had been burned out, so they would organize 
themselves into desperate bands and go around plundering and robbing whatever they 
could. The reply to that was that finally the lords joined together. They were always 
fighting each other, but they wiped out the Jacquerie. That took a bit of doing. Then they 
started fighting among themselves again. Then there was another Jacquerie. Well, this is 
routine; this goes on. At the same time in the north, Stralsund was being besieged by 
Queen Margaret. She wanted to be queen of everything. She was queen of Denmark, 
Norway, and Sweden all at the same time. In the 1370s was the siege of Stralsund, which 
was the most important German town belonging to the Hanseatic League. It was relieved 
during the siege by the Victual Brethren. They formed themselves into a solemn 
brotherhood to deliver food to the town during the siege. So they called themselves the 
Victual Brethren and had solemn oaths, etc. After the war was over they were out of work, 
but they continued. They organized themselves then under the banner “Friends of God, 
but Enemies to All Men,” and they raided everything on the sea. They made the Baltic 
unsafe. But there was one person who made it even more unsafe. We talked about the two 
thousand young boys all in their teens. At the mouth of the Vistula there was a huge castle 
right in the sand. It stood on stone pylons, and it had a trap door underneath where you
would go in with a boat. It was run by Palnatoki who was twelve years old. He was the terror of the Baltic. He would go down and destroy anything. He had a sacred brotherhood, the Jomsburg. They swore sacred vows and were just like the Teutonic Knights on the shore just opposite them. There were these sacred bands going around to plunder everybody else under the name of holy deliverance. They were out for themselves. Little Palnatoki was only twelve years old and had everybody scared to death. So it goes.

Why do they call them sacred brotherhoods? It’s very obvious. To keep from plundering each other. They had to trust each other. You have to trust somebody. You remember the Pardoner’s Tale from Chaucer about the three crooks. The point is they couldn’t trust each other, and they all kill each other. Two of them gang together and say, “We’ll put him out of the picture; then we’ll share it between ourselves.” Immediately, who’s going to get it all? You have to trust somebody if you are going to operate at all, so they would form these sacred oaths, take these vows, and have all this secret stuff so they could trust each other and wouldn’t plunder each other. Well, this goes back much earlier, of course, to the assassins, the Old Man of the Mountain, and terror in the time of the Crusades in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Our word assassin comes from Hashishim. An assassin is somebody who is hopped up on hashish, which is hemp. Anyway, you get yourself hopped up and then you go out and commit these murders under the effect of drugs. They were all young kids the Old Man of the Mountain had. He terrorized all the Middle East and started terrorizing Europe. He could get anything he wanted. Well, there’s the Medellín [drug cartel] and the Mafia today. This is the way we do things. This happens with assassins. They’re a brotherhood; they’re families.

I didn’t bring my Pearl of Great Price, but that round thing, the Hypocephalus (the name is on it) belonged to Sheshonk. The Sheshonqides founded the twenty-second dynasty, and that’s not an Egyptian name. They were the Meshwesh, the great chiefs of the Ma. This is the principle. We can put it this way. We don’t have to go into this all today, but it’s lots of fun. Every great emperor and king is a descendant of a bandit. I don’t know any exception. There may be, but I’ve never found any yet who isn’t descended from a bandit who was just this same way. The great Meshwesh came in. At this time Egypt was being invaded, and they would form dynasties by the Meshwesh, the Tehemmu, and the Temeru. All these tribes were from the west and the south. They would invade the Nile Valley and demand tribute for their armies to go away. This one was hired by a great prince in Heracleopolis whose grandfather had been [a bandit]. This man was the son of Nimrod, and his name was Sheshonk. He made himself indispensable. The agreement usually was with these: You defend the land, and we’ll give you land. They were given lands and estates, and they would take to farming with their serfs whom they had captured in their various raids. They became very prosperous farmers, with the understanding that they were to come to the great lord’s aid in time of war. Well, very soon they built up their own strength. They didn’t have to come to anybody’s aid. The Meshwesh—the great chief of Ma,” as they called him—was ruling in Heracleopolis. Then his [son] married the daughter of the high priest of Thebes. By the fifth generation the twenty-second dynasty was founded by the Sheshonqides. It’s very interesting that we have the name Tubaloth [verse 16] here from that dynasty. There were five Sheshonks. This was the way they did it. The tribes would take over, and then they would become pharaohs. But the pharaohs before them had done that. Out of the thirty dynasties in Egypt maybe one or two of them were native Egyptian, but I doubt it. They were all Asians or from the west. Then came the people of the sea, relatives of ours. The peoples of the sea came in 1200. There were the Siculi from Sicily, the Sardenu from Sardinia, the Palaštu who
settled down in Palestine. There were the Achaeans, the Greek-speaking people of Homer. The Philistines spoke Greek too, a language very closely related to our own. But they were all raiding people. They came as raiders, and they settled down. They took what they could. If they couldn’t take it, they would make a deal and be settled down and join the king’s own army and add to it—it’s your chess game, etc. Well, this was in Egypt. In Asia it was even more active that way. To keep from plundering each other they formed the sacred brotherhoods. That’s all that has been going on in the world. People have been plundering each other and settling down. Where’s your civilization? The old kingdom of Egypt is the only case where we find what might be called a real civilization. The rest of them were just taking over. It’s amazing. We forget about the other brotherhoods. If it wasn’t for inspiration and intervention from on high, nothing would ever happen except this sort of thing.

I cut this out of the paper this morning to give an example of what’s going on in the world now. He goes down the list of things here [to show] the capacity for meanness. “I ask if there is no one in Iran, Syria, and Lebanon whose heart and mind does not lead them to say, ‘An end to this holding of hostages,’ but I see that the West Bank and other outrages against the kin of the hostage takers deadens the hearts and minds on both sides. . . . I thought of the searing violence that people resort to . . . . The assassins of the drug cartels in Colombia have just murdered two television journalists in Bogota, continuing their reign of terror against all who oppose the leaders of this multi-billion drug trade.”

See, it’s loot and rivalry and buildup. It will soon build up a legitimate government. They think they are legitimate. This is what has been happening all along. “Over the past weekend five more people were killed in the District of Columbia, a total of 369 homicides in the nation’s beautiful capital.” The homicides in England over a year would be somewhere around 100, but not 369 so far this year in one city, and that in the capital which should be the model of order, decorum, and control. This sort of thing goes on. So we still need the Book of Mormon. “Then I thought of a state-imposed inhumanity, murder, and hostages taken as I watched 70,000 black South Africans rally around 77-year-old Wallace ______ and others who were held hostage by the South African government for twenty-six years until they were freed last week.” Nelson Mandella and others. Then he goes, “The Nazis massacred hundreds in a Mideastern city in 1942.” We think of the Holocaust, Malai [massacre in Vietnam], Jamestown, the Philadelphia-Mississippi murders, and Idi Amin in Uganda. We’re doing the same sort of thing today. It’s not getting better; it’s getting worse. So I’m afraid we need the Book of Mormon after all. But are we going to take it to heart?

We got this far with these various things. But this is the process they were following. Notice, these people are quite mobile. They form themselves into governments. Religion is the one thing that holds them together, but it is very fragile and brittle and breaks apart. There is always trouble arising within the people themselves. Then this Coriantumr leads to trouble. I thought we would get them out of war for good into good, wholesome, everyday crime. We haven’t done it yet, so we’ll have to take up here next time.
Well, now, we’d better move along. After all, we’re in the first chapter of Helaman, and we’ve just come to Coriantumr’s exploit where he marched right into Zarahemla. The reason he could do it is because there was so much social unrest in Zarahemla. This Coriantumr was the leader, and he was appointed leader by the [son of] Ammoron who was the brother of that rascal Amalickiah. [Tubaloth] is a nephew of Amalickiah, and he was put in charge of things, but he put Coriantumr in charge. And here’s an interesting distinction. Notice Helaman 1:15: “. . . And they were led by a man whose name was Coriantumr; and he was a descendant of Zarahemla [that means he wasn’t a Nephite]; and he was a dissenter from among the Nephites.” So Nephites is a political term here, as it has been telling us for a long time. He dissented from the Nephite society. They all call themselves Nephites. He dissented from among the Nephites. He was among the Nephites. “. . . and he was a large and mighty man.” But he was a descendant of Zarahemla, who was a Mulekite, of course. He founded Zarahemla.

Verse 16: “Therefore, the king of the Lamanites, whose name was Tubaloth . . .” That’s very interesting because in the twenty-second dynasty [of Egypt] just before Lehi’s time, the names Tacalot and Tubaloth were common names. Tacalot was especially used, but it follows that same structure.

So Nephite was a political term here. He [Tubaloth] appointed Coriantumr leader for this enterprise. He marched smack down into Zarahemla, and the reason they were able to make such an easy break-in was like [what happened in] Singapore or Pearl Harbor. Their guard was down. They didn’t expect anything at all. But wham! It hit them like everything. The British said the Japanese could never come through the Malay Peninsula to Singapore. It would always be safe. So their mighty guns—they had sixteen-inch guns—couldn’t be pointed in that direction. They thought they were safe from that direction. That’s where the Japanese came from, of course. But as the great General Suvarov said, “Where a deer can go, a man can go, and where a man can go, an army can go.” So don’t expect there’s any terrain that can’t be negotiated by an army if a deer can do it. And that’s what the Japanese did on the Malay Peninsula. They just came down. The British had their big guns, but they couldn’t point them at the Japanese. They were pointed out toward the sea.

But there was so much contention among them [the Nephites]. They hadn’t kept sufficient guard, it says, over them. As I say, we all know about Pearl Harbor. We had all sorts of guards there, but it’s the mental state. That’s the all-important thing, you’ll notice, in war or anything else. And they marched with great speed. It was a real blitz attack here, it says in verse 19.

Verse 20: “Therefore Coriantumr did cut down the watch by the entrance of the city, and did march forth with his whole army into the city, and they did slay every one who did
oppose them, insomuch that they did take possession of the whole city.” This was Zarahemla, right in the center of the land. Pacumeni, the chief judge, had to flee. He was killed trying to get away. Coriantumr then obtained possession of the strongest hold in all the land, which was the center, and then he went forth to expand his conquest toward the city of Bountiful and obtain the north parts of the land. That was the strongest part, as you know. And he was met by small bodies, which they cut down. They should have practiced guerilla warfare, as we’ve learned since then. He marched right through the center, but Moronihah had put all the defenses on the outside. Of course, they never expected anything like that. So Coriantumr had actually gotten himself surrounded, and he was taken care of.

In verse 27 he marched through the land, slaying the people with a great slaughter, like the Nazi carnival going into Poland in September 1938. Tyrtaeus and Callinus, the Greek poets, described how the barbarians marched. It was their way to just go through and slaughter everything indiscriminately. It’s the normal procedure for armies anyway. Moronihah had sent forth Lehi to stop him. When he met Lehi that was too much, because Lehi was a very tough guy. They began to fall back on Zarahemla, and Moronihah had them in retreat. There was an exceedingly bloody battle, and Coriantumr was killed in the center [of the land]. Nobody had their hearts in this thing. Notice, neither side was very worked up about it. They were both willing to call it quits then.

Verse 32: “. . . and the Lamanites did yield themselves into the hands of the Nephites.” [What did the Nephites do? They just let them go, that was all.] . . . Moronihah took possession of the city of Zarahemla again, and caused that the Lamanites who had been taken prisoners should depart out of the land in peace.” Notice, no reparations, no indemnities. Well, was that wise? Look what they’d done. Here was an army that had raided their country, sacked their capital, killed people right and left, slaughtered everything, and yet they were let off without any reparations or indemnities or anything like that. Well, that was wisdom, of course, because the reparations and indemnities always lay the foundation for the next war. Remember World War I when Clemenceau and Lloyd George insisted on making the Germans pay the last pound of flesh? Everybody had been guilty there. Woodrow Wilson was against it, but his plan was turned down both by the Senate and those countries [France and England], especially Clemenceau. They really cracked down on the Germans and forced the situation that brought about World War II—creating economic policies that wrecked the German economy.

On the other hand, the reason we’ve had peace since World War II, in spite of people always whipping up the Cold War and things like that, is the wisdom of two men, George Marshall and Douglas MacArthur. The one put Europe back on its feet with the Marshall Plan instead of reparations, you see. Germany got back on its feet very quickly, and now Germany and Japan are the leading economic powers because of the wisdom of George Marshall and his plan. And the conquering hero, the Caesar, Douglas MacArthur, played the role of a very wise man. He could have done anything he wanted; he was the conqueror. As far as the Japanese were concerned, he was it. And what he did was gave them their democratic government. He made it possible, a man like that. There’s no point to making vicious reparations. After all, I think bombing Nagasaki and Hiroshima was bad enough. But no, there was to be no punishment, and there were to be no reprisals against them at all. That’s the reason we’ve had a fairly sane world since then for a while. So that’s the way you do it. And it’s very wise.
Then what happens? The troubles go on among the Nephites though. Notice they fill the judgment seat. This judgment seat is most important. Who has more power than the chief justice of the Supreme Court today? Nobody does. He has as much power as anyone. The Supreme Court “makes” the laws. They make the final decisions—it rests with them. So we had all this fuss about Bork and people like that. It’s a very important office. The question is asked now, shouldn’t that man be elected? He’s someone who’s appointed according to the whim of this person or that person, this interest or that. He’s appointed without having to run for office at all. The power of judges is very great, as you know, and has led to a lot of questions recently.

But Helaman was appointed to fill the judgment seat, and Kishkumen, the hit man, prepared to destroy Helaman too. And he was upheld by his band. Now we have organized crime, you see. Helaman 2:3: “And he was upheld by his band, who had entered into a covenant that no one should know his wickedness.” See, we do not know what’s behind Noriega. It goes way back, for example. There’s this organized crime, as we said before. If you were in business with a person who had no principles—you knew he didn’t—who would kill anybody for money, betray anybody and break any promise, or shoot you in the back, how could you possibly do business with him and get along with him? Well, men like that gang themselves together because they know in unity there is strength. The only way you can bind them is with these fearful oaths and covenants, terrible things they take.

So you have the evil brotherhoods as well as the righteous brotherhoods. There are two sides to brotherhood, just as there are two sides to Babylon. There’s a good side, a cultural side. Athens was a great Babylon for a while, but only very briefly as in the Book of Mormon. There are also two sides to the warlords, as a matter of fact. We just mentioned those. They can be the great conquerors; they can also be the great peacemakers. The greatest of the warlords was Alexander, and he did more for civilization perhaps than any other man did. And so there are good sides to the warlords; there are also good sides to the primitives who can have their bad sides. There can be tribes governed by witch doctors who practice cannibalism. That’s not a good side. On the other side there can be the gentle savages, whom Columbus discovered. There are such people—the Pueblo Indians, the peaceful Indians, the Moqui, the Hopi, etc.

Now here comes an expert, this Gadianton. He was a pro. He was the new professional Capo. Verse 4: “For there was one Gadianton, who was exceedingly expert in many words [he was a fast talker, and that’s important—they always are, you’ll notice], and also in his craft.” Now this was his craft, and he was polished in it. He was proud of it. He was efficient; he did a thorough job of bumping off. He would take a contract, and he was good at it, which was “the secret work of murder” and he could crack a bank anytime. He was good at murder and robbery. And we have experts in that today. He was a professional. He was the leader of the band of Kishkumen.

And he worked on them and said, look if you’ll put me in charge of the whole operation I can take care of my boys. If they would place him in the judgment seat—that’s all he wanted—“he would grant unto those who belonged to his band that they should be placed in power and authority among the people.” They’d have the high office. Well, this is just the feudal system. The big bandit gets his supporters, those who support him most valiantly. He’s the ring giver, as the opening lines of Beowulf tell us, going back to the eighth century there, typical ancestors. So that’s the way we take care of our boys. We do that in corporations, etc.
And here’s one of the servants of Helaman, “. . . having been out by night, and having obtained, through disguise, a knowledge of those plans . . .”. Now what was his disguise? His disguise was that of a defector, of course. He’d come over as an insider who knew all about it, and defectors are quite common. He was a mole. He was actually an undercover man; he was a double agent for Helaman. He knew all the workings, and this is why they would come to him and why Gadianton said, lead me to him. Get me an audience with the judge so I can bump him off. So this was one of the servants of Helaman; otherwise, this looks rather confusing, but it isn’t when you realize the nature of his disguise. He didn’t wear a mask or a false moustache or anything like that. But his disguise was his persona. He was a [pretended] defector. He’d come over; he knew all about Helaman. And he had attained “a knowledge of those plans which had been laid by this band to destroy Helaman.” This is their regular police practice. He was put in there as an undercover man, a double agent.

Verse 7: “And it came to pass that he met Kishkumen [in the street—going about his business and probably waiting for him], and he gave unto him a sign [Kishkumen knew who he was then and decided he could trust him] . . . desiring that he would conduct him to the judgment seat that he might murder Helaman.” He knew where the judgment seat was, but, you see, this is what you would ask of an insider or a defector, someone who knew about it. He could get him into the presence of the judge without being suspect. As the notorious Gadianton—well, he wasn’t notorious yet—he’d run a risk, but not with this man to take him there. So that’s why he was very pleased.

Verse 8: “And when the servant of Helaman had known all the heart of Kishkumen [he found out all about it], and how that it was his object to murder, and also that it was the object of all those who belonged to his band to murder, and to rob, and to gain power, (and this was their secret plan . . . now this did please Kishkumen exceedingly [he’s got an in to the judge now, and he knows what he’s going to do. It’s a big doublecross], for he did suppose that he should accomplish his design; but behold, the servant of Helaman, as they were going forth unto the judgment seat, did stab Kishkumen even to the heart.” He says, hey look here, bang, bang, bang. He let him have it. This is a typical episode from any evening of TV if you want to “edify” yourself. You’ll find this happening. This is the doublecross that dominates the scene now and makes things more exciting. They’ve used up all the other good guy/bad guy ploys.

Notice previously that “the servant of Helaman said unto Kishkumen: Let us go forth unto the judgment-seat.” How do we know it pleased Kishkumen if Kishkumen was bumped off on the spot as they were going? Well, the servant reported it. Of course we get all this information from the one informed servant of Helaman. He tells us the story. And so the servant of Helaman stabbed Kishkumen.

Verse 10: “And it came to pass that Helaman did send forth to take this band of robbers and secret murderers.” He came back and reported, of course, and Helaman wasted no time. They were going to raid the headquarters and do a bust, but they were too late. They’d already flown. This happens too. “But behold, when Gadianton had found that Kishkumen did not return he feared lest that he should be destroyed.” Very shrewd and very suspicious, immediately he said, we’ve got to get out of here. There’s something wrong. So his band followed him in flight out of the land. They wasted no time at all, so the bust was a bust. Verse 11: “And they took their flight out of the land, by a secret way, into the wilderness; and thus when Helaman sent forth to take them they could nowhere
be found.” So that was that. But now he says, I’m going to tell you this. Verse 13 is very important: “. . . ye shall see that this Gadianton did prove the overthrow, yea, almost the entire destruction of the people of Nephi.” It proved the overthrow and almost the destruction, just as World War II proved the overthrow of the German government, the Nazi regime. It was the overthrow and almost the destruction of the people—almost destroyed the nation. They’re not the same thing. But the Gadianton band did overthrow the government and did almost destroy everything too while they were at it, but not quite. Well, I didn’t mean the book of Helaman; I mean the next book, he says.

So, now we go on to happier times, or do we? The next year, the forty-third year, was a nice time. There was a little pride in the church, some little dissensions, but they were taken care of. There were no contentions in the forty-fourth year, and not much contention the next year. But then it started heating up. Four years after, all hell broke loose. How could that be, so soon? Why would they change so quickly? Well, we see these things happen. Verse 3: “. . . in the forty and sixth year there was much contention and many dissensions [they couldn’t stand prosperity very long, could they?]; in the which there were an exceedingly great many who departed out of the land of Zarahemla.” This is the movement north, and it was a regular one. There were good people in it too. It says here that the people of Ammon, the Ammonites, did it. Maybe it was to escape the general unrest. Verse 12: “. . . there were many of the people of Ammon, who were Lamanites by birth, did also go forth into this land.” So it was a general pioneering movement. They were opening up new lands in a time of prosperity. In this time of troubles, of political stress, of rivalry, and all sorts of things like that, they started this big movement toward the north.

“They did spread forth into all parts of the land.” Now here we get some geography. We try to avoid it, but there must be some here. A little later on we’re told that a certain place here was a day’s journey by a Nephite from one sea to the other, so it was still in a pretty narrow neck. Verse 4: “And they did travel to an exceeding great distance [that’s a long way] . . . to large bodies of water and many rivers.” Well, is that the Mississippi Valley or the Great Lakes? Is that central Mexico, which was full, as you know, of great lakes at that time. Mexico City was built on a swamp, on lakes.

Verse 5: “Yea, and even they did spread forth into all parts of the land, into whatever parts it had not been rendered desolate and without timber.” Now we get into a very interesting thing. This next section to verse 12 is the ecology and the environment. See, it’s only within the last ten years or so, just very recently, that people have been taking that seriously. Now we realize it’s one of the great threats. In 1830 when America was covered with woods and everything else, they regarded it just something to be cleared away. But whoever got interested in ecology and the environment? This is a wonderful passage on that. This whole story here brings out the importance of it. Up until very recently—well in most cases still—ecology and environment were dirty words in Utah. They were against business, they slowed it down and made it expensive. They set natural resources aside which could not be immediately exploited. Until as recently as five or six years ago, anyone who mentioned those things in the state of Utah was sick. You were interfering with business. But now, things are different, aren’t they? All of a sudden we realize [the importance of it]. This is what happened here. This third chapter is very valuable for other things too. It shows us that there had been other people in the land—not Jaredites. It had been inhabited before. Every time we discover a ruin or artifact you say well that’s Nephite or Lamanite. Well, that’s absurd. The Book of Mormon doesn’t require that at all. Just as it says more people can come after, more people came before.
And this is an example here.

So they spread into all parts of the land. I want to show you a small map and a large one. You see the general idea of the thing we get here is, which is it? Is it east/west or north/south? Notice it goes more east and west than north and south, so you have seas north and seas south. It talks about the sea north and south and the sea east and west. From the same vantage point, they could move toward the sea north, south, east and west. And that’s so. There are places here where that can be done. We think of Central America as running north and south. It doesn’t at all. It runs east and west mostly, as you see there. I have a big map, but there’s nothing to stick it on. It’s a pretty good one. It’s from National Geographic, and it shows what the layout is on a larger scale. [He shows them things on the map.] Here’s the Panama Canal. If you enter from the Pacific side, you go from east to west. Here are the lines of longitude here, you see. Panama City on the Pacific is definitely east of Colon on the west. It can be very confusing.

And so the Book of Mormon keeps telling us about seas on the east and the west and the north and the south. As I say, there’s no point in getting all tangled up in this at all. But you get the general idea. And here is a land of many waters, Nicaragua, and many rivers too. The clutch on Nicaragua wasn’t United Fruit. It was that we were going to build a canal. All through the twenties and thirties and as late as the forties, the big plan was to get rid of the Panama Canal, which was too dangerous and too exposed, and build a real canal right through Nicaragua, where it would have been easier. It’s water all the way. See, you can go from the Indio River right over to this huge Lake Nicaragua and out that way. It actually would have been easier in Nicaragua.

Then there’s the valley of Mexico, and that’s all water. There are places like that, but how far is exceedingly far, I’d like to know. Here’s another thing I was going to read from, and it’s rather important, too, to realize this. It’s written by a Peruvian anthropologist and archaeologist. Here it shows a picture of North and South America, and he shows the distance from one end of the Inca empire to the other end up here to be farther then from the entrance to the isthmus to New York City. The point he makes here is that this Inca empire is through the rugged Andes, and yet they had roads the whole length of it. They moved back and forth on a daily basis. They had a milk run from one end to the other, which is greater than the distance from here to New York, or from Mexico City to New York. You go right through. And it’s much more rugged. This could be much more quickly negotiated than this, which was done quite often. So, is Cumorah too far? Is Cumorah a bridge too far? I don’t think it is, not the way Indians move around.

Well anyway, we’re not going to argue about those things. You can argue about that till the cows come home. So they went a great distance. But this is the point here. Helaman 3:5: “ . . . into all parts of the land, into whatever parts it had not been rendered desolate and without timber, because of the many inhabitants who had before inherited the land.” When we get to the history of the book of Ether, if we do [we’ll see] they were nomads. They were very mobile in the manner of the Asiatics. They were destroyed in this north country. They were in the north areas and were a different people entirely. It was a different culture. But these people were obviously practicing what the Mayans still practice, the age-old slash and burn, and they had cut it all down. You cut down the jungles, and the ash deposits make the soil rich for a few years. But then it wears out. As you know, jungle soil is very poor soil, so you have to move on. What you do is cut some more jungle, and then get the ash for a while. So with slash and burn you keep progressively destroying the forest. That’s what’s worrying people today, of course. Now it’s being done for the cattle raisers. This is being done systematically, not only there but
in other countries as well, but especially there.

Verse 6: “And now no part of the land was desolate, save it were for timber [they didn’t have that]; but because of the greatness of the destruction of the people who had before inhabited the land it was called desolate.” So they called that land desolate. There had been people there before, but there was not a trace of them left. And we know that lots of Jaredites escaped and went back into the woods. People with Jaredite names would turn up and intermarry with the Lamanites. But here the land was called desolate. It was absolutely cleaned of forest. All you see in a vast area of Oregon now, which was beautiful just after World War I, is stumps as far as you can see. They’ll never grow back again. You don’t realize that Provo Canyon was densely forested until a great forest fire in 1915, and it never came back again.

Verse 7: “And there being but little timber upon the face of the land, nevertheless the people who went forth became exceedingly expert in the working of cement [this is a thing they made quite an issue about in the Book of Mormon]; therefore they did build houses of cement, in the which they did dwell.” Well, cement can be any bonded building material. You use rocks with lime, adobe, or something between them. But this is real cement. In the *National Geographic* for August 1980 there’s something about that. Let me read you this section here from a talk I gave earlier down in Merida in Yucatan. S. Jeffrey K. Wilkerson says here: “In use of poured concrete, says my engineer colleague David Hyman, El Tajin’s builders excelled at techniques remarkably similar to today’s.” (*National Geographic*, August 1980, p. 216). It wasn’t just building with bonded masonry. It was pouring concrete. It was real cement houses, concrete just as we talk about it, which came as a surprise to me. I didn’t know they had it [to that extent].

It says here: Many Latter-day Saints are disturbed when they read of the remains that must be much older than Book of Mormon times. In their simplistic reading of the Book of Mormon, they assume that the only people permitted in the hemisphere before Columbus were either descendants of Lehi or Jared and his brother. The Book of Mormon corrects this quite handily here. We learn in this passage here—we haven’t finished it yet—how the Nephites, pushed up from the south an exceeding great distance. It’s more than 1,200 miles air miles from Guatemala to Mexico City, you know. They didn’t have to go into North America, into the Ohio Valley, to go an exceeding great distance. In a major infiltration they settled a clearly defined territory. It tells us here, there was a sea to the north and to the south, as well as to the east and the west. And of course that can only be found in one region. That’s Central America, one we were just pointing out here. And the expressions referring to the seas were ancient. And in the *Codex Ramirez*, which was published in 1944, we are told how the first Montezuma conquered almost from sea to sea and ruled from the sea southward and in another direction to the limits of the great sea. So they thought of it as a sea southward, rather than a sea west. So it is in this territory here. This is the way it puts it. Montezuma ruled almost from sea to sea. That would be higher up. He ruled to the sea southward and in another direction the limits of the great sea, 300 leagues to the south.

The central highlands of Mexico are described in all early records as a land of many waters. Indeed Edward Seler wrote that the name usually translated as highlands really meant “land of many waters.” The complete deforestation of the land doesn’t suit the vast forests of the north—they wouldn’t completely lay them bare—but was a very serious problem in ancient Mesoamerica, because of the slash and burn economy.
So we can compare this passage in Helaman 3:5–10 with the condition in the valley of Oaxaca in the fifth to the ninth centuries [A.D.] So we’re going back 1500 years there “when overpopulation created a growing shortage of timber for construction and firewood for cooking, apparently reaching such an alarming extent that the hills were completely stripped of forest.” That’s from a recent survey. So way back 1000 to 1500 years ago they were doing the same thing in Oaxaca, which is one of the most lush and beautiful places down in Coatepec Peninsula. They not only didn’t have enough for building, but they didn’t have enough for firewood. They didn’t have enough for scraps to go out and gather firewood for cooking. That’s an alarming extent. Completely barren. That’s exactly what it tells us here. The land was bare. And it tells us that they were alarmed and took drastic measures here. Verse 8: “And it came to pass that they did multiply and spread, and did go forth from the land southward to the land northward, and did spread insomuch that they began to cover the face of the whole earth, from the sea south to the sea north, from the sea west to the sea east.” See verse 8 shows us they were in an area where there were seas in all directions.

And this is a lesson in ecology. It shows how strict they were. There was to be no cutting of trees—any trees at all. Verse 9: “And the people who were in the land northward did dwell in tents, and in houses of cement, and they did suffer whatsoever tree should spring up upon the face of the land that it should grow up [they wouldn’t let you touch a tree, a growing tree], that in time they might have timber to build their houses, yea, their cities, and their temples . . .” So until a tree grew up, all cutting was forbidden. So you’re not going to get firewood out of that, are you? What were they going to burn? Coal? Verse 10: “And it came to pass as timber was exceedingly scarce [he keeps harping on that] in the land northward, they did send forth much by the way the way of shipping.” What they did was ship timber.

Well now, if you go back to the earliest records of Egypt, the Old Kingdom, to the time of Seti or the time of Pepi II [you find a similar situation]. He left lots of inscriptions. Then there’s that great account from the year 1085 B.C., the story of Wenamun who was an agent of one of the pharaohs in the north. He was sent up to buy timber for Egyptian buildings. Of course, Egypt is not rich in timber, to say the least, as you know. So they would bring it from Lebanon. And it is described in those texts way back before 2000 B.C., and then the other was 1085 B.C. He had letters of credit. [It told] how he was to buy them and the trouble he had in the business. At times he was robbed, etc. And then he described how the oxen pulled the great logs down from Lebanon, how they were lined up and classified on the beach all ready to be taken to Egypt. They were pulled by special ships. This was going on 4,000 years before Christ. The earliest tombs have these cedars of Lebanon in them.

At the same time [there are] records of Babylonia on the other side of the mountains from Lebanon. There were streams there, but there were no streams on this side. They would pull them down. It’s very abrupt, as you know. You can see the pictures from there. Hills really pile up very high. They are terraced. There are very steep terraces all over Lebanon. But on the other side there were streams, and they would only work when there was heavy snow and in the springtime, during the spring floods. Then they would make rafts and float them down the river to the Euphrates. They would go right down to furnish the Babylonian civilization with their timber. The result is today the flag of Lebanon is red, white, and green with a green cedar tree—a cedar of Lebanon—in the middle. But you can find about half a dozen cedars of Lebanon today. In a few little pockets where they’ve
been preserved you’ll find a cedar. They’ve sprung up, and there may be a hundred or two in the land. That’s about all there are. You can’t find [many] cedars of Lebanon. It has been bare ever since, but at one time [Lebanon] supplied the world with all the timber it needed for thousands of years. Plato described the same thing happening in the Peloponnesus and how barren it was. So ecology is more important than you think. Once those forests go, they don’t come back. The French made a very extensive study of the Sahara Desert after World War II in which they concluded that it had been a mimosaplain as late as the Middle Kingdom of Egypt, full of sparkling streams and lakes, etc. Now it’s a manmade desert. The Sahara? That’s amazing. But deserts do spread. We’re living in a day of spreading deserts. As you know you can stand on the cliffs on the west bank of the Nile and watch those huge dunes the way they move, swallowing up what little farmland is left now, while the population increases.

These are serious problems. And isn’t this something here? Way back in the 1820s in upstate New York, which was all wooded country, you had to clear the woods by breaking your back, as Joseph Smith’s family did to get enough land to cultivate. [It’s amazing] that the destruction of timber can be alarming, can be serious, can damage a civilization and should be very strictly dealt with. And here we’ve got it in the Book of Mormon, so it keeps us up to date.

Verse 11: “And thus they did enable the people in the land northward that they might build many cities, both of wood and of cement.” This was by transporting timber. In the ancient world transporting timber was a big business. It went by sea in the Mediterranean. The main business was cedar of Lebanon for many years at the east end of the Mediterranean.

And many people of Ammon joined [the migration] too. This was a peaceful migration, and “many records [were] kept of the proceedings of this people . . .” Now here’s an interesting thing: Many records, very large, we can’t give a hundredth part of them here. It tells about them. Now here’s the list of themes and subjects that you might write on. Take your choice, here. Notice, there are accounts of wars. We’ve been talking too much about them. And contentions is another theme it’s talking about now, social troubles, “. . . and dissensions, and their preaching, and their prophecies, and their shipping and their building of ships, and their building of temples, and of synagogues and their sanctuaries, and their righteousness, and their wickedness, and their murders, and their robbings, and their plundering, and all manner of abominations and whoredoms, cannot be contained in this work.”

Well, what about these vast libraries? Are we going to find any? I remember when I was teaching at Claremont there was a girls’ humanities class at Scripps College there. I taught it on Tuesdays, and Professor Goodspeed, who had retired from the University of Chicago (he was the big New Testament man in those times), taught it on the other day. The girls used to say, “But look, Professor Goodspeed said there was no Hebrew written in the time of Christ. Nobody wrote Hebrew. There’s not a scrap of colloquial Hebrew or anything like that written from the time of Christ.” And there wasn’t at that time. But then along came 1948 and all of a sudden they started finding the Dead Sea Scrolls. Now we have thousands and thousands of documents and letters all written in cursive Hebrew by the Jews. To that time it was entirely unknown.

This is the way it is. These records are always discovered in an explosion when you get almost too many. For example, ancient studies began with the discovery by Langdon of
Nippur in the 1850s and the great library of Assurbanipal. It was a tremendous library. They didn’t discover just a record here and there; they discovered a whole library. Then a little later, in 1887, they discovered the Amarna library, correspondence between Egypt and the princes of Palestine up to the time the Hebrews took over there. The Hebrews are in it and everything else—all these hundreds and hundreds of letters. It was too good to be true when they started shipping these letters. They were on tablets and they were written in cuneiform of all things, yet they were in Egypt. When they started arriving in Paris, they started destroying them, saying, “These are fakes, they’re no good at all.” Then suddenly they did a doubletake and realized they were genuine. What a difference this made! And so you have the Amarna letters.

Then in the 1930s all of a sudden [they discovered] in a totally new language, a north Semitic language, the libraries of Ugarit, which was a very rich city on the coast occupied by Phoenicians, people related to the Greeks. They spoke the Canaanite language. In Lehi’s time there were all sorts of Greeks there. But this was earlier. The letters of Ugarit are from 1300 to 1200 B.C. And the Amarna is a huge library that [appeared] all of a sudden. As I said, just after Professor Goodspeed died all of a sudden they discovered Qumran and the great texts there with thousands of documents. Nobody paid any attention to Coptic, but now if you’re going to study for the ministry it’s as important as Greek. Why? Because at the same time they discovered the library at Qumran they discovered the Nag Hammadi library, which is all in Coptic. It’s the earliest Christian texts and again, a huge library. We have shelves of it here. And so it goes.

And then finally in the 1970s near Aleppo the Italians were finishing a dig. It was the last day. They were closing out for the season, and somebody unearthed a corner of a tablet there. It was the first written tablet they had found. They got excited, made further diggings, and found a room in which there were 15,000 tablets stored. So you find these records all at once, and you find them at a particular time—late. They mostly come out late. I wouldn’t be at all surprised that their records [mentioned in verse 13] are stowed somewhere, and sometime they’ll turn up.

Well, after all, Father De Landa burned thousands of them. That may have been the big library that he destroyed. He did the same thing as the buyers of the Roman Sybilline documents. There were the seven Sybilline texts, and the Roman senate was going to buy them for a high price. The Sybil asked too high a price. They said, “Nothing doing,” so she destroyed one tablet and doubled the price. When they wouldn’t take it she destroyed another and doubled that price. Well, increasing exponentially, you can imagine the fabulous price she asked for the last tablet, and they were only too glad to get it then. So this is the way it went. And it the same thing with the Nag Hammadi texts and the Qumran texts and others. We paid no attention to them, and they come out all of a sudden. Father De Landa did a double take too. He bitterly regretted what he had done when it was too late. Don’t lock the door. So we [should] be careful about these things, the preservation and so forth.

So their records are there. There’s a big ball of wax here, and here’s the subject. It says here [in Helaman 3:15]: “But behold, there are many books and many records of every kind, and they have been kept chiefly by the Nephites [but not only by them]. And they have been handed down from one generation to another by the Nephites . . .” The people were scattered on the face of the land and mixed with the Lamanites. The Nephites and mixed with the Lamanite, so don’t call an Indian a pure Lamanite by any means. And the Nephites had become more wicked, and wild, and ferocious than the Lamanites. Here we
have a switch. This is another story now. As you notice, we’re told that the unrighteous people become a dark and loathsome people and so forth, but there’s no mention of skin change here or anything like that. That doesn’t necessarily accompany a thing at all. We won’t go into that. That’s another story. We take it up the first semester.

Here [verse 17] there’s still great contention in the land. How can they carry on this contention year after year? Well, the Book of Mormon came out in 1830, and up until then the country had been rather quiet. Then as you remember what happened in 1832. Then all through the 1830s, the 1840s, and 1850s there was nothing but ferocious, vicious contention in the country that led up to that terrible Civil War, the worse civil war we know about. And all through those years, that terrible contention never stopped over the issue of slavery and the new territories. So it’s not impossible that they could carry on for six years here being nasty to each other.

Then came Helaman. He filled the judgment seat with justice and handed it over to his two sons, Nephi and Lehi. Then there was a letup. Things got better then all of a sudden. But at the same time, in verse 23, the mob was moving in. They were doing it very subtly, not advertising themselves. Verse 23: “. . . there was continual peace established in the land, all save it were the secret combinations which Gadianton the robber had established in the more settled parts of the land.” In the urban districts, of course—that’s the way they do it. But it certainly caught the government off guard. It was not known unto those who were heads of the government. See, they moved in very subtly. They’d learned. They had to run for their lives before. They cleared out and now they’re going to be very shrewd about it, as they are today, of course. All this infiltration has been going on for years. They’re not just the drug [lords] but the others, the capos of the Mafia. “. . . were not known unto those who were at the head of government; therefore they were not destroyed out of the land.” Nobody knew they were there.

And the church enjoyed great prosperity. They were absolutely amazed at what’s happening in the church. This is the forty-ninth year. Verse 25, “. . . and so many the blessings which were poured out upon the people, that even the high priests and the teachers were themselves astonished beyond measure” at this great progress. We’re astonished at the progress of the church today. There’s no real reason for it that you can explain, except that it’s the work of the Lord. It’s happening in the strangest places where you’d never expect it, very strange places. They were baptizing people “even tens of thousands.” They never expected that. Now this is a very interesting thing here in verse 27. We’ve been talking about people who couldn’t get along together. There was constant trouble and so forth. But who is to blame and what are we to do about it? Human nature is human nature. If you get a kennel full of dogs and you don’t pen them up or anything, you just let them loose, and what happens? One dog is bound to start making trouble. There are dominants and submissives among all animals, and someone’s going to fight back. There’s going to be trouble, and then there’ll be pandemonium in the kennel, as long as the master isn’t there. But if the kennel master is there, everything will be all right. Men are the same way. They will not behave themselves if they’re left to themselves. But the Lord, Jesus Christ, is the one around whom we can center our hopes for any kind of peace and cooperation here. We can’t do it ourselves. We cannot, any more than dogs will behave. With statistical probability or anything else, they will not behave, and once they fight, there will be pandemonium. All the dogs will get into it. It has happened again and again in the world, and it’s happening today, so these are very wise verses here.

Verse 27: “Thus we may see that the Lord is merciful unto all who will, in the sincerity of
their hearts, call upon his holy name.” You don’t trust in yourself, you see. You must call upon his name, because you don’t have the wisdom to carry it off. “Yea, thus we see that the gate of heaven is open to all, even to those who will believe on the name of Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God. [It’s perfectly open to anyone.] Yea, we see that whosoever [notice he’s talking about individuals—no matter how the world goes, the individual can be happy here] will may lay hold upon the word of God, which is quick and powerful, which shall divide asunder all the cunning and the snares [that surround us—everything is deception with us as far as we’re concerned] and the wiles of the devil, and lead the man of Christ in a strait and narrow course . . . .” You can go through it all and won’t be affected.

There is nothing under our feet in our society. We have no solid ground. We’re just going on from day to day, like the stock market. We’re just carrying on and living, as I say, from one day to the next. That’s what you do. There’s nothing under our feet. As Shakespeare says, “To be imprisoned in the viewless winds and blown with restless violence round about the pendant world.” [Measure for Measure, Act III, Scene 1]

The earth is pendant; it just hangs there. We’re [blown] in restless violence and we have no place to put our foot. We have no security, no solidity, nothing you can rely on, except we rely on the darnnest things. When the market cracks, then what happens? But notice: “. . . divide asunder all the cunning and the snares and the wiles of the devil, and lead the man of Christ in a strait and narrow course across that everlasting gulf [this isn’t just rhetoric he’s pulling off, at all—it’s a very strict instruction of our situation] of misery which is prepared to engulf the wicked—And land their souls, yea, their immortal souls, at the right hand of God . . . to sit down [notice, sit down] with Abraham, and Isaac, and with Jacob, and with all our holy fathers, to go no more out.” See, that’s solid security, to sit down and never have to go out again. This is very vivid imagery here. This is what atonement is. Home at last. At-one-ment. To be one, united with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That’s what the gospel is for, and so they could have continual rejoicing with this assurance in Zarahemla.

Well, how can you rejoice continually? Don’t you get worn out? No, I’m told from many reliable sources that the pioneers rejoiced continually. They were happy all the time. In their worst sufferings they said, we just celebrated—we just thought it was a picnic. We were like people who had just been let out of jail. Sure we had hard work and so forth, but it was fun.

Well, it is possible to be that way, but we certainly have forgotten a few lessons, haven’t we? Here’s something to cling to.

1. Brother Nibley is reading from one of his own writings.
TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 3, Lecture 75
Helaman 3–6
Apostasy
The Gospel and World Religions

We begin with Helaman 3:30: “And land their souls, yea, their immortal souls, at the right hand of God in the kingdom of heaven, to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and with Jacob, and with all our holy fathers, to go no more out.” To sit down—it uses that a number of times in the Book of Mormon. Remember, you’re invited to go into the tent and sit down—have place with us. What he’s talking about is the old Mosaic law, which was abolished after Lehi left Jerusalem and the temple was destroyed. It was never the same after that. These people were familiar with the old custom—that going in and sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is very important. That’s the yeshiva, which is the atonement. Yeshiva means “sitting down.” This is a very important part of the atonement, talking about the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur. This is the way it’s given in Deuteronomy. The Lord parts the veil of the tent, which is the kippur, the covering, and he says he’s ready now to converse with Moses. Moses is supposed to come in. After they have conversed and [he has] passed the test, then he comes in and sits down. But the sitting down is very important. That’s the yeshiva, and yashav. Yashav means to settle down in a place permanently, and yeshiva means to take a seat by somebody.

The word atonement is only found once in the New Testament. It’s found a number of times in the Old Testament, but only once in the New Testament. And it’s not found at all in the Revised Standard Version. They don’t use atonement at all. The word doesn’t even appear in the New Testament. They use instead reconciliation, keeping it quite literal, from reconcilio. Reconciliation means “to return and sit down beside somebody again.” And, of course, the yeshiva goes along with the teshuva. Yåshûv means “to return.” So you have yeshiva and teshuva. You return and then you sit down. You sit down by the side of the Lord, and you sit down again because you’ve been there before. It’s reconciliation. It’s redemption. This means buying back something that he had before. We weren’t just created out of nothing, you see. We are returning to his presence. We’ve been there before, and the whole thing is a sense of returning to his presence. That’s what reconciliation is, which is the equivalent of atonement, and you can see where that comes from. You know this, of course. This is at-one. It is not a Latin word. It’s not a Greek or Hebrew word. Atonement a good old English word, a theological word. At-one-ment, being at-one with the family, to go out no more, as he says, “with all our holy fathers, to go no more out.”

There’s your solid security. You’re home at last. You’re back where you started from, and we hope that you’re back with some added credentials, etc. The only passage [where atonement is found] is in Romans 5:11 in the New Testament. There in the King James [translation] you’ll find the word is atonement, but now in the Bible they use only reconciliation, which is a good word. We’re reconciled. To be reconciled with someone is [to return to] someone from whom you’ve been separated before. They say separated by
the Fall. But this is return to what? Separated from what? It isn’t a return to Eden, you see. It’s a return to the tent. You have the tent of covenant, and that’s what the kippur is. Well, we won’t go into that too far.

We talked about continually rejoicing. Then something happens in the fifty-first year. It didn’t take long, did it? The cloven hoof appears again in verse 33 when things go bad. “. . . the pride which began to enter into the church—not into the church of God, but into the hearts of people who professed to belong to the church of God.” Ah ha, there are two churches. There are the people who profess it, and the people who really are. They all profess to belong to the church of God, but how do you distinguish? Well, as Paul says, our security rests in this. God knows his own. Only he knows the ones who are true Latter-day Saints and those who aren’t. We have no means of knowing. You’d be surprised what rascals there are among us and what good people there are among us too. But you never suspect.

Patriarch Hoagland from southern California was an inspired patriarch my mother knew very well. He went with one of the brethren to a conference in southern Utah to excommunicate a member who had acquired the disfavor of the community. He smoked and he drank and he swore some, so they didn’t want him in their society. They were going to excommunicate him. The night before the conference Brother Hoagland had a vision. It wasn’t a dream. He said he found himself in a timeless world. He found himself in a conference in the other world, and there was great excitement. There was a great throng of people there, and he noticed presidents of the Church in the throng and former apostles. There was an air of great expectancy, and he [wondered] what are the people so excited about? They said, well, the Savior is going to drop in on us today. The Lord is going to be here. And wow, he was so excited! Under great tension they all stood up, and there were two chairs on the stand. The Lord came in, and with him who should come to sit on the other chair except the bum they were going to cut off from the Church? He was the one who sat down by the Savior, side by side. Well, that was a lesson to him. He immediately started to look into things. It seems that this man who had broken the Word of Wisdom had always been kind to the poor; he shared everything he had with them. If there was a widow who needed help, he would do everything to help her, etc. But he was doing it quietly, and he was always helping. If they needed extra work on the farm, he’d go out and work for them. That’s the sort of man he was, but he swore. People have been known to swear in Dixie. And he smoked. People have been known to smoke in Dixie too. But that wasn’t what counted.

Now here again there were lots of people who professed to belong to the Church. We all profess it, but who really belongs? How big does the Church have to be to satisfy me? I would feel great if there were 100,000 members in the Church. I would think, boy, we have it made. Really. But it’s grown pretty big now, and in distant parts people that haven’t entered into the Wasatch community may be living the gospel as far as we know, and not be full of vanity. This pride begins to enter into the Church.

I was home teaching with a person who had been a bishop up in Salt Lake, and last year into one of the wards on the East Bench—this is typical; we all know stories like this—there came a rather distinguished man. He was going to teach history at the [University of Utah]—Latin American history and jurisprudence, things like that. But he was a Mexican, and his first day in the ward up there, although he was a member of the Church, a group came in and invited him to go to another ward. “We think it’s better if you go to one of the wards in the lower part of town. We don’t take people of your kind here.” Now that
goes on up there all the time. It goes on down here, too. Well, you know the vast snobbery of high school kids. I had three kids at Timpview High. I had three at Provo High too. They were distributed all over the place. But the snobbery and the class consciousness was perfectly natural. It happens among animals. We divide into groups and cliques, and you have to feel superior some way or other. This can easily become pride, and it follows up here and tells us what the source of this is for those who profess.

Verse 34: “And they were lifted up in pride, even to the persecution of many of their brethren.” But would they go so far as to persecute? What do you call persecution? Cutting off? Ignoring? If they start swearing at you and giving you a bad time, they’re at least paying attention to you. But when they make a studied attempt to ignore you, as if you didn’t exist, that hurts worst of all, doesn’t it? There are various ways of persecuting, as far as that goes, “even to the persecution of many of their brethren . . . which did cause the more humble part of the people to suffer great persecutions . . .” because they put up with it. You can’t be a true member unless you’re a member of my group or believe in my political party and things like that. That’s a very strong feeling in the Church now. But why did they persecute? You know what it is. We’ve gone into those things before. We’ve compared men with dogs before, and that was a very important thing. Dogs aren’t bad at all, but they behave that way. And people aren’t bad at all, but they behave that way. But what pushes you over? There’s a point at which it becomes really nasty, and that’s where Satan is really there. He really works there, and it makes a difference. We’d get along all right if it weren’t for him, I think, but he does spoil things, we shall see here. Notice the effect here. It’s just like the war. The length of the war made many people hard-hearted, but the length of the war had made many other people soft-hearted. So don’t blame the war. And here [it’s] the same thing.

Verse 35: “Nevertheless they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility . . .” That’s good, you see. Notice the end of the next verse: “. . . because of their exceedingly great riches and their prosperity in the land; and it did grow upon them from day to day.” So both sides became stronger and stronger, whether it was in their perversion or in their salvation here. “They did fast and pray oft and wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ [so this pressure was doing them good—it strengthened them, as a matter of fact, just like the war] . . . even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts [well, we have to be brought down pretty low, don’t we?], which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God.”

And here’s the effect that prosperity has on the others: “And it came to pass that the fifty and second year ended in great peace also, save it were the exceedingly great pride which had gotten into the hearts of the people [This is in general. Why? Because of their riches. Every time it will take us back to that, won’t it?]; and it was because of their exceedingly great riches and their prosperity in the land [those to whom money was all in all—the economy is everything, you see]; and it did grow upon them from day to day.” It is as if this were a plague of some sort. Well, what do the Book of Mormon and Bible both call it? Wealth, they say, cankers the soul. It’s a cancer, and it will grow.

And so Helaman died, and his eldest son Nephi began to reign in his place. Now, the fourth chapter is the turning point, until the coming of Christ, of course. Here’s the turning and the breaking. The Lord has to come; that’s the only thing that can stop it. An angel comes or the Lord comes. It has to be the end of a cycle, the end of a dispensation. The only thing that can stop this now is the coming of the Lord himself. We’ll see that’s
going to happen.

Helaman 4:1: “... there were many dissensions in the church, and there was also a contention among the people,” also. Notice this: the church is not the people. It’s no longer a sacral society. There’s a distinction between the church, in which there were dissensions, and also contention among the people. That was something else. Everybody didn’t belong to the church. And alas, much bloodshed. “And the rebellious part were slain and driven out of the land, and they did go unto the king of the Lamanites.” So it was a showdown, and they went out, and they went over and stirred up the Lamanites, their usual thing. They’ve done this before. But the Lamanites didn’t want to have any of that, you see. They didn’t want to get into this squabble. Notice verse 3. “The Lamanites were exceedingly afraid, insomuch that they would not hearken to the words of those dissenters.” Remember, Zarahemla at this time was brilliant. It was strong. It was the center of everything. But the dissenters succeeded finally in stirring them up and brought the [Lamanites] to battle.

Well, they were pulling the old Coriantumr ploy again. And this time it worked. Well, it worked with Coriantumr too, until he got himself trapped. But here they began the work of death again, and “they succeeded in obtaining possession of the land of Zarahemla.” How was that possible? Right up to the land Bountiful, which was the last stronghold, as we’ve seen. Now this is beginning to be the decline and fall. The armies of Moronihah were driven right up to the land of Bountiful. And then here we have some more geography, and we know that it’s on the isthmus. It’s down there pretty far south. The decline and fall is neatly summed up in these pages right here. They fortified against the Lamanites. They were going to make fortification and a stand there, “a day’s journey for a Nephite, on the line which they had fortified and stationed their armies to defend their north country.” This would hold pretty well on both sides.

The last hold of the Utes in this valley was in Rock Canyon over here. And they had a fortification at the beginning. They had a wall up there, and they held out there. They could come in from the back over the Squaw Peak trail, and bring supplies over that way. And they held out for a while there before they fell back. Then they were moved way up to the eastern part of the state where [others] are trying to take it away from them now. But they held out in the same way. And you can still find stuff up there. I have found arrowheads and things like that. They’re getting rather rare now. It’s pretty close to Provo.

Anyway, the dissenters of the Nephites helped the Lamanites to obtain possession of the Nephites’ [territory] which was in the land southward. The Nephites and Lamanites are all mixed up here. Notice dissenters of the Nephites are working along with the Lamanites because they want a share of it too. They want to go back to the old homestead; now it belongs to me, and I can take what I want now—this sort of thing. But there was no particular strength or survival value in that sort of thing, so Moronihah was able to take some of it back, many parts of the land. These are border wars now, back and forth. They have been all along. The seasonal wars that last hundreds and hundreds of years and never stop are nearly all border wars. The standard wars between Germany and France have been going on for ages, and the border wars of the Scots and the English. (The border ballads, Percy’s Reliques, are great epics.) That went on for hundreds and hundreds of years and it wasn’t settled until the eighteenth century. Now there’s a Scottish movement of dissent to become a separate nation. So we have these things going on. These are border wars, and they shift back and forth.
He [Moronihah] got half of it all back. And none of this would have happened [except for wickedness]. Now here is the cause again. Here it’s analyzed. How could the Lamanites succeed so? It would never have happened, he said, “had it not been for their wickedness, and their abomination which was among them; yea, and it was among those also who professed to belong to the church of God.” They were the ones who made this possible. They could always claim they were the good guys because they were members of the church, and blame the Lamanites because they weren’t—they didn’t even have the gospel. You can’t take that position at all. They professed to be the church of God, and it was their wickedness and their abominations that brought this all on. And why? What was the nature of their abomination? It was the pride of their hearts. And why the pride of their hearts? Because of their exceeding riches. Here we go again. Verse 12: “. . . yea, it was because of their oppression to the poor, withholding their food from the hungry [now we go down the list here—these things all go together; this is a single package here], withholding their clothing from the naked, and smiting their humble brethren upon the cheek, making a mock of that which was sacred, denying the spirit of prophecy and revelation, murdering, plundering, lying, stealing, committing adultery, rising up in great contentions, and deserting away into the land of Nephi, among the Lamanites.”

They were drifting off too. All this was going on because people had too much money. Well, does that happen? Well, it happens to the Church here—those professing to be real saints, you know. But the fact is they weren’t saints. They were left to their own strength, we’re told, and when you’re left to your own strength [you have problems]. Remember Prospero at the end of The Tempest?

Now my charms are all o’erthrown,
And what strength I have ‘s mine own,—
Which is most faint . . .

He had had this great strength, but it was gone now. And so they were left to their own strength and driven before the Lamanites. Did you ever know a person of strength, position, power and success who hadn’t depended on someone else? He had to have a sponsor. You have to have someone to get through, someone you can bank on. This always has to happen. You have to have someone highly placed in the legislature, someone who will put legislation up or through for you. You have to know the boss’s daughter, or something like that. It’s all these connections. But is there anyone who possesses such greatness that he’s above all that? He can get to the top just on his own. You’ll find some interesting success stories [which claim that] people have actually done that. No, you always have to have a sponsor somewhere. And people do it. Politicians get a free ride on the Church—both sides, and things like that. They shouldn’t, but these things go on. But don’t think we have any strength of our own. Do we have any great men any more? No, we don’t. Or do we? If there are, you don’t know who they are, you see. This is the point. As the Hindus say, the king goes around but his crown is concealed in his hair. It’s done over it. Well, angels unaware come upon us. There must be some good people around. There must be someone who has some strength around, but where do we find it? The Lord is teaching us lessons today.

Verse 13: “. . . driven before the Lamanites, until they had lost possession of almost all their lands” in this seesaw war. And Moronihah got busy now, and he preached because of their iniquities, and Nephi and Lehi. He preached unpopular subjects concerning their iniquities and what would happen to them if they didn’t repent. And surprise, surprise, in verse 15 they did repent. Sudden repentance is a human phenomenon. It does happen. I
mean, at a banquet you can be having a riotous time, and some event happens. Well it’s like *Death in Venice* and things like that. The death mask, the mummy at the banquet and the like. The *Totentanz* is a good example, you see, where they’re rioting in the palace. Well, here you have the great and spacious building with the finely dressed people that are carousing and having fun and pointing their fingers in contempt at the poor. Then all of a sudden what happened? Well, the great and spacious building fell down. That’s what happened, and that took them by surprise. But all of a sudden if something happens at a party, a serious altercation or something, the spirit of the whole thing changes. Suddenly everybody changes their mind very quickly, and it becomes a totally different experience for everyone. We may have seen that happen. This is what happens, and they did repent.

**Verse 16:** “For when Moronihah saw that they did repent he did venture to lead them forth.” Then they could try to get back something, and they regained one-half of their property. They had lost it, and he gained back half. Then they lost it again and gained it back again, one-half of their property. As I said, this is the turning point here with verse 16. That was as much as they could do. Verses 18–19: “And it came to pass in the sixty and second year of the reign of the judges, that Moronihah could obtain no more possessions over the Lamanites. Therefore they did abandon their design to obtain the remainder of their lands [they’re not going to retain it, but to contain it—that’s all they can do now], for so numerous were the Lamanites that it became impossible for the Nephites to obtain more power over them; therefore, Moronihah [he had to settle on that] did employ all his armies in maintaining those parts which he had taken.” So it’s a policy of containment from now on. They’re not going to gain any more. From now on it’s going to be downhill. They’re on the defensive.

Because of the greatness of the number of the Lamanites, the Nephites were in this constant state of fear, this loss of confidence. They began to remember the prophecies of Alma, and they had altered and trampled the laws of Mosiah under their feet. It was a moral decline. And how do you alter and corrupt the laws? Notice, the laws had become corrupt. How? Well, they can become twisted very easily. We have good laws; for example, homestead acts and water distribution acts for farmers. But they’re twisted by skillful lawyers to enormous farms. All these funds that were set aside for the farmers now go to a few big corporate farms, and they can be owned by Japanese or Germans or anybody else. Just little tricks in the law can do all sorts of things. This is what they call “corrupting the law.” The laws become corrupt—the same laws, as I said, they’re good laws. The timberland is handed over. You have a perfect right to homestead. You homestead it and then a lumber company buys you out. That’s what my grandfather did for many years. He bought them out. It’s your land, and they go in with tricks of the law. They promise you a job in return, and very quickly they get 5,000 or 6,000 acres of timber just like that, pretending that these are homesteads for people who took out claims to 160 acres each. This is the way they did it. That’s what you call twisting the laws. The laws become corrupted, and we do it all the time. As I said, that’s what lawyers are for. (Nice things we say in this class.) I remember Governor J. Bracken Lee used to say a law degree is a license to lie, nothing else. And then you take it as that.

So the church began to dwindle, and they began to disbelieve in the spirit of prophecy. They were becoming disinterested. The spirit of prophecy faded out, and the spirit of revelation, “and the judgments of God did stare them in the face [verse 23]. And they saw that they had become weak, like unto their brethren, the Lamanites, and that the Spirit of the Lord did no more preserve them [that’s all the difference in the world] . . . Therefore the Lord did cease to preserve them [the lights go out now] . . . for they had fallen into a
state of unbelief and awful wickedness [there’s a hopeless imbalance now] . . . they must
unavoidably perish [they didn’t have a chance]. For behold, they saw that the strength of
the Lamanites was as great as their strength, even man for man [now it was that, you see].
And thus had they fallen into this great transgression, yea, thus had they become weak,
because of their transgression, in the space of not many years.

The Book of Mormon likes to emphasize that, how quickly these shifts take place. You say
that’s too fast. No, it isn’t too fast. You can follow it in our own society just the same
way. American history is only 200 years old. Take it decade by decade and the picture just
changes like that—a totally different picture in the space of not many years, this sad
refrain. But it still has this paralyzing effect, you see, because in our subconscious we know
we are guilty, and it paralyzes us to action. We even try to camouflage it by cruelty,
taking that as strength, etc. Nevertheless, it’s sin that will hold you back and keep you
from doing things and sap all your courage away actually. Consult Mr. Freud on that
subject.

And Nephi delivered up the judgment-seat. This is what happens. Now we talk about
the governments of the East, etc. We’re praising up the value of democratic government
everywhere now, but that is not enough to assure righteousness, not by any means, as it
tells us in Helaman 5:2: “For their laws and their governments were established by the
voice of the people, and they who chose evil were more numerous than they who chose
good . . .” Even though it was the voice of the people, they didn’t always choose good. The
principles were set down by Mosiah that the people usually choose good. It’s rarely that
the people choose evil in preference to good, and therefore he said do all things by the
voice of the people. Then if they choose evil, it’s their responsibility. They’re to blame.
They can’t blame anyone else; they’re not innocent. Remember, he was talking about his
sons and said, if you have a king his unrighteousness can bring calamity on many, and it’s
his blame, but not if the people have their own voice. Then they’re to blame for what they
bring on themselves. And this is what happened here. The voice of the people chose evil,
so “they were ripening for destruction, for the laws had become corrupted.” Unfair
practices. Inequitable. This is acceleration.

Did we mention the four stages here? It’s important that we get them. In their plays
Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus used them. They all use the four stages. I talked about
four societies. Well, this is four stages that we’re all familiar with. The first stage, of course,
is prosperity, which they call olbos. That’s the Greek word for prosperity, olbos. When you
prosper and get rich, that’s olbos. Things are flourishing and looking up. We’re smiling
and we prosper. Next after that comes koros—when you have enough, when you’re full.
Koros is full, and you don’t want to eat any more. If you eat any more, you get sick.
That’s koros, completion, repletion. After that comes the word we all know, which is
hybris. Then it goes to your head and you think you’re really somebody, and you start
pushing people around. That’s what happened here. See this is hybris. Because of their
riches they turned to their cruelty and their arrogance and their pride. Hybris is pride. It’s
usually just translated as pride. And then comes this chapter we’re at now, which is at
. At is that point at which there’s nothing you can do except make things worse, so it’s
time you got off the stage. It’s used in all the plays. So the person deliberately does
everything as if he were hypnotized, as if he were under a spell. He does everything that
will deliberately get him off the stage as quickly as possible. There’s no more use for him.
There’s no more hope for him; therefore, he cooperates in the gods’ or in nature’s
operation to remove him. He’s just so much excess baggage. So at is the point at which
there is no return. You’re on the way out after at .

So they reach the point of at . This is a good description of it here. In the space of not many years they were ripening for destruction and became corrupted. And how do you deal with it? Nephi had become fed up; he was exhausted. It was too much because of their iniquity. He gave up the judgment-seat and “took it upon him to preach the word of God all the remainder of his days, and his brother Lehi also, all the remainder of his days.” Both Nephi and Lehi had enough. Alma did the same thing [Alma 4:18]. Remember, Alma had all these high offices. He was chief judge, he was head of the church, and he was also the commander of the armies. What more do you want? But he gave them all up because that won’t work.

Notice Alma 45:16: “. . . Thus saith the Lord God—Cursed shall be the land, yea, this land, unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, unto destruction, which do wickedly, when they are fully ripe [he waits til that point, though]; and as I have said so shall it be; for this is the cursing and the blessing of God upon the land [this is the promised land, you see, but with the blessing goes the curse], for the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance. . . . And when Alma had done this he departed out of the land [he blessed those in the church] of Zarahemla, as if to go into the land of Melek. And it came to pass that he was never heard of more.” There were legends that sprung up around him. He said we don’t know if they’re true or not. “The saying went abroad in the church.” We supposed that the Lord took him, as he took Moses, but that’s just a legend, he says. We don’t know whether it’s true or not. But he says at the end [of verse 18], “therefore, for this cause we know nothing concerning his death and burial.” Now this is another test of the Book of Mormon, you see. What a chance to make up a nice story here. But he says they realize that pious legends are not necessarily the gospel. People made up stories about Alma, and he says it may be true and it may not, but we just don’t know. This is not the way a person writes a forgery, to put it that way.

So we’re back here [in Helaman 5], and Nephi and Lehi do the same thing. They go out by themselves. We notice that the names in the Book of Mormon are significant. It tells us here [in Helaman 5:6)] that their father said to them: “I have given unto you the names of our first parents,” and when you hear those names you think of certain qualities and you remember those names, that “ye may remember them.” Like the last emperor of Rome was called Romulus Augustulus (476 A.D.) trying to revive the glory of Rome that was lost forever, and he was the last. As the Romans say, “Your name is the omen. It tells your story.”

Verse 6: “. . . when you remember your names, you remember them; and when ye remember them, ye may remember their works.” And remember that their works were good. Now this is not a platitude here. Be good; don’t be bad. What did the minister say about sin? He was against it. Well, that’s obvious enough. We’re talking about something much deeper here. “. . . I would that ye should do that which is good, that it may be said of you, and also written, even as it has been said and written of them. . . . lay up for yourselves [this is where it counts] a treasure in heaven, yea, which is eternal, and which fadeth not away.”

Now what is the opposite of that? Well, of course it’s success. It’s the career. See how that spoils, how that sours, how that embitters and leads to all sorts of violence and unscrupulous action. The success, the career, the good life, gracious living, all the things
that go with it. The four things, remember, that the two Nephis both mentioned, namely power, gain, popularity, and the lusts of the flesh. These are the four things. They’re one package; they come together. You get them on TV any night you want. You see these things. You see the money, the power, the crime, and the lusts of the flesh—plenty of that too.

Verse 9: “O remember, remember, my sons, the words which king Benjamin spake unto his people.” Notice, they always refer to Benjamin and Mosiah. They do it again here, because that is the standard. Here it is in Helaman 4:22: “And they had altered and trampled under their feet the laws of Mosiah.” See, they were still observing the laws of Mosiah. So if you want to know what the constitution was they were living under, what version of the law of Moses, the laws of Mosiah were just the laws of Moses. And they were the ones laid down by Benjamin in his farewell address. So if you want to know what they were living under, what they were obliged to follow, that was the basic law. Like our Bill of Rights was the speech of Benjamin. He says here, remember the words of King Benjamin.

Verse 9: “... yea, remember that there is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ [here you have it again], who shall come; yea, remember that he cometh to redeem the world.” Now why do we have to have him? Well, it’s obvious why we have to have him. We cannot save ourselves. Now that is the moral of all the literature that’s ever been written, and science teaches us the same thing, that you’re going into annihilation and nowhere else. We usually have a lot of nice things we like to quote on this particular subject, eloquent poets and Greek tragedians, the chorus, and all this sort of thing. We’re going nowhere here. Man has no hope at all for himself. We’re finished, and the scientists believe it even more. I read that one before about the scientists at Cambridge in the 1930s. They all knew that they were going into annihilation, and it chilled them. They were successful, glorious, while they were among the crowd, and they reveled in their science. It was a marvelous study, but they knew that they were destined for annihilation.

Also, only the gospel has this. It talks about Jesus Christ and repentance. Other religions don’t have it, comparative religions. The best thing that Hinduism can give you, for example, is the desire to become a drop of water in the ocean. That’s what you’ll return to. Zen and Buddhism will tell you, don’t expect anything and you won’t be disappointed. The main thing is don’t expect anything. Deny the flesh. Get rid of your ego, your self, your identity and everything else. Well, the Book of Mormon is exactly in the opposite direction. It’s the intensification of your identity. You’re going to live forever. The Egyptians would never settle for being a drop of water in the oceans. No, every individual had to keep it for himself. And how do we do that?

Here’s a good example here. Other religions do not have this. Verse 11: “And he hath power given unto him from the Father to redeem them from their sins because of repentance; therefore he hath sent his angels to declare the tidings of the conditions of repentance, which bringeth unto the power of the Redeemer, unto the salvation of their souls.” This is not self-evident. Other religions do not have it. A person by the name of [he couldn’t think of it at the moment] made a surprising discovery. In all classical literature and in all ancient literature there’s not a single instance of anybody seeing an angel. They talk about gods and goddesses, and Vergil thought he saw something. He said he thought he saw a light in the room. He stopped still and stared, and every hair stood on end. His voice caught in his throat, and he couldn’t say anything.
The first angel that Mohammed saw was the angel Gabriel. He didn’t know what he was seeing. He rushed home and had his wife Khadija cover him with blankets so he’d have a sweat and sweat it out. Then he had Khadija’s cousin come whose name was Waraqa, and who had been a Christian and knew the teachings of the Jews and the Christians. And Mohammed asked him, is this a real vision I had, or was I misled? He needed reassurance, and Waraqa reassured him and said, this is a real vision because you shall be the prophet to this people. And Mohammed was the prophet. He was a real prophet, but to those people. But he wasn’t sure of what he’d seen. He said he thought it was a bow shot away. Sometimes he filled the whole sky. Sometimes he was like a man, and then suddenly he was behind him. But it was all around. What was he seeing? He thought he was off his head. He said, am I crazy? Have I lost my mind? Well, Joseph Smith never asked that. He was always absolutely sure and stood up against the most tremendous [pressure] when he was just a little kid. He stood against all sorts of criticism, because he said I knew I talked to those people, the Father and the Son. I knew I had seen an angel, and nobody would ever make me deny it.

So it’s a different thing here. It’s not that in world religions you’ll find something just like the gospel. They all have something. Sure they do. They have the moral teachings, and they observe them more strictly than we do, some of them. And they have other teachings. Then we have a whole roomful of fathers of the church up in the library, and for two thousand years they have discussed these things, argued about them, analyzed them, etc. But it’s all a matter of debate and discussion. Nobody actually said, “I have seen” until Joseph Smith came along.

Eduard Meyer was the greatest historian of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He studied and knew more ancient history than anyone else, and he wrote that great work, The History of Antiquity. Well, Eduard Meyer saw that there was one thing that animated the ancient world, and that was religion. What is religion? What’s behind it? All his life he studied that. Finally, he centered on Joseph Smith. He said, “Joseph Smith is the answer to this whole thing.” It seemed that something really happened once in a while, that the apostles really did see angels. He said, I don’t believe it. I believe they were a delusion. I believe the angel Moroni was an illusion and the Golden Plates were a hallucination. He never explained the Book of Mormon. He wouldn’t read it. That’s an interesting reflection, isn’t it? But the Book of Mormon wasn’t a hallucination. That’s on top of it. We have these things that go together, and it fits in the whole thing. It’s the kind of a book an angel would bring, because it’s the handbook we need for these latter days, the last days. He devoted years [to study]. He came out to Utah in 1904 and lived a long time here. Then he wrote a big work on the origin of Christianity in which he said you can only explain it in terms of Mormonism. He compared Joseph Smith with Mohammed. He said all the old prophets and the founders of religions, like Luther and Calvin, had their periods of doubt and struggle. Every founder of religion has, whether it’s the Buddha, Mohammed, the founder of Jainism, or whoever it is. They all have their periods of doubt. But Joseph never did. He said he saw the angel when he was a boy, and there was never any question about it. He wrote the Book of Mormon when he was 23 years old, and he never came back and said, wasn’t I foolish when I was a kid back there? He was very sharp and he became very learned. He became a master of the language. But did he ever apologize for what he wrote back then? Did he ever make a change in it? Never. He said this is the truest book that we have. And so these things go together.

And what’s the alternative? When angels come then big things are happening. Well then,
Satan has to counteract with big things. His big act is in the next verse. He’s the one that counteracts. He hits back with the same sort of thing. Notice verse 12: “. . . ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind . . .” See, swept along in an irresistible force, like the drug plague that’s sweeping the world today into all countries. It’s like a whirlwind, like a zawba’a, like a tornado or typhoon. “. . . his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you . . .” So the devil doesn’t strike back gently at all. He hits back just as hard as the other side. When they send angels, he sends his angels, and they really get busy here. “. . . it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built . . .” Referring to the rock again, the thing they always refer to. This is throughout the Old and New Testament, the same way.

Verse 13: “And it came to pass that these were the words which Helaman taught to his sons; yea, he did teach them many things,” and they went forth to preach them. They were going to try to reform the people. They went from city to city and “among all the people of Nephi who were in the land southward; and from thence into the land of Zarahemla, among the Lamanites.” (Verse 17:) They confounded the dissenters from the Nephites who argued against them. It was the dissenters from the Nephites that argued against them. They came forth, repented, and were baptized. They went back home to the Nephites again and tried to repair the wrong that they had done. Well, there’s hope there. But the main hope comes from the Lamanites here. And this is the interesting thing, this sudden shift of conscience. Verse 19: “Therefore they did speak unto the great astonishment of the Lamanites, to the convincing of them, insomuch that there were eight thousand of the Lamanites who were in the land of Zarahemla and round about baptized unto repentance.”

Then they were taken by an army. Notice there were roving bands of Lamanites. That’s the Lamanite type of warfare. And they were taken by an army of Lamanites and cast into prison. And then came the miracles. They were encircled by fire and they took courage. The interesting thing here is they’re among prison rabble in the prison. “. . . in the prison were Lamanites and Nephites who were dissenters.” They were criminal types, the criminal element. Verse 28: “And it came to pass that they were overshadowed with a cloud of darkness, and an awful solemn fear came upon them. And it came to pass that there came a voice as if it were above the cloud of darkness, saying: Repent ye, repent ye, and seek no more to destroy my servants whom I have sent unto you to declare good tidings . . . [there] was a still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper, and it did pierce even to the very soul.” The earth shook exceedingly. The voice came again, and the earth shook again. These things are all timed. It’s a matter of timing. That earthquake was scheduled, but so was the voice that was talking to them there. These things are all timed. The Lord knows they’re going to happen. Then the third shake was the worst one. It was not an aftershock. It was a humdinger, “as if it were about to divide asunder . . . [and they were paralyzed] they were immovable because of the fear which did come upon them.”

One among them was a Nephite who had been one of the dissenters. He saw through the cloud of darkness the faces of Nephi and Lehi shining exceedingly as if they were talking to somebody, sort of matter of fact. He cried unto the multitude, hey, look. They all looked, and sure enough they saw Nephi and Lehi talking to somebody. And they said, who are those men talking to? Verse 39: “And Aminadab said unto them: They do converse with the angels of God.” Well, what shall we do about this? [they said]. “. . . you
must repent, and cry unto the voice, even until ye shall have faith in Christ [cry unto the voice that they’d heard— they’d heard this voice three times], who was taught unto you by Alma, and Amulek, and Zeezrom.” Notice, these were traditions. These were well known. This was in the preceding generation that Alma and Amulek and Zeezrom had been among them. These traditions were remembered in the church, and of course this Nephite remembered them.

So they all began to cry, and the cloud of darkness was dispersed. They became the best missionaries. They became saints on this occasion, these same people. They had a pentecost. Did they suddenly become righteous? Well, they couldn’t have been such bad people or it wouldn’t have happened. They hadn’t passed the point of no return, certainly. Verse 43: “. . . they were encircled about, yea every soul, by a pillar of fire. And Nephi and Lehi were in the midst of them. . . . the Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven, and did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire . . .” See, this is your baptism of fire. They hadn’t even been baptized yet. The Holy Ghost came to numbers of people in the New Testament before the restoration of the gospel. He came to Elizabeth, to Zachariah, and to Mary. They were filled with the Holy Ghost before the Holy Ghost had been delivered after baptism. So the Holy Ghost is always operating when the Lord isn’t there.

And it was a pleasant voice. Verse 45, “. . . and they could speak forth marvelous words.” [Here is instant righteousness.] “. . . a pleasant voice, as if it were a whisper, saying: Peace, peace be unto you, because of your faith in my Well Beloved. . . . they saw the heavens open; and angels came down out of heaven and ministered unto them.” The word minister is used a lot in the Book of Mormon. You find out in what sense angels minister. What do they do? They converse with you. They come down and converse with people. If you find all the passages under minister, you’ll find out they came and talked with the children; they came and ministered to the apostles. When an angel comes he ministers to you. I mean, he answers your questions and helps you along. He discusses things with you—ministering angels.

Verse 49: And there were about three hundred souls who saw and heard these things [boy, they had their prisons full, too]; and they were bidden to go forth and marvel not, neither should they doubt.” Well, we don’t know why they were in prison. Maybe they were political prisoners in this kind of society. “And it came to pass that they did go forth, and did minister unto the people.” They do the same thing. This is what they do when they minister. They declare “throughout all the regions round about all the things which they had heard and seen [that’s what ministering is; they become missionaries], insomuch that the more part of the Lamanites were convinced of them, because of the greatness of the evidences which they had received.” And this is why it happened. This is why you had this miracle. When things get as bad as this, it is time to intervene. The Lord says, we must do something, so something like this happens. But you’re not going to have angels come just on any occasion. You’re not going to have things like this happen every day, or even in every century.

When things reach a crisis point like this, something has to happen. Something has to crack. But it comes from the other side; the help comes from there. We can’t pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps. We may have committee meetings, sessions, and elections going on from here to doomsday—we’re not going to save ourselves. If anything is true, it’s that “man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward” (Job 5:7). “The troubles of our proud and angry dust are from eternity, and shall not fail.” (A. E.
Housman, *Last Poems*). Man cannot save himself, and everybody knows that. The ancients knew that; they say the scientists know that, and it makes us very sad.

So we come around to the sixty-second year. Now notice what happens. The tables are turned now. The other bucket is up. Helaman 6:1: “The Lamanites had become, the more part of them, a righteous people, insomuch that their righteousness did exceed that of the Nephites [it’s turned around], because of their firmness and their steadiness in the faith [see, we mustn’t be simplistic about the Book of Mormon]. For behold, there were many of the Nephites who had become hardened and impenitent [this is the others]. . . . the people of the church did have great joy because of the conversion of the Lamanites, yea, because of the church of God, which had been established among them. And they did fellowship one with another, and did rejoice one with another, and did have great joy.” They had a time of great prosperity [when they could] rejoice with great joy. The Lamanites now enjoyed the blessings of the gospel. Notice here how the tables are turned here in verse 4: “Many of the Lamanites did come down into the land of Zarahemla” to preach as missionaries, to try to convert the Nephites, to “exhort them to faith and repentance.”

Verse 6: “And it came to pass that many of the Lamanites did go into the land northward [where there had been that great pioneering movement through a whole generation—lots of people moved up there]; and also Nephi and Lehi went into the land northward, to preach unto the people [the settlers up there]. . . . [and] Nephites did go into whatsoever part of the land they would.” This is open now. They have cut down the walls now and lowered the barriers. They were free to go. You see these things happening in our own time. This is quite remarkable, the parallels we see everywhere now. You see that things are sort of ripening. This is apartheid, you see. The wall is broken down. The Nephites would go whither they wanted to go. They wouldn’t dare go before, and the other way “it came to pass that the Lamanites did also go whithersoever they would, whether it were among the Lamanites or among the Nephites; and thus they did have free intercourse one with another [this is the ideal situation for trade, culture, or anything else—they finally achieved it], to buy and to sell, and to get gain, according to their desire.”

And the result is, of course, it’s the best thing in the world for the economy, so in verse 9 they become exceedingly rich. Here it comes again. We’ve got to go through this all over again? Well, if we’re going through it today, we shouldn’t complain about this. This comes too often. It comes so fast.

Verse 9: “And it came to pass that they became exceedingly rich, both the Lamanites and the Nephites; and they did have an exceeding plenty of gold, and of silver, and of all manner of precious metals . . . Now the land south was called Lehi, and the land north was called Mulek . . . for the Lord did bring Mulek into the land north [they were the Mulekites, you see], and Lehi into the land south.” See the Mulekites still kept their identity. After all, Zarahemla was a Mulekite city. The Nephites were in the south, the children of Lehi, but now they’ve gone up north where the old hangout in Bountiful [was].

Next we have a cultural chapter on the type of civilization they had. Are they going to build up Babylon here? Do you have to? Do cities always have to be Babylon? Ah, we shall see.
TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 3, Lecture 76
Helaman 6
Crime
Secret Societies
Egyptian Mythology on the Origin of the World

We are on the sixth chapter of Helaman now. It is one of those epoch chapters; it’s like chapter 46 and others. If this was all we had of the Book of Mormon, it would be enough to attest to its authenticity right down to the ground. This is a chapter on crime. It starts out happily and then suddenly things go sour. You notice we start out when they broke down all trade barriers and other barriers between them. They began to prosper greatly, and they could go to whatever parts of the land they would. The Lamanites could go wherever they wanted, and they had “free intercourse one with another, to buy and to sell, and to get gain according to their desire. And it came to pass that they became exceedingly rich, both the Lamanites and the Nephites.” They had plenty of gold and silver. It was an almost gaudy civilization.

Here’s a December 1980 National Geographic. You can always pick this stuff up in anything. Here’s a typical marketplace. Of course, this is during the time of the Conquistadores. This is much later, but there’s this lavish wealth. As it says here, “Cortez reports a crowd of 60,000 bartering for goods in one market [that’s business, you see]—turkeys, armadillos, rabbits, cotton boles, girds, bolts of finest cloth, quilts filled with gold dust [notice it talks about the weaving and the gold here], straw mats, corn, pottery, feathers for lavish ornament. . . . When disputes arose they were settled by a judge. Dress identifies region or occupation.” Here’s a high-rankin warrior appearing all dolled-up fit to kill, and here’s another one. [Notice] the buildings and magnificent ceremonial centers they set up—places like this. This is the sort of thing that Ammon and Amulek preached in—tremendous things built by the labor of the people who were oppressed, who came to listen to them. This is the December 1980 issue. You can pick up illustrations of the lavish civilization. In other words the Book of Mormon isn’t exaggerating. It is not Joseph Smith letting his imagination run wild, as some people have said—Mrs. Brodie, for example.

The curious workmanship [is mentioned]. Verse 11: “. . . and thus they did become rich. They did raise grain in abundance . . . And they did multiply and wax exceedingly strong in the land. And they did raise many flocks and herds [agricultural and pastoral], yea many fatlings. Behold their women did toil and spin, and did make all manner of cloth [they are trading their cloth here], of fine-twined linen and cloth of every kind, to clothe their nakedness.” Among the Navajo, for example, only the women can spin in some tribes. Among the Hopis only the men make the cloth, and the women make the pottery. But you get these cultural notes all through the Book of Mormon.

Verse 14: “. . . they did also have great joy and peace, yea, much preaching and many prophecies concerning that which was to come.” Well, everything is happy here, a good brotherhood, and all the rest of it. Then something happens in verse 15; things start to go
sour again. What is going on here? Obviously, there is an underground, but what is it? The chief judge “Cezoram was murdered by an unknown hand as he sat upon the judgment-seat.” And his son was murdered also. It sounds like the judges in Colombia today. The judge murdering goes right on. Well, as I said, there must be something going on here. The people began to grow exceedingly wicked all of a sudden, almost overnight. Why is that? Well, the next verse explains it again—how quickly we run into these things in a post-war boom or something like that. Notice the perils of peace. Nature takes its course right into prime time today, and so we get this.

Verse 17: “For behold, the Lord had blessed them so long with the riches of the world that they had not been stirred up to anger, to wars, nor to bloodshed [this is how it happened]; therefore they began to set their hearts upon their riches; yea, they began to seek to get gain that they might be lifted up one above another.” Why does it have to be that way? We notice it always does. That’s the way it works. That’s the only way you measure your wealth, to compare it with [the wealth of] someone else. “. . . therefore they began to commit secret murders, and to rob and to plunder, that they might get gain.”

Anything to get gain, and notice that you’re right here on prime time in this verse 17. They rob and murder and plunder because of the four things Nephi talks about—the high living, the wealth, the display, the glitzy clubs, and the crime that goes right together with it. And the power, of course—power is the whole thing, and the luxurious living. These things make up the ever popular stock of our evening TV programs today that we call the prime time.

Now it becomes systematized. The cooperative action is the most effective, we see here. There is a corporation formed that attracts members, and because of that they can do as they jolly well please, as we learn in verse 19. The crime ring is exposed—a mixed Mulekite, Nephite, Lamanite operation here. All of them were mixed in on it, as we learn in verse 9 as well. Verse 21, “. . . Satan did stir up the hearts of the more part of the Nephites [most of the Nephites united with those robbers] . . . and did enter into their covenants and their oaths [the whole nation seemed to become one big conspiracy here], that they would protect and preserve one another in whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be placed, that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.”

This is the other brotherhood. Notice they are entering into covenants. Recently, they were in another kind of covenant entirely. Have they lost their heads or something? Well, a few comments here may be in order. Today, crime covers the earth like the miasmic vapor of smoke the Book of Mormon talks about that will cover the whole earth. That miasmic vapor of crime covers the earth from pole to pole, whether it is the Valdez or the equatorial forest, or whatever it is—various degrees of crime. Incidentally, that mist, that vapor of smoke hangs over the earth as the last phase of extermination. First, we create the garbage, which is the main thing we create today. How do we get rid of that? The ultimate thing is to burn it. That’s the end, this smoke that hangs over the earth.

Crime is everywhere. This is possible because of degrees of crime, little crimes, big crimes. The Egyptians have many words for crime. They can say ‘isft, wrongdoing, mischief, or they can say ‘wjt, crimes of greed, or they can say dqw, which is vicious crimes, evil intent, rancorous crimes. There is s’d, crimes of rebellion, refusing to go a certain way. There is this long list. The famous 125th section of the Book of the Dead lists 42 basic
crimes. Forty-two is a sacred number with the Egyptians, and you get that very clearly in the book of Ether. We'll see how 42 figures all through the Book of Ether. But 42 is the number of crimes, just as it is the number of virtues. But that is far from a complete number, as King Benjamin tells us in his talk to the Nephites. Remember, he says, I cannot number the ways in which crime may be committed. I just have to tell you the few things you can do that are right. He actually says that he cannot enumerate all the ways that a person can sin. You can make up quite an impressive list, can’t you?

Even the Jesuits failed to exhaust the list with their probabilism—Molina and others. They tried to make a complete list of crimes for the purpose of the Spanish Inquisition, etc. What kind of punishment would be given for what kind of crimes? Of course, when you confess then you must be given absolution, after you’ve made certain recompense. How great is the crime and how many Ave Marias do you have to say? So they had it figured out to the fourth and fifth decimal place, how much a crime is a crime. Of course, that is a complete waste of time, because all crimes are the same. We say there are little crimes and big crimes but there’s one thing that makes them all crimes. What is it? Crime is anything that disfigures the true image of things.

Perhaps the two oldest writings in existence (they both claim it) are the Shabako Stone from Egypt and the Sefer Yeshira of the Hebrews, usually attributed to Abraham. They both tell the same thing—namely, we all have seven receptors. We have seven gates of knowledge by which information reaches us from the outside world. That’s the anthropic theory. We get our ideas of the outside world through the seven openings in the head—two eyes, two nostrils, mouth, and two ears. That makes the seven gates of knowledge, seven gates of wisdom and perception. But we have only one projector and that is the mouth. The word is the only way we can project what we have in us. This is analyzed, especially in the Shabako Stone. When we get these impressions, they pass through the brain, and we get certain images. They go down to the heart and we give them certain estimates and place. It’s like the left and right side of the brain, you see. The right side works on it one way, and the left side in another way. The right side coordinates things. So you get your image and it’s brought to the heart. Then it comes up to the tongue, and the word is what your image of the world is. That’s what you project; that’s the world you live in. They tell us that. That’s why the word is so important. If you foul up the word, if you make it wrong, you can spoil everything, destroy everything. That is why it can be made so subtle because you have to be taken on trust. That’s the only way of conveying what you have in mind is through the word. There’s body language, I suppose, and that sort of thing. You can fake that. So you must trust my word implicitly if we are to communicate because that is the only access you have to the world I live in. We have to agree on things to communicate.

Like Jacob and Laban, we need to meet on a common ground. See, Jacob and Laban agreed to meet at dawn at a place where a stream flowed, where there was a stone circle with a line through the center, one on one side and one on the other side, to settle their affair. That’s a very ancient way, the archaic way, that happened throughout the ancient world. We find that in Genesis. So, we must meet on a common ground like that. The ancients called it a maidan, a fair field. It’s basic in chivalry. We have to meet on a fair field where we have an equal chance. You can’t move the goal post every time you feel like it. That way there is no game. It’s the same way if you deceive when you speak. There is no game at all if what you are telling me isn’t true, and you know it isn’t. How am I to know if it’s true or not? You can’t move the goal post anytime you want, but that’s what we do all the time. Everybody’s doing it today. It’s the thing—we are taught to do it. We
give courses on strategies of salesmanship. Well, strategy is defined as deception practiced on an enemy. It is deception. That's the way you win wars by strategy, by making the enemy think what you want him to think, which is wrong. You deceive him as to your position, your strength, your intentions, everything about you. You must deceive the enemy for effective strategy. It's strategy that wins battles and wars. So we have strategies of salesmen—how to beguile people into buying things they don’t want, how to bamboozle them. What is your relationship with another person when you are trying to get around him that way? It breaks down all confidence and faith. The whole structure of society is undermined and begins to rot and corrode in that case. So we have a maidan, a fair field.

If I’m using that trysting place (trysting means “a place of trust”), to set up an ambush and entrap you when we meet there [I’m destroying our communication]. That’s what nearly all public relations is. That’s what we do now; we scheme in those things. It’s one of the biggest businesses we have. Of course, public relations is faking things, the unreal. And so what I am doing is destroying our universal discourse, as they call it. This is the anthropic principle that the quantum physicists talk about so much. The ultimate crime is to deliberately distort and smash our common sphere of existence. Because [you’ve] deceived [me], I don’t know whether I can trust you or not.

In the end there are degrees of crime, but there are no degrees of crime. There is a degree of offense with a musician. A mediocre musician is not better than a bad musician. A mediocre musician is a bad musician—or a mediocre dancer, artist, or actor [is a bad one]. It’s excruciating. Say, you have a guy who gives a violin recital, and he’s just a little bit off most of the time. Well, that’s horrifying. That gives you goose flesh and makes you want to scream. That’s just as bad as if he was completely off on every note. There are no degrees here. You distort it and it’s distorted, and that’s that. Little distortions can be the most deceptive and the most ruinous. A mediocre teacher, like myself, is a bad teacher; he is not just mediocre. If he is mediocre he is wasting the students’ time and his time and he’s bad. The good ones are—well, let me know when you find one.

The most violent crime, for example, and the most timid crime commit the same outrage. They rend and distort the structure of things; they tear everything apart. When I lose my temper and do something really violent to somebody, that’s breaking down the faith and trust that exist in society. But white collar crime is worse, because there you don’t at least have the courage to break into the bank and run a risk at night. In white collar crime you are deceiving friends who trust you. These are people who trust you, and you are robbing from them. That is far worse, I think, than knocking someone over the head. Not that we should practice either one. I’m not recommending it, but they are equally bad.

So, we live and move and have our being in a world of great and small crimes, and great and petty deceptions. But now the question the Book of Mormon brings up here, and this is an important one. Is there a center? Is there a nucleus? Is there a fountainhead? Is there a source? Is there a director to this operation? Is it a single operation that goes on? We have talked about the Battle of the Bulge. In what they call the Operation Wacht am Rhein their business was deception, and they succeeded entirely. The whole thing was deception. What they did was dress whole units in American uniforms and send them behind the lines to circulate back there. That’s why I didn’t have to stay at Bastogne, which helped my nerves. I was immediately whisked off to Paris and reassigned back to the same front because I knew French and German, and they were dropping these spies everywhere, in uniforms to confuse the picture.
What was the operation? Was Operation *Wacht am Rhein* a number of little separate operations, or was it just one big operation? When we see people lying, deceiving and tricking everywhere, is that little individual weaknesses here and there? Yes, it is. But is there any coordination? Is it part of one big operation? Is this run by Satan? Is there a Satan in charge of things here? Any operation, to be most effective, must be organized, coordinated, centralized, systematized. In other words it has to be managed. Now, here we have an example of this, and this is why you have these brotherhoods. We talked about the oaths and covenants to go with it. They are a vital and organic part of crime. You’ll always find these oaths and covenants because there has to be trust among criminals. To be more effective in your crime you must organize. As I have said before, one criminal can’t trust another unless he takes the most terrible oaths and must pay the most terrible penalty, so this is what happens.

I am going to read some texts here that are very interesting. First is the Al-Arish text. Here’s a picture of it. This was found in 1894, I think, on the boundary between Egypt and Palestine. This is a shrine, basalt, very hard rock. It was found almost at Elarish or Ismailia, on the boundary line between Egypt and Palestine. It goes back to a very early time. It’s at least 4,000 years old, but it reports events much older. This says, “the shrine of Ismailia,” but it’s called the Elarish text. I’m going to read you something from it. It has been edited by Goyon. Let’s see what he says here. This is a story about crime, and it’s very old, the oldest one we have. “There was a time when Shu reigned as the perfect, absolute, king. He reigned over both heaven and earth, and the seas, and the underworlds, and all things. He ruled all things by righteous law upon his throne, which was the throne of his father.” So Shu is reigning on the throne of his father. This is in the pre-existence, and he reigned over all things at this time. This is the “golden age.” All people have this “golden age” idea.

“The father, Horus Re Herachty and mª hrw wanted to establish on earth an equivalent to his palace in heaven, in the heavenly order of things”— because heaven is designed and laid out with geometrical perfection, etc., representing all the laws of truth as men understand them. That was what he was going to do, and he wanted to build it at the “white wall.” Well, that goes back to the very first time Egypt was settled, when the “white wall” was set up.

“Then the majesty of the gods said to the great council of the gods, which was obedient to him, that they should hold an assembly and discuss the creation of something parallel on the new earth. He said to them, ‘We will go down and create there upon the earth an order like unto that which we have in heaven—in the east part of the earth, in the garden eastward.” Then it’s a ritual-complex described here by drawing a picture of a stone circle, and then a grove, the sacred grove. There’s a picture of the stone circle, and then a grove, the sacred grove. It’s called the iyat and bs (bes). Iyat is a sacred gathering place, and bs (bes) is initiation, and the sacred grove is there.

“They beheld it and saw it was good, in the realms of light. When it was completed they said, ‘Let us go down there and have a great conference and a celebration, to celebrate its founding upon earth, the order of things as they are in heaven. Then they all did as God had commanded.” He didn’t ask them to, it says, “. . . as was commanded by the Lordship of his Majesty.” So they all went down to celebrate because they had the order on earth. They had the shrine and they describe it here, the way it’s laid out. Then what happens?
Satan breaks in here. It describes how Seth, who is Satan here, wants to spoil the whole thing. He comes in and wants to be made the head of everything. He brings his sacred band with him. He has those that have sworn fealty to him, a third of the hosts of heaven sort of thing. They follow him and come down the sacred way which leads to this holy place. Incidentally, after they had finished the plan of everything, it says, “This plan shall be consulted in times of crisis or of troubles of that kind.” Then there was the lake and the road for the procession.

“They brought the earthly heaven to the Mount of Shu which is the temple, which is the place of initiation on earth where men learn the things of heaven down here below.” (Then we are trying to find out where Satan breaks in on the scene here.) The plan and the things they taught were secret. They talked about the ordinances and the completion of the temple. It is all after a heavenly model and is the seat of universal government.

Then a new section begins here with Satan and his hosts: “Then it happened that the children of Apep [those who had rebelled against the plan, the rebellious followers of Apep] came. They entered into the garden at dusk, when it was dark, and darkness fell upon the earth as they came in.” Just as Homer said, “And his coming was like the coming of night” when he came to slay and bring the plague, etc. He destroys everything. Suddenly, it says that the Children of Light were living on the mountains, and they invaded from the plains. This is the story of the Sethians and the Cainites, which we will mention presently.

It says here in the next section that the hosts of Re and Shu remained in the mountains where God still ruled them, as in Zion of old—upon the hills and upon the mountains. Remember where Enoch preached?

“It was in the pre-existent time when Re was in the garden on earth, and it was defended by a great wall.” This time they couldn’t get in here. The gods were elevated above all these things, but then Satan gets his hold and he really raises a rumpus. It says, “Then the majesty of Re went forth to meet head-on in conflict the secret combination, the brotherhood.” *Abwt* means “those who have been joined to him in his family, those who have been intimate with him, those who have sworn their oaths.” So Satan and his army and the Lord’s [army] clash here. “It was at this holy place that they clashed.” (Then what turns out here?) Shu takes the place, and there is no more resistance. Shu is the sole victor. He sets up a tent shrine in defiance of the opposition, but then there is more trouble. Then he [Satan] strikes again. There’s one section that says he never repents, he never changes, he will always be there.

Well, this is one old text. The idea is that you have organized crime going on in a very early time. Along with that there is the Victory over Seth. I just happen to have a couple of pages in hieratic of the Salt Papyrus, 825A, which deals with the same thing in the beginning. This deals with the terrible times at the time of the Flood. It talks about how even the gods sat with their hands upon their heads mourning, and all the children of earth were in turmoil. It talks about the Flood and the terrible things that happened at that time because of the wickedness of men. That is another very old one which was republished by Derchain recently.

This one is a good one. It is the Victory over Seth. There are many manuscripts of this, some of them very old. This describes the same event, but it says in the title at the
beginning, “This ceremony of the overthrowing of Sutekh [Seth, Satan] along with his followers, along with his devoted clan is a celebration, a ceremony of the overthrowing of Sutekh and his faithful band. This is performed in the Temple of Osiris of Amenti, the great god, the lord of Abydos. It is to be performed daily in a small reduced fashion in every temple in Egypt at a particular hour, even as it is performed here but in the reduced form. This is the basic temple ordinance of Egypt. It begins with the Fall, with Satan’s interruption in things. First it describes certain ritual dress.

Then we get to page seven, but I’ve used this in some other contexts and misplaced it. I’ll have to begin on page nine, which is just as good, I guess, because it describes what is going on—the terrible indictment. It is written like the Bible in parallel passages. A passage is written and then it is repeated in other words. It says here, “Thou hast performed violent acts.” That’s the way it is described in the Shabako Stone. “Thou has committed crimes in the presence of God, and the mischief thou hast done has been reported to the most high God. And the Great Council has taken it under consideration. The secretary in heaven, the third member of the Godhead, has taken due note of it and has drawn up the list of indictments for the court. They are aware of what you have done; they bring these charges against you. Your ultimate condemnation will be the fire.”

The earth complains that it has been violated, as it does in the Book of Moses. The world has rebelled; men are in a terrible state. Geb is Adam, our literal father. The principal of patriarchal succession is Geb. He organizes the human family. He is the first father on earth, Shu above but our first father, Geb, down here below. He addresses the Council of the Gods and asks why these things come forth before us. “Who is raising all this warfare among the children of men? The earth is in turmoil, the earth is in an uproar, completely disorganized because of them.”

Again, he [Satan] has it well organized. It is Sutekh, the same one again. He is incurable. It tells us a little later on that he comes back again and again and always turns out to be the same. He destroys the temple. Here’s what happens: “He and his hosts have gained control of everything. They are cutting down all the trees. They are hunting and fishing everything away.” This is a time of extermination again. They barge into the annex of the temple. They disrupt everything with loud, raucous voices. They raise a rumpus everywhere.

They talk about the lumber business, which is offensive because they have been taking logs out of reserve forests. Of course, they were very precious in Egypt. They defile the temples with their false ordinances and dances, etc. It is the archaic temple and he says, “You’ve renewed the fighting.” Then [there are] the taboos and abominations. They trespass in all the holy places, and they practice piracy. They loot everything in every city they visit. They plunder all the peaceful places. They are bandits, in other words. He is the lord of misrule. “He rules with blood and horror,” it says here. Upon his throne he scorns civilization. Here again and again, he is very well organized. Here it gives the genealogy of Adam. It goes back to a man by the name of Adam. These oldest accounts are of somebody who rebelled, and raised hell, and organized it. He had his band following him, and we have been ritually fighting him everyday. That is what they do here.

Then [there are] the Sethians and the Cainites, of course, in the oldest books of Adam. A rich literature has come forth recently. After the children of Adam divided, the Sethians lived on the mountains. There were very few of them after the people had gone down into the plains and caroused, founded Babylon and become luxurious. And Nimrod had built
the tower and all these things. Remember, the Book of Mormon will tell us all this. It goes back to the Tower.

But there have always been these secret combinations and the two brotherhoods, each claiming to be the righteous one. The most famous perhaps were the Pythagoreans. How do you tell the difference? Each accuses the other of one evil. You'll find from now on that there are large societies, usually suspected of being worldwide, of these brotherhoods, both good and evil ones. They are always accusing each other of just one crime, world domination. The Pythagoreans were very lofty thinkers. Their oaths and covenants, which came from Egypt, were secret. They took sides unwisely in certain political things. Some popular uprisings burned them out and destroyed their order, but they were a great influence and they still are. They carried on in other orders after that. You have the Isiacs in early republican Rome, before the empire. They passed a law forbidding the cult of Isis to come from Egypt to practice in [Rome] because they thought it was a crime against the empire. They thought it was seeking world domination. They had an empire then, but they didn’t have an [emperor].

So you have the sicarii. Do you know what the death squads in Colombia call themselves? They call themselves sicario. The sicari were Roman. In Varro’s great work on agriculture, which was written before Augustus’ day, there’s a story [about this]. The richest men in Rome had met in the Forum where there is a big map of Italy on the wall. They were discussing where their estates were and boasting about their wealth. They were waiting for one man who was exceedingly rich and influential. Finally, his servant came and said, sorry, his master wouldn’t be able to come to the meeting because he was just murdered by one of the sicari. A sica is a little knife, a short knife you carry under your robe. You just slip through the crowd, assassinate somebody, and you are on your way. These people in Colombia still call themselves sicarios. Their organization is the Sicaria. Anyway, he had made a mistake. He apologized as he slipped away and said, “I’m sorry I killed the wrong man” and disappeared in the crowd. The most powerful man in Rome was unable to defend himself against these terrorists. This was in the “flower” of Rome, in the noblest period of their existence.

[There were] the Mediterranean pirates, and that’s how Pompey came to power, and the Triumvirate. The big question was, who should eliminate the Mediterranean pirates? By the time Augustus became the first emperor, the whole Mediterranean was terrified by various bands of pirates. They were brotherhoods. There were plays about them. These people were very dangerous people. We mentioned the Vitalian brethren and the Vikings, your ancestors—all these people that went around plundering on the seas, and the great influence they had. And [there was] the Jomsburg, which was a very sacred order.

Then you have Hadrian’s rescript. Why did they persecute the Christians? They thought that because [the Christians] announced that the Lord would come and rule over the earth that was their plan. They met in secret and had certain ordinances which the world didn’t know. We have a famous rescript written to the emperor Hadrian, which would make it before the year 138 [A.D.] telling about the Christians in Asia Minor [and asking] “Are they a danger to the empire?” That’s why Nero and others persecuted them.

DeWitt Talmage was the most influential preacher in America in the late 19th century. His big theme, the only thing he ever talked about, was that the Mormons threatened world dominion—that’s what they were after. We say that the Lord will come and rule. They are right that way. The world can’t go on the way it is. Always these counter charges
are made. In Hadrian’s rescript you find the same thing—that the Christians should be exterminated because they are a threat to our world empire.

Just before that, the last people to hold their own were the Jews. They were the zealots who were secretly organized and went around murdering. They were like the stern gang today. Then you come down to the Middle Ages, and you have the assassins. Again, they spread their influence to China and to England. The assassins were organized in the year 1090, just five years before the other crowds organized themselves against them in the Crusades. They organized the Knight Templars and the Knights Hospitalers. There was a man called Hassan Ibn Sabbāh who founded the assassins. Hasish is hemp, the drug that makes you wild. He had his castle at Malamute. You always had a center, and that was at the great center at Malamute, just like the one at the Jomsburg. From there he would send out these kids. They were all “hopped up” and they would commit assassinations. They were promised heaven if they did it, because they were drugged when they did. They would go out and terrify anyone. Everybody was scared to death of the “Old Man of the Mountain.” He was renowned. And, there are still groups surviving in the Druze country, Lebanon, etc., from these assassins. These things carry on and on and on. They are continuing traditions on the earth, and you see them now.

The answer to that was the militant orders. In 1095 Bernard of Clairvaux preached a great sermon which got the first Crusade going. Then to defend people going to the temple they organized the Templars and the Hospitalers. These became militant orders. They had a red cross on a white robe, a black cross on white robe, or white cross on a black robe. There was always a cross on the shoulder. Then they became very rich and influential. Rumor spread that they wanted to rule the world. This is why Philip IV of France, who was the world’s prize heel, [persecuted them]. He wanted to get money from the Jews. He wanted to rule the world from Jerusalem. This is what happened as soon as they set up in Jerusalem. They didn’t hold on very long. What happened to these orders, for example? They were driven out. First they were driven to Acre, then to Cypress, then to Rhodes. They were the Knights of Rhodes and the Knights of Malta. Then they went to France. It was in France that Philip the Fair tried to exploit them, but only after he first wanted to exploit the Jews. This was because of the Assizes of Jerusalem, which were a protocol for the court life and the structure of government in which some European king would rule the world from Jerusalem. They took that dead serious. That is why you have this magnificent display, all this theatrical stuff of chivalry, etc. It was all centering around Jerusalem, the Holy Grail motif, etc. That was their justification. It was sacred and it was a world group.

I have a rather long article in the Encyclopedia Judaica on that very subject. Look under Christian Jerusalem in there. Jerusalem was their justification for wanting to rule the world because [the Bible says] . . . “and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” [Micah 4:2]. The temple was Jerusalem, Jerusalem was the Holy Land, the Holy Land was the world. That’s the way it was. It went out like sparks from a central fire. So, you have these Hospitalers and Templars moving from one place to another and getting very rich. In order to rule under the Assizes of Jerusalem and hold the throne there, Philip IV wanted to get money from the Jews, and he had a way of doing it. Every Jew had to give everything he had. He had one eye knocked out, and if he wouldn’t give everything he would have the other eye knocked out.

So, he [Philip IV] got very rich, but he wasn’t getting rich enough. There was a rebellion.
against him. He fled and was protected by the Knights Templars who were in France this time. Their great leader was Jacques de Molay. You all know the Masonic Order of the Molays, the Junior Masonics. Philip publicly accused him and spread the word around through the clergy that the Templars were aspiring to world rule, that their immense wealth was going to be used to enslave the human race. They made up all these wild stories about them, and above all that they practiced immoral things. You see, these lodges were very secret. Anytime you do anything in secret they can tell all sorts of stories about it. That’s what they did about the Pythagoreans and the Christians. They told about “love feasts” they had, where they all engaged in promiscuous sex. All these stories went around, and some real beauties went around about the Templars who were accused of this world conspiracy. So 60,000 of them were lined up and executed in the cruelest possible fashion. They fled to Scotland and became the Scottish order up there, which still exists. Everywhere in the world you are going to find these orders. They have always existed. Are they the right ones or wrong ones? At the same time there were the Cathari in southern France.

There is a book that created an immense sensation in Europe a couple of years ago and still does. It’s called *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, by Baigent, Leigh, and Lincoln. They were correspondents for the BBC. They got the idea that there came from Palestine in the time of Christ certain relatives of the family of Christ, who settled near Marseilles and spread out. There was an order descended from them. The Holy Grail is the *Sang réal*, the Royal Blood, which came down from Christ’s family, and which is claimed by every family in Europe. All sorts of intrigues and murders and everything center around that. It’s an interesting thing. [There were] the chivalric orders, such as the Rosicrucians. Each one has been accused of world ambition and been persecuted. The cleverest of all were the Jesuits. They were really after it. That is why the Spanish Inquisition was to go everywhere. That was their object. They established the office of the *Sang réal* for propagating the faith. Our word propaganda comes from them. They became expert liars, very clever.

In our own day we’ve had such things as the Anti-Masonic party in this country. That was a big thing, and it all centered right around the time and place of where Joseph Smith produced the Book of Mormon. That’s an interesting thing. In 1797 a French Jesuit by the name of August Baruel wrote a book (five volumes), which became enormously popular. He [supposedly] proved that the Freemasons were trying to take over the world. They caused the French Revolution. They caused revolutions everywhere [according to him] as the ultimate conspiracy against royalty in all the world—the identical charges brought against Communism after that. He accused George Washington of being one of the Illuminati. The Weisskopf organized a branch of that called the Illuminati. In 1776 the Illuminati was organized in Europe. George Washington was a Mason. There was a great excitement about it.

There was an old fraud by the name of William Morgan who also wrote a book about it because he was a drunk and had been kicked out of the Masons. No one took it very seriously. He was driven away one day from Canandaigua, New York, which is very near the city of Manchester where the Book of Mormon was found. He was whisked away in a wagon across the border to Niagara Falls. He disappeared and was never heard of again. Various bodies turned up that they claimed were Morgan, but they claimed the Masons had done him in. This was worked up to a tremendous fury. Thurlow Weed, a famous American, was actually head of the Anti-Masonic Party. It was a party and they ran [a man] for president. Joseph Smith had been accused of stealing from Ethan Smith for the Book of Mormon. Ethan Smith headed the Anti-Masonic representatives in Massachusetts.
in 1832. He accused the Illuminati—that was his big thing. That was two years after the Book of Mormon [was published] that this Ethan Smith was raising a big stink. It got to be a big thing. In one year 227 lodges were closed in Massachusetts alone. The Masonic movement practically collapsed then. The town of Fillmore [in Utah] was named for President Fillmore. Do you know how he got elected? He was on the Anti-Mason ticket. He got elected as the head of the Anti-Mason party. They elected President Fillmore, as well as William Henry Seward who bought Alaska and was Secretary of State under President Lincoln. So these Anti-Masonic candidates won everything.

Well, how did the Masons ever get back? It was mostly with Andrew Jackson’s return, the Populism, and the Romantic Movement. He was a chief Mason of Tennessee. Masons came back into repute after that. They [were targets of] the popular movement against all monarchy, against all government, against all order, etc. That was the charge that was made against the Masons, which was a big thing. This went all over Europe, America. If it isn’t one thing it is another.

What is it today? You know about the Mafia, and they are everywhere. You know about the Triad in Hong Kong. The Tong Wars among the Chinese families used to disrupt everything. The Triad is extremely powerful. They can do away with anyone they want to. They rule in places like Hong Kong and Singapore. In Israel it was the Stern Gang that got in. Shamir was the head of that. What a character! And then Hitler’s SS Schutzstaffel was organized as a society of brotherhood with secret oaths and covenants, etc.—very bloody, and the like. They were to counteract the Jews.

Today you have the Shining Path in Peru, and the Medellín that every week gets rid of another judge. They are terrorizing the country [Colombia] entirely now. The main thing is that they want to keep the peasants in place. An interesting article came out yesterday that the main object is not drugs at all, but just the old claim of the landholders. They want to get back their power when just one percent of the people, a handful of families, would rule a country. That’s a Central American pattern.

In our inner cities we have the Sharks, the Bloods, and various inner-city gangs, which are very serious. Half a dozen get killed every weekend in Los Angeles, don’t they? And then right around here we have Satanism. Can’t we get this out of our system? It’s a romantic theme. Remember Sax Roemer and Fu Manchu. He was going to rule the world; that was the whole thing. There was Rex Stout and Mr. Zeck, and James Bond is always going after Goldfinger or somebody like that. It always has to do with secret conjurations to rule the world, this great power. It has to do with some individual who has control of some atomic power or something else. He can intimidate and blackmail all the nations. They always think in world terms.

Now, what’s behind it all? We get the secret societies here. The Book of Mormon explains it to us. The best treatise you will find on this is Helaman 6 and what follows. In the first place there are no “-isms;” There are organizations. As Liddell Hart says, war is an individual affair. Religion and nationality are not basic. You can belong to anything you want. It’s not the party machine, the politburo or anything like that. It’s something else—personal ambition, etc.

Secondly, it must have a power base. It must have a market. As a way of robbery, piracy has been official. Then it was bootlegging and things like that. Today it’s drugs. It won’t
be for always. It used to be pearls. It was cattle-stealing and then gambling, as in Vegas. You can build an empire on gambling. You can build an empire on drugs and all of these things. You can build an empire on prohibition of illicit things.

The third point is that the object has the broadest appeal. Those four things that both Nephi mention: It is for money and for power; the one that holds the gun has the power. It is for popularity; they must have public support—they always do. And the lusts of the flesh—the glitzy clubs, the high-class dames, the Tony resorts and places like that. These all fit into the same setting that we are all so fond of today, as you know from your television.

The fourth point is that it must offer protection. The Book of Mormon goes right into this Gadianton stuff. It breaks it all down. You’ll find all these elements are there. You must offer protection.

The fifth is, it must seek an air of total respectability. The stretch limo, the overdressing and very expensive dressing, even piety. These people are good church members, like the Mafia—very pious family people, loyal to each other. They strive for an image of ultimate respectability. They have their own mystique. They are entirely independent of state.

This is the picture the Book of Mormon gives; it’s accurate and explicit enough to make its explanation of the whole thing quite creditable, as far as I am concerned. So isn’t it funny that three years ago we would have thought this was a waste of time? Maybe it’s a waste of time now, but that crime should take such a [prominent place]. First it’s war and then it’s crime in the Book of Mormon. These things that are emphasized have made the Book of Mormon unpopular. They have made it avoided. We didn’t want to read about these unpleasant things, but it keeps rubbing our noses into them. This is what it is talking about now. You read these chapters on crime and it makes you sick. So that is a great promise isn’t it?
Brother Barrows, would you read Helaman 6:15?

“And it came to pass that in the sixty and sixth year of the reign of the judges, behold, Cezoram was murdered by an unknown hand as he sat down upon the judgment-seat. And it came to pass that in the same year, that his son, who had been appointed by the people in his stead, was also murdered. And thus ended the sixty and sixth year.”

Then what happened the next year? Read the next verse and see if things are getting better.

Verse 16: “And in the commencement of the sixty and seventh year the people began to grow exceedingly wicked again.”

Why? Read the next verse and it will tell you why.

Verse 17: “For behold, the Lord had blessed them so long with the riches of the world that they had not been stirred up to anger, to wars, nor to bloodshed; therefore they began to set their hearts upon their riches; yea, they began to seek to get gain that they might be lifted up one above another; therefore they began to commit secret murders, and to rob and to plunder, that they might get gain.”

That’s funny! They were getting rich so they didn’t need wars anymore. They were rather happy about it. With riches of the world they hadn’t been stirred up to bloodshed nationally, so they got rich and were stirred up to private bloodshed. Their wars are lowered to a private level now. They are going to start doing that sort of thing, and then we get our prime time, as I mentioned before. “. . . to commit secret murders, and to rob and to plunder, that they might get gain.”

Now these two, Kishkumen and Gadianton, had put their heads together and formed a gang. These gangs, we noticed, are very enduring. They were called “Gadianton Robbers.”

Verse 20: “. . . when the Lamanites found that there were robbers among them they were exceedingly sorrowful; and they did use every means in their power to destroy them off the face of the earth.” How did the Nephites react? Brother Bryson, verse 21 has a lot of dynamite in it. Would you read it to us, since I can’t?

Verse 21: “But behold, Satan did stir up the hearts of the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those bands of robbers, and did enter into their covenants and their oaths, that they would protect and preserve one another in whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be placed, that they should not suffer for
their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.”

So, they got protection, didn’t they? They were all getting into it and were all going to profit on it. It tells us a lot about this now. What happens to the mutual trust that you have? I noticed [something like this] just day before yesterday. Notice, “. . . they might murder, and steal, and commit whoredoms and all manner of wickedness . . .” But they have these oaths [and signs] among themselves to show, that they might distinguish a brother in the covenant. Do you think those would hold up very well if that’s the kind of people they are? Well, there was a report about Nidal’s gang, which is very secret. They are a secret assassination gang. Within the last week 150 members of the Nidal gang had been murdered by other members of the gang. That’s how they trust each other, you see. If that keeps up we will all be very happy. But, they are the “untouchables,” contrary to the laws of the country, and also the laws of God. They were tried, but they had special courts of their own. This is characteristic of all your brotherhoods. They have their own laws and their own government. It is a state within a state in verse 24. Are there such institutions in the world today? What is the one that immediately comes to mind now? The Medellin—it just runs itself. They have their own laws. They have their own policemen, army and everything. They even have their own public works and charities and the like. “. . . not according to the laws of their country, but according to the laws of their wickedness, which had been given by Gadianton and Kishkumen. So, we have these independent states within a state.

I didn’t listen to it, but Bill Moyers recently ran a series on the “state within a state.” We have things like the De Molay, etc. Just for the fun of it, this is from the paper for the last two days. This is the sort of thing we run into. This just got in here, but it amuses me because President Lee says, “. . . ethical conduct is essential to a person’s financial success. Over the long run ethical conduct pays off.” But if you are in insurance or in real estate or in the law, it’s the short-run that pays off. Remember, as against the Japanese, the American stock market is aimed entirely at short gain—quick, short gain. That’s the way these big fortunes are being made. Anyway, he says that in the long run ethical conduct pays off in dollars and cents. But, if being honest meant financial ruin, would you still be honest then? Of course you would have to be. It has very often happened that a person has suffered financial ruin because he wouldn’t collect on a certain thing, or wouldn’t crack down. On the other hand, there are situations in which being honest will make less money in the long run.

That’s a strange thing. Remember, Plato says the honest man is a man who will do right even with the “ring of Gyges.” Gyges was one of the tyrants, and he had a ring that made you invisible. Now, if you had the ring of Gyges, you could do anything you wanted to because you would be invisible. That shouldn’t change your behavior at all. You should do the right thing because it is the right thing—not because it will make you money, bring you financial success, or in the long run dollars and cents. That’s positively cynical, if you ask me. He’s not as bad as Wilkinson though. Wilkinson had some “dillies.”

Here’s another one, “Exxon Quits Wildlife Board.” Well, Exxon [executives] were exponents of wildlife until they had to pay a lot of money. They are not going to pay the money, so they quit the board.

“Rockefeller Mitsubishi Deal settles with Japanese Taxpayers Subsidy” (The Wall Street Journal). This is what happens: Mitsubishi, one of the biggest companies in the world, and the Rockefellers, one of the richest families in the world, made a deal which made both
exceedingly rich. Neither has to pay anything. They are enriched by the taxpayers of Japan and the United States respectively because of this deal they made. We won’t go into it but that’s the way it works. “... huge government subsidy, courtesy of the tax code. The Rockefellers structured the deal. Mitsubishi now inherits this debt, but it passes its tax problem on to the Japanese government.” Everybody is paid off and everybody is happy. That’s the deal we work in today.

This one is an interesting thing: “Drug War Screens Fascist Takeover.” The perennial struggle has always been between the rich landowners and the people who want the land. That’s goes way back to the Mexican Revolution. It’s still going on. It says here that’s the real thing. The drugs are only a temporary screen for that sort of thing.

Here’s another one that’s interesting: It says, “Reagan busy hoping for certain financial security.” It says he feels financially insecure. It also lists his sources of income which are quite fabulous. But still it says he feels insecure because the money isn’t coming in fast enough for the Reagan library. He’ll get his bread and milk, I think.

Scouring the earth or destroying the earth, everybody is blaming everybody else. They are aware of it now. Then the “down-winders” blast for N-safety. Terrible things happened there—all the cases of cancer, etc., in Nevada and southern Utah. And they are not responsible for what happened. This is the way it goes.

“Angry Judge Fines Boeing $5-1/2 million. Boeing pleaded guilty Monday to two felony counts.” That’s just a week’s earnings for them, so they can afford to have done it. The point is that this infests every level. Here is one of the biggest supports for our military and commercial airlines, and yet they have been cutting corners and doing all sorts of wicked things like this. A federal judge was angered that no Boeing corporate officer appeared in court. They had contempt [charges]. They are such a powerful company. They don’t have to appear in court if they don’t want to, and that made the judge mad. This is an interesting thing because we just read here that they did according to their own minds and wills to be tried not according to the laws of their country, but according to their own laws (Helaman 6:24). We find cases just after this where they refuse to appear. [The judge requested that] the chairman of Boeing’s board write them a letter personally expressing the company’s criminal contrition in the case. They haven’t written the letter yet.

“Richard L. Fowler, senior marketing analyst for Boeing aerospace, was indicted on 39 counts of conspiracy and fraud involving secret Pentagon documents.” This has to do with national defense, which they are the sacred defenders of. They all wrap themselves in the flag and say they are making this country strong and free. That’s what the suppliers tell us. The plea bargain involved two felonies. Why Boeing had no corporate officer present in the courtroom they don’t know. Boeing’s lawyer admitted, “This is a very sad day in its history.” He also admitted, “There is no question Boeing should not have had those documents. They were doing wrong.”

Here is what is happening this week in Lima, Peru. Suspected Maoist guerillas killed six people Monday apparently as a reprisal for voting in Peru’s municipal election. “The guerillas walked up to three men, one of them a poll watcher in the election [this is the way the Gadiantons operate] as they played soccer and shot them to death. Three other men were shot dead in the outskirts of Achuko,” police said. “We presume the murders were reprisals for participating in the elections.” That was their crime—they voted in the elections. “At least six people, including a family of three, died in the Shining Path attacks on election day in the poverty-stricken Andes. In the bloodiest instance, a group of
peasants stepped on a guerilla mine on a road, as the peasants walked home to their village after voting in the City of Concepcion, killing all three members.” The Shining Path takes credit for this. This is the sort of thing we read about in the Book of Mormon. It’s the same country and the same sort of thing going on, a standing tradition. It is amazing how little things change.

Here’s a new one that just came out on Sunday about a Mayan city, dating back to 600 B.C. It’s an interesting thing that these cities don’t change very much. It is yet to be excavated, but it had towers up to 150 feet high, even in their crumbled state. It was built over an older village that goes back to 1000 B.C. Remember the former inhabitants of the land, etc. [The excavators] include about 60, which includes scientists from UCLA, Brigham Young University, and the University of San Carlos. So BYU is in on the deal, and that is a good thing. These things may develop. They are beginning to look more and more alike.

Here are our national treasures, etc. Here is a French Fort that goes back to the French and Indian Wars. It is older than the republic. It is on the Mississippi, a fort of very great value and interest. Now it has been converted into a hazardous waste dump.

“Business Is Booming for Gun Manufacturers.” Well, we know that. Of course it is.

Here is the low-down on high tech. A very important gadget has been selling very widely in the market, and they just discovered that it has a very serious glitch in it. Your machine will go out all the time if you use it. This is what they say about it. INTEL is the one that makes it. “Certainly INTEL is not the only company that has ever had a bug in its product—just one of those that for whatever reason has admitted it. This kind of stuff crops up all the time in software as well as hardware. The more complex computers and programs get, the tougher it is to test them adequately and the greater chance a substantial error will show up.”

What really galled me about this particular incident though is that INTEL continued to make the bad part, even as it worked on a fixed version. Hardware companies, such as AST, continue to buy it too. “AST research, apparently more concerned about staking out an early market position than about the needs of their consumers, vowed to continue buying the bad parts and using them and incorporating them in their computer systems. To their credit, IBM refused to do that. Is it too much to expect companies to stop buying something they know is flawed [because it can do great damage—a false calculation can throw everything off] and reselling it to the public? Do companies believe that the world is so desperate for another new MIPS of flawed computer power this month that it won’t wait for corrected machines next year? That may be fine for big corporations that can afford the luxury of experiments with the latest equipment, or absorb the cost of any problems that arise when the technology doesn’t work as expected. But for individuals, the people who get the machines, the effects are disastrous.”

Then there’s the Burr Trail. It seems that they’ve discovered there has been all sorts of underground pressure. Well, the BLM is notoriously corrupt because of the big funds there.

In Bogota, Colombia, they decided to have the army join in the fight against drugs. It was a disastrous thing to do because now the [traffickers] are participating in the army. The police should have done it. “It was really a mistake to place the army in Colombia in
contact with the narcotics criminals who have an immense capacity to corrupt.” So they have corrupted the army now. “Despite the arrest of about 11,000 suspects and the seizure of more than a thousand properties, no drug lords have yet been captured. Gomez Mendez said the military command was aware that the drug lords had infiltrated and corrupted the army officers.”

This is the situation in the Book of Mormon. Here is the morality of it. Here’s this fellow, Louis Hart, who got the U. S. News and World Report going. He wrote the book called The Memoirs of an S.O.B. He said, “To me an S.O.B. is someone who uses whatever tactics it takes to get the job done, to rise to the top, and in truth I think there are more CEOs or bosses who would use my tactics in some degree than will admit it.” In his book Louis Hart does not paint a pretty picture of the business world. Driven by an insatiable hunger for power he manipulates friends, ignores his wife and children, torments his rivals, and generally stops at nothing to reach his goal. Along the way he drives hard-working employees into the ground and angers fellow executives with his bullying tactics.

His divorced wife [whose wife? He gives two different names] writes about him. His wife, Lori Wilson, was a former Florida state senator. “Al Newhart is a snake. The world is Al’s prey. He is a stalking animal. Once you are his target, professionally or personally, he will do whatever it takes to get you. You might as well roll over and play dead.” This is the morality. But, asked why she would help her ex-husband promote the book, she doesn’t bat an eye. The same woman answers, “Well, of course, I’m hoping he will remember me in his will.” She’ll get some money out of it. These are pleasant people, aren’t they? And, of course, Utah is always right there on top. It only helps the tiniest of Tiny Tims. We consistently cut our assistance to the poor, about which the Book of Mormon has a lot to say.

This is amusing. “For years and years they have been dropping bombs all over the place outside of the range. Navy pilots accidentally dropped hundreds of bombs for years outside of military bombing ranges in central Nevada.” They fly over Fallon. They could drop one on you; keep your hat on. “State officials are angry that they were never told about it. Thousands of bombs jeopardizing life and limb being dropped and never a hint about it. The Navy has recovered up to 2,000 live and dead bombs dropped outside the 22,000-acre tract there.” The governor said, “This is just one in a long string of broken promises from the Navy.”

We used to think we could turn to military forces for integrity. But remember, you win battles and wars by strategy, and strategy is deception. You get what you want by fooling the enemy. Strategy is to give them the wrong idea as to your place, your position, your potentiality, your capacities, your supplies, your routes, etc. You try to fool them in everything. If you look in the dictionary, it says, “Strategy is deception practiced on an enemy.” The only thing is, who is the enemy? Well, as the Roman army soon discovered, the enemy is anybody you don’t like. The enemy is anyone who won’t pay you enough. They say more than half the emperors were “bumped off” by the army. “Operation Ugly Baby” is a routine exercise to ensure people’s safety. You always find these lame excuses: “The public wasn’t informed of the effort to keep away onlookers,” they said. They didn’t want onlookers.

Well, this is a sweet one here: “Springville Boy Hurt in Gun Mishap. A Springville boy was checking a shotgun before going pheasant hunting when the gun discharged into his
shoulder. Kevin Peterson was at his home over the weekend getting ready to go pheasant hunting with his friends.” At least four presidents of the Church have declared that hunting, especially hunting birds for pleasure, is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. The president tells us what we don’t want to hear. Is the prophet the prophet we don’t want to hear?

Here’s a nice list of things going on from Ivan Boeski to Mike Milken. “Scandal Had Many Major Players.” First, Boeski paid $100 million in fines and restitution and agreed to plead guilty on one count. Then this fellow working with him was Michael R. Miliken, 43. He created a $200 billion market for junk bonds. He pleaded innocent and plans a court fight. (Shakespeare gives us a good picture of Shylock, who was a great soul but was also a scoundrel. And these people are all Jews. I hope I don’t sound anti-Semitic, since I am partly Jewish, but you notice they’re shrewd.) “Dennis Levine, 36, was paroled in September after serving 17 months for securities fraud, tax evasion, and perjury with a broad inside trading ring.” He organized this ring—there’s your secret combination. “He told a group of business students this year he has formed a merger with an acquisition and consulting firm and ‘I’m sorry I broke the law,’ he said.” But he is going on with it.

Then comes Martin Segal, 40. He is guilty of illegal stock trading. He was with Peabody and Company. He agreed to return $9 million in legal dealings with Boeski. They are all connected with Drexel, incidentally, the highly respectable drugstore.

Then there’s Boyd L. Jeffries, 58. After two years of helping the government, he was fined $250,000 because he was an informer in a stock-concealment scheme with Boeski. He was in for five years but eventually returned. Boeski went around giving talks in 1983 to high schools, and the subject was, “It Is Good to Have a Healthy Greed.”

Well, Boyd Jeffries was in a stock-consumer scheme, and he got five years. Paul Bilzerian, 39, is an Armenian. There’s a saying, “It takes five Jews to cheat one Armenian.” They are the sleakest of all. He got four years in prison on nine counts of securities fraud and conspiracy. He continues to deny the charges. Steven Wayne, Jr., the sly oriental there, is only 25 years old. “The former Morgan Stanley and Company junior analyst allegedly made $200,000 from a multimillion dollar insider trading scheme.” And Robert Freeman. It goes on and on.

The most dramatic of them all is this one. He agreed to plead guilty to one felony count and was awaiting sentencing. Bruce Lee Newburg, 32, is a Princeton Newport partner—very, very respectable. Newburg told an executive in the investment firm after a shady deal, “Welcome to the world of being a sleaze.” That’s what he called it.

R. Foster Wynan, 41, was a former Wall Street Journal reporter. He wrote things he heard on the street and these tips to probe inside the trading. Then Lisa Jones, 26, former Drexel assistant, lied to the federal grand jury during a government investigation. Well, here are all these big names. These are the people who are pushing the stock markets ahead. And, here we have a U.S. House panel who hears the testimony of “downsiders” and what people do here.

“Joe, who speaks Navajo and whose testimony was read for him by Billy said miners had to work in the dust and smoke without any protective clothing, face mask, or respirator. ‘We ate our lunch in the mines; we drank water from the home-made water fountain in
the mines. By the end of the day we were sent home very sick. This went on year after year.” That’s nothing compared to the mines of Scotland though, where my grandparents toiled away. I’ll read you something from them one day.

And then, of course, childish play has become absolutely devastating. This “Devil’s Night” burn down houses now. And so it goes. We have a happy picture here! Let’s get on with this sort of thing and see how it develops.

Now, we’ll see where it comes from. Helaman 6:25: “Now behold, it is these secret oaths and covenants which Alma commanded his son should not go forth unto the world, lest they should be a means of bringing down the people unto destruction.” There are things that have been held back and never told to us because they could do great damage if we knew them.

It was a very interesting thing. When I was training at Camp Ritchie in a very secret, underground thing, there was great talk about a new technique that was devastating and should never be allowed to get out. It was a means of assassination. It was very, very secret, and if it ever got out the world would be destroyed probably. All it was, was Judo. But in those days it was kung-fu, and that sort of thing that you see on the television you see all the time now. In those days it was unknown and a carefully guarded government secret, these various ways of doing this thing. So, I had a class in that and felt very powerful.

This will take us back to one source though. These things all follow a pattern. Do we need Satan to help us do these things? Can we do them without Satan? There are parts of the Book of Mormon where people are not influenced by Satan at all. There are societies where people are not. You don’t have to be. But it is something that comes in from outside. It is something that grasps your mind. It is not just power, gain, and ambition—the basic wishes of human beings to assert themselves. Like I said, the dogs start fighting, and then the whole pound breaks into pandemonium if the kennel keeper isn’t there. We will go into these things just of our own [nature] without Satan’s assistance at all. These things come without the Lord. That is why Jesus Christ is so important. There is no other defense. There is nothing else. No one else has an inkling of an idea what else could be done about this. This just goes on forever and ever. Without Jesus Christ you are not going to get out of it at all.

So, he says they didn’t keep record [of these secret oaths and covenants]. “. . . they were put into the heart of Gadianton by that same being who did entice our first parents to partake of the forbidden fruit.” Notice that he says “that same being” five times in verses 26–29. He keeps emphasizing this; he wants us to know that there is a being. That’s the way he describes it. There is that being, something at the core and center of things. There is a control here, something working in that direction. It could be like an abstract principle, you know. “. . . that same being that enticed our first parents to partake of the forbidden fruit—Yea, that same being who did plot with Cain, that if he would murder his brother Abel it should not be known unto the world. And he did plot with Cain and his followers from that time forth.” Of course, that story is told to us in the Book of Moses, how Cain manages those things.

Well, we should consider this because this takes it back to its source and shows us how it operated here. You remember Moses said [to Satan], “I am a son of God, in the similitude of his Only Begotten [Moses 1:13]. Satan wanted to run the thing. Notice Moses 1:19: “. .
Satan cried with a loud voice and ranted upon the earth, and commanded, saying: I am the Only Begotten, worship me.”

It is an interesting thing that he never commands Adam to do anything wrong. He commands Cain to sacrifice unto the Lord, to take oaths by the most High God, the Creator.

What is he doing here when he tells Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit? The same thing that had been done in other worlds. “What’s wrong with that?” he says. The thing is that he wants them to be taking orders from him—that’s the whole thing. He wants us to be saved, but he wants to be the author of salvation. It says that right at the beginning, in Abraham 3. He came to the Lord and said, give me thy glory and I will see to it that they all get saved. I’ll get the glory, I’ll get the credit, and I’ll get them all saved. That was his plan. He wanted to save them, not to damn them. So, they don’t take oaths by devils or anything. They take oaths by their Creator and God. So, here he goes and he wants to run the whole show.

Moses was intimidated. He began to fear. He saw the bitterness of hell, and he called upon God to denounce Satan and tell him to depart. Moses 1:22: “. . . Satan cried with a loud voice, with weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth; and he departed hence . . . that Moses beheld him not.” But he is going to come back again, you see. He works on Adam first of all, but he doesn’t sell Adam on it at all.

In Moses 4 we have the account of the council in Heaven, which is well documented in early Christian and Jewish sources. They skip it because it isn’t part of their theology, but it is there. Verse 3: . . . Satan rebelled against me and sought to destroy the agency of man [his agency was going to be Satan’s agency; he laid down the rules; he’d tell them what to do, and that’s what dictatorial, autocratic states do], which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down. And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies . . .” He loves and makes a lie. Remember the various titles. Master Mahon means “the hater.” He is the great hater. He aspires, he contends, and he uses violence. This is the way he works, to deceive with strategy. Deceiving is his method. So there is only one crime, after all. The word tells you what I think is going on, and by the easiest thing in the world I can fool you. I can tell you what I don’t think and make you think it. I can put on an air of great sincerity, and it becomes a fine Jesuitical art. “. . . to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will [and notice this], even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.” If you do not live up to every commandment, you will be in my power, Satan says, and he is right. If you don’t hearken unto my voice, the Lord says, you will be subject to his [Satan’s] will. And that’s what he wanted.

Verse 6: “And Satan put it into the heart of the serpent . . .” And then the sad thing happened. Adam and Eve receive the gospel in Moses 5. They see it in its fullness and absolutely glory in it. But then what happened? Verse 12: “And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God, and they made all things known unto their sons and their daughters. And Satan came among them, saying: I am also a son of God; and commanded them saying: Believe it not [there it is, the straight denial, and they went for it; they all believed him]; and they believed it not, and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish.”
We are not born carnal, sensual, and devilish. It was from that time forth that they yielded to the temptations of Satan. That is not our nature at all, coming from the other world. That's the doctrine of Calvinism. St. Augustine said, "Man is a mass of perdition and utterly corrupt." Or as the Calvinists put it, "total depravity." We are by nature totally depraved. Well, we are not totally depraved. It was from that time forth that men began to become carnal, sensual, and devilish.

Adam and Eve "ceased not to call upon God" and did everything they could, but all they could do was mourn before the Lord. "... Cain harkened not, saying: Who is the Lord that I should know him? [Cain had his own plan, you see]... And Cain loved Satan more than God. And Satan commanded him, saying: Make an offering unto the Lord." Notice he said, "an offering unto the Lord." We are in Moses 5:18. He didn’t say, make an offering unto me; he didn’t say, make an offering unto the devils or to idols. He said, "Make an offering unto the Lord. And in the process of time... Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof... But unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect." Now, Satan knew he [the Lord] wouldn’t have respect. He couldn’t have respect; Cain had already denounced him. He said Cain loved Satan more than God, and Satan commanded and he obeyed. See, Satan has what he wants. He is taking orders from me. He is offering to the Lord, which is good, but he is offering on my instructions. I’m the leader here [Satan thought]. "But unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect." Satan knew that was exactly what would happen; the Lord couldn’t accept an offering since Cain had already denounced him. "... and it pleased him. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain: Why art thou wroth?"

And then the Lord very kindly protested and explained to him, and look what happened [in Moses 5:23]: "... If thou doest well thou shalt be accepted. If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee; and except thou shalt hearken unto my commandments [there it is again—all who do not live up to the commandments will be in his power], I will deliver thee up, and it shall be unto thee according to his desire [he shall have power over you]. And thou shalt rule over him." (That last statement is very important, but we won’t take that up now.)

The Lord was protesting. He was going to teach Cain the right way, but look what happened in verse 25: "And it shall be said in time to come—that these abominations were had from Cain; for he rejected the greater counsel which was had from God; and this is a cursing which I will put upon thee, except thou repent." He said you can always repent, but there is a cursing on you except you repent. What was his reaction to that in verse 26? "... And Cain was wroth [hot as a firecracker], and listened not any more to the voice of the Lord, neither to Abel, his brother, who walked in holiness before the Lord." He turned his back on God and walked out; he wasn’t going to have any more discussion with him.

So Cain brought it all on himself, didn’t he? Then he went out and started to work at things. We can understand his psychology here. If you get miffed and puffed up, you make yourself worse and worse and dig yourself in deeper and deeper. You can become very dangerous. Notice, what can poor Adam do? Verse 27: "And Adam and his wife mourned before the Lord, because of Cain and his brethren." He had his following; he had his brotherhood. In verse 29 they are starting to take their oaths and covenants, which are the same as those in the temple. Therefore, he says, we mustn’t let Adam find out about this, because he will know what it is. Verse 29: "And Satan said unto Cain: Swear unto me
by thy throat, and if thou tell it thou shalt die; and swear thy brethren by their heads, and by the living God [see, they are swearing by the living God] that they tell it not; for if they tell it, they shall surely die; and this that thy father may not know it.” Adam must not know about this for he would immediately denounce and discredit it as phony, because that’s what it was. They were establishing this as the real rites in the world.

Verse 31: “And Cain said: Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret [all these things are done in secret], that I may murder and get gain. Wherefore Cain was called Master Mahan, and he gloried in his wickedness.” As we know, he killed his brother by a conspiracy. He formed an organization, we learn in the [Pearl of Great Price]. When he killed [Abel] he gloried in what he had done and was not ashamed. Why? Because he said, now I’m rich, and being rich will make me free. Verse 33: “... I am free; surely the flocks of my brother falleth into my hands [I’ll get his flocks, and I’m rich]. And the Lord said unto Cain: Where is Abel, thy brother?” So Cain became a fugitive and a vagabond and went to the land of Nod. That’s the same as our word *nod*. When you nod you go back and forth. You wander and don’t have any center. So, the land of Nod is the land of the migrants, the land of the everlasting wanderer. That is the curse that Cain is under.

This thing is right at the center. We go very deeply into these things. This is a very interesting thing: Lamech becomes [Cain’s] successor. He holds the office of Master Mahan after [Cain]. Somebody breaks the oath of secrecy and Lamech murders him. Then he is betrayed by his two wives, and then it says [verse 52] “Wherefore the Lord cursed Lamech, and his house, and all them that had covenanted with Satan; for they kept not the commandments of God, and it displeased God and he ministered not unto them, and their works were abominations, and began to spread among all the [children] of men.”

If you read something like *The Golden Bough* on comparative religions, you find that throughout all the earth you have these religions. I would recommend some very good treatments on it—books like Marie Renault’s *The King Must Die*. There’s the old fight between the matriarchy and the patriarchy, and the wild, obscene rites that go with it. These are the things that spread throughout all the earth. That is why you find them in all the earth. This is your world religion. In world religion this dominates. Well, I’ve written a lot about that. But the point is there is more to the Cain thing than you think, and more to Satan too.

[Back to Helaman 6:26:] “... by that same being who did entice our first parents [that is Satan] to partake of the forbidden fruit—Yea, that same being who plotted with Cain...” to make him rich if he murdered his brother. That is why he did it. He murdered his brother to get gain. And notice, this is the great secret of Master Mahan—that I can convert life into property. All of these things I’ve been reading here [from the newspaper, for example] jeopardize life; they all destroy some of the quality of life. They all distract from life. They are all anti-life, but they get gain. The only way you can get money is to convert living things into gain. So the earth is being made absolutely desolate in our time in an astonishing manner.

Verse 28: “And also it is that same being who put it into the hearts of the people to build a tower...” That was Nimrod [who built the tower] who was a descendant of Cush, who was a descendant of Noah. He built the tower from which the Jaredites came. “And it was that same being who led on the people who came from that tower into this land; who spread the works of darkness and abominations over all the face of the land, until he dragged the people down to an entire destruction... that same being [there it is again] who put it
into the heart of Gadianton to still carry on the work of darkness, and of secret murder; and he has brought it forth from the beginning of man even down to this time.”

So, it has already been there. So, this is our anatomy of crime, our theory of crime. There has always been a center, a headquarters. He is the author of all sin. That’s interesting. It has nothing to do with nationality or anything like that. You don’t have to be a communist to break the Ten Commandments; people can do that. He “doth hand down their plots, and their oaths, and their covenants, and their plans of awful wickedness . . .” Notice again, they are a brotherhood, a closed society. They have plots, oaths, covenants, and plans. We think they would be rid of that in these modern, sophisticated, scientific times. They wouldn’t go back to this crazy mystique, but everybody is in it up to their ears now.

Verse 31: “And now behold, he had got great hold upon the hearts of the Nephites. . . . the more part of them had turned out of the way of righteousness . . . and did build up unto themselves idols of their gold and their silver.” Not gold and silver idols, but they made idols of their money. They worshipped that. Suddenly, this bursts on us like a clap of thunder—like a shocking exposé of things we hadn’t expected. It’s [like] a report to a grand jury that’s come out—so circumstantial, so clear, so detailed here. Who could have worked it out then? All of this happened so fast, in the space of not many years. That’s another thing. It works very fast, doesn’t it? We’ve seen that. Noriega used to be on our side; well there you are.

Verse 32: “. . . these iniquities did come unto them in the space of not many years, insomuch that a more part of it had come unto them in the sixty and seventh year of the reign of the judges . . . And they did grow in their iniquities . . . And thus we see that the Nephites began to dwindle in unbelief, and grow in wickedness and abominations, while the Lamanites began to grow exceedingly in the knowledge of their God [turning the tables] . . . the Spirit of the Lord began to withdraw from the Nephites, because of the wickedness and the hardness of their hearts.”

The hard-hearted ones that are set and decided can’t be moved. (See, that was Cain. He was hard; he wouldn’t listen to the Lord. Nothing could move him; he just walked out.) The Spirit of the Lord began to withdraw from them; “the Lord began to pour out his Spirit upon the Lamanites” on the other hand.

This is too fantastic, you might say. Verse 37: “. . . and it came to pass that the Lamanites did hunt the band of robbers of Gadianton; and they did preach the word of God among the more wicked part of them, insomuch that this band of robbers was utterly destroyed from among the Lamanites.” Just by preaching the gospel to them they utterly destroyed them? What strange changes come about!

Saturday night I had a call from a Church office in Salt Lake, which was very strange. A man started talking to me in Russian, and he was from the Leningrad Institute. He was suddenly all excited about Mormonism, but he had never heard of the Book of Mormon. Imagine that. Yet suddenly he started getting interested in Mormonism. Such strange turnabouts can happen, you know. It sounds absolutely weird. What would he care about it, being a professor at the Leningrad Institute? Well, he said his business was to teach religion there, and the one religion that attracted him most was Mormonism, though he knew very little about it. He had never seen a Book of Mormon. Obviously, the Book of Mormon was meant for us, certainly up to this point. These things apply to us; they don’t
apply to those “naughty Russians.” They have their sins, their wickedness, etc., but there are some things we must pay attention to, because this is certainly meant for us. “This comes to you, O ye Gentiles.” He has written to me a forty-page résumé of why Mormonism is superior to other religions. This is a Russian professor in Leningrad, a total atheist. Why he would say such a thing is astonishing, but those things happen.

And so they preached the gospel, and they [the robbers] weren’t such bad guys after all—like the good bandits. Were the Gadiantons so bad? Ammon was right. Remember, Ammon went out to speak to the worst and most vicious of people. They [the Nephites] told him he would not last for five minutes—you will be [like] a snowball in hell. He went out and those were the very people he preached to, and they became the most righteous people in the land. They became more righteous than the [Nephites], the ones that Ammon went out to preach to. So we have strange shifts, tides and winds going on now. We are living in a tumultuous time, in case you don’t know it.
Note how fast it happened. In the sixth chapter they’ve gotten wicked again. Remember, they [the Lamanites] wiped out the Gadiantons simply by preaching the gospel to them. That may seem extravagant to us. But the Nephites went on getting more and more wicked, and then see what happened. Why did they do this? Because they didn’t work at it [being righteous]. You have to fast and pray and things like that. The Lord had blessed them, and this is the reason. They liked prosperity, so in Helaman 6:17, “. . . the Lord had blessed them so long with the riches of the world they had not been stirred up to anger, to wars, nor to bloodshed; therefore they began to set their hearts on their riches; yea, they began to seek to get gain that they might be lifted up one above another.”

Does that necessarily follow? Well, how do you measure gain? How do you measure wealth and power? By numbers, of course. The whole thing is done by numbers. You don’t even have to have the money anymore. It’s just the numbers. It used to be the numbers in the bank, the number of gold coins. Now it’s the number of blips, just something in a computer, and yet you can have this vast wealth, as the Chicago trading has shown, without doing a thing. But it’s all in terms of numbers, and of course a number is nothing but a comparison. So you measure your greatness by number. “. . . [to] be lifted up one above another; therefore they began to commit secret murders, and to rob and to plunder, that they might get gain.” Back on prime time again. And there was the gang. Now [the followers of] Kishkumen and Gadianton, those two geniuses, got together again, and “there were many, even among the Nephites, of Gadianton’s band.” This is the old gang, as we mentioned, the assassins, etc.

Verse 20: “. . . when the Lamanites found that there were robbers among them they were exceedingly sorrowful.” If there is a giant crime exposé, what are you going to do about it? “. . . Satan did stir up the hearts of the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those bands of robbers . . .” They united with the bands. There was profit in it; there was business behind it. A giant brotherhood is what it turns out to be. But everybody’s profiting in certain times. We all invest, and they invested. They bought in is what they did. “. . . the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those bands of robbers, and did enter into their covenants and their oaths, that they would protect and preserve one another in whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be placed, that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.” Well, who are they going to plunder if it’s the whole nation? Who are we plundering today, as far as that goes? And [they had] their secret signs.

Now, here, at this point, let’s ask this question. Is the needle stuck, or something like that? Are we going to get the same routine over and over again? Does this lack of variety disturb you at all, what we have here? Well, look at the record. I just wrote down some things. You go through the historians—whether it’s Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, Livy, Gellius, Ammianus. Then you get into the Middle Ages and read Gregory of Tours. You can check the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, or anything like that. You can save trouble by
reading Gibbon, all five volumes of it. In the Middle Ages you have Le Bel and all the chronicles there [such as] the *Peterborough Chronicles*. Fulcher was the chaplain to Baldwin of Boulogne, but he worked for everybody; Froissart, even more so. He was secretary for one king, and worked for another king. He spent a lot of time in Ireland and married two Irish wives. We don’t realize that half the court of King Frederick II spoke Irish—it was the fashionable thing to speak Irish. Then [there were] the *Eddas*, Eroissart, and Percy’s *Reliques*. We have them all collected here in one massive collection made by the Germans in the late nineteenth century called the *Monumenta Germanica*. We also have the *Patrologia*, thousands of volumes—Oriental, Greek, and Latin.

These stories are all written down, and they’re all the same as the Book of Mormon. There’s nothing but downbeat. It’s all dirty; it’s all nasty. Well, what goes on here? Well, I guess Voltaire was right when he said, “Happy the people whose annals are blank.” If you have nothing to say, if you have nothing to report, then your history is happy. But what kind of history is that? Who’s going to read that? I got up this morning and brushed my teeth. We had a picnic, etc. Well, well, isn’t that great. That’s not going to be prime-time TV. You’ve got to have the blood, murder, and intrigue and all that stuff.

But in all this writing there are a few flashes of light. They come in there. They are nearly always connected with these people that are called “the Great.” Some one individual moved them that way, like the prophets of old. Who are called “the Great?” It’s not historians who bestow the title “the Great.” It’s by popular acclaim that it happens. It happens almost unconsciously, and so we have Alfred the Great, Alexander the Great, and Karl the Great who is Charlemagne, and Peter the Great. They are the greats. They give us the happy moments. And what’s so great about them? It’s not their conquests, it’s not their power, and it’s not their ego. Nobody ever wanted to call Napoleon, “Napoleon the Great.” They all admitted that he was the greatest of conquerors. Caesar, the same thing. They never called him “Caesar the Great.” But why do we have Alfred the Great? Because we think of Alfred and the plowboy—Alfred who was determined that every plowboy in England would learn to read and write.

Then you have Charlemagne going to school as the emperor, sitting down on little seats with the little boys, and girls too, in the school to learn how to read and write, because he was illiterate. It wasn’t beneath his dignity to do that. Well, they may have laughed at him in school, but he would do that. And the same thing with Alfred. And you think of Peter the Great working as a common day-laborer in the shipyards of Holland so he’d learn how to make ships for his people. He wanted Russia to have a navy. Peter the Great was the greatest conqueror of the East, and he worked just as a common laborer and expected no more. This sort of person we call “the great.”

The one story we all know about Alexander is “Alexander and Diogenes.” Diogenes, you know, had a lamp and went around looking for an honest man. He was a social philosopher and other things. He was in a barrel, which was in a public place there. He was permitted to do that. Everybody was so busy he would roll his barrel from one side to the other. [They would say,] “What are you doing, rolling your barrel?” He said, “Well, everybody has to be busy in this town. I’ve got to do something; you have to look busy.” This is the main point. You’re not doing anything, but rolling your barrel. Well, anyway, Alexander the Great came to see him. “What can I do for you?” said Alexander the Great. He [Diogenes] was sitting in the sun. The sun had just come up in the morning, and he was getting warm. Diogenes said, “Get out of the sun, please; that’s what you can do for me.”
And Alexander, as he walked away, said to the people with him, “If I were not Alexander, I would choose to be Diogenes.” That was the greatness of Alexander. They were not uppity; they were not high and mighty. They realized that all others were equal to them. These would have been photo opportunities for our pseudo-greats today. These men were very sincere, and that’s what made them the greats.

Now the Greeks don’t have that title, “the Great,” but they have “the Wise,” you see, except for Alexander. The greatest of the Greeks was Solon the Wise, and Solomon was Solomon the Wise. We have the wisdom of Solomon, and we have the wisdom of Solon, too—for example his “Ode on the Seven Ages of Man.” They’re very sad, and, as you know, the Wisdom of Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes is bleak and sad as ever a writing can be. We’ve seen everything; it’s all the same routine. Nothing’s going to get any better on this earth. Well, history tells us, no matter what happens, it never gets any better. But does it ever get any worse?

So this is the story we’re getting in the Book of Mormon too, but there’s going to be a difference here. Don’t blame the Book of Mormon for being bleak. What about the ancient East, the real ancient East? There’s an interesting thing, because you have all these inscriptions. You have a vast autobiographical literature. And Lehi’s is another typical autobiography of the time. And you have the heroic inscriptions and doings of kings, etc. Well, they’re idealized. The king is always victorious and glorious and this sort of thing. But everybody knew they weren’t. They were ritualized, etc. The Old Testament chronicles are the only ones that are different. They tell it like it was. David and Solomon are not unmitigated heroes by any means. David is not going to make it out of hell without a lot of trouble because of the things he did. And Solomon was not wise—he was a fool. The Shulamite made a fool of him. In his wisdom he thought he was so wise, having all those wives. No, he was not wise. But we find those things in the Old Testament.

But they [the Eastern civilizations] had another side of the picture, which was very real, and they were aware of that. That is the great wisdom literature, the great lamentation literature. This counteracted the rest. You have the lamentation literature in Egyptian from the beginning and right through, “The Lamentations of Neferohu” and their prophets too, of Amenemhet, “The Prophecy of the Lamb.” What are some of the others? “The Destruction of Mankind.” There are some great works that deal with the other side of the picture, very realistic and very accurate descriptions of a world which is doomed.

It’s the ludlul literature with the Babylonians and their epics, the Gilgamesh Epic, and the Adapa. They’re very bleak. See, gilgamesh is quest. Can we gain eternal life? And he flubs it. It just drives him wild because he can’t have eternal life. He’s not going to settle for just being a drop in the ocean of being.

So we have these things, and the Book of Mormon shows its authenticity at all points. The same gloomy, depressing routine of human folly runs through the whole thing. But then along with it is something unique. It’s the upbeat nature of the Book of Mormon, which you don’t get in the others, except some. Of course, there are some of the psalms of David. But once, years ago, I got a cheap edition of the Book of Mormon (you can get them for 50 cents) and colored all the upbeat verses green and all the downbeat verses red. They’re about equal in number. It’s half up and half down. It’s a miserable world we’re living in, but the news is all good. That’s the nice thing about it. And the authenticity of
the one vouches for the other. It has given such a true picture of this world we live in that we can trust it all the way.

I turn to the Bible when I’m in distress. You get comfort from that, from sorrowing and from suffering. There are promises and passages about the Messiah. It has passed through many hands and many editors and been commented many times. But the Book of Mormon is like grabbing the hand of God. It’s like grabbing the iron rod. You’ve got something very solid there. It was brought by the angel, and you have the whole thing. It has never been explained. It is solid, not built up of any coincidences. It’s like a hand reaching down to grab you, and it says we’re not lost at all. The Book of Mormon is all good. So let’s get to the good part as fast as we can. We need it now. Of course, having bad colds does not put one in a good temper, you know; I start looking for the bleak side of existence.

Helaman 6:29: “Yea, it is that same being who put it into the heart of Gadianton to still carry on the work of darkness . . . from the beginning of man even down to this time [he’s the one who sows these nasty viruses]. And behold, it is he who is the author of all sin [well, that’s a funny thing]. . . . and doth hand down their plots, and their oaths and their covenants, and their plans of awful wickedness.” Now we’ve shown that before. We don’t need to go into that—a subject that hasn’t been properly treated this way. But in any century of the earth’s history you want to name, these bands have been there, and they’ve dominated. They have not just been there, but have always insisted on secrecy. Naturally, you say we don’t know about them. Ah, yes, but the mischief they perform is so great. There’s so much evidence of their existence, and they keep popping out all the time. And some of them are practically indestructible. The old assassins are still going, for example. There are all these outfits, like Abu Nidal, in the East—not just in the East. The worst used to be in China; they may still be. Well, there’s the Triad in Hong Kong; terrible things go on. And not only that, but these gangs in Southeast Asia—Vietnam, etc. They not only fight each other; they start wiping out merchants or anybody else. They are not limiting themselves to their own people; they’re going everywhere. Now they’re planting cells in towns in the Middle West. In the big cities, like Los Angeles and New York [it’s expected], but now they are in the most unexpected places. They find Springville a particularly inviting place to operate. Well, it’s very insidious. These things actually do go on like that, and the police can tell you some horrifying things about that even now. But why does this concern us?

The more part of the Nephites made idols of their gold and silver. Well, they were making too much money. Notice verse 31. It got so much hold on them. “. . . build up unto themselves idols of their gold and their silver.” But why did it happen so fast, in the space of not so many years? Notice, this astonishes the Book of Mormon historians too as much as it does you. You say, well how can it happen so fast? It is strange. In not many years it happened just like that. And again, if you look at the record, that’s exactly what happened. In the sixty and seventh year of the reign [of the judges] “they did grow in their iniquities.” They reversed roles. The Nephites began to dwindle because of the hardness of their hearts, and the Lamanites began to grow.

We’re getting behind here; let’s go to chapter 7. We’ve already mentioned that the Gadiantons had been wiped out [among the Lamanites] just by preaching to them, as if that could be done. That has a lot to do with the nature of their covenants. But they [the Nephites] had a new administration here in verse 39: “And thus they did obtain the sole management of the government,” so that anything they could do was all right. And they
did “turn their backs upon the poor [cut all benefits] and the meek, and the humble followers of God.” As Tolstoy said about the Russian baron who rules a large estate and sees his aged peasants suffering. He can’t bear the sight of seeing them suffering, so he sends them off to Siberia where he won’t have to see them. That was the solution. Well, it’s the same solution with us. We say we feel for the poor, but boy do we grind them down. Verse 40: “. . . they were in an awful state, and ripening for an everlasting destruction.”

Chapter 7 starts with a sad homecoming. This is a thoroughly sad story, isn’t it? Nephi, the son of Helaman, had been on a mission trying to make some headway among the Nephites, and he was a complete failure. Nobody would accept him at all in the land northward. Verse 3: “And they did reject all his words, insomuch that he could not stay among them . . .” He had to leave; he couldn’t stay. Well, at least I’m going home; things will be better there [he thought]. Forget it. They were worse when he got home: “And seeing the people in a state of such awful wickedness, and those Gadianton robbers filling the judgment-seats [they know where the keys of power are]—having usurped the power and authority of the land; laying aside the commandments of God, and not in the least aright before him; doing no justice unto the children of men [here is the routine; notice, it’s all personal friends]. Condemning the righteous because of their righteousness; letting the guilty and the wicked go unpunished [and you might know why] because of their money; and moreover to be held in office . . .” There’s only one purpose in politics today, all of a sudden, the last ten years or so. It’s to get elected. If you get elected, then that’s it. Eighty-five percent of the incumbents in the last election were re-elected. So if you’re once in, you’re in, and when you’re in you can do as you jolly well please. As Reston says, they’re not interested in governing; they’re just interested in campaigning. That’s what everybody does today. And so it says here: “. . . because of their money, and moreover to be held in office at the head of government, to rule and do according to their wills.” That’s exactly what the racket is. Once you’re in there, you’re in. Nothing can get you out. A cold steel chisel won’t get you out. So this is the bottom line here. And the thing is that they might gain in glory and popularity. Those in office are not answerable to anyone, and the main interest, of course, is to get elected and live happily ever after.

It goes on in the next verse: “Now this great iniquity had come upon the Nephites in the space of not many years; and when Nephi saw it,” he was in agony of soul. Well, not many years again. I recall when the Roaring Twenties came on us overnight, and they were “roaring twenties.” There were excesses. The market just blew up, and we got the great Depression, of course. But then the same thing happened in the Gilded Age in the 1870s, right after the Civil War. There was great exploitation and terrible things that happened. Then there were the awful strikes and social disruptions of the 1880s, what Mark Twain called “the Gilded Age.” It was gilded, and everybody was “living high on the hog.” Colonel Bariah Sellers said, “Two years ago I didn’t have a cent, and now I’m $3 million in debt.” That was considered a big success, because he was doing big time. That’s the whole thing.

So in not many years [this happened], and when Nephi saw it, it just broke his heart. What could be going on? Is this a naive statement he makes here? “Oh, that I could have had my days in the days when my father Nephi first came out of the land of Jerusalem [out of that hell? Nephi didn’t have any fun at all] that I could have joyed with him in the promised land.” When he got to the promised land, he had to break off from his brethren, and he ends on a note of dire misgivings. “Then were his people easy to be entreated, firm to keep the commandments of God.” They weren’t at all. But this is a very realistic touch.
in the Book of Mormon. We do look back to those happy times, not really knowing what they were like, reading their teachings rather. “They were quick to hearken unto the words of the Lord.” Actually, the early Nephi said they were very slow to hearken to the words of the Lord.

Now this is an interesting word he uses. Well, I can’t live in those happy times. Why don’t I get a better break? Why do I have to live in this time. “But behold, I am consigned [his use of the word consigned in verse 9] that these are my days, and that my soul shall be filled with sorrow because of this the wickedness of these my brethren.” I’m consigned to that. Everyone one has his days assigned him. Why are we consigned? Well, everything is scheduled. Then again, we ask that question, why? Well, we get a marvelous vignette here, and we’ll go into that. But the idea is that everything is assigned and consigned. That’s part of the Book of Mormon; it’s part of the doctrine we teach. How far do we accept that? You’re here because you must be here, now because it’s now.

Now we have a marvelous little cultural picture in verses 10, 11, and 12. He gives a picture of a Nephite city. It’s not like a European or ancient city at all—it’s very different. It’s a well-ordered town. We have Aristotle’s essay on the city, and many ruins still stand. Ancient cities, without being ruins, have the most tangled, narrow, tricky streets you can imagine. Well, they were supposed to. If an enemy broke in, it was to confuse him so that he couldn’t take the city once he got through the walls. They were easy to defend when every native knew every bend and crook and window. But if they didn’t [the enemy] could take advantage. As Aristotle said, it must be designed as a maze to trick an enemy. But that’s not so in the American cities at all. He describes them here. That National Geographic I mentioned the other day has pictures of cities, and they are all superbly laid out. (Here’s one. That gives us a picture of the crooked merchants coming to marketplace. That’s a good one. But here are some of their big markets. We mentioned that before.) Well, here’s Mexico City today. As you see, it’s on the lake, and it’s all on the checkerboard style. But here’s the ancient city as the Spaniards saw it when they discovered it. It’s all very neatly laid out, all planned with streets wide open, all at right angles to each other, etc. And notice here are the gardens. As you go up, these are garden plots. Here the road approaches the city and passes a garden plot here. You get in the city, and you see their towers here and there. Everything is laid out in a very proper manner. The interesting thing is the garden surrounds it, and they still do. This is one thing that has been discovered, archaeologically, down at Teotihuacan today at the big Pyramid of the Sun there. It was a large city, and moreover, the city was surrounded by garden patches, very systematically, and he describes it here.

Verse 10: “And behold, now it came to pass that it was upon a tower, which was in the garden of Nephi, which was by the highway which led to the chief market . . .” We know these people were great market people. We see some pictures here of their ancient markets going on. Yes, here’s a picture of a market, very bustling. But there’s a picture of a much more impressive market here, a big city market where they’re coming in. Here is a military marketplace where you get all sorts of fancy gear. You notice they talk about their fine, costly apparel. They’re always emphasizing that in the Book of Mormon. Well, you see why. These people overdressed outrageously. Of course these are Aztecs; they come much later. But another trend of the archaeology, which is very diligent now, is the sameness—the fact that these patterns are kept for thousands of years. They don’t change as much as you might think.

Now here’s a very impressive city. Note the towers all over the place, somebody yelling
from a tower, and the boats bringing in the stuff to the marketplaces with their awnings spread and the like. The people are out with their wares, and here’s an outrageously overdressed soldier making an announcement. And the banners are there. It’s a splendid thing. It’s laid out. And this is the system we have in the Book of Mormon. Nobody knew anything about that. Well, we have the Spanish record and these pictures here. [The author] just puts it in sort of incidentally, “highway which led to the chief market, which was in the city of Zarahemla; therefore, Nephi had bowed himself upon the tower which was in his garden [as you know, these people were incurable tower people; they built towers at the drop of a hat], which tower was also near unto the garden gate by which led the highway.” So [it mentions] the gardens and the highway going to the main marketplace. That’s why you have the marketplace in the center of the city. The people pass to go to the market. It all fits the picture perfectly that we get in these old American cities.

“And . . . there were certain men passing by and saw Nephi as he was pouring out his soul unto God upon the tower.” Now Nephi was a famous man, you see. They ran and told the people that Nephi was back. “The people came together in multitudes that they might know the cause of so great mourning for the wickedness of the people.” This rushing together spontaneously and forming great multitudes is a phenomenon we’re seeing in our own days, that we haven’t seen since the days of the French Revolution. In almost every capital of Eastern Europe there are these spontaneous gatherings together of all the people now. It’s the first time for years that they hadn’t been laid on by the army for doing it. You find it even in Prague now, which is the hardest city of them all. In Prague, Sofia and Budapest, in East Berlin, even in Moscow, everybody comes together spontaneously for a cause. And they came together here.

Well, Nephi stood up, and the people were worried. The reason they gathered is they felt something was wrong, or he wouldn’t be there. It tells us this later on. “. . . when Nephi arose he beheld the multitudes of people who had gathered together.” In Helaman 8:7–10, it tells us, “. . . they did stir up the people to anger against Nephi, and raised contentions among them; for there were some who did cry out: Let this man alone, for he is a good man . . .” There is much disagreement among the people in the next chapter. Many of them feel that things are going wrong, that the Nephites are wicked and there is something they should do about it. So when they gathered here [Helaman 6:12], Nephi had his audience. He opened his mouth and began to speak to them and rebuke them for their wickedness, of course. Verse 15: “. . . ye are given away that the devil has got so great hold upon your hearts. Yea, how could you have given way to the enticings of him who is seeking to hurl away your souls down to everlasting misery and wo? . . . why has [the Lord] forsaken you?” They feel that God has forsaken them; he has a case here. It is because ye will not hearken unto his voice. “Why has he forsaken you?” God never forsakes anyone. You forsake him, he says, because you have hardened your hearts; you will not hearken. You won’t listen, that’s all. Instead of gathering you, he shall scatter you. “O, how could you have forgotten your God in the very day that he has delivered you?”

Here is the good old, routine answer again in verse 21: “But behold, it is to get gain, to be praised of men, yea, and that ye might get gold and silver. And ye have set your hearts upon the riches and vain things of the world, for which ye do murder, and plunder, and steal, and bear false witness against your neighbor, and do all manner of iniquity. [This is what people do to get money; I wouldn’t believe it] . . . For if ye will not repent, behold, this great city, and also all those great cities which are roundabout, which are in
the land of our possession shall be taken away. [This is how God’s going to punish them; you have no strength at all; you just have to stand by yourself against your enemies] . . . it shall be better for the Lamanites than for you except ye shall repent. For behold, they are more righteous than you [verse 24], for they have not sinned against that great knowledge which ye have received [you have greater knowledge; their sins may be just as bad but their knowledge isn’t as great, so that’s a redeeming factor]; . . . he will lengthen out their days and increase their seed, even when thou shalt be utterly destroyed except thou shalt repent [this is what happened, of course]. . . . ye have united yourselves . . . to that secret band [crooks own the country]. Yea, wo shall come unto you because of that pride which ye have suffered to enter your hearts, which has lifted you up beyond that which is good because of your exceedingly great riches [the cause of it all]. . . . even your lands shall be taken from you, and ye shall be destroyed from off the face of the earth.”

Well, this is the standard call of the prophets of old. This is what Solon preached to the Athenians. He was so much like Lehi.

There were judges from the secret band in the crowd, of course, and they were angry. These dignified judges had been getting away with it for years, and they didn’t like this at all. Everyone was getting payola. The judges were in on it, like everybody else, and here they are. They were in the [crowd]; there were so many of them. Why don’t you grab the guy? Why don’t you seize upon this man? they said. He’s reviling against this people and against our law. They were going to make a case against him, but what they were really worried about was that he might expose them. [They felt] righteous indignation because he was talking about them, concerning the corruptness of their law. “And those judges were angry with him because he spake plainly unto them concerning their secret works of darkness.” [Helaman 8:4] That’s what they were afraid of—that he would give away the whole thing. Shut up, you’ll give away everything, they said. Their defense is a counterattack, of course, the best defense. So they’re crying unto the people saying [Helaman 8:5]: “Why do you suffer this man to revile against us? For behold he doth condemn all this people . . . and also that these our great cities shall be taken from us.” It’s impossible. We’re powerful. Our cities are great. They can’t possibly break in on us. “. . . thus they did stir up the people to anger against Nephi, and raised contentions among them.” There was a lot of trouble already. People were worried, because some people picked in and said, now wait a minute. He’s right after all. Let him alone. He’s a good man. “. . . all the judgments will come upon us . . . he has testified aright unto us concerning our iniquities.”

It was no secret then. Is it a secret today? Verse 9: “Yea, and behold, if he had not been a prophet he could not have testified concerning those things.” He had been out of town, you see. The others were compelled because of their fear that they could not attack Nephi, and that saved him. Verses 10: “They did not lay their hands on him; therefore, he began again to speak unto them . . . Therefore he was constrained to speak more unto them saying: Behold, my brethren, have ye not read that God gave power unto one man, even Moses [they have the scriptures, and they’re being bound by the scriptures] . . . insomuch that the Israelites, who were our fathers, came through upon dry ground.” He used the standard arguments, of course, especially the Red Sea. The Jews always refer to the Red Sea. The delivering of Israel through the Red Sea is the standard argument of God’s
demonstration of power on earth, because it was a historical event, and they all had record of that.

This man, Moses, could bear record that the son of God should come [he told them]. Verse 16: “Moses did not only testify of these things, but also all the holy prophets, from his days even to the days of Abraham.” He goes backwards from Moses to Abraham, and then from Abraham backward too. Down to Abraham, they saw of his coming. “. . . but there were many before the days of Abraham who were called by the order of God; yea, even after the order of his Son.” We call them “the brotherhood,” which isn’t right, I suppose. It is the priesthood, or the order before Abraham’s day; but you belong to the one order or the other. Remember, we’ve just been told in explicit terms that Satan had organized and created these things and worked with them from the beginning. It’s his doing—the same being who did works of darkness from the beginning. He swore men into this, the great abominations of darkness. He handed down their plots, oaths, covenants, and plans. On the other hand, you had this other arrangement. “. . . but there were many before the days of Abraham who were called by the order of God; yea, even after the order of his Son; and this that it should be shown unto the people, a great many thousand years before his coming, that even redemption should come unto them.”

“A great many thousand” is a Semitic expression. A thousand is a lot, a great many. It doesn’t have to mean thousands of thousand. Two thousand is a great many thousand. A great many years, a thousand. “Zenos did testify boldly.” Now he’s naming the prophets down from Abraham—Zenos, and Zenock and Ezias, and Abraham in the middle. Verses 20: “O then why not the Son of God come, according to his prophecy? And now will you dispute that Jerusalem was destroyed? [We have the seed of Zedekiah, the Mulekites with us, who tell us that it was.] Our father Lehi was driven out of Jerusalem because he testified of these things. . . . he is God, and he is with them . . . ye have rejected all these things, notwithstanding so many evidences which ye have received.”

What evidences? Then he gives the standard evidences of the philosophers in verse 24: “. . . both things in heaven, and all things which are in the earth . . .” Nephi chooses the argument of the whole picture. When you look at the whole picture the question is, how does this happen in a world that is nothing but threatening? What unspeakable powers are loosed—all beyond control, everything happening just by chance and in a jumble, etc. How it be possible for us to live such a comfortable life? If we behaved ourselves, it would be even more comfortable. But how is it, with the solar wind on one side and with the ultraviolet and various rays on the other side, that we’re able to survive at all? Well, there are the fifteen constants that have to be adjusted. Something has made this world comfortable for us, you see, is the argument he uses. If the earth was just a little farther from the sun, we couldn’t be living on the earth. If it was a little closer to the sun, we couldn’t be living on it. If it revolved a little faster or a little slower, we couldn’t be living on it. If it was a little drier or a little wetter, life would be impossible for us. If it was a little hotter or a little colder, we couldn’t live on it. Everything is fine-tuned. There are these fifteen fine-tuned constants, as physicists call them, that have to be adjusted to each other in absolute perfection. The chance of it happening accidentally is a trillion to nothing—something like that—absolutely fabulous. Well, that’s the one he was talking about. He used the argument of the big picture, the whole picture: “. . . both things in heaven, and all things which are in the earth, as a witness that they are true.”

Today, we call that the anthropic principle—the fact that man not only fits into the thing, but he’s the only one who comprehends it. It’s not for any other person’s benefit.
Without him nothing’s aware of it. It doesn’t even exist; it’s not there. Who cares when something happens? It is arranged for us, with us in mind. We’re the only ones that can comprehend it, and we’re the only ones who can enjoy it. Yet with all these things beyond our control utterly, here we are fitting into the picture so very nicely. There’s something wrong there, and this is the argument he’s using here. And don’t discount the treasures. He said, “. . . instead of laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where nothing doth corrupt, and where nothing can come which is unclean, ye are heaping up for yourselves wrath against the day of judgment [this is the large you]. Yea, even at this time ye are ripening, because of your murders and your fornication and wickedness.”

The band has its grip on everything now. Verse 27: Yea, behold it is now even at your doors; yea, go ye in unto the judgment-seat [now this is what the corruption is doing], and search; and behold, your judge is murdered, and he lieth in his blood; and he hath been murdered by his brother, who seeketh to sit in the judgment-seat.” The only thing here that takes inspiration is timing. You can almost be sure it would happen. After all, I suppose about eighty percent of the Roman emperors were bumped off by their successors. You could always count on it happening; the only question is when. Well, he was inspired to say it had already happened; otherwise, it would have been a perfectly safe guess. He could have said, sooner or later you can go to the judgment-seat and [find] your judge lying in his blood, murdered by his brother. If you know the judge has a brother and if you know what the judge is after and what kind of people they are, you know what’s going to happen.

I mentioned Gregory of Tours and the ten books of Frankish history written in the fifth and sixth centuries. Again, like the Nephites and Lamanites, it’s between the Burgundians and the Franks. There’s that story of Fredegunde and Brunhilda, the queen, and what they did for power. It’s as horrendous as anything you can imagine in the Book of Mormon—the things they do to each other and the plots. It’s inevitable that when somebody becomes king everybody is going to try and bump him off. And the tricks. Well, the king plays of Shakespeare, of which he wrote many, are nothing but that. They move in high-flown, marvelous language. “O for a muse of fire, that would ascend the very heaven of invention! A kingdom for a stage, princes to act, and monarchs to behold the swelling scene!” [Henry V, Chorus]. Well, it’s a great show to see. But it’s nothing but murder and intrigue.

So here we go. “Yea, behold it is now even at your doors.” So the men ran to the judgment-seat, and sure enough [chapter 9:3], “behold, the chief judge had fallen to the earth, and did lie in his blood [and, of course, they were afraid]; therefore, they did quake and had fallen to the earth.” Now this falling to the earth is a thing to notice in the Book of Mormon. Every time you’re afraid do you fall flat on your face? Does fear have that effect on you? I’ve remained standing when I’ve been scared stiff. How come these people all fall down when they’re afraid? Well, this is routine. They have to do this particular thing. This is a very interesting arrangement we have here—what the Egyptians call sh t, your nose on the ground. Remember, [they lived] in a religious world, a sacral state. And it’s true that we’re surrounded with these powers, these marvelous things around us all the time. They’re real. So if something unexpected absolutely bowls you over, what happens? You’re in the presence of some great or divine influence. You don’t know whether it’s good or bad, but you know it’s powerful. It’s more powerful than you are, so what do you do? You play safe. You take the position of complete submission. You fall on your face, and it becomes quite automatic. Women, children—everybody does it, because in the
presence of someone who can smite you or anything else, that’s a defensive position. You go flat on your face and you stay there until it’s safe for you to move, until everything is in order.

Now, I read from that very ancient rite in the founding of the kingdom of Egypt, in the terrible times, Papyrus Salt 825A. It begins with all the powers of nature unleashed in such a degree that even the gods are frightened. It says all the gods covered their heads with their hands and then fell down and put their heads between their knees and held that position, because they were terrified to decide what would happen. These were gods doing this, you see. So this is a natural thing. We may all do it someday. Well, what’s the natural thing to do in our society? If you hear a shooting, what happens? If you’ll notice, everyone goes flat on the ground. That’s the safest position to have. I suppose that today in El Salvador everybody spends most of the day flat on his face. What other position could you have that’s safe? So here he says they fell right flat. . . . therefore they did quake, and had fallen to the earth. Now, immediately when the judge had been murdered—he being stabbed by his brother by a garb of secrecy, and he fled, and the servants ran and told the people, raising a cry of murder among them.” And the people went there and found these five men still in their positions of submission. In verse 14, right across the page, they tell their story: “We ran and came to the place of the judgment-seat, and when we saw all things even as Nephi had testified, we were astonished insomuch that we fell to the earth; and when we were recovered from our astonishment, behold they cast us into prison.” So they got over their astonishment. They weren’t that way all the time. It says, “. . . they saw those five men who had fallen to the earth.” This other one tells us when they recovered from their astonishment, then they were cast into prison.

Well, these are the men who have murdered the judge because look, here they are and here he is [they said]. So they cast them into prison and “on the morrow the people did assemble themselves together to mourn and to fast, at the burial of the great chief judge . . . [a great state occasion]. And thus also those judges who were at the garden of Nephi, and heard his words, were also gathered together at the burial.” This is a very dramatic situation, which you get in a typical Greek tragic scene. Remember, we’re talking about city-states, where tragedy is a practical thing. The people all do meet together. And remember, in the kingdoms and republics of Europe today, the people do meet together in the public square in the main capital. They do that from time to time, and they’re doing it today spontaneously. With some of these, like the one in Prague, they said they had no leaders. They couldn’t find any leaders. The people just came together spontaneously—in Tiannamen Square or wherever you go. And so it’s the same thing here: They came for this big thing to happen, the burial of a great chief. The judges who were at the garden of Nephi were there. They were gathered at the burial, and the [judges] said. “Where are the five who were sent to inquire concerning the chief judge whether he was dead?” And the judges declared that they should be brought.

Verse 13: “. . . they told them all that they had done, saying . . . we were astonished insomuch that we fell to the earth. [Well of course the judges had a quick explanation for that.] The judges did expound the matter unto the people, and did cry out against Nephi, saying: Behold, we know that this Nephi must have agreed with some one to slay the judge [they had been set up by Nephi to tell this story; it was a typical public relations trick on the part of the judges] . . . that he might convert us unto his faith.” He was going to perform a fake miracle, and that would convert them [the judges claimed]. Everybody is overplaying everybody else. It’s like the two Japanese merchants that met in a railroad station in Tokyo, and one said, “Where are you going?”
He said, “I’m going to Osaka.”

He looked at him and said, “You’re lying, you know; you are going to Osaka.” So everybody was trying to overreach everybody else here. “... and then he might declare it unto us, that he might convert us unto his faith, that he might raise himself to be a great man, chosen of God, and a prophet.” It was all a public relations trick by Nephi [they claimed]. Wouldn’t you know that? [He was] out standing on his tower and all that sort of thing.

Verse 17: And now behold, we will detect this man, and he shall confess his fault and make known unto us the true murderer of this judge ... the five were liberated on the day of the burial. Nevertheless, they did rebuke the judges ... and did contend with them one by one, insomuch that they did confound them.” Nevertheless, the fact that they had to be cleared didn’t make any difference. You can’t fight city hall; they were all thrown into jail anyway [see verse 38], and were sentenced to be executed. “Nevertheless, they caused that Nephi should be taken ... that they might cross him, that they might accuse him to death.” They passed a death sentence on him.

Verse 21: “But Nephi said unto them: O ye fools, ye uncircumsized of heart, ... ye ought to begin to howl and mourn, because of the great destruction which at this time doth await you, except ye shall repent. Behold ye say that I have agreed with a man that he should murder Seezoram, our chief judge.” The judge’s name was Seezoram, and we had a Zezrom before. That is the Egyptian word zsr, a very popular name, founded the third dynasty of Egypt. The name means holy, sacred. Our word Deseret comes from that. The land of Egypt, “the holy land, the red land” is called Deseret. And, of course, the symbol of the lowland is the bee. This is the Deseret name, the Zeezrom name. It pops up throughout the Book of Mormon.

Well, I’ll show you another sign, he says: “Go to the house of Seantum, who is the brother of Seezoram, and say unto him ...” He tells them what to say, so they do [verses 27–29]: Has Nephi, the pretended prophet, who doth prophesy so much evil concerning this people, agreed with thee, in the which ye have murdered Seezoram, who is your brother? And behold, he shall say unto you, Nay [no, no, no]. And ye shall say unto him: Have ye murdered your brother?” Then he’ll be taken aback and know not what to say. And, of course, he’ll deny it, “and he shall make as if he were astonished ... But behold, ye shall examine him, and ye shall find blood upon on the skirts of his cloak ... and then shall greater fear come upon him; and then shall he confess unto you [but he doesn’t fall down]. And then shall ye know that I am an honest man [they did what Nephi said, and] ... he did deny; and also according to the words he did confess.” Now by this time there were some people who said that Nephi was a prophet, moreover that he was a god. Anciently, they would have called him a sophist, a wise traveling man to whom divine power was attributed in the ancient world.

In chapter 10 “... there arose a division among the people, insomuch that they divided ... leaving Nephi alone.” This is a dramatic situation. They go in both ways and leave one hero standing alone. Where does that happen? In Julius Caeser. Remember after Antony’s speech, the people go one way, the senators go another way, and leave Antony standing all alone with the bier there in the center of the Forum. He says [Act III, Scene 2], “Now let it work: Mischief, thou art afoot.” It is very dramatic. They go off both ways and leave him standing alone there. It’s the same thing we see here. This is quite a picturesque situation, “leaving Nephi alone as he was standing in the midst of them.” He moves off
sorrowfully going home. Well there you are; he didn’t get anywhere with them.

Verse 2: “. . . Nephi went his way towards his own house, pondering upon the things which the Lord had shown unto him.” It’s time something happened, now. Of course, now you get the intervention of an angel. Angels don’t just come because people want them or any old time, but always at a crucial time when nothing else can break the jam. “. . . as he was thus pondering in his heart, behold, a voice came unto him saying: Blessed art thou, Nephi, for those things which hast done . . . and thou has not feared them, and hast not sought thine own life . . . . I will bless thee forever; and I will make thee mighty in word and in deed, in faith and in works; yea, even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word . . .”

Now this is a very interesting condition. Anything you say will be done, because anything you say will be exactly what I want you to say. That’s safe. He says here, “All things shall be done unto thee according to thy word, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will.” If you ask anything contrary it might happen, but I know I can trust you. You’ll ask what I want you to ask, so that’s all right. In Moses 1:25 the same thing happens again. [The Lord] says, I’ll make you as strong as many waters. Your voice shall be as mine. You shall lead my people because I know whatever you say is what I want you to say, so we’re safe. We have that kind of men. There’s a single will here. Does Nephi have a free will? That’s for philosophers to argue about.

Verse 6: “Behold, thou art Nephi, and I am God. Behold, I declare it unto thee in the presence of mine angels, that ye shall have power over this people, and shall smite the earth with famine [he gives him a broad hint, a suggestion—you’ll have power to smite the earth], and with pestilence, and destruction, according to the wickedness of this people.” [So he planted the idea, obviously, with Nephi.] Behold, I give unto you power, that whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and thus shall ye have power among this people.”

Now, this goes beyond ordinances, you see. We talk about ordinances [Matthew 18:18]: “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven . . .” Well, this goes beyond that. This is more than an ordinance. There is an understanding between the worlds, we’re told, which is expressed by the priesthood and is expressed nowhere else. There is this understanding and coordination between the worlds, and that’s what we have here. [Nephi would] have power, and whatsoever he sealed in this world will go over in heaven, and the other way around.

Verses 8: “And thus, if ye shall say unto this temple it shall be rent, it shall be done.” Notice, the temple is the connecting point between the worlds, the markas shame u irstitim, the point at which heaven and earth meet. (It doesn’t say the veil of the temple.) “And if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou cast down and become smooth, it shall be done.” See, God trusts Nephi all the way not to do foolish things. He knows darn well Nephi is not going to go around casting mountains down just to show his power. He knows by now that he can trust Nephi to do only what he would do himself, so you can trust Nephi. But he’s operating there. So here is the power of the other world being projected down here as with a beam—the focusing of mighty powers upon this little earth. As a famous German physicist says, it’s simply staggering what it takes to make life on this earth possible. From the most distant points of outer space, the elements and the energies are being focused right here and operating there. That’s the sort of thing we’re talking about, I suppose.
Verse 10: “And behold, if ye shall say that God shall smite this people, it shall come to pass. And now behold, I command you, that ye shall go and declare unto this people . . . except ye repent ye shall be smitten, even unto destruction . . . when the Lord had spoken these words unto Nephi, he did not stop and did not go unto his own house [didn’t even go home to change his clothes] but did returned unto the multitudes [plural] who were scattered about upon the face of the land.”

And characteristic of this, as of other cultures, is the hierocentric point—the great temple, the great shrine, the great mound, the great tower—which is the center of the land and marks the place at which people assemble whenever there’s any alarm or emergency, or when there is a great message to be given. There they were, and they were ready to listen to Nephi.

Well, we didn’t get through with Helaman, but we’ll do it the next time all right.
I referred to this old *National Geographic* I just happened to pick up for one thing, but it is loaded with things, like this, for example. When the Aztecs came to the valley of Mexico, and I quote, “their cities’ need for firewood was already denuding the valley of Mexico of trees. An epic famine . . .” We are going to have an epic famine here today, aren’t we—great famines and deforestation? What we find is steadily advancing drought in these chapters of Helaman; it’s very clearly indicated. All the clues are there, and they all fit together so beautifully, like this one: “An epic famine in the year one of the rabbit decimated the Mexican people. Their empire might well have fallen before they could employ the arts of the wheel or the bronze.” We don’t know about these other things.

But how about these merchants going around when they got prosperous? They learned a thing or two from the Nephites, started to make money, and got rich. Does that mean they had to be wicked? Here’s a very interesting comment, “This was . . . the twin city of the Aztec capital and home of the great merchant traders. These men dressed in deceptively shabby clothes and traveled widely throughout the empire, serving as agents and spies in foreign domains and stealthily brought great riches home in their cargo canoes, arranging to arrive at night.” There is something sinister and underhanded about the whole business, isn’t there? Well, that’s the nature of business; you have to put one over on the opposition. It’s competitive, and when you are competing this is a very effective way. What a way of doing it! This is very interesting. In the Book of Mormon the implication is that they necessarily go bad when they start dealing in riches and being very successful. [They] dressed in deceptively shabby clothes, traveling as agents and spies—industrial and technical spies, among other things. They stealthily (why stealthily?) brought great riches in their cargo ships and barges and arranged to arrive at night, keeping it all secret even from their own people.

Well, this is the sort of thing we have in this marvelous book of Helaman, which is the dark book, the book of crime. Let’s take chapter 11 of Helaman. After Nephi got out of prison and was delivered, he went on preaching. But it didn’t do any good. Things got worse and worse. “And now it came to pass in the seventy and second year of the reign of the judges that the contentions did increase [things only got worse] insomuch that there were wars throughout all the land among all the people of Nephi. And it was this secret band of robbers who did carry on this work of destruction and wickedness.”

We mentioned these robber bands before, of which there were many. They have dominated every century of the world. They were merchants too. They were acquiring gain. That was their purpose, power and gain, and they became immensely rich—like the
Hospitalers, the Knights of Rhodes, the Knights of Malta, etc. The crusading knights formed sacred societies, very secret brotherhoods that ended up owning half the wealth of Europe. This happened not only there but also in every region of the earth.

Nephi saw the way it was going. This was very bad. He said, “O Lord, do not suffer that this people shall be destroyed by the sword [they had lost all control; when is a famine a blessing?]; but O Lord, rather let there be a famine in the land, to stir them up [to repentance], . . . And so it was done.” There was a great famine. We mentioned a great famine here [in Mexico]. It tells us what the famine was due to, not enough rain. It tells us in verse 6 that it was drouth; they were going into a dry period. These famines can be absolutely devastating. We saw this in Africa two or three years ago. Entire areas of Ethiopia were just wiped out. They had nothing to eat. They would wander for hundreds of miles trying to find a little food. They would drop like flies and whole districts would be wiped out. It’s the same thing here. Verse 5: “The work of destruction did cease by the sword but became sore by famine. . . . For the earth was smitten that it was dry, and did not yield forth grain in the season of grain; and the whole earth was smitten, even among the Lamanites as well as among the Nephites, so that they were smitten that they did perish by thousands” as in vast areas of Africa. And it has happened in Europe; there was a great famine in the year 1000. There have been famines that practically wiped out the population of Europe because they had no way of bringing in food. There was the great Chinese famine of the early 1900s. These periodic famines are part of human history, but this was a “beauty.”

Now they began to remember their Lord. This is an interesting thing. What is the obsession with the Southwest Indians, the Pueblos and all those others? It’s rain—they are always dancing for rain. Look at the place where they live. What would they think about rain? If it doesn’t rain the Hopis are absolutely finished. Remember, in all the reservation there they have no running stream. You have to go all the way to Gallup for baptisms. In the Hopi villages they can’t baptize. Old Araibi is the only place where there is enough water. Well, there is a sacred spring at the Twin Rocks of the Second Mesa. There is the Jacob’s well at old Araibi, but the water there is so foul it can’t be drunk. Missionaries always get into trouble when they go down there and try to drink that water. There is not enough water to drink. It has to be brought up from a very few springs by the women in jars on their heads, up to the top of the mesa on the trails. They have to go a great distance to baptize, to Gallup or someplace like that. They are always thinking of that. It’s a great concern with them. How do they expect to live? Well, you know how they live. What they do is take five kernels of corn and stick them down twenty inches into the ground with a stick. They just leave them there and hope there will be enough ground water. It has to be in the bottom of a dry wash; Denebito Wash, the great wash there, is where most of the corn comes from. They just stick it down and hope it will grow up. One stock will grow up about eighteen inches and no higher. It will have one ear of corn on it. I’ve never seen them with more than two ears. It’s exotic corn in various colors, all blue, black and white, and everything. They take them and pile them carefully like wood. Everybody knows where the ears of corn came from, and they have it all to share. How they can survive on that is amazing. We couldn’t do it at all, and yet they flourish. They are not exactly rolling in luxury or anything like that, but they say it is good for them because it has taught them to live more soberly and more righteously than they did before.

They [the Nephites] began to remember their Lord because this is it—you are always dependent on him. If it wasn’t for the sky and the Lord sending rain, you wouldn’t last at all. Of course, it’s the same thing in Israel. At the end of Zechariah at says [Zechariah
14:17: “And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.” That is the ultimate curse. That’s why you had to go to the temple. That’s the meaning of the word liturgy, a prayer for rain. The Romans had it way back in prehistoric times. It had to be done barefooted. All the people would come to pray. The liturgy is done in churches today because it is one in which the congregation, the clergy, and various groups share. It is divided up. They say a line and then the priest or the bishop says a line. It is antiphonal, back and forth. I have been to some liturgies in Germany. The priest will read a line of prayer, and then the people will say, “Hear us.” Then the priest will read on. This is done when there is no rain, and they do it in the Romanesque cathedral in Worms. So that’s a liturgy. Its original idea is this prayer for rain, but it is an obsession with the human race because our livelihood depends on it. Look what happens.

What about these great foundations of the Southwest, like Gran Chaco? Suddenly they disappeared. They were huge things. The only answer is that they dried up; there was nothing to live on. What about the Anasazi? They were everywhere around here, and all of a sudden they were no longer there. This disappearing in the New World is a strange thing. It’s peculiar to the Book of Mormon promises. You don’t find that in the Old World. People hang on; they suffer, but they hang on. They don’t hang on here; they just vanish.

So we have these litanies. Notice, the chief judges said unto Nephi, “Behold, we know that thou art a man of God, and therefore cry unto the Lord.” So they asked the leader to cry unto the Lord, and they were required to join into it, because they came in sackcloth and entered into the thing. It’s very much like a rain dance which is performed very faithfully. It has to be. Right now, down at Brianhead they are having Indian rain dances because they want it to snow for the skiing down there. They hire the Indians to come in and dance for the snow, and it always has results apparently. They are doing it right today. They are having a dance to make it snow down at Brianhead for business.

Verse 9: “When Nephi saw that the people had repented and did humble themselves in sackcloth [so the people were together in this ordinance], he cried again unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, behold this people repented; and they have swept away the band of Gadianton. . . . They have become extinct, and they have concealed their secret plans in the earth [in other words they have gone underground]. Now, O Lord, because of this their humility wilt thou turn away thine anger . . . O Lord, wilt thou hearken unto me . . . and send forth rain upon the face of the earth, that she may bring forth her fruit, and her grain in the season of grain.”

Question: Nephi said that they had become extinct and they had concealed their secret plans in the earth. You said that meant they went underground? Answer: I mean they literally went underground if they buried their secrets in the earth. They will dig them up later on—don’t worry. These things are hid and dug up. You find them. They put them in caves and their sacred places. If you go near those places, you are in real danger because those places are carefully guarded. They have all sorts of things in them. I had quite an adventure in one where you would never expect there was anything at all. They had the whole thing down underground.

Verse 15: “Yea, O Lord, and thou seest that they have repented, because of the famine and the pestilence [so that was necessary, the one thing that could force them]. . . . The Lord did turn away his anger from the people, and caused that rain should fall upon the earth.”
In nearly all the dances they [Indians] accompany themselves with the scratchy scratch that goes this way, and the drums that rattle. That’s the sound of rain, and this is the sound of thunder. They are always imitating rain sounds, thunder sounds, and wind sounds. No matter what the dance, rain is the main theme. They have a dance every weekend.

So it happened. Verse 18: “And the people did rejoice and glorify God, and the whole face of the land was filled with rejoicing. [Lehi, Nephi’s brother, was just as diligent as Nephi was in this] . . . . The people of Nephi began to prosper again [uh oh, here it comes] in the land, and began to build up their waste places.” This building is a constant activity with them.

At the turn of the twentieth century and just before that, because of the threat that came from the Spanish, the Aztecs, and the Apaches that came in, [the Hopis moved]. All the twelve villages where the Hopis are located today are new. Walpi is ancient, and First Mesa is ancient, but most of them are new. These villages that look so ancient go back to 1900–1906. The villages they came from are standing, but they are ruins now. They moved all at once. They didn’t hesitate to move from their ancestral home. They didn’t have to move far. Because of the threat that was there, they all moved up to the tops of the mesas. But that wasn’t hundreds of years ago; that was quite recently. They are ready to move at a moment’s notice; that’s a surprising thing. We call them Pueblos, the city Indians, because they are stable. The cities have been there a long time. Sister Theresa Harvey’s house has been there for 800 years, since the eleventh century. But they are ready to move whenever they are supposed to. This is the way they do.

“They did multiply and they did cover the whole face of the land, both northward and southward, from the sea west to the sea east.” They are still down in the narrow peninsula there. It’s a relatively small area, one would suppose. And the church spread among the Nephites and the Lamanites. There were a few contentions on points of doctrine. [Then there was] much strife, Nephi and Lehi having many revelations daily. They preached and put an end to the strife that same year. Then there was a certain number of dissenters who had gone over to the Lamanites. Here is the race question again. They were always mixing themselves up together; there was no distinction. They had “gone over unto the Lamanites, and taken upon themselves the name of Lamanites.” Well, that made them Lamanites.

Now there’s a new technique here. This is the robbers’ roost technique. Utah has a number of nice robbers’ roosts, doesn’t it? There’s one out by Helper. There is one in Capitol Reef, which has Butch Cassidy’s name—Butch is spelled out in bullet [holes] on the wall up at the big arch there, when you go back on the trail. There’s one in southern Utah. There are lots of robbers’ roosts.

Brother Swapp lived right around the corner from me. He was a gigantic man, about seven feet tall. I was his home teacher for years. He used to be the sheriff in Price and in Bluff, of all places. He knew Butch Cassidy very well. They got along famously together. He knew my grandfather very well. My grandfather used to drive down there with a horse and buggy on church and other business. He would drive along with Brother Swapp, and Brother Swapp still remembered all these things that went on. How could these people [the robbers] get away with it? All they had to do was drop back into [the canyons], before they filled [the lake behind] the dam at Glen Canyon and others down south. There’s Lake Mead and [Lake Powell]. There were all sorts of places to hide down there, all these little
nooks and crannies. Well, you know how it is in the red-rock country. I can remember when very little of it had been explored at all. It was absolutely unknown quite recently. So they would fall back in those, and the Indians still do. The One-Horn and the Two-Horn tribes of the societies hide out there.

These bands of robbers play an important role. This is a technique peculiar to the terrain; they can use it by falling back in these places. Notice verse 25: “And they did commit murder and plunder; and then they would retreat back into the mountains, and into the wilderness and secret places, hiding themselves, . . . receiving daily an addition to their numbers.” Well, what opera do you think of there? It’s act two of Carmen. The robbers hide out in the mountains, and Carmen plays with the cards—the doom motif. The robbers are hiding out in the mountains, and everything is very secret and hush-hush. Robbers hide out in the mountains of Italy, Sicily, Spain, and Portugal, and in the hills of Scotland. You know the famous Rob Roy and the Sonny Bean family. They were famous ship wreckers. They made themselves rich in the most vicious ways, and always hid out in the highlands. There was no place you could trace them. This has been a technique for which the earth’s terrain provides a sort of protection. This isn’t just the big city operations—these are specialties. We talked about the Seths, the Riffs, the Vitalian Brethren, the Algerian pirates, the Vikings, the Free Companies, the Bedu, and the Assassins. They all worked in different ways, but this particular technique has been highly developed by some of the Southwest Indians, the robbers’ roost technique of the Freebooters. They defied whole armies.

In 1070 A.D. al-Duruzi was the leader of a robber band in Egypt, and he was driven out. So he retreated to South Lebanon and discovered there this marvelous place just like Rock Canyon [near BYU]. They are very steep mountains, which are terraced now, with lots of deep crevices, ravines, and places to hide in. They hid out there in South Lebanon and have been there ever since, known as the Druze. They are very dangerous. I’ve always wanted to visit the Druze, and I was able to with President Barnes of American University in Beirut years ago. We spent some time up there because he was very popular with them; he got along with them famously. I found out some very interesting things about the Druze. They always intermarry. They are very suspicious. They are beautiful people and are nearly all redheads, showing that they are intermarried. They are the fiercest fighters in the East and completely independent, living in these mountains. Everybody is afraid of them. They can sell their services to Israel or to Islam as they please. There are some interesting things about them. They go way back to early times.

A few years later from the East the Old Man of the Mountain moved into the mountains. He was Hassan ibn al-Sabba, a Persian. He settled at Alamut, which was on a mountain east of there. From there he terrorized all of Europe and everywhere, sending out his assassins. These kids were hopped up with [hashish]. The idea is to have a base or hiding place in the mountains. Incidentally, they [the hiding places] are still being used quite effectively in some parts of southeastern Utah and northern Arizona. I’ve gone into some of them. Several years ago on March 15, the night of the havawuhti, [I was there]. That’s a very important thing. They have no lights; everything is in the dark. If they catch you out there, they will say, “Who are you?” You reply, “I am myself.” There are the two societies. The One-Horn society is very sinister and dangerous. Look out for them; they can do anything they want. The Two-Horn society is benevolent and tries to protect you from the One-Horn society. They try to get there first because the One-Horns mean to do damage. They mean mischief.
Question: Are these Lamanite people? Answer: Well, they are Lamanites and Nephites, all this mixture. Of course, they’re as near as you can get to Lamanites. Remember, all we’ve been getting is a mixture. These people we were talking about here [Helaman 11:24] had gone over to the Lamanites and taken upon them the name of Lamanites. These were the people who were plundering. They were Nephites who joined Lamanites. They were all mixed up together. And it’s interesting that the Southwest Indians, these Pueblo Indians, are the most citified and were always identified by the early Brethren as Nephites. Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, and Jacob Hamblin always recognized them as Nephites, because of their customs.

They [the robbers] were able to hold their own. Helaman 11:28: “Therefore they sent an army of strong men into the wilderness and upon the mountains to search out this band of robbers.” They thought that would take care of them, but it didn’t work. They were driven back. (Well, remember the story of Spartacus and the [rebels in Rome]. They hid out for a long time in the crater of Vesuvius. That was their hideout, but it wasn’t a secret hideout. People knew where it was then. There they held their own against Roman armies.) Then they did go forth again and destroyed many of them, but they didn’t get rid of them. Verse 32: “And it came to pass that thus ended this year. And the robbers did still increase and wax strong [this is like Medellín now; we are going to see the same thing there], insomuch that they did defy the whole armies of the Nephites, and also of the Lamanites.” This bands of robbers could do it, like the Jomsburg. They were the armies [in their opinion]; they were just the other side. “Yea, for they did visit many parts of the land, and did do great destruction unto them [this was a standard practice in the later years among the ones we call ‘the wild Indians’] yea, did kill many, and did carry away others captive into the wilderness.”

[As mentioned before,] in the thirteenth century the Old Man of the Mountain got established with his assassin organization and the Druze got established almost at the same time, and the militant orders of the Crusades got established. They were just as sinister, greedy, and dangerous [as the others]. They fought each other. After [these organizations] were established, then came the “big boys.” In the middle of the thirteenth century came Hulagu and the Mongols. They just wiped out everything. When he came to Baghdad, which was a flourishing city of the Abbasids then at its peak, they killed everybody in the city. These people were systematic. These things going on aren’t very pleasant, are they?

They [the Gadiantons] carried them away captive, especially women and children, both for ransom and to keep and build up the numbers and strength of their empire. (That’s the way Genghis Khan and the great Khans did; they just sucked them up like a vacuum cleaner so they could count them among their people.) This great evil did finally stir up the people to remembrance. Well, hadn’t the drought done that enough? No, it had to be this. When they got on top of the drought, they got the gangs and raids here. It didn’t do any good though. In verse 36 the needle is stuck in the same old groove again. “They began again to forget the Lord their God. And . . . they began to wax strong in iniquity. . . . They did not mend their ways. . . . They did wax stronger and stronger in their pride.”

What do you conclude from this? Do we have to repeat this so often? That’s exactly what Nephi asks in the next chapter. Chapter 12 is wisdom literature. This is a unique and very striking chapter, a typical chapter of ancient literature. It’s called the “lamentation or wisdom literature.” The most reliable sources we have from Egypt and Babylonia are the lamentation literature. Lambert collected the Babylonian lamentation literature. The
literature of the Egyptians is more famous. It goes right back to the beginning, to the earliest times. It’s always a man lamenting that the people have no wisdom at all. It’s that people are just damn fools is the point. Will they ever get any sense? As Isabella says in Measure for Measure:

Could great men thunder
As Jove himself does, Jove would ne’er be quiet,
For every pelting petty officer
Would use his heaven for thunder: nothing but thunder.
Merciful heaven!
Thou rather, with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt,
Splitt’st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak
Than the soft myrtle;

[Jove uses his bolt for objects worthy of it, but the high officials use all their power on weaker people. They work on the soft myrtle.]

but man, proud man!
Dress’d in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he’s most assured,

[He thinks himself everything.]

His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
[A senseless prancing and display before a mirror]
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep; who, with our spleens,
Would all themselves laugh mortal.

Shakespeare, Measure for Measure, act II, scene 2

They would laugh silly if angels could laugh at seeing what we do.

This is the story we have here [in Helaman 12]: “And thus we can behold how false, and also the unsteadiness of the hearts of the children of men; [he lays down a law of human nature or human condition here]. . . . We may see at the very time when he doth prosper his people . . . then is the time that they do harden their hearts, and do forget the Lord their God, and do trample under their feet the Holy One—yea, and this because of their ease, and their exceedingly great prosperity.” Why must it do that to them, and why must they be clamoring for more ease and prosperity? Are we the exception?

Verse 3: “Except the Lord doth chasten his people with many afflictions [they just had a major drought and a crime wave that practically wiped everybody out, then civil war; they are having an awful time—unless that sort of thing happens what do they do?] yea, except he doth visit them with death and with terror, and with famine and with all manner of pestilence, they will not remember him.” Now comes the reflection on human nature. This is a soliloquy, a simple statement of fact: “O how foolish, and how vain, and how evil, and devilish, and how quick to do iniquity, and how slow to do good, are the children of men [there’s a nice reflection on human nature]; yea, how quick to hearken unto the words of the evil one, and to set their hearts upon the vain things of the world!” Here we are again.

Incidentally, where this lamentation and wisdom literature reaches its peak in Hebrew is in the book of Ecclesiastes. The wisdom literature of the Hebrews is very close to the Egyptian. They quote from each other as a matter of fact. The Wisdom of Solomon and
the Wisdom of Amenemhet overlap each other. The latter is a thousand years older. They say the same thing. The human race is just this way, and it’s always going to be this way. Since the beginning of the world it has never gotten any better. “Yea, how quick to be lifted up in pride; yea, how quick to boast, and do all manner of that which is iniquity; and how slow are they to remember the Lord their God, and to give ear unto his counsels, yea, how slow to walk in wisdom’s paths!” See this is wisdom literature. This should be capitalized, I suppose. I’ll see if it is in an earlier edition of the Book of Mormon. That’s the Ḥokhmāh literature of the Hebrews. They always capitalize Wisdom in the Hebrew writings, as if it were a person. And that’s so in the Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price, too. It’s Wisdom and her children.

Verse 6: “Behold, they do not desire that the Lord their God, who hath created them, should rule and reign over them.” He has given them the law of consecration, for example, and they don’t want it. They won’t have anything to do with it. The minute you mention it, they will immediately come up with arguments against it. If they liked it they wouldn’t do that. “Notwithstanding his great goodness and his mercy towards them, they do set at naught his counsels, and they will not that he should be their guide. [It climaxes in this; Hamlet says the same thing:] O how great is the nothingness of the children of men; yea, even they are less than the dust of the earth.”

What a piece of work is a man! . . . in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me; no, nor woman neither.

Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, act II, scene 2

After [Hamlet says] all these wonderful things about what man is, yet he is nothing at all. It’s the same thing here. He could have been all these other things, but no—he is nothing. The children of men are nothing. They are less than the dust because the dust obeys. This is a standard statement of wisdom literature. The stars in their courses and all nature obey God’s commands. All nature works together. Everything is fitted into a single system, so we have the basic idea of ecology. Everything is there that should be. The predators are there and all the other things are there, the plants and the animals. Everything fits in and works together, except man works against it. Man is the only one who can break up the ecological chain and wreck everything, which, of course, we are doing on a massive scale today. For this reason: The dust of the earth moves hither and thither and remembers. “Yea, behold at his voice do the hills and the mountains tremble and quake.” See, all nature obeys what God wants, so all nature is running the same way on the freeway, so to speak. Man alone wants to run in the opposite direction, so he thinks nature is fighting him. He thinks fate is against him. He thinks God is cruel because of these things. How cruel is life! How unjust is life! And we are the ones who are making all the trouble.

Verse 10: “And by the power of his voice they are broken up, and become smooth. . . . By the power of his voice doth the whole earth shake, . . . the foundations rock.” Notice, this is all prearranged. It is all timed, so it is by a powerful arrangement. It is on certain principles that have already been set forth, and it does happen. Then there’s a very interesting thing. In the wisdom literature a bit of cosmology always comes in, because man has to be fitted into the big picture. Here it comes; he is going to give us some
astronomy here [in verse 15]: “And thus, according to his word the earth goeth back, and it appeareth unto man that the sun standeth still; yea, and behold, this is so; for surely it is the earth that moveth and not the sun.”

He puts in these little notes with much behind them—ignored subjects like the elements in the rigid editing of the Book of Mormon. We are not going to go into cosmological discourses here, but you can be sure that the Nephites were very much concerned with those things. You won’t find astronomical discussions where you expect them in any of the wisdom literature, but then they will come out with something [saying] that man has to work with other things. [Saying that it’s] “the earth that moveth and not the sun” shows that he is up on things. He’s going to treat this [subject] in verse 18 a little later on. “And behold, if a man hide up a treasure in the earth, and the Lord shall say—Let it be accursed, because of [his] iniquity . . . it shall be accursed.” This often happens.

Verse 26: “Yea, who shall be consigned to a state of endless misery, fulfilling the words which say: [What words is he talking about? Well, he is quoting the Memphite code here, the oldest document in existence, the Shabako Stone, which says] They that have done good shall have everlasting life; and they that have done evil shall have everlasting damnation.” He tells us he is quoting from the old source here. They are not his words. It fulfills certain words he is quoting here, and you will find the same words in the Memphite text, which we won’t go into. It’s too long. We have to hurry up to get through with Helaman now.

There is a complete reversal between Nephites and Lamanites here [Helaman 13:1]. Then here’s another great episode with Samuel the Lamanite and his preaching. The Nephites remained wicked “while the Lamanites did observe strictly to keep the commandments of God, according to the law of Moses [remember, they are still keeping the law of Moses; that’s something] . . . There was one Samuel, a Lamanite, came into the land of Zarahemla, and began to preach unto the people [that’s turning the tables, isn’t it?] . . . Behold, the voice of the Lord came unto him, that he should . . . prophesy unto the people whatsoever things should come into his heart [well, he is persona non grata; they don’t want him] . . . They would not suffer that he should enter into the city; therefore he went and got upon the wall.” We have that absurd picture of Arnold Friberg, where he is on a 150-foot wall with a howling wind going, and he is yelling. Of course, nobody could hear a sound from there. The archers are trying to shoot at him at that vast distance. They didn’t need walls that high; it’s ridiculous. Well, it’s dramatic; that sort of thing is good for candy box covers and things like that.

He spoke “whatsoever things the Lord put into his heart.” Inspiration is unforced; just let it flow freely. That’s exactly the way Solon begins his work of wisdom, which revolutionized the Athenian society. [Samuel said], “the sword of justice hangeth over this people.” The same expression is used in Mormon [8:39-41] when it talks about people of our day: “Yea, why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not? . . . Behold the sword of vengeance hangeth over you.” It will soon fall to your utter destruction. Helaman: 13:6: “Yea, heavy destruction awaiteth this people [nothing but repentance can save them] And behold, an angel of the Lord hath declared it unto me [an angel again], and he did bring glad tidings to my soul. And behold, I was sent unto you to declare it unto you also, . . . but behold ye would not receive me. Therefore, thus saith the Lord . . . I will take away my word from them. . . . I will suffer them no longer.” But then in verse 10 he says “the fourth generation.” If we have to wait
four generations, that doesn’t bother us now; we’ll cross that road when we get to it [the people thought]. As Scarlet O’Hara said, “I’ll think about that tomorrow.” Verse 10: “And there shall be those of the fourth generation who shall live, of your enemies, to behold your utter destruction. [This is just about the time of the birth of Christ, and he is talking about the destruction at Cumorah.] . . . and this shall surely come except ye repent, saith the Lord; and those of the fourth generation shall visit your destruction.”

Well, “Après nous le déluge” (after us comes the flood). But that’s after us, as the French nobility [under Louis XV] used to say when they were enjoying themselves and getting away with everything. Verse 12: “Yea, wo unto this great city of Zarahemla; for behold, it is because of those who are righteous that it is saved.” That’s a basic principle of the Talmud. In Sodom and Gomorrah the Lord spares the wicked [for a while] only for the sake of a few righteous. Verse 14: “But behold, it is for the righteous sake that it is spared. . . . When ye shall cast out the righteous from among you, then shall ye be ripe for destruction.” When the people in the states cast out the Saints, they were ripe for the Civil War, Brigham Young used to say. And what a destruction that was! “Yea, and wo be unto the city of Gideon [wo be unto all the cities of the Nephites]; . . . a curse shall come upon the land.” He really pours it on here.

Now we have a very interesting thing because of the Copper Scrolls. That’s 1Q4, the Copper Scroll from the fourth cave of Qumran. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls records was a scroll on bronze plates—just regular sheets, but they were riveted together and then rolled up so they could put them away that way, rather than put them as plates. Each one has three holes to rivet them together that could have been used for rings if they were plates. But they riveted them together and rolled them up. These metal plates were particularly important because they [the people of Qumran] wanted to have these records preserved against all danger and chance of destruction. They gave the information as to where all the other records were hidden. Not only that, but especially where the treasures were hidden. There were treasures under the tile in a certain public place, treasures under the sewer at the temple—at certain streets and corners. It tells us where these things are buried and where to get them. They are great treasures, and they are the treasures that people were hiding up when they were leaving Jerusalem in 70, 130, and 135 A.D. They had to get out and couldn’t take their treasures, so they hid them. They hid them up so they could get them back, and this [the Copper Scroll] tells you where to go if you want your treasures back. But only on one condition. They shall be used only for the temple; you can never use them for yourself again. They have been hidden up unto the Lord; they are his now. You can’t get them back. Of course, what the people really had in mind was getting them back for themselves. This is exactly what we are referring to here [in verse 18.] When you hide up your treasures with the idea that you will return later, you must hide them up unto the Lord or you will never get them back again. If you get them back and dedicate them to the Lord, that’s fine; you get credit. You are expected to do that in Israel anyway, so you are not losing. You are hiding up that treasure. It’s yours, but you are getting it back as you should get it back.

Verse 19: “For I will, saith the Lord, that they shall hide up their treasures unto me; and cursed be they who hide not up their treasures unto me [notice how he emphasized this]; for none hideth up their treasures unto me save it be the righteous; and he that hideth not up his treasures unto me, cursed is he, and also the treasure, and none shall redeem it because of the curse of the land.” There has been an edited work on this about the treasures. The great Copper Scroll was edited by John Allegro, but we don’t have time for it. They were writing on plates, and the writer didn’t like it. His fingers had hard work. He
complained and broke down, and the symbols become sloppy—just as people who wrote on plates for the Book of Mormon said, if we could only have written Hebrew it would have been much better, but our hands are clumsy. It’s painful to write on these plates, etc. They had to write on the plates to preserve them. Verse 20: “And the day shall come that they shall hide up their treasures, because they have set their hearts upon riches [see, they want to go back and get their treasures again—watch out for that]; and because they have set their hearts upon their riches, and will hide up their treasures when they shall flee before their enemies.” That’s the whole thing; that’s why they were hiding these in the Jerusalem story. That’s the real history. We actually have the documents today. As they left Jerusalem they hid their treasures, hoping to come back and get them. But the specific statement in the Copper Scroll is: All these are reserved for use in the temple and in the ordinances, and you can’t use them for your private purpose. They have been dedicated from now on. “Because they will not hide them up unto me, cursed be they and also their treasures; and in that day shall they be smitten, saith the Lord.”

Here is the old routine again in verse 21: “Ye are cursed because of your riches, and also are your riches because ye have set your hearts upon them [that’s what cursed them], and have not hearkened unto the words of him who gave them unto you [the economy is all, you see], Ye do not remember the Lord your God, . . . but ye do always remember your riches.” You are always thinking of the economy. There have been other societies like ours, I suppose, that have been completely absorbed in the economy. It’s not a particular society; it’s a stage of development in a society, which we would call at —the last stage when they think of nothing but the economy, nothing but the stuff they have, nothing but the perishables. They’ve got to perish; these things can’t last, you know. They [people in such a society] are in a very bad state. “Yea, your hearts are not drawn out unto the Lord, but they do swell with great pride, unto boasting, and unto great swelling, envyings, strifes, malice, persecutions, and murders [it leads to that—this is your prime-time mix again]. . . . For this cause hath the Lord God caused that a curse should come upon the land, and also upon your riches, and this because of your iniquities.” This is a curse on the promised land, you see.

Now we come to a very important thing. It looks just like routine platitudes about self-righteousness and the like, but this is a very, very important principle that we overlook. Especially today it should be emphasized, namely this: “And now when ye talk, ye say: If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets; we would not have stoned them, and cast them out. Behold ye are worse than they.” Then he talks about this self-righteousness. This is the great obstacle to repentance here; it’s the beautiful self-image which we cultivate today. It’s the unbreachable wall—no criticism or questioning can penetrate it. You don’t have to bring specific charges or anything. You are just sweetness and light. You see it in Iago. Iago is the worst of Shakespeare’s villains, and yet he is the most upright. He is always moralizing. He is absolutely convinced of his own righteousness and superiority. He is doing just what’s right; he means no wrong to anybody. And in Tartuffe the idea is that the worst possible villain is the most righteous appearing person. He has the most glorious self-image. Remember, with the Lord the worst of them all are those that broaden their phylacteries, love the high places in the banquets and the greetings in the market place, “Good morning, Rabbi”—spreading out their pious ways. They are the worst of them all. [He called them] hypocrites. The worst of those in the Book of Mormon are typical, such as the Zoramites. In Alma 31 we get them. There are many examples here, but this is the point. They are the worst who think they are the best. Alma 31:18: “And again we thank thee, O God, that we are a chosen and a holy
people.” Then skip over to verse 28: “Behold, O my God, their costly apparel, and their ringlets, and their bracelets, and their ornaments of gold, and all their precious things which they are ornamented with; and behold, their hearts are set upon them, and yet they cry unto thee and say—We thank thee, O God, for we are a chosen people unto thee, while others shall perish. . . . O Lord God, how long wilt thou suffer that such wickedness and iniquity shall be among this people? O Lord, wilt thou give me strength, that I may bear with mine infirmities.”

This is the worst thing you can find, and they were great people too. They were courageous. They were very neat; they had high dress standards. Remember, the people couldn’t get into the meetings without them. They were always talking about their righteousness. They were very clever dissenters and very prosperous. This is the kind of people they were. It goes on here, this holy, holy, holy, we believe thou art God. Every Sunday they would come and bear their testimony. “Thou hast separated us from our brethren. Thou has elected us to be thy holy children.” Well, what an image they have of themselves! “Behold thou art the same yesterday and today. We thank thee that thou hast elected us.” So this is the best possible defense you can have against repentance, and it’s the hardest wall to penetrate, once people get this idea. The Zoramites had it. As Joseph Smith said, “Let no man proclaim his own righteousness.” That’s one of the greatest dangers to Latter-day Saints because we have been blessed, and the Lord recognizes us. There’s a reason for thinking that we are pretty good, but look out for that because look what happens. Then there’s this other thing, the prosperity. That’s what is going to wreck it all.

Now, here’s a very good one, a nice culture note here in the verse 26: “Behold ye are worse than they. . . . If a prophet come among you and declareth unto you the word of the Lord, which testifieth of your sins and iniquities, ye are angry with him.”

“Don’t tell us what’s wrong with America; tell us what’s right with America,” as Brother Marriott used to say. Well, when you go to the doctor, he says, “You’re fine. Your eyesight is 20/20; your digestion is fine; your complexion is good; your teeth are in good condition.” As you leave the office, he says, “By the way, you have an advanced cancer of the spleen.” He hadn’t told you that. Well, you don’t come to the doctor to find out what is right with you; you come to find out what is wrong with you. The physician is not sent to the well, as the Lord said, but he is sent to the sick. We don’t want that. If he comes and tells you what is wrong with you, “you will say that he is a false prophet, [you don’t want to hear what’s wrong with you, naturally], and that he is a sinner, and of the devil” and you throw him out. But if a man shall say: “Do this, and there is no iniquity [it’s all right]; do that and ye shall not suffer. . . . Walk after the pride of your own hearts [that sounds a lot like standing tall, doesn’t it?] . . . and do whatsoever your heart desireth—and if a man shall come among you and say this, ye will receive him, and say that he is a prophet.”

Then there is a very interesting thing here. The only surviving book from the Mayan civilization of Central America is the Chilam Balam. It tells us that when a man was acclaimed as a prophet, the people would dress him in fine apparel, put him on a sedan chair, lift him up and carry him around town on their shoulders. That is exactly what happens here. If he tells you what you want to hear, “ye will lift him up, and ye will give unto him of your substance, . . . of your gold, and of your silver, and ye will clothe him with costly apparel; and because he speaketh flattering words unto you, and he saith that all is well, then ye will not find fault with him.” Well, this is a picture from the Chilam
Balam. The prophet is accepted. He is dressed in fine apparel. You notice the outrageous overdressing of these people. They put him on a sedan chair, lift him up and carry him around town. Well, every word of this rings true. Alas, alas that it should be so. “Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides?”

I thought we would get through with Helaman, but we don’t want to skip any of these goodies here. We’ll take up here the next time. We have six more times; we can cover some ground in that time.
Now, we’re beginning to learn a lesson that these Book of Mormon people were having a hard time learning—that things do change. It’s not always going to be the same. They thought it was, you know. We’re in chapter 13 of Helaman. We got down to where he’s talking about blind guides. They lifted him [the false prophet] up, remember. From the Chilam Balam—that’s the oldest record we have from Central America, the Mayan record—when a prophet is approved by the people, they dress him in costly apparel and carry him on their shoulders in a sedan chair around the town. It says the very same thing [in Helaman 13:28]: Ye will lift him up, give him your substance, and clothe him in costly apparel. Everything follows the customs.

How far can public relations and rhetoric be carried here? We’re going to find out. Verse 29: “Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides. . . . He hath cursed the land because of your iniquity [are there no limits here?] And behold, the time cometh that he curseth your riches, that they become slippery.” It’s a very interesting phenomenon of riches. It seems you can have them one day and don’t have them the next. The richest American, the first billionaire we had, was Commodore Vanderbilt. He was by far the richest man in the world, yet his grandchildren are all dead broke. It didn’t last that long. They used to have a saying in America: “From shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves, three generations.” You start out in shirtsleeves; the next generation is wealthy and doesn’t know what to do with it, and you’re back to shirtsleeves again. “He curseth your riches, that they become slippery, that ye cannot hold them; and in the days of your poverty ye cannot retain them.”

It’s a funny thing that happens; well, just look at the Dow and what it does. We don’t know where all that money goes all of a sudden when it drops 508 points in one afternoon. And a lot of very rich people are very poor all of a sudden. That happens you see. Verse 32: “And in the days of your poverty ye shall cry unto the Lord [well, that’s what poverty is for, among other things]. . . . Your destruction is made sure; and then shall ye weep and howl in that day . . . and say: O that I had repented.”

Have you all heard the Leroy Robertson Book of Mormon Oratorio? Oh, you must get it—it’s tremendous. This is a great climax when this comes out. “O that we had repented”—marvelous. “O that I had repented . . . that we had remembered the Lord our God in the day that he gave us our riches, and then they would not have become slippery that we should lose them; for behold, our riches are gone from us.” And notice there’s no security anywhere anymore, anywhere than there is here [in the United States]. Of course we think of October ‘89 and October ‘29 when the same thing happened. But here [verse 34]: “Behold, we lay a tool here and on the morrow it is gone; and behold, our swords are taken from us in the day we have sought them for battle.”
What do you do? Well, every year we have to buy new garden tools where I live. They’re gone. We put them in the garage, and the next year there’s nothing. We have to start all over again. This has gone on year after year after year. You lay a tool here and it’s gone when you want it, and the same thing with weapons. What happens then? They’ve slipped away from us. Our treasures have slipped away; everything seems slippery. There’s a curse on the land. You can’t hold on to anything, and this is exactly what happens. Everybody lifts everything. “All things are become slippery, and we cannot hold them,” he says.

Then the great fear comes. Verse 37: “Behold, we are surrounded by demons.” At the end of the fourth and fifth centuries the very same thing happened in the ancient world, all throughout Europe and the Mediterranean. People were seized by this terrible fear. It was a strange kind of fear. There was the great fear of 1789 (there’s a new book out on it now) in France mostly. People were suddenly seized by a terrible fear. They didn’t know what it was; it just drove them wild. Well, the same thing happened in 1384, all down the Rhine Valley, where there were the Totentänze. People just went crazy. With the Children’s Crusade earlier than that [there were] these same social diseases.

The most famous, the first one, is described by Aristotle. It’s the Abderite fever. Aristotle was a native of Abderea, you know. Well, one day they were giving the tragedy “The Madness of Heracles.” There’s a scene in which Heracles, visiting a hospitable home, suddenly goes mad and smashes all the furniture. He does it offstage. It’s very interesting. The Greeks living in those ancient and savage times were much more considerate and rational than we are. They followed the order, again from Aristotle, “Let not Medea slay her children before the populace.” All murders—and there were lots of murders—took place offstage. They were described by a messenger usually, but they never had the bloodshed or the murder or the torture before the public. And here, of course, it’s the big attraction of the play. This is why we turn on the TV, to see that, the very thing that was forbidden by the Greeks. It wasn’t a decent thing to do.

Well anyway [back to] this Abderite fever. It was a very hot day in July or August, and Heracles started smashing the furniture. The people suddenly went mad. They started taking off their clothes and yelling and howling. They ran wild through the city, and it spread from city to city. It became the popular practice to take all the furniture you had, all the junk you had, to the central square of the city, put it in a big pile, set fire to it, and jump into the flames. That’s what Herodotus tells in earlier times about Croesus. And so we do have these strange epidemics of apparent madness. It’s attributed now to ergot. See, they had barley more than wheat. They lived on barley, and just a little bit of ergot (blight in barley) will have that effect. It will drive you quite crazy. They found that in 1789 the crops of Europe had a very strong blight of this ergot, barley blight, and they say this may have been responsible. But something was driving these people absolutely crazy. This happens.

These people [in Helaman 13] got the same way. I think this is built up. It reaches a point when you can’t trust anything. What are you going to do? Well, you finally just go like a young soldier in Israel. Nothing could be settled at all, so he just committed suicide. You have these mass suicides at times like this, but it’s this idea that they’re surrounded by demons. They’re haunted and helpless. They’re in the grip of something, and they think they’re spooked. They don’t know what it is. They get that illusion, and it drives them crazy. They see little green men and things like that: “We are surrounded by demons, yea, we are encircled about by the angels of him who hath sought to destroy our souls.” This feeling of utter helplessness culminates in this. What are they going to do?
Verse 38: “But behold, your days of probation are past; ye have procrastinated the day of your salvation.” Every day brings us closer to this, you see. It’s an amazing thing that you do reach this point, and then you have these climaxes in civilization, and these sharp breaks. Our memories are very small. These unpleasant things we don’t like to remember. So the next generation forgets them almost immediately, and it goes on as if they were the only people who ever lived. It happens after a war, too. You get half a nation wiped out, and in a little while nobody ever thinks of them. They’re gone, and so we go on living from day to day. “Ye have sought all the days of your lives for that which ye could not obtain; and ye sought for happiness in doing iniquity, which thing is contrary to the nature of that righteousness which is in our great and Eternal Head.”

And what is that? The American dream. That’s the story of Citizen Kane. You’ve all seen that epic film, I’m sure. He was William Randolph Hearst. Hearst was actually much worse than that. I know some people who knew him quite well in California. Aunt Polly lived almost right next door to him. In the early days when he was wild and had all the money in the world, they would have the most horrendous orgies up there on Knob Hill in San Francisco. He did anything he wanted, had anything he wanted, and was always seeking. It turns out to be Rosebud, if you remember the play. But he was utterly depressed. All his life what he was doing was seeking for happiness in what he could obtain. He sought it in orgies and sex and in all kinds of wealth, luxury, and power. He had to have power. He had to have all these things, you see, and it soured him.

There’s a book written about that by Aldous Huxley. When Aldous Huxley came and started writing for Hollywood, he wrote a book about [Hearst] called After Many a Summer Dies the Swan. It’s true that he wouldn’t allow the word death to be mentioned in his presence. He accumulated about him all the junk in the world. If he liked a castle in Europe, he’d take the whole castle and bring it to San Simeon and set it up there. He had to live in something that actually equaled the splendors of the retired Roman emperors on Goat Island, there off the coast of Italy, where Tiberius lived in such riotous luxury and all this sort of thing. But William Randolph Hearst had everything, and he was always after everything all the time. That’s the American dream with bells on, and it didn’t work. That’s the whole idea. It was a complete flop. You can think of many other examples equal to that. We mentioned Vanderbilt. He was a sour, bitter, mean old so-and-so. He was unloved by everybody, but he made more money than anybody else.

So it was “contrary to the nature of that righteousness,” and that’s your foolishness—you wasted the time trying to get that. Now Samuel the Lamanite is talking here. He predicts the coming of Christ. Helaman 14:2: “Behold, I give unto you a sign; for five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name.” Remember, the prophecy for Kirtland was five years, too. The Prophet Joseph said, “We’ll be here five years.” It was just five years, and they had to get out. “This will I give unto you for a sign at the time of his coming.” Now notice these signs are all a matter of timing. Of course, the meteors that are going to show in the heavens are already on their way. The way these things are coordinated is a very interesting thing. When these great events happen, there are these signs of coordination, how these things are worked together, and you see a lot of it here. “For behold, great lights in heaven, insomuch that in the night before he cometh there shall be no darkness.” In the timing of the meteors they’re already on the way. Then for 36 hours it will be like one night and one day. Apparently a supernova. Those things have happened—the one in 1054 A.D. could be seen all over the world. It was almost as bright as the sun. The supernova exploded and
became the Crab Nebula today. You can still see it, only it's just a nebula scattering in all directions. “And behold, there shall a new star arise.” Well, there’s a nova, all right. That’s the Star of Bethlehem, “And . . . there shall be many signs and wonders in the heaven.” They go along with it.

Verse 9: And behold, thus hath the Lord commanded me, by his angel, that I should come and tell this thing unto you.” [Alma 8:16] says the same thing. In a crisis it’s an angel that’s sent. “Yea, he hath said unto me: Cry unto this people, repent and prepare the way of the Lord.” Because I’m a Lamanite, you’re not going to listen to me; you just get angry with me. The Nephites resent Lamanite righteousness teaching them anything. They’re the righteous people [in their eyes]. “And ye shall hear my words, for, for this intent have I come up upon the walls of this city . . . that ye might know the conditions of repentance.” He’s going to give them a break. He’s going to reason with them and give them an explanation. Of course they don’t want any of it. ”And if ye believe on his name, ye will repent of all your sins; . . . and behold, again, another sign I give unto you, yea, a sign of his death. For behold, he surely must die that salvation may come; yea, it behooveth him and becometh expedient that he dieth to bring to pass the resurrection of the dead [now this is the Atonement] that thereby men may be brought into the presence of the Lord.”

It’s going to be a matter of a breakthrough, you notice in verse 16: “Yea, behold, this death bringeth to pass the resurrection,” and nothing else [can do it]. This death is one thing. It’s in the nature of a breakthrough. The whole system is going this way, and then something breaks through and puts it on an entirely different footing. Something changes everything. Of course, this is the way things happen in nature too. “. . . and redeemeth all mankind from the first death . . .” All mankind right now are cut off and are considered as dead. But when that happens there’s going to be a real change. Something marvelous is going to take place.

I was just thinking this morning about the heavenly world, the celestial world, the other realms, the eternities that we can’t even imagine. Most people don’t believe they exist at all. They are so hard to imagine. But equally hard is the other side—the extreme, irrational, wild and insane other world. Imagine that we have that, you see. That’s just as incredible, just as hard to believe. But the point is, we don’t just walk into that other world. We’re not equipped. It is there all right, but because I’m not there now I may not believe it. But don’t expect that you can just walk into it—that’s the whole point. We’re preparing for it here because there’s going to be a lot to do. In this terrible mess we’re preparing for it, and that’s what it’s going to be. But there is this division line. It comes like that, and precise times and places are marked. These things [miracles] come, and when they’re realized, you say, well it’s the most natural thing in the world. He’s going to talk about that, the resurrection.

Verse 18: “Yea, and it bringeth to pass the condition of repentance. [It’s a state required for the accomplishment of that, the condition of repentance] . . . and there cometh upon them again a spiritual death, yea, a second death, for they are cut off again as to things pertaining to righteousness.” You can go on in a state of corruption, but you’ll have nothing to do with that other world at all—you’ll be out. See, [the Lord said] worlds without number have I created—all sorts, many mansions. “Therefore, repent ye, repent ye, lest by knowing these things and not doing them ye shall suffer yourselves to come unto condemnation.” There’s the tragedy, to know and not do.
And then these are the signs of his death; they’re described more fully later on in 3 Nephi. 

Verse 20: “And there shall be no light upon the face of this land . . . for the space of three days.” That’s just the opposite. There was the light for three days, and now there’s darkness for three days to match it. This is the cosmic effect. And “there shall be thunders and lightnings for the space of many hours, and the earth shall shake and tremble.” A vivid description is going to be given of this later on. “One solid mass, shall be broken up . . . shall be rent in twain, and shall ever after be found in seams and in cracks, and in broken fragments [go up Rock Canyon, you’ll see this all right] upon the face of the whole earth, yea, both above the earth and beneath,” like the earthquake in 1954. That was the worst of them all.

The lamentation and creation literature all have to do with these great catastrophes. They’re very well recorded, these colossal catastrophes. We never realized that they were true before. They are literally described in Amenemhet in 825 [B.C.], the Book of the Dead in 175, the Salt Papyrus, the famous Cannibal Hymn from the Pyramid Texts and Lambert’s collection of Babylonian and lamentation texts. The whole society was just wiped out with a smash overnight. And this has happened again and again. And then many mountains shall be laid low, and valleys shall become mountains. Well, we’ll get this routine later on. I think we’ll get it in the very next lesson if I hurry up.

Verse 25: “And many graves shall be opened, and shall yield up many of their dead.” Now does that mean resurrection, or is it the shattering of the tombs where the dead fall out? There are various interpretations. Why not all appear if it’s going to be a resurrection? It says “many of the saints shall appear unto many”—not all of them. What’s going on? Again we’ll find a description later on—be patient. “Darkness should cover the face of the whole earth for the space of three days.” There it is. Things happen that haven’t happened before. Well, I think in the fall of ’89 we’ve seen things happen—storms of such severity in all parts of the earth as have never been recorded before. They said a storm could never reach this speed, but they’ve been doing it and breaking all the records everywhere. It’s wonderful how we can go on breaking records. But this shows us that things can happen, as Moses said, “which thing I never had supposed.”

Verse 28: And this “that there should be no cause for unbelief among the children of men.” They will not believe a righteous judgment, see. Will they believe this? Now do we convince by miracles? This is the point. No, a wicked and adulterous nation seeketh a sign. Can you force people to believe by miracles? No, it doesn’t work. They immediately start explaining it away on scientific grounds, etc., as it tells us here. A number of reactions are possible. But this leaves them actually without excuse. As the Lord said, if I had not done the miracles I have done among them, they wouldn’t be without excuse. But now they have seen and hated both me and my father [they have no excuse]. The reason they doubt is they say these things don’t happen. This is impossible, this is not sensible, this is not scientific. But when you show them that they do happen, then you rob them of that argument. That’s the only argument they have. They’re rational, scientific, sensible people. They don’t believe in these extravagant, over-picturesque, over-wild things. One of the basic principles of geology up until very recently was that nothing spectacular ever happens. Well, don’t fool yourself. Things infinitely spectacular happen.

Verse 30: “And now remember, remember, my brethren, that whosoever perisheth, perisheth unto himself.” With all these titanic forces around us, the decision is still our own. You can be impressed or not be impressed, but the fact is when this has wrecked your best excuse, you see that these things don’t just happen. “And whosoever doeth
iniquity, doeth it unto himself; for behold, ye are free; ye are permitted to act for yourself [nobody is going to twist your arm here]. . . . He hath given unto you that ye might know good from evil.” See, the miracles that belie the excuse of pure reason leave you with nothing else, but you know the good and evil, and you can always judge that.

“My beloved brethren,” he says [in Helaman 15:1]; he calls them that. Now he gives them what the Lord teaches in Matthew 24: Make sure that you don’t have any pregnant women around when this happens, because there’s going to be a bad time. “Ye shall attempt to flee, and there shall be no place for refuge; yea, and wo unto them which are with child, for they shall be heavy and cannot flee; . . . wo unto this people who are called the people of Nephi except they repent. . . . They have been a chosen people of the Lord; yea, the people of Nephi he hath loved, and also hath he chastened them . . . because he loveth them. But behold, my brethren, the Lamanites hath he hated [that’s strong language, to say the Lord hated the Lamanites] because their deeds have been evil continually, and this because of the iniquity of the tradition of their fathers. But behold, salvation hath come unto them.” It’s been completely reversed; the bad guys are now the good ones. The Lord will prolong their days, he said. This part of the chapter is an encomium of the Lamanites. “The more part of them . . . walk circumspectly before God [and they do] . . . Yea, I say unto you, that the more part of them are doing this, and they are striving with unwearied diligence that they bring the remainder of the brethren to the knowledge of the truth.”

Verse 9: “And ye know also that they have buried their weapons of war [they followed the example of the Ammonites on a broad scale in burying the hatchet, you see], and they fear to take them up lest by any means they should sin; yea, ye can see that they fear to sin [well, the NRA would put an end to that] . . . and [they] will not lift their swords against them, and this because of their faith in Christ . . . The Lord shall bless them and prolong their days, notwithstanding their iniquity [because they have redeeming virtues]. Yea, even if they should dwindle in unbelief [which they do] the Lord shall prolong their days until the time . . . spoken by our fathers, and . . . many other prophets, concerning the restoration of our brethren, the Lamanites [eventually they will be restored] . . . In the latter times the promises of the Lord have been extended to our brethren, the Lamanites; and notwithstanding the many afflictions which they shall have . . . they shall be driven to and fro upon the face of the earth, and be hunted, and shall be smitten.” This is the fate of the Lamanites now, of course, in the country. Every treaty that’s been made with them has been broken. Any time anything of any value was found on the reservation, they just went in and took it from them. “. . . and scattered abroad, having no place for refuge.” This is the basis, and it’s true. He says they’ll suffer all that. They’ll go all the way down before, and then they’ll be blessed. But they shall be “numbered among his sheep.”

Verse 16: “I will not utterly destroy them [that’s quite a promise] I will not utterly destroy them . . . they shall return again unto me, saith the Lord.” That’s the promise. But, in the next verse: “I will utterly destroy them [the Nephites].” There’s the difference. “I will not utterly destroy them [the Lamanites—this is the condition of today but] . . . concerning the people of the Nephites: If they will not repent, and observe to do my will, I will utterly destroy them.” That’s the promise.

Well, as many as believed on his [Samuel’s] words, hurried to confess and get baptized. Most of them, though, cast stones at him and shot arrows at him, but they couldn’t hit him as he stood on the wall. When they saw that he couldn’t be hit, they went away to Nephi to be baptized. Helaman 16:4–5: “For behold, Nephi was baptizing, and prophesying [like Alma]; . . . therefore as many as believed on the words of Samuel went
forth unto him [Nephi] to be baptized.” He was the one who had the authority to do it. So they didn’t go to Samuel; they went to Nephi after they had heard the preaching of Samuel. Verse 6: “But the more part of them did not believe in the words of Samuel . . . they [said]: Take this fellow and bind him, for behold he hath a devil”—because we can’t hit him. See, they interpreted it their way all the time—supernatural protection. So he jumped from the wall and ran out of the land, went to preach among his own people, and was never heard of again among the Nephites, like Alma and the younger Nephi. It was something of a custom, wasn’t it, like the ancient anchorites. You would just flee out of society and never be heard of again.

Verse 10: “And thus ended also the eighty and seventh year of the reign of the judges, the more part of the people remaining in their pride and wickedness.” The people began to be more hardened. In the ninetieth year there were great signs “and angels did appear unto men, wise men [now the chain begins, you see] and did declare unto them glad tidings. . . . Nevertheless, the people began to harden their hearts, all save it were the most believing part of them . . . and began to depend upon their own strength and upon their own wisdom, saying: [the intellectuals began to explain everything, and there were commentators and panels and everything else to explain it all]. Some things they may have guessed right, among so many.” Statistically they may have guessed some things right and explained them. That’s true; that could happen that way. After all, so many things are happening, like great and marvelous works [they reasoned].

Verse 17: “And they began to reason and to contend among themselves.” As I said, they had meetings, debates, and discussions. This was Korihor’s line—it’s not logical. They were very smart. Notice, they said, “it is not reasonable that such a being as a Christ shall come.” (It isn’t—I’d never figure that out myself.) And if that’s the case, why doesn’t he show himself to us instead of just to those of Jerusalem? That doesn’t make sense either [they said]. This is not only a false tradition, it’s a wicked one. Some great and marvelous thing is going to happen in a land far away—so what? Notice verse 20: They say that just to keep us in ignorance. They don’t have to explain it, because it won’t happen here. You’ll notice it’s not going to happen here; it’s going to happen there. So they’re safe; they can say anything they want to. They keep us in ignorance where we can’t witness it with our own eyes. So they can tell us anything they want [the intellectuals said].

Verse 21: “For we depend upon them to teach us the word; and thus will they keep us in ignorance. . . . They were much disturbed for Satan did stir them up to do iniquity continually; yea, he did go about spreading rumors and contentions upon all the face of the land [See, there are such times when rumors just go wild. Nobody knows what to believe anymore—rumors about El Salvador, etc.], that he might harden the hearts of the people against that which was good and against that which should come, . . . [and thus did] Satan get great hold upon the hearts of the people upon all the face of the land.” And thus ends the book of Helaman.

Finally we get to 3 Nephi here. “And it was in the year that Lachoneus was the chief judge and the governor over the land.” Lachoneus is going to play an important role here; he’s an important man. And what’s the Greek name Lachoneus doing there? Well, where was Laconia? Laconia was in the southeast Peloponnesus. In Lehi’s day who ruled Palestine? Necho II of Egypt did. It was a commercial empire, but he kept it in control by mercenaries. He had a whole mercenary army and a mercenary navy of Carian fleets. Also at that time a new kind of warship was invented that revolutionized sea warfare, and Necho thought he could beat the Babylonians by using it. That was the new trireme.
the Carians of Asia Minor. And along with that, major shipbuilding was along the coast of Laconia, which had wonderful harbors. Laconians—including Lacedamontonians that went as far up as Sparta—were the best mercenary soldiers. They were mercenaries because they were not only great fighters, but they lived in a very poor, rocky, mountainous country. The only way they could make ends meet was to hire themselves out.

So the entire army of the kings of the 26th dynasty were employed Greeks from Laconia and elsewhere, but mostly from there. Both the sailors and soldiers were prime people from Laconia. So the fact that you find the name Lachoneus is certainly to be expected here, because you’d find guys by the name of Lachoneus walking around in Palestine in Lehi’s day. They were the troops—not the troops of occupation or anything like that, because the kings were taking the side of Egypt. Remember, they were leaning on Egypt to support them against the threat from Asia, from the Babylonians. So don’t be shocked when you see a name like Lachoneus here. It should be here.

Verse 2: “And Nephi, the son of Helaman, had departed out of the land of Zarahemla, giving charge unto his son, Nephi [and we have an account of the record here]. Then he departed out of the land, and whither he went, no man knoweth.” There it is again. Alma did that. Where is it they go in these places? They used to say there were two places where these mysterious people always disappeared—to San Francisco or to Paris. They would end up there. That’s where you could achieve anonymity very quickly, you see. Or, for many years [they would go] out West. You just go out West and disappear. Nobody would ever see you again, especially if you were wanted by the law or anything like that. It was a safe thing to do. So he disappeared too. They were always disappearing up north anyway.

Well then, how about this time? The time had been set. Verse 4: “There began to be greater signs and . . . [they] began to say that the time was past” and heaved a great sigh of relief. The time has passed, and you’ve missed it—you’ve muffed it. And they began to rejoice about it. “The ides of March are come. Aye, but not gone,” as Caesar said. [Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar]. He was mocking them—they’re not gone yet. And of course this is what happened at Far West. There are many examples of that when they set a particular date [for something to happen], and when [it doesn’t happen on] that date there’s a great uproar.

Verse 6: “And they began to rejoice over their brethren, saying: Behold, the time is past, and the words of Samuel are not fullfilled; therefore, your joy and your faith concerning this thing have been vain. . . . They did make a great uproar. . . . There was a day set apart by the unbelievers, that all those who believed in those traditions should be put to death except the sign should come to pass.” Well, wasn’t that rather extreme? No, that has happened lots of times, such as St. Bartholomew’s Day in 1572. On August 23 every Protestant in France was to be murdered in that one night. And they nearly succeeded in doing just that. And there was the same thing with the famous Sicilian vespers, when all the Normans occupying Sicily were wiped out in one night. The Sicilian vespers were during Easter, and in one night they killed them all. Also, the Mamelukes [were killed] in one night. They set a particular time, and then all the Mamelukes in Egypt were killed. And there have been others, like the bloodbath of Hitler’s Kristallnacht. He was going to get rid of all the Jews in one night, the crystal night, because they had smashed all the windows. It’s a funny thing that [people] think they can finally solve the Mormon problem or the Indian problem or the Lamanite problem just by getting rid of them in
one fell swoop. That’s been tried again and again, and some of those have nearly succeeded.

But for setting the date, a very dramatic example is that at Far West. This is how Brigham Young told it. I like what he says in introduction, though. It’s a very important thing he says: “Joseph Smith had to work by faith. It’s true that he had knowledge of a great many things, as Saints of former days had, but in many things he had to exercise faith.” Just because he was the prophet he didn’t have it all given to him, not by any means. “He believed he was fulfilling the prophecy of the ancient prophets. He knew that God had called him, but in the establishment of his kingdom, he had to work continually by faith. He sealed his testimony with his blood. His whole life was as if wading through deep waters of persecution and oppression. The Saints should seek to cherish and grow in this principle, that we may have faith in every revelation and promise and every word of the Lord that has been given in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Covenants.” There’s the source of our revelation. We must have faith in them, you see.

Well, he goes on: “When the members of Zion’s Camp were called, many of us had never beheld each other’s faces. We were strangers to each other. We were young men, and what we had to do, we had to do by faith [this is what they had to do]. We accomplished a great deal, though apostates and unbelievers many times asked the question, what have you done? [when they went to Far West and laid the foundation stone of the temple]. We gained an experience we never could have gained in any other way. We gathered some 200 elders from throughout the nation at early day and sent us broadcast into the world to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Had I not gone up with Zion’s Camp, I should not have been here today and presume that would have been the case with many others. We have to work and live by faith.”

Well, now, this is the story: “The twelve apostles were called by revelation to go to Far West, [Caldwell County, Missouri], to lay the foundations of the cornerstone of the temple. When that revelation was given, the Church was at peace in Missouri. It’s the only revelation that’s ever been given since the organization of the Church that I know anything about that had a day and date given with it. [The point is a particular day was assigned, and everybody knew what that day would be. Now what would happen on the day?] The Lord called the Twelve Apostles. While in this state of prosperity, it looked all right on the 26th day of April 1838 to go to Far West to lay the cornerstone of the temple and from there to take their departure to England to preach the gospel. Previous to the arrival of that [date], the whole Church was driven out. Between the command to carry that out on that particular date and the chance to do it, the whole Church was kicked out of Missouri. How could they do it then? And it was as much as a man’s life was worth to be found in the state if it was known that he was a Latter-day Saint, and especially was this the case with the Twelve. “When the time came for the cornerstone of the temple to be laid as directed by revelation, the Church in Illinois having been expelled from Missouri by an edict of the governor. Joseph and Hyrum Smith and Parley P. Pratt were in chains in Missouri for the testimony of Jesus. As time grew nigh for the accomplishment of this work, the question arose, what is to be done? Here was a revelation commanding the Twelve to be in Far West on the 26th day of April to lay the cornerstone of the temple. It had to be fulfilled. The Missourians had sworn by all the gods of eternity that if every other revelation given to Joseph Smith was fulfilled, this one should not be, for the day and the date were given, and they declared that it should fail.” So they knew exactly when and where this should take place, and they vowed that it never would happen. But what happened?
“The general feeling in the Church was, don’t try it. It’s too risky. There’s no point to it now. So far as I know, under the circumstances it was impossible to accomplish the work, and the Lord would accept the will for the deed [like the Law of Consecration, wait till later]. This was the feeling of Father Smith, father of the Prophet. Joseph was not with us. He was in chains in Missouri for this religion. When President Young asked the question of the Twelve, Brethren, what will you do about this, the reply was, the Lord has spoken it, and it is for us to obey. [Just as Nephi said, the Lord has spoken and I’ll go get the plates no matter what.] We felt that the Lord God had given a commandment, and we had faith to go forward and accomplish it feeling that it was his business whether we lived or died in its accomplishment. We started for Missouri. There were two wagons. I had one and took Brother Pratt and President Young in mine. Brother Cutler, one of the building committee, had the other. When we reached Far West and laid the cornerstone according to the revelation that had been given us, we cut off the apostates and those who had sworn away the lives of the brethren [they were still living in Missouri and had left the Church]. We ordained Armand Chase and Norman Shearer to the Seventies. Brother George Albert Smith and myself were ordained into the Quorum of the Twelve on the cornerstone of the temple. We had been called before but not ordained. We then returned [nobody lifted a finger, nothing happened at all] nobody having molested or made us afraid. We performed that work by faith, and the Lord blessed us in doing it. The devil, however, tried to kill us, for before we started for England, every one of the Twelve was taken sick. [He said he had never had the ague before], but upon this occasion I was taken with it for the first time in my life. All the Twelve became violently ill. [But, they all went on their missions. And what’s the point of all this?] We went to England, we baptized in the year 1840 something like seven thousand people. We established churches in almost all the principal cities of the kingdom. Brother Pratt established a branch in Edinburgh, Scotland; Brother Kimball and George Albert and myself set up a branch in London. We baptized 1800 persons in the south of England in seven months. Out of that number, 200 were preachers belonging to different denominations in the land. We opened an emigration office, published the Book of Mormon, and gathered many to Zion. God was with us. I may say that he has been in all the labors of the Church and kingdom.”

So this is what happened [because of their] faith. And here [in 3 Nephi] was a day set, and what was going to happen? It looked pretty bad, Verse 10: “Nephi, the son of Nephi, saw this wickedness of his people [he was upset, of course, and he] . . . cried mightily to his God in behalf of his people.” He prayed and prayed and the Lord said, “Lift up your head”—I’m coming tomorrow, so don’t worry. Verse 13: “Be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand; and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world.” Notice this fine tuning. The dates are set. When the Lord came after the resurrection to the apostles, he said to John, tell the brethren to go and meet me in Galilee (that’s way up north) exactly three days from today. There was a particular time and place where they were going to meet; everything was set here. Then Moroni said to Joseph Smith, come back to this place exactly one year from today, the 23rd of September, and you’ll meet me here again. That happened to be the autumnal equinox, and they did that four times, three times after the first time. Everything is timed. The Magi saw his [the Savior’s] sign in the heaven. These events that happen are timed in the affairs of men, and when the time [will come] you never know. Who would have told us eighteen months ago that the whole face of Eastern Europe would be changed today—its psychological and social [aspects], attitudes and everything. The Communist freeze, like a great iceberg, looked as if it would never melt, and all of a sudden in a matter of weeks it’s gone. See, the Lord times these things, and they happen just like that.
The time is at hand and the sign shall be given, he said. In the creation of the world it was the same thing. When a certain thing had been accomplished, [the Lord said] now the next thing we do is this. The Lord said, you go down and do this, and then you come and report. They said, “We will go down.” Everything is timed and properly organized. That’s what’s going on here. Then, here’s this marvelous passage. This is just like poetry, the prose is so marvelous here [verse 15]: “And it came to pass that the words which came unto Nephi were fulfilled, according as they had been spoken [the great solemnity of this is like the tolling of a great bell]; for behold, at the going down of the sun there was no darkness [it sounds just like a Greek chorus—a supernova appeared]; and the people began to be astonished because there was no darkness when the night came. And there were many, who had not believed the words of the prophets, who fell to the earth, . . . for they knew that the great plan of destruction. . . . [We talked about falling to earth as supplication, submission, and terror at the same time.] All the people upon the face of the whole earth from the west to the east, both in the land north and in the land south, were so exceedingly astonished that they fell to the earth.” Does that mean they lost their foothold? It could have been deliberate. See this is the point. When you’re faced with something too much to cope with, when there’s some power that’s beyond your control, that’s what you do, of course. You put yourself in a position of complete submission. You go down on your face, not only in complete submission but in supplication. This is a very interesting thing. When the great God appears in Egyptian writing, like the 312th section of the Coffin Texts or the 178th section of the Book of the Dead, the first thing is—down on your faces. That’s the first thing that happens in the presence of any great power. It’s the normal thing to do. Well, this was a cultural thing. It was a customary thing, and they did it deliberately. It’s the ancient way to cope with too much. It’s called the proskynesis. It means kissing the ground on your face, and it’s spontaneous. They began to fear.

Well, I’ll tell you a wonderful story about Mars Bumgardt who was an astronomer in Southern California. He was in charge of the Clark Observatory, which used to be at USC. A very close friend of mine (when we were kids we used to go out in the mountains together and camp and this sort of thing) became assistant to Mars Bumgardt. He became an astronomy major and later professor at UCLA. This was 1925 or ‘26 and Mars Bumgardt was preparing for a total eclipse. They were going to have a total eclipse in Mexico, so they made big preparations. They prepared for a whole year for this expedition. It was a big thing going down there. And they got all their equipment and set it all up on the mountain, knowing exactly where things would happen. He got everything set up and ready to go. And then the shadow of the moon started hissing toward them like this, an overpowering thing. The way Mars Bumgardt described it, after all this preparation, after all this getting ready with the instruments set up and everything, all he could do, he said, was go down on his knees and raise his hands (just like the kid in the tent) and say, “There is a God, there is a God, there is a God.” He wasted a whole two minutes just doing that; he said he was completely overpowered. Well, with the astronauts it was the same thing. They knew the sort of thing they’d see when they got out there. But when they actually saw it, like Collins, they became converted. They never knew anything like that existed; it just overpowered them.

This is what happened to these people [in the Book of Mormon]. This was a real supernova; you can be sure of that. But Mars Bumgardt’s experience was an anticlimax if there ever was one. But he considered it a fair exchange. That changed his life, you see. He had been an astronomer, very much a scientist. I remember old Dr. Larkin when we went up to the Echo Mountain Observatory at Mount Lowe. They had a good telescope, a 16-
inch Brashear, there. He just spent all his time fulminating against ancient Hebrew mythology; he couldn’t stand it. So in those days they were down on ancient Hebrew mythology, but when Mars Bumgardt saw the shadow coming toward him, it just overpowered him. So I really believe [their reaction] was spontaneous. A new expectation, a new kind of reality suddenly appeared.

Verse 19: “There was no darkness in all that night, but it was as light as though it was mid-day, . . . and they knew that it was the day that the Lord should be born. . . . A new star did appear according to the word.” Ah, now you say, this would certainly convert them and there would be no more lying, but it was just the opposite in verse 22: “And it came to pass that from this time forth there began to be lyings sent forth among the people by Satan to harden their hearts.” They said, we can explain this all right. Immediately, the reaction is not what you expected. You can explain every situation. Notice how Satan is going to exploit every situation to his ends. “The more part of the people did believe. . . . Nephi went forth among the people, and also many others, baptizing unto repentance.” There was peace in the land, and they preached by the scriptures. Verse 24: “And there were no contentions, save it were a few that began to preach . . . that it was no more expedient to observe the law of Moses,” because Christ had come, but they were soon converted and everything went along smoothly. There was peace “save it were for the Gadianton robbers, who dwelt upon the mountains, who did infest the land.”

Now, we have a very interesting psychological study in this first chapter from verse 27 to the end, namely the younger generation. You remember the clever Zoramites. They were the snazzy people that wore the natty uniforms. They were the best fighters. There was a time when all the best officers in the Lamanite army were Zoramites who had been Nephites. They were very hard working, rich, prosperous, and pious. They observed strict dress standards and all that sort of thing, and they were the ones that intrigued the young to go over and join the Gadiantons. They gave it sort of a romantic allure—become soldiers of fortune, etc. It tells us that [they went] among the Gadianton robbers in their secret places. “Therefore they did commit many murders, and did do much slaughter among the people. And it came to pass that in the ninety and fourth year they began to increase in a great degree, because there were many dissenters of the Nephites who did flee unto them.” Well, why would that be? Just like people go to these training camps in the South to become soldiers of fortune. The glamor of it they find irresistible. Up in Idaho and in the deep South we have training camps, and here the same thing.

Verse 29: “And there was also a cause of much sorrow among the Lamanites; for behold, they had many children.” When they started to grow up they were led away by some of those who were Zoramites. The Zoramites sold them on this. The Zoramites were recruiters for the Gadiantons. They said it was glamorous and adventurous. . . . led away by some who were Zoramites, by their lyings and their flattering words to join those Gadianton robbers [so that’s what happened]. And thus the Lamanites were afflicted also, began to decrease as to their faith and righteousness because of the wickedness of the rising generation.” The young were very much attracted by this. The life of a Gadianton robber was romantic, it was exciting, and it was profitable, too. And the Zoramites went out and recruited them successfully. A very interesting psychological touch there.

In the second chapter the signs and wonders began to be less and less astonishing because they got to see more and more—they became commonplace. People have short memories. The moon landing is a good example, isn’t it. All my life I heard that if man could land
on the moon, it would be the greatest thing that ever happened. In fact, when it happened Nixon said, “This is the greatest event since the creation of the world.” Yet the next day people were already complaining that their favorite soap operas had been cut off and they couldn’t see them because of the greatest event since the foundation of the world. That’s how long it lasts. That’s how long people’s memories excite them in these things. So they began to say, well, anything could happen. “They began to be hard in their hearts, and blind in their minds, and began to disbelieve all which they had heard and seen—imagining up some vain thing in their hearts, that it was wrought by men and by the power of the devil, . . . and thus did Satan get possession of the hearts of the people again.”

This left them unimpressed, just like we can put things off and on. The company explanation will always give you an answer, which is not an answer, as to whether it’s ozone or acid rain or radon or solar wind or cosmic rains or whatever it is. When they [scientists] say these things threaten, that’s just a myth. These things don’t happen. We have no solid evidence for this if it interferes with our profits. They can always argue around that. They’re great at that, and that’s what the people started doing here. They started explaining and rationalizing these things away.

Verse 3: “The people began to wax strong in wickedness [this is a fine thing to happen] and abominations; and they did not believe that there should be any more signs or wonders given; and Satan did go about, leading away the hearts of the people, tempting them and causing them that they should do great wickedness in the land.” This is going to be pretty bad, I’m afraid.

We’re told in verse 8 that “the Nephites began to reckon time from this period when the sign was given. . . . And Nephi, who was the father of Nephi . . . could nowhere be found in all the land [he went out]. . . . The people did still remain in wickedness, notwithstanding the much preaching and prophesying which was sent among them [they get worse and worse]. . . . There began to be wars and contentions [verse 11] throughout all the land.” The Gadianton robbers just took charge. They laid waste many cities, like our Bagaudi, Free Companies, Vitalian Brethren, and the barbarian hordes with these servile wars, etc. The Apaches are a good example here. Verse 11: “It became expedient that all the people, both the Nephites and the Lamanites, should take up arms against them.” They were compelled to take arms against them. The Nephites were threatened with utter destruction from these robbers. It’s getting very serious.

Verse 14: “Those Lamanites who had united with the Nephites were numbered among the Nephites.” There’s a nice note on race again. If you were Lamanite who had joined the Nephites, you were now called a Nephite. “And their curse was taken from them.” Did they change their complexion and become white overnight? No, it’s a cultural thing. The same things go together all the time. And they were called Nephites; the same name was given to them. We can’t dwell on that now—we will later.

Verse 17: “The people of Nephi did again gain some advantage of the robbers [who were like the Druze] insomuch that they did drive them back out of their lands into the mountains [again], . . . [but then] because of the wickedness of the people of Nephi, and their many contentions and dissensions, the Gadianton robbers did gain many advantages over them. . . . And [thus] the sword of destruction did hang over them, insomuch that they were about to be smitten down by it, and this because of their iniquity.”
Now we get the letter of Lachoneus here. I wanted to hit the big climax here. We have to have the coming of the Lord. We just have time to have that happen [this semester] won’t we? But these steps, these processes have taken on so much more meaning in the last few years. Things weren’t this extreme before. There was no such thing as talking about a people as being wicked. People were just normal people in every way. But now we start looking at statistics and things like that and start taking public opinion polls on what people value. When 80 or 90 percent of the people say, “Yes, you have to be dishonest in business if you’re going to succeed,” that’s pretty bad. There’s never been anything like that before [in our society]. So the Book of Mormon gets more and more impact with every passing week, I’m afraid.
Now the standard explanation today of all this misunderstanding that’s been going on between the Nephites, the Lamanites, the Zoramites, the Gadiantons, and all the rest of them—we would say piously is a lack of communication, wouldn’t we? They certainly aren’t communicating, and so we have a masterpiece of communication. This third chapter of 3 Nephi is the great letter. It’s really a lesson in communications. It’s typical of the official communiqué of our day. It’s smooth, it’s convincing, it’s conciliatory—and it’s totally false, as we’ll soon find.

Now we see that Lachoneus is not an unlikely name at all to find at this time and place. Lachoneus, the governor of the land, gets an epistle from the leader of the other band. He has the good name of Giddianhi; Gidgiddoni was the Nephite captain. Giddianhi is a pure Egyptian name; in fact, if you’re going to write it in Reformed Egyptian, you would have a very easy time of it, to write Giddianhi. All you’d have to do is write that—that’s Giddianhi. “The Lord is my life” is what it means. His name is Giddianhi; we’ll get to him later.

3 Nephi: 3:1: “Lachoneus, the governor of the land, received an epistle from the leader and the governor of this band of robbers; and these were the words which were written.” Now what does it say there? It’s flattering. Remember, we’ve seen already in the Book of Mormon a great deal about flattering words. Flattering words get the thing done. If you want to organize a movement, you start out and end up with flattering words, and they always work. Flattering words are those the people want to hear—tell them what they want to hear. It’s a very good thing in our society. It has become a fine art, as you know. It has become the cornerstone of the rhetoric of our times. And at this point I might point out that it was not wars or plagues or famines or climatic changes that wiped out ancient empires and nations. It was rhetoric, this very thing we’re talking about. That was the cause of it.

I’ve written some spiels on rhetoric. I’m not going to hold you up with it, but we must make this clear—what this rhetoric is and how devastatingly effective it is. It destroyed the ancient world. Every period ended up with rhetoric taking over, because it confounds all values. This article was written 33 years ago in Berkeley, when I was teaching classical rhetoric. This is what it does. The ancient civilizations were beset by a feverish preoccupation with rhetoric, which suggests nothing so much as a hopeless alcoholic’s devotion to the bottle. It destroyed them. Everywhere the ancients give us to understand that rhetoric (you can call it TV if you want) is their poison, that it is ruining their capacity to work and think, that it disgusts and wearies them, and that they cannot let it...
alone because it pays too well and, having destroyed everything else, it is all that they have of remembered glory.

That sounds like an extreme statement; we have to go on here about how the art of rhetoric was founded. It existed in other civilizations, but it became a big thing in the ancient world with the Sophists, Gorgias and Protagoras, the more famous one, who started the school. These are both [from] dialogues of Plato. They were friends of Socrates, and Socrates denounced what they were doing as the most dangerous thing in the world. It does have that effect, too. (Our word gorgeous comes from Gorgias because of his gorgeous style. It’s -ias because it’s a Dorian name.) [Plato] charges his friend Gorgias because he has founded the first rhetoric school, and it’s paying off enormously. He’s turning out lawyers and businessmen by the scads. These schools are spreading everywhere, and before you know it, there’s nothing else. By mixing rhetoric with philosophy he turned it to Sophistry, for which offense Plato takes him grimly to task. The charge is that he is turning his talents from the honest search for truth to the business of cultivating appearances. That is exactly what his teacher, Empedocles (whom the younger Aristotle calls the inventor of rhetoric) had done. Fretting like Dr. Faustus at the limitations of the mind and despairing of ever arriving at truth the hard way (there’s just too much to be done in the short span of human life) Empedocles found satisfaction in pretending before the public that he had already achieved knowledge and power. He said that’s just as good as having it. You have the same effect; you have the same satisfaction. You have learned the art of pretending; that will do it. He became the most magnificent of quacks and the father of a long line of skillful impostors. Well, you’ve all read the poem “Empedocles on Etna.”

So we have the three big names here. We could start out with Gorgias, Protagoras and Empedocles. Gorgias wrote three famous books. One was to prove that nothing exists; the second was to prove that if it did exist you couldn’t know it; and the third was to prove that if you did know it, you couldn’t prove it to anybody else. So having settled that matter, he cultivated a new and wonderful art of finding success the easy way. He worked out a technique, says Philostratus, which enabled him to speak offhand on any and all subjects and to prove or disprove any point on demand (this is the skill of the rhetorician, you see, of the journalists, etc.), thereby bringing against himself the shocked and scandalized charge of “making the worse appear the better reason.” That shocked everybody, but you can do it. You can make any reason appear the best. Traveling everywhere, he proved to the world that “nothing can stand up against the art of rhetoric.” His playing with words, which captivated the fancy of the rising generation and all that followed, was actually a philosophical nihilism. Schmidt points out in his great work on the subject that it made a hash of all values, including the sacred nomos—the moral order of society—itself.

Gorgias shares with his friend Protagoras the glory and guilt of selling rhetoric to the world. Protagoras concluded that he was wasting his time trying to sound the secrets of the universe in a short lifetime, burned his books in the marketplace, and turned to teaching rhetoric, achieving the immortal fame of being the first man ever to make 100 minas at the trade (a million dollars doing it). His famous dictum that “man is the measure of all things” led only too easily to the rhetorical gospel that anything goes, the Philistine morality which in the end destroyed Greek civilization. So let’s put these two names down, Gorgias and Protagoras, so at least you’ll remember them. He [Gorgias] came from Sicily to Athens and caused a sensation. We have wonderful stories about
them. We know exactly who they were, and they gave us the art of journalism, legal
display, rhetoric, etc.

Well, there are some things to note here—it goes on and on. If nothing is rarer than a
good orator, nothing is commoner than bad ones. The rewards of rhetoric are
tremendous. Are such rewards to be left lying about unclaimed until the perfect orator
comes along? As might be expected, the worst people took to rhetoric like ducks to water,
for rhetoric preached the gospel of success. This is Theodor Mommsen, the greatest of the
German historians [of Roman history]: The chance for everyone to "succeed" was the soul
and essence of the principate [that's the empire after the emperors took over], its
justification for being, and its driving power. It was the school of rhetoric under the
benign patronage of the Good Emperor that offered this plum to every ambitious youth
in the Empire [you have a right to an education so you can succeed, they said], and
“people of every class became inflamed with a desire to achieve the new success.” The
orator’s philosopher, says Cicero, is not Aristotle (who loathed rhetoric), but Carneades,
because he was always successful: “He never supported a cause that didn’t win or opposed
one that didn’t fail.”

Lucian illustrated the spirit of rhetorical education when he told about a boy who went to
Harmonides, the greatest flute player of the time. Harmonides started giving him lessons
and telling him he had to practice long hours. The boy said, “Wait a minute, wait a
minute. I don’t want to be a good flute player; I just want to be a successful flute player.”

“Well,” said Harmonides, “no trouble at all, then. You practice one hour a day and
cultivate the right people.” That’s it, you see. But success was what they were after—which
is a reminder that Isocrates, the founder of the first real school of rhetoric, ruled against
the flute as a waste of time.

From the time of Isocrates on, wrote Wilhelm Schmidt, “naked self-interest ruled in the
rhetorical schools.” Success meant getting ahead; all else was eliminated. Cicero simply
can’t understand those Greeks who actually like to talk about things which are both hard
and impractical in the schools; those people have no word for “inept,” he says with scorn,
but play with ideas for their own sake. That, for him, is against the whole spirit and
purpose of rhetoric and education, which aims to get results and no funny stuff—we
should keep our boys away from such studies, he cautions. Why study anything but
rhetoric? as the great Seneca challenged, and he became the richest man in Rome. What
good is astronomy except for fixing horoscopes and keeping appointments? (It’s like
Cornelius Vanderbilt who never learned to read because it would interfere with his
business.) “Mathematics teaches me to make my fingers organs of avarice.” That’s as far as
Seneca could see. Music is no good because it will not stop fears, nor sell anything, nor
still appetites, as rhetoric will. “Geometry teaches me to measure a field. How much better
to know how to measure a man.” It’s human engineering that’s going to pay off. Seneca’s
interest in things went only so far as they would support his case; but even the case
concerned him wholly and simply as a pretext for pushing his own career: *cupit enim se
approbari non causam* was his slogan—"it is yourself you are selling after all." You can
take either side. It doesn’t make any difference what product you’re selling; it’s yourself
you’re selling. And this was the philosophy of the time. For the rhetor success meant three
things (right out of the Book of Mormon): fame, wealth, and power. We’re going to get
that here; remember the four things that Nephi talked about. We talked about these
things, and this is what ruined the ancient world. This article was written 36 years ago
before we had the new developments of rhetoric, before we had the techniques.
What was not recognized was a fatal Gresham’s Law by which bad rhetoric, art, and education, like bad money, always forced the better product out of the market. There can be no truce between the two. . . . In his discussion with Socrates Gorgias repeatedly confirmed the definition of a *rhetor* as one who addresses an *ochlos*, the multitude, the many. Number is everything. The Nielsen ratings are the whole measure of success. He says here, the multitude is the audience to whom he normally appeals in the interest of his clients. Accordingly the values of rhetoric are quantitative: How much? How many? These are the only questions you need to ask, he says. *Gloria*, like wealth, is a function of size alone; the greater the cheering multitudes (these are your Nielsen ratings), the greater the glory and success of the one cheered.

There is no exception to the rule, for all the fastidious and hypocritical protests of those scholarly rhetors who affected to despise the mob. Rhetoric, according to Augustine, is the art which, animated by necessity rather than “purity,” scatters to the populace from its overflowing bosom (the Roman equivalent of pockets) an abundance of delights, thus leading them to comply with his interests. You can have whatever you want out of people if you only give them what they want—without question and without hesitation. The rhetor, says Philo, is the slave of a thousand masters; the public is a whore and he is her minion and her lap-dog. “What do you want me to do?” cries Dio Chrysostom to the people of his native city; “I’ll do it!” And so it is. Give them anything they want, and that’s what we want to find.

The orator must stoop to conquer, and a quick and frightening rebuke awaits him if he doesn’t stoop low enough. For all his toadying Dio was banished for being unsociable. Libanius had to clear himself of the same terrible charge, and Apuleius was investigated time and time again because he was suspected of being an introvert. Go easy on philosophy, Cicero advises. Don’t talk over people’s heads—they don’t like orators who make them feel stupid. Best keep your books at home for your private leisure. (You can see the direction everything is going in here.) “Everything must be accommodated to the common judgment and popular intelligence” [said Cicero], for the rhetor sells to everybody. To find out exactly what the people wanted was the hardest part of the rhetor’s work and the secret of his success; it was the canvass or survey (well, this is your poll), the careful trial-and-error game of *empeiria*, “to pick out just those things that appeal most to listeners, and not only delight them, but entertain them without ever tiring them.” (Now this is what [political pollsters] do. They find out what people want, and that’s what the party gives them, because that will get you elected. Whether it’s our policy or not has nothing to do with it. If they want that, that will be our policy.) Once you had that, the rest was easy, simply “to scratch and tickle the ears of those who want to be tickled,” taking care never to speak harshly to them. And so it goes.

The landslide of vulgarization, once started, could not be stopped, it says. Just like TV, it all goes in one direction. Good men were intimidated and banished from their cities by mobs who could always count on finding orators who would never contradict them—society reserving its richest rewards for those who could justify, condone, and confirm its vices. Even a strong-minded emperor who tried to stem the tide (like Marcus Aurelius) could wreck his cause by refusing to play along with the show-bred city crowds, and even risk his person if he dared to talk back to them. The orating bishop who tried to introduce a fancy word or new idea into his sermon might find an angry congregation shouting back at him, or even have a riot on his hands. There was only one thing to do, as St. Augustine observed: Don’t fight the stream, “O wo, thou tide of human custom—who
can possibly resist you?” You have to go along with the current, etc. McGiffert writes of the saint [Augustine], “For all his intellectuality, he was instinctively a conformist and could never be quite happy unless the majority agreed with him.”

“What society as a whole believes,” said St. Augustine in the *De Doctrina Christiana*, “that we also believe, and without an inkling of a doubt, even though there’s not the slightest evidence that it is true.” If everybody believes it, we believe it. So that’s the way people went. But rhetoric did more than bow before the storm; it worked hard to create and intensify it, beginning with political speakers who “systematically debauched” the people for their votes. (Well, we go into that sort of thing then.) Encouraged by the state to avoid serious thinking, the crowd came under the leadership of experts, not revolutionary or radical, but stoutly conservative, fond of rough-house but mushily sentimental. In time they learned even how to exchange spontaneous tears and laughter for the nicety and propriety of organized and directed applause. They had direct applause, too. They had cheerleaders. The *stasiarch* would wave a flag and lead a cheer, and they would all yell together. And so it goes, this unbridled passion for the spoken word.

Well, what did it do? The experts knew exactly what would sell and what would not sell; they had it all at their fingertips—formulae that could get a reaction as quick and predictable as a knee jerk. Even those who knew how it was done couldn’t escape “the noose of *suaviloquentia,*” as it was called. The general public didn’t have a chance—the rhetors simply get them drunk, says Lucian, and go to work on them (like selling Coke or Pepsi). Flesh and blood can no more resist the impact of a tried and tested rhetorical assault than it can take a cool appraising look at the Gorgon’s head—you are paralyzed before you know what hit you. A properly trained rhetorician can make his audience clay in his hands, helpless as automatons without a will or mind of their own. That was the effect they were after, and that was the effect they got. The Book of Mormon is full of this. We get these flattering speakers who lead people this way and that way by the nose. They are the cause of every great movement. Every great mischief in the Book of Mormon starts out with a person who is a master of many words, who is very clever and has a cunning knowledge of the language, and who is above all expert at flattering speech.

[Quoting from his article again:] With the introduction of the Second Sophistic the arts and sciences of the West entered a period of decline from which they were never to recover. At the same time the school entered upon a career of undreamed-of expansion and splendor. As steadily as civilization sank in the scale the school mounted on high, until the one reached a peak of enduring glory and authority at the very moment, in the fifth century, when the other came to rest at its final and permanent bathos. The school never recovered. Everybody went to school then, but they never learned anything. This is the point. It was because of what the schools became—the schools of education.

There came a day, says Cauer, when the cultural deposit of the past had become just too great for any mind to absorb (so they didn’t try anymore), while in the face of what had already been done, all future creation lost heart. They couldn’t think of anything new, and they never created a thing for centuries on end. This happens, you know. From then on, learning the hard way was just too hard, and the creative spirit was left with nothing to create. The only answer was rhetoric, the wonderful art by which an ordinary person could master all knowledge “in his sleep” (as a brochure said), and bring forth new and original creations simply by rearranging the familiar rhetorical building blocks in any desired pattern. The very thing that stifled learning was pure oxygen to the schools of rhetoric.
How easily they took over all the functions of scholarship may be seen in the case of the immortal Hermogenes. As a boy-wonder (it was an age of praecoces pueruli) he had given exhibitions of his rhetorical skill before the Emperor at the age of 15. His sweeping and pretentious rhetoric convinced the world that he was its greatest thinker, and his writing on all subjects became compulsory school books for generations to come. Right down to the 16th century, [his works were] being taught at the Strasburg School, etc. Hermogenes was the big one; he became the great leader of education for centuries, and he didn’t have a thing to say! It’s marvelous, isn’t it. Yet his actual contribution to knowledge is exactly nil—he has nothing to say. As the brain that feels for the whole body is incapable of feeling itself or what is happening to it, so the antique school seems utterly incapable of judging its own ineptness. The actual productions . . .” We have them. R. Raby of Oxford has collected three very fine volumes, one on Latin secular poetry and the others on Latin religious poetry. A great deal of this rhetoric has been brought together. Of course, [there is] much more. But we have them all here at school [BYU]. The actual productions of the world’s most illustrious professors for centuries on end are incredibly imbecile. In reading them we blush for the authors, yet they, in perpetrating these childish horrors, are joyfully exhibitionistic of their very worst themes, totally unaware of what a shocking spectacle they are. Rhetoric, like Mephistopheles, gave them success but took away their brains in exchange.

Then we get the horrible result of all this—[similar to] the Book of Mormon. From the second century on the chief characteristic of every branch of science and art is “the inability to create new compositions.” The stereotype had abolished the need of that: “things that bad poets instinctively love to fashion” are the permanent legacy of rhetoric to literature. Look how the Church has gone over for kitsch. All the art, music, and everything we have show a violent antipathy for anything which isn’t kitsch—commonplace, low, vulgar, and easy to imitate. Our favorite artist is a Seventh-Day Adventist painter, Harry Anderson. He paints these Coca-Cola ads that are very folksy, very down to earth. [They have] no artistic value whatsoever. And so it goes.

In the rhetorical education sponsored by Augustine, Marrou observes, there is “an echo, an influence, a general direction of studies—this lowering of the general level of civilization which already, on all sides of Augustine, announced that the times of the barbarians is at hand.” They were going into a thousand years of slump after that. So, this is what rhetoric does to people, and what it did in the East and West. And the Book of Mormon is great on this. You won’t call this [the letter of Gidddianhi] a rhetorical masterpiece because it can’t fool anybody; it’s so transparent. And yet it does. This is the interesting thing about rhetoric. As it became more transparent and silly, as they kept repeating the same formulas over and over again, you might say, well, people would surely get wise to that. Yes, they got wise to it, but they had an appetite for it. They were able to take it because it was what they expected. Finally it was what they wanted, and it was all they ever got.

So here it comes from the band: Notice, he starts out with this flattering [language, in 3 Nephi 3:2:] “Lachoneus, most noble and chief governor of the land, behold, I write this epistle unto you, and do give unto you exceedingly great praise.” He’s coming on too strong. This isn’t what Henry IV says of the bishop of Bristol, who has been his bitter enemy all of his life. He says, “For though mine enemy thou has ever been, high sparks of honor in thee have I seen.” So he wouldn’t condemn him too much when the civil war was over, because the bishop of Bristol had been true to his lord who was Richard II. Even
though Richard II was a fool and acted like a fool, and the bishop knew it, but still he had
sworn and promised to support him. So he supported him, no matter what; he was loyal to
him. That’s why Henry says at the trial, “For though mine enemy thou has ever been, high
sparks of honor in thee have I seen.” But this isn’t what we’re talking about here at all.
This is just is pure flattery: “[I] give unto you exceedingly great praise because of your
firmness, and also the firmness of your people, in maintaining that which ye suppose [it’s
always what you suppose] to be your right and liberty; yea, ye do stand well, as if ye were
supported by the hand of a god, in the defence of your liberty, and your property, and
your country, or that which ye do call so.”

This is an ironical touch. Throughout this letter he keeps contrasting Lachoneus’s “wimps”
with his own mighty men, you see. He rubs it in here. It’s much more effective than
name-calling would be. This is ironic; he’s being almost sarcastic here. Verse 3: “And it
seemeth a pity unto me, most noble Lachoneus, that ye should be so foolish and vain as to
suppose that ye can stand against so many brave men who are at my command [your
people are all right, but come on now], who do now at this time stand in their arms [the
intimidating motif], and do await with great anxiety [they’re just waiting to come down]
for the word—Go down upon the Nephites and destroy them. [And he drops the disguise
here—Mr. Nice Guy no more, he says.] And I, knowing of their unconquerable spirit,
having proved them in the field of battle, and knowing of their everlasting hatred towards
you because of the many wrongs which ye have done unto them . . .”

Of course, there’s no hint in here anywhere of the fact that the issue is the crimes and the
outrages that have been performed all these many years by the Gadiantons. He’s going to
tell us it’s a noble society and we’ve been doing well, and you’ve forced us to do it.
Therefore if they should come down against you they would visit you with utter
destruction [now, if that isn’t a threat—but] . . . feeling for your welfare [he says, that’s
what is worrying me], because of your firmness in that which ye believe to be right, and
your noble spirit in the field of battle. Therefore I write unto you, desiring [all you have to
do is give us everything you’ve got, and then we’ll be your friends; save us the trouble of
having to beat you and we’ll appreciate that] that ye would yield up unto this my people,
your cities, your lands, and your possessions, rather than that they should visit you with
the sword and that destruction should come upon you. Or in other words, yield yourselves
up unto us, and unite with us and become acquainted with our secret works, and become
our brethren that ye may be like unto us—not our slaves, but our brethren and partners of
all our substance.”

After talking about everlasting hatred here, he wants recruits. Remember, they’re being
outnumbered. They’re having a hard time here, and this is what he’s after. They’ve been
using the Zoramites to recruit, as you’ve seen, and they’ve been doing it by using the
romantic appeal to younger people—come down and join the training camps down in the
woods, or in the canyons where they were doing it, “And behold, I swear unto you, if ye
will do this, with an oath, ye shall not be destroyed; but if ye will not do this [now, no
longer Mr. Nice Guy; humanity has nothing to do with it—you do it my way or], I swear
unto you with an oath, that on the morrow month [one month—he’s going to give them
one month to prepare] I will command that my armies shall come down against you, and
they shall not stay their hand and shall spare not, but shall slay you, and . . . ye shall
become extinct”—another age of extinction.

Verse 9: “And behold, I am Giddianhi [that’s his name, and he had no trouble writing it, if
that’s all he had to write]; and I am the governor of this the secret society of Gadianton.”
Now he starts talking. Most secret societies make this claim—that they’re ancient and that they’re essentially benevolent. That’s what he says. We’re a benevolent society. We’ve just suffered wrong, that’s all. You’ve done all the wronging, and we’ve been your victims. “And the works thereof I know to be good; and they are of ancient date and they have been handed down to us. And I write this epistle unto you, Lachoneus, and I hope that ye will deliver up your lands and your possessions without the shedding of blood.”

You see, this would be very nice. Nothing pleased Hitler more than having people just yield without it. He did not want war. Germans always enjoy war, but when he got what he wanted he was Mr. Nice Guy. Hitler was a very sweet person when he got exactly what he wanted. And this is a beautiful self-image: “I hope that ye will deliver up your lands and your possessions, without the shedding of blood, that this my people may recover their rights and government, who have dissented away from you because of your wickedness in retaining from them their rights of government.” It’s all their rights and their government that they’re talking about all the way through. We are the real state and you’re not [they claim]. It’s like S.S.

Verse 11: “And now it came to pass when Lachoneus received this epistle he was exceedingly astonished.” Notice he was nonplussed at this total mendacity. He’d never heard of such nerve in his life. He knew perfectly well, and it’s obvious from the letter too, what kind of man Giddianhi really was and what he was really after. They had wronged themselves. He said they had brought it all on themselves, and he knew that and everybody else knew that. “Now behold, this Lachoneus, the governor, was a just man, and could not be frightened by the demands, . . . but he did cause that his people should cry unto the Lord.” And then he used the redoubt tactics against them. He gathered together the people into one place. What they’re doing is launching a general strike, because he knows that these robbers depend on them for their livelihood. If they just refuse to produce and have enough to live on [they can win]. In order to do that they must have enough reserve to live on, so they’re going to have a general strike, have their reserves, and starve the others out. They’re going to win that way. “. . . gather together their women, and their children, their flocks and their herds, and all their substance . . . unto one place. And he caused that fortifications should be built round about them.” This is on the large scale—robbing them of their labors. He placed guards round about, etc. And he said to the people, “As the Lord liveth, except ye repent of all your iniquities,” you are to blame—are you the good guys? Large-scale crime requires large-scale cooperation. This is what happens. We’ve been told many times the Mafia or the Medellin couldn’t survive a month if they didn’t have cooperation in city and town governments throughout the country. They have cooperation everywhere. They couldn’t carry on on their own. Any lawman will tell you that—they’d fold up almost instantly. But it takes massive cooperation for large-spread crime to thrive, as it thrives in this country today—so many people cooperating, so many people on the take. Who knows? You might innocently be on the take even without knowing it, as far as that goes, once these meshes spread out.

Verse 15: He [Lachoneus] said “Except ye repent of all your iniquities, and cry unto the Lord, ye will in nowise be delivered out of the hands of those Gadianton robbers. And so great and marvelous were the words and prophecies of Lachoneus that they did cause fear to come upon the people [he made them afraid], . . . Now the chiefest among all the chief captains . . . was Gidgiddoni.” Well, now there’s another of these Egyptian names; this is a more elaborate one—Gidgiddoni versus Giddianhi They are period names; they are
common. You notice that Giddianhi and Gidgiddoni sound alike. You’ll find that in particular periods in the Book of Mormon the names sound alike, as they do in ancient times a lot. Remember, in the fifth century everybody was called Constans or Constansius or Constantinus, all variations on Constans. There were three rivals: Maxim, Maximianus, Maximus, and there were Valentinians and Valens and there were Galerius and Galeanus—emperors at the same time. Everybody would sort of share the same names. These two names are very much alike.

Well, the chief captains had “the spirit of revelation” and they were devoid of military ambition. “This Gidgiddoni was a great prophet among them, as also was the chief judge [a very different social organization from ours, you see]. Now the people said unto Gidgiddoni: Pray unto the Lord, and let us go up . . . and destroy them,” because they had faith in Gidgiddoni. But he said, no, that is not the way we do it. We’re not going to make any preemptive strikes or any search and destroy or anything like that. If we do that, we’ll get badly beaten. Clausewitz is right all the time. The defense is always the strongest position to take in war. So he says [in verse 21:] “If we should go up against them the Lord would deliver us into their hands.” We’re not supposed to do that. All wars so far have been fought on Nephite soil, and if they invade, that’s different. “We will wait till they shall come against us.”

So he sent out a “proclamation of Lachoneus . . . and did march forth by thousands.” They were gathering their stuff together; it was a big thing. “. . . they should gather themselves together to defend themselves against their enemies.” It’s the redoubt psychology; it doesn’t work for long. You must have enough supplies to outlast the enemy, and then you can do it. You must have strong enough defenses. They had everything they needed for that. It can’t usually be worked, because you can’t last for long. You can be starved out—that’s the thing. But this time it was the other way around. It was the outer ones, the Gadiantons, that could be starved out because they didn’t have a source of income in the land. If they started to cultivate or anything like that, immediately the Nephites would descend on them. It explains here what the economic arrangement was. Verse 24: “And there were a great many thousand people who were called Nephites, who did gather themselves together in this land [there was a curse upon the land northward] . . . and they did fortify themselves against their enemies; and they did dwell in one land, and in one body [and] . . . they did repent of all their sins.”

In ancient times and medieval times, on the great rivers of Europe, the Syech was the big island in the center where robber bands would retire, and these were very strong places. You’ll find them in Taras Bulba, the great Russian novel about the people of the Syech. But this is the reverse. It’s the good people who are in the Syech now, and the robbers are on the outside. But, you may think, they have the whole land around there; why don’t they take it? Because it was scorched-earth policy. They’ve taken everything off it. This is very effective, as you know. This is what beat Hitler in Russia and Napoleon too, because the people left nothing for them to live on.

Verse 25: “They did repent of all their sins [that’s the important thing]; and they did put up their prayers unto the Lord their God. . . . And they were exceedingly sorrowful because of their enemies. And Gidgiddoni did cause that they should make weapons of war.”

Then chapter 4 is the general strike and how effective it was. The armies of robbers “began to come down and to sally forth from the hills.” Easy pickings. They found the land
vacant, but that was just it. There was nothing there—the land had been left desolate in a
black-earth policy. And “there were no wild beasts nor game [they were depending on
those] . . . save it were in the wilderness. And the robbers could not exist save it were in
the wilderness, for the want of food; for the Nephites had left their lands desolate”—their
own lands. They didn’t leave a thing for them; they could have burned their houses and all
the rest.

When the Saints went south in 1857, Brigham Young ordered every house in Provo to be
burned. They had straw and combustibles in every house in Provo. Every house was to be
burned all at once. As it turned out, they didn’t have to do it, but they were ready to leave
everything, burn all their crops, and leave everything blank so [the army] would have
nothing to live on. That’s what defeated Johnston’s Army, actually; they had nothing to
live on except what the Mormons sold them. A year after Johnston’s Army occupied,
Brigham Young stood up in a general conference and said, “I thank God for the United
States Army; I am $1 million richer than I was a year ago.” As soon as he heard the army
was coming, he hitched up his horse and buggy. He had a black footman and driver of
whom he was very fond, and he said, Get down to Provo just as fast as you can and tell
them that the army’s coming and that they’re to double the prices of everything—charge
a dollar apiece for eggs and everything else. They did, and the army was glad to pay for
them. The government was paying for it anyway, so they were able to sell produce to the
army and make themselves very prosperous. It was the greatest source of profit they had at
that very difficult time that they were in. The army struck, hoping to wipe them out in
their weakness, and handed it all to them on a platter.

Verse 4: “Therefore, there was no chance for the robbers to plunder and to obtain food
[that was their business], save it were to come in open battle against the Nephites.” This
accounts for their generous offering. Armies do exist by coercing, by destroying. What
kept the Thirty Years War going was a system that was invented by the Austrian general,
a system of requisitions. The army would just go into town and requisition whatever it
needed. There was no talk of contract or anything—in other words, it was living by
plunder, and that’s what kept it going. The great Austrian general Wallenstein introduced
requisitions, and everybody started doing it then. But they couldn’t make requisitions
here because there was nobody home. They took “provisions, and horses and cattle, and
flocks of every kind, that they might subsist for the space of seven years.” Now that again
was a set policy of ancient times—the seven-year cycle. You know, the seven lean years
and the seven fat years [in the story about Joseph in Egypt]. We have eleven-year cycles
today because that’s the normal sun cycle. But the seven-year cycle was standard. You
would get enough food for seven years, and this was a law in Israel too. Remember, every
seven years was a year of release, the Lord’s year. The year of release was the seventh year,
and the great year was the seven times seventh year, the 49th. So they were just following
the old Jewish custom of getting all the stuff you’d need together for a seven-year cycle.

Verse 5: “Giddianhi found that it was expedient that he should go up to battle against the
Nephites [They were forced to fight. The poor Gadiantons had no other source of income.
What were they going to do?], for there was no way that they could subsist save it were to
plunder and rob and murder. And they durst not spread themselves upon the face of the
land.” If they tried to do it that way, then they exposed themselves everywhere. So they
couldn’t raise grain; that would take too much time and effort. They didn’t want to do it
anyway. They would be “sitting ducks” if they tried to go out and farm that way, because
that’s what they had been doing to the Nephites all these years. So what would they do?
What a picture! They decided they would have to make one big push. They were going all
out; we’ll go for it now [they said], and this will do it. Boy, did they prepare for that! Verse 7: “Great and terrible was the day that they did come up to battle.” It was going to be the steamroller now. This was Clausewitz’s psychological policy of *Schrecklichkeit*, paralyzing your enemy with fear. They fixed that up, “They were girded about after the manner of robbers; and they had a lamb-skin about their loins, and they were dyed in blood, and their heads were shorn, and they had headplates upon them; and great and terrible was the appearance of the armies of Giddianhi, because of their armor, and because of their being dyed in blood.”

It reminds you very much of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia who terrified the people mostly by their fantastic costumes. They wore the headplates with deer antlers, horns, wings, and all that sort of stuff. They would paint themselves as dragons to make themselves hideous, go out by night, and scare the daylights out of the peasants. This psychological effect was very important in the Middles Ages—to make yourself utterly hideous and then put a defiant devise on your shield, defying all other persons.

Verse 8: “And it came to pass that the armies of the Nephites . . . had all fallen to the earth, and did lift their cries to the Lord their God.” Of course, the armies of Giddianhi thought they really had them now, that they were terrified. It wasn’t that at all. “They began to shout with a loud voice, because of their joy, for they had supposed that the Nephites had fallen with fear because of the terror of their armies. But it was God they feared, so it went on. Note the literary style in verse 11: “And the battle commenced in this the sixth month; and great and terrible was the battle thereof, yea, great and terrible was the slaughter thereof, insomuch that there never was known so great a slaughter among all the people of Lehi since he left Jerusalem.” That was the battle of battles, all one side all out against all the other. And to their surprise the Nephites beat them back and pursued them as far as the borders of the wilderness. You can understand that this was the only time they gave the order “take no prisoners,” and they didn’t. “They should not spare any that should fall into their hands by the way; and thus they did pursue them and did slay them, to the borders of the wilderness.” They got out into the wilderness. But they only defended their own turf, you notice. They pursued them to the borders, but not over the borders. They defend their lands, and that’s it. Giddianhi was pursued and fled. He was killed, and that was the end of him, we’re told. “And the robbers did not come again to battle,” but still they had to live. They didn’t kill them all, so they started coming back again.

They came to lay siege again in the twenty-first year, and they “cut them off from all their outward privileges.” They tried to cut off the people of Nephi. When they went to work in the fields or trade or anything else, they would be waiting for them. And they [the Gadiantons] had another leader, Zemnarihah. This was an advantage to the Nephites, just what they wanted, because of their much provisions. They had enough to live on, but the others didn’t. They were exposing themselves. Verse 19: “They had nothing save it were meat for their subsistence, . . . and wild game became scarce in the wilderness.” That goes very fast, doesn’t it? Suddenly, deer became scarce in Utah this year; the deer hunt was very poor. A few years ago it was lavish; we had all the deer we wanted, but not this year. Who knows? They come and go. In the 1950s when they were talking about the bomb and everybody was building bomb shelters, many people had the idea that they could go out in the mountains and live there until the war would be over. It wouldn’t bother them; they could live on game [they thought]. They couldn’t last a week that way; there wouldn’t be enough at all. It was the same thing here; they had exhausted their resources. We don’t have unlimited resources anymore.
Notice they [the Nephites] went out by day and by night, falling upon their armies. It was really a retreating and beaten army, like 1812 or like Xenophon’s 10,000. They just kept harassing them all the time. They [the Gadianton’s] had to do something; they were the ones that were desperate. Verse 23: “And it came to pass that Zemnarihah did give command unto his people that they should withdraw themselves from the siege, and march into the furthermost parts of the land northward.” So they really retreat now. Brigham Young said they retreated into the canyons and the gorges of the red rock country [that are now] Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, etc. That’s the sort of country they went into. This became Gadianton country. Well, it certainly is today. They use those areas for various things. You’d better look out; there’s some stuff that goes on there.

Well, “Gidgiddoni . . . did send out his armies in the night-time, and did cut off the way of their retreat. . . . When the robbers began their march, they were met by the armies of the Nephites both in their front and in their rear. [In other words, they didn’t have a chance; they had been worn down completely.] . . . And there were many thousands who did yield themselves up prisoners. . . . And their leader, Zemnarihah was taken and hanged upon a tree.” The same thing happened to Nehor; he was hanged upon a tree. This is a very interesting rite that is mentioned in the Book of Mormon. It’s not mentioned in the Bible, but it is an important one.

We are told the Watchers were sent down to convert people in the time of Enoch when the world had gotten very wicked. After the sons and daughters of Adam apostatized, there was a crash program to try to turn things around. These Watchers were sent down to live upon the earth. They were tempted by the daughters of men, and they fell. They were led by Harrût and Marrût, and they perverted all the ordinances of the gospel, which they had. They preached that they were using them in righteousness, but they were using them for evil purposes. They were the first ones who ever rebelled, as happened in the case of Nehor. We are told that Nehor was the first in the Book of Mormon to rebel against the order the Lord had established. They had to be hanged because the earth would not receive them, as it would not receive Cain. Heaven, of course, couldn’t receive them. This is in the Koran. Harrût and Marrût to this day are suspended between heaven and earth, hanging there, because heaven wouldn’t have them and the earth wouldn’t have them. Until the day of judgment comes, they have not place. They just have to be suspended there. And they can’t even blight the air; the tree is cut down then. This whole thing is an ordinance. “They did fell the tree to the earth, and did cry with a loud voice, saying: . . .” This is a chant in which they were all led by a stasiarch. This was like trampling on the garments, a very well-attested Hebrew custom that we have in the Book of Mormon too, where we have the title of liberty. The people brought forth their garments, trampled on them, and said, may God trample on us if we break our covenants. The same thing happened here [in verse 29]: “May the Lord preserve his people in righteousness . . . that they may cause to be felled to the earth all who shall seek to slay them because of power and secret combinations, even as this man hath been felled to the earth [it was the old Hebrew custom that Jonathan Z. Smith has written about]. . . . May the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob [this is the old Jewish custom they are following; they are reciting a formula] protect this people in righteousness, so long as they shall call on the name of their God for protection. And it came to pass that they did break forth, all as one.” They are all chanting in one voice.
How about this chanting of a whole nation all at once like that? Well, we are seeing it today in the main squares of Prague, Budapest, and even Sophia, Leipzig, and all over. The people are all singing together. In Prague they all sang the national anthem together, and they chant these things. It’s a case of the whole nation coming together celebrating a new liberty and freedom, and they all chant together. Here we have it in the Book of Mormon. We are finally catching up with the Book of Mormon, we might say. These things that sound so strange and distant to us actually happen, and they are happening here when it says that all the people did rejoice with one voice and “did break forth, all as one, in singing, and praising their God for the great thing which he had done for them, in preserving them from falling into the hands of their enemies. . . . And their hearts were swollen with joy.” God had delivered them because of their repentance. We are seeing something akin to that in the world today. Whoever dreamed two years ago that anyone would see such a thing actually happen.

Well, we come to a happy part here now. Everybody was converted, and we could say, this is going to be wonderful now; everything is going to go well from now on. Of course, if we know the Book of Mormon, we’ll say, don’t fool yourself—or if you know human nature. 3 Nephi 5:1: “There was not a living soul among all the people of the Nephites who did doubt in the least the words of all the holy prophets who had spoken. [Now that is complete conversion. It’s like the celebration of Salamis, isn’t it?—a magnificent affair.] . . . And they knew that it must be expedient that Christ had come [they had already had the signs]. . . . Therefore they did forsake all their sins.” Now this is going to be a happy state. Any bets? How long is this going to last. Well, six years is the outside limit. Within six years they were very wicked people. That’s pretty good to hang on for six years. They didn’t kill all the prisoners. They took all the robber prisoners and caused the word of God to be preached to them. They rehabilitated them, in other words. They gave them lands, and they were set at liberty. This is what they did to those terrible robbers; they preached the gospel to them and set them at liberty. Verse 5: “As many as were found breathing out threatenings against their brethren [if they hadn’t laid down their arms] were condemned and punished according to the law.” We are not told what it is here, but they weren’t given the same satisfaction. For anyone who wanted to come around it was fine, and they gave them lands to settle on.

Then there is an account of the record here [in verse 8], of the things that happened. These were great times. “Yea, this book cannot contain even a hundredth part of what was done among so many people in the space of twenty and five years [this is the twenty-five year period]. . . . There are records which do contain all the proceedings of this people; and a shorter but true account was given by Nephi. . . . I do make the record on plates which I have made with mine own hands. [This record is by Mormon, and this is made after all these things were over. See, Mormon was the last survivor, except for his son Moroni. “And then I do make a record of the things which I have seen with mine own eyes. . . . There are many things which,
according to our language we are not able to write.” How is it possible that there could be something you couldn’t write because of your language—that your language wouldn’t lend itself to writing like this? I don’t think English would lend itself to writing like that at all.

This is a very interesting note on race [in verse 20]. “I am Mormon, and a pure descendant of Lehi.” Well, I thought everybody was a descendant of Lehi. Oh no, not by any means. It is something to boast about, to be a pure descendant of Lehi. The blood of dozen of stocks is all mixed up by now. So when he says he’s a pure descendant of Lehi, there’s a reason for saying that. It’s a kind of boast; he is proud of that. He said many have sneaked out of Jerusalem, including Rabbi Akiba, without anyone knowing. He said, we got out of Jerusalem, and you won’t find any record of it back there, because nobody knew about it when we left.

Verse 23: “Yea, and surely shall he again bring a remnant of the seed of Joseph to the knowledge of the Lord their God. And surely as the Lord liveth, will he gather in from the four quarters of the earth all the remnant of the seed of Jacob, who are scattered abroad upon all the face of the earth.” This includes far, far more people than you ever dreamed of. We see now how Abraham’s descendants multiplied and filled the earth at a time when the population had sunk almost to nothing. It had been a time of great extermination. “Even so shall the covenant wherewith he hath covenanted with the house of Jacob be fulfilled in his own due time, unto the restoring all the house of Jacob unto the knowledge of the covenant that he hath covenanted with them. And then shall they know their Redeemer, who is Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and then shall they be gathered in from the four quarters of the earth unto their own lands [notice there is more than one land for the gathering], from whence they have been dispersed.”

Now we begin a new epic here. We’re on the lap where we start racing. There is going to be one more very bad time, then the great destruction, and then the coming of the Lord. These things go fast, so we will have to take them fast. I want to get to the coming of the Lord. That’s very important. We’ve got to get at least that far here. We only have four more times [this semester]. These are the exciting chapters; they really pick up now.

Look at this: Joseph has been writing the Book of Mormon, and he has gone 410 pages. He has kept up a pretty good pace with every idea you could think of—all sorts of preaching, sins, and everything. He has given us a pageant of a civilization. What can he do to top this? This is a hard act to follow. What can he possibly say after that? Well, now comes the real climax. Now it really builds up to something absolutely colossal! How could you handle that if you were writing the Book of Mormon at the age of 23 to play a practical joke on your family. That’s what Mrs. Brodie said, you know.
Well, we’re in the sixth chapter of 3 Nephi, and everybody says at this point, “Well, this is where I came in. You mean we’ve got to go through this again?” As it starts out, you notice everything is lovely at the beginning. The Nephites all returned to their own lands, a happy ending. They still had plenty of provisions left. It wasn’t seven years—it wasn’t even six years—and they returned to their own lands, and everything was lovely, like 1945. And they rehabilitated the robbers. Verse 3: “And they granted unto those robbers who had entered into a covenant . . . land [they even granted them lands to settle] . . . wherewith to subsist upon; and thus they did establish peace in all the land.” They not only rehabilitated the robbers, they gave them land. That was their trouble—there was no way to make a living otherwise. “And they began again to prosper and wax great.” Now this is a postwar boom that is a beauty. They really flourished because everything had to be built up again. There was a great demand for everything, and everything started to flourish magnificently—a boom, you see. Verse 7: “There were many cities built anew [all this reconstruction to be done] and there were many old cities repaired.” The inner structures were restored. What we call the infrastructures had broken down, and they were repaired. Notice the Book of Mormon is right up to times in these things. You not only build new cities, you have to repair the old ones, and that’s where the big expense goes.

Verse 8: “And there were many highways cast up, and many roads made”—great road building. See, that’s what happened after World War II. We didn’t have any freeways. We didn’t have any I-15 or anything like that. There were none of those roads in the country at all until after World War II, and then came this, “many highways were cast up, and many roads made, which led from city to city.” And this is a very vivid picture of the culture as we actually know it was. But then “there began to be some disputings among the people; and some were lifted up unto pride and boastings because of their exceedingly great riches.” Do we have to go through this again? you say. It had only been three years, and this was beginning to happen.

Notice they have a very efficient Byzantine civilization. Almost all ancient civilizations were formed like this. By byzantine, we mean you have various classes with various uniforms and insignias, various preparations, educations, etc. In Rome if you were a member of the conscript patris you wore a toga. You didn’t, if you were not. If you were a member of the plebs, you didn’t. And if you were a workman, you had to wear a russet brown garment. If you were a little higher up in business, you added a purple tinge to it. If you were an official, you wore the toga clavata with a rim around the border or a red fringe. And so it goes. If you were the “big cheese,” then you’d wear a toga picta. These things were to distinguish them all. You remember Julius Caesar from high school. He says, “What, know you not? Being mechanical, ye ought not walk upon a holiday without the sign of your profession.” You had to wear the sign of your profession at all times. And
they’re talking about workmen and being mechanical. If you were a workman, you had to have a sign of your profession. It was so here, too, notice.

Verse 12: “And the people began to be distinguished by ranks, according to their riches and their chances for learning [as I said, this is the byzantine—an efficient, over-organized type of civilization, as the yuppie world is]; some were ignorant because of their poverty, and others did receive great learning because of their riches.” Today, for the first time, money is regarded actually as the purpose for which a person wants to be educated—because you make more money that way. They did receive learning, but they had this warped view of things—instead of scholarship as a life of austerity and doing without, so that you can have the real fun. Verse 13: “Some were lifted up in pride, and others were exceedingly humble [and then this happens very rapidly]... There became a great inequality in all the land, insomuch that the church began to be broken up.” Broken up how? Well, in verses 12–13, into the rich and the poor, of course. They were redistributing the wealth, all right—the rich get more, and the poor get less. That’s redistributing it, as we are doing it today. Many statistics today steadily, for the last ten years, show that drift has been very marked in this country—the separation between the rich and the poor. Well, we don’t need to recite them, but some other things I’m going to read to you now anyway.

The church began to be broken up; the church couldn’t take that, you see. There were a few among the Lamanites who survived. The church can’t survive inequality. You’ll notice this is a very interesting thing. In ancient times it was the same way. A few among the Lamanites stuck to the true faith; “they were firm, and steadfast.” What can this refer to? It can only refer to the law of consecration as far as I can see—the doctrine. They were “immovable, willing with all diligence to keep the commandments of the Lord.” See, that’s what they did; they kept the commandments. It was not doctrine. They gave a different interpretation to doctrine, but they kept the commandments and the others didn’t. Now here it sums it all up. Here’s the whole thing, and these are the four things we’ve talked about before. Notice verse 15 if you want to know what caused all this. “Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this [it lays it right down on the line here]—Satan had great power, unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world.” Again, this is your prime time. Power is what they all want. That’s the big game today, but they go with riches. Of course, you have to have the means, and the two go together.

The only virtue to the stuff I write is that I quote some good things. I’ve got some good quotes, and that makes them rather useful reference books for some things or other. They’re interlarded with the tripe I put in. There’s some very good stuff here, I just happened to notice, in this book that’s just out [Nibley’s Approaching Zion]. It’s not available yet, and it will stir a lot of people up when it does come out. We were talking about how this happened so fast. Remember, the commentator keeps telling us here all the time—it’s amazing that this happened so soon, that it happened so quickly. In the space, it tells us right here, of not more than six years—all this change came about. It’s amazing!

Daniel Yergin, a famous economist, writes: “There is increasing doubt [among economists] that anything at all can be done about anything. . . . If that wisdom is correct, then any ‘solutions’ to poverty become far more difficult and painful; they cannot be financed out of a growth dividend, but only by redistributing what others
already have—in turn creating massive social unrest [most utopians did that very thing].

Before the 1974–75 mini-depression [as recently as that], all financial poverty could have been eliminated at a modest shift of $10–15 billion to the poor from the rest of the community; $15 billion is less than 1.5% of the GNP, about the size of one of the cheaper weapons systems.” But we didn’t do it. Our society has gone out of the way not to do what could be done to solve the problem. Why? A community which can at tolerable expense eliminate human distress but refrains from doing so either must believe that it benefits from unemployment or poverty, or that the poor and unemployed are bad people, or that other more important values will be impaired by attempts to help the lower orders—or all of these statements.

Now, Robert Heilbroner says this, and he’s considered the most eminent economic historian today. Many people consider him that. He says, “No other civilization has permitted the calculus of self-interest so to dominate its culture. It has transmogrified greed and philistinism into social virtues and subordinated all values to commercial values.” He’s going to tell us the very same thing here in the Book of Mormon; they did the same reversal of values here, the Umwertung der Wertung, as Nietzsche calls it.

Thomas More wrote his famous Utopia in 1516, and he was one of the most eminent men of the time, one of the great merchants in Holland and England, a very important figure. You know the movie about Thomas More [A Man for All Seasons]. Thomas More wrote in his Utopia: “What was heretofore passed as unjust, . . . they have turned upside down, and in fact proclaimed it publicly and by law to be nothing less than justice itself.” And that is exactly what Ivan Boesky proclaimed when he recently commended “healthy greed” as a high virtue to college audiences (of course, he’s in jail now). The complete inversion of the utopian ideal is reached when success itself becomes synonymous with money, which of course it does. That’s exactly what we’re reading about here, and it’s a very precise, concise, and to-the-point discussion in the Book of Mormon. It hits it right on the head. This doesn’t describe Joseph Smith’s world at all. This isn’t the kind of community he lived in. This goes back to ancient times and other times, but it certainly is coming awfully close to home now.

What is the end result? The old familiar pictures. A citizen of New York writes, “You have to be on the alert constantly to sense when somebody nearby is out of place—waiting, looking, ready to pounce. You have to clutch your handbag up close, ready to fight for it should that become necessary. You have to put three locks on your door plus a burglarproof chain. You have to avoid the subways, night or day, and don’t smile at strangers on the bus.” What a way to live. Still the writer is determined to hang on. She says, “I can’t accept a life-style that makes us weary of community or civility, where human beings have to take on the attributes of jungle animals in order to protect themselves, in order to live.” Foreigners coming to this city from Eastern Europe hail it as an earthly paradise—that’s New York—a utopia; which only goes to show that anyone can adjust to anything. But, our writer objects: “Something inside of me says that I will die if I accommodate to this way of living.”

The Lord has to put an end to it, and this is what we’re going to have very soon in the Book of Mormon with a big bang. Is this an exaggeration? Every day coming to school I walk from Seventh North, where I live, up to here. Every day I pass these signs along by the canal—“Do Not Walk in This Area After Dark for Your Own Safety.” And this is Zion? You can’t even take a stroll in the dark. Great guns! In Athens a few years ago we
lived in a fleabag. It was cheap but not bad, down just two blocks from the Acropolis at the base. There was this little Byzantine church and a place where the buses turned around there. It’s the end of the line, the end of Athena Street, and very busy. And you could go out any time of day or night. Phyllis had to go out to the drugstore at 3:00 in the morning, and it was perfectly safe. This is a tough part of town, by the flea market. I left a suitcase on the curb there where you get off the bus and went and forgot all about it. The next morning at 10:00 I had to go up to the university, and I said, “Well, it’s gone, it’s gone.” I went by there at 10:00, and there was the suitcase standing on the curb. Nobody had touched it, and this was the toughest part of town. It seemed like it was, but it was perfectly safe. The last day we were there that time, I got some yogurt at a place in the open market there. I bought it from a farm woman. Goat’s cheese is what it was. I walked over a mile getting back to town, and here came this little old lady. She chased me all the way. I had overpaid her about ten cents, and she had to pay it back to me. She followed me all over town so she could pay back this ten cents that I’d overpaid. We don’t do like that here at all. You can see why those ancient civilizations have survived. Suffer they have, but they will survive.

[Back to Brother Nibley’s book]: So this is Zion to which we have become accustomed for the sake of the economy. It’s the same fantastic situation as that confronting all the utopians. Well, here we might quote from [Shakespeare’s] Timon of Athens. When he left Athens, Timon was the richest man in Athens and extremely generous. He gave his money to everybody and helped everybody. And by doing so he lost his wealth. He didn’t keep good track of it. He was too generous and went broke, and all his friends just cut him. They wouldn’t recognize him in the street or anything else. First he went around trying to get loans, [but he got] nothing. They’d all never heard of him, etc. Oh, they all had good excuses. Well I’d like to help you, but this, that, and the other. He got no help from them, so he became a misanthrope. As a misanthrope he left the town and went out to live on roots outside the city. He was not going to have any more of that. And he pronounced a curse on the city as he left, “Let me look back on thee. O thou wall, that girdest in those wolves! . . . Bankrupts, hold fast; rather than render back, out with your knives, and cut your trusters’ throats! Bound servants, steal! Large-handed robbers your grave masters are, and pill [steal] by law.”

See, a servant should filch around the house and steal as he can. He has a perfect right because his grave master steals in the grand manner. He’s the real thief because he steals by law; that’s all arranged. So he talks about that, and then he uses that wonderful soliloquy on money, which I won’t recite at this time. But money can do anything, is the idea. Timon’s whole argument is that money creates values that do not exist, “confounded contraries,” he says, and thus gives us a completely phony world. We have mentioned this before.

So here we have it in the Book of Mormon which really pours it on here and makes it very clear what these things were. Because of their riches, what’s going to happen? Verse 16: “And thus Satan did lead away the hearts of the people to do all manner of iniquity; therefore they had enjoyed peace but a few years.” Notice he keeps commenting on how this could happen so fast, the pace of it. In verse 8 of the next chapter, it says, “And thus six years had not passed away since the more part of the people had turned from their righteousness, like the dog to his vomit, or like the sow to her wallowing in the mire.” How can it happen? Well, it does. These things hit us fast. And it says it became the “me first” philosophy—I want it now, and I want it all. 3 Nephi 6:17: “the people having been
delivered up for the space of a long time to be carried about by the temptations of the
devil whithersoever he desired to carry them, and to do whatsoever iniquity he desired
they should—and thus in the commencement of this, the thirtieth year, they were in a
state of awful wickedness”—after just those few years.

It began by telling us at the beginning of chapter 5: “There was not a living soul among
all the Nephites [five years before that] who did doubt in the least the words of all the holy
prophets who had spoken. . . . And they knew that it must be expedient that Christ had
come [already]; . . . therefore they did forsake all their sins, and their abominations, and
their whoredoms.” And now they’re already back in a state of awful wickedness. Now that
is a real flip-flop. But you can do those things. It’s amazing how fast they can take place.

And then what happens? Of course something has to happen now. Verse 18: “Now they
did not sin ignorantly. . . . They did wilfully rebel against God.” But we’ve seen that. They
had just been righteous people; they knew what they were doing. How can that happen?
You may have read Butler’s novel The Way of All Flesh. It’s not read much in schools
now, but it’s a great novel on that sort of thing. The man was very strict and upright. In
just in one event, by one experience, he completely lost everything, because of his
misadventure. These things happen after sinning once. One good sin and you say, what
the hell. As Macbeth says, I might as well go all the way now. “I am in blood stepped so
far, that, should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o’er.” So I might as well
go on, and people do that. They did not sin ignorantly.

This is exactly what [Robert] Heilbroner and Thomas More were talking about here. They
people] make a virtue of what they are doing. Ayn Rand for years was the most popular
author by far here in the bookstore. They would sell more of her books than any other
[author’s], and her books have such titles as The Virtue of Selfishness. But selfishness was a
virtuous thing, and to be too generous is a fault, because if you take care of yourself, then
you’re taking care of everything else. Then the economy will take care of itself. Well, this
is the basic philosophy today, you see—the virtue of selfishness.

Lachoneus filled the seat of his father at that time [verse 19]. So there had to be a reaction
here, not just objection, but something had to cut in. God couldn’t just leave things [as
they were] here, and so “there began to be men inspired from heaven and sent forth, . . .
preaching and testifying boldly of the sins and iniquities of the people.” When it goes too
far, this happens. These men got in real trouble, you see. They couldn’t just laugh at them.
Notice verse 21: “Now there were many of the people who were exceedingly angry
because of those who testified of these things [the important ones, the chief judges and
others in high places] . . . the chief judges and they who had been high priests and lawyers;
yea, all those who were lawyers were angry with those who testified of these things.”
Notice he keeps hammering away at the lawyers. They’re the ones who take over when a
society reaches this stage of depravity—it becomes a world of lawyers. They were the
lawyers, and they didn’t like this kind of talk at all.

Then, what’s going to happen? Now, there was a law—it was part of the constitution
here—that nobody could be put to death unless there was a warrant signed by the
governor. Of course if there’s a death warrant, you have to go to the top. He had the
power to reprieve and he had to sign the death warrant. But the judges and the lawyers
didn’t like these people who were preaching, so they put them out of the way anyway.
They had ways of getting around that; this was their business. Verse 23: “Now there were
many of those who testified of the things pertaining to Christ . . . were taken and put to
death secretly by the judges”—legally but secretly, you see, because they were the judges
and made it legal. And then no knowledge [of this] was known until after their death. It
was a fait accompli—too bad, there’s nothing we can do about it now. In other words, it’s
sometimes necessary to go beyond the law, as Faun Hall [secretary to Oliver North] says.
And so they did, to get rid of these people. Well now, this was very serious, and people
started noting this and started declaring that this was unconstitutional. A complaint came
to the governor against these judges. They were going to be indicted. The complaint was
made officially to the governor, so these judges and lawyers were going to be indicted for
what they’d been up to. They weren’t going to put up with that, you see. Notice in verse
26, they were not only indicted; they were tried and [almost] convicted. They were
“brought up before the judge, to be judged of the crime which they were done.” But they
weren’t going to be convicted, because they had a position of strength.

Verse 27: “Now it came to pass that those judges had many friends and kindreds; and the
remainder, yea, even almost all the lawyers and the high priests did gather themselves
together.” And remember we’re told this is a byzantine society, where you belong in a
particular class. It says they were divided into classes, and they wore a particular garment
and had a particular rank. They were members of the same order, so they stuck together.
That’s what they were doing here, showing great solidarity. “Almost all the lawyers [it says
here] and the high priests, did gather themselves together and unite with the kindreds of
those judges who were to be tried according to the law.” [They were] these rich, influential
people of the establishment—we read about them [today]. There was such an
establishment. You see here in verse 12, “And the people began to be distinguished by
ranks according to their riches and their chances for learning.” They formed definite
groups in the society. But it went much beyond that.

We forget that far more important than the national state, anciently and today too, are
the subgroups, the groups it’s divided into—our classes, interest groups where they’re in
business, academics—and, of course, the tribes. All the cities were divided into demes and
frateries, into smaller groups. They were the ones you belonged to. That’s so with any
tribes of Indians or anything else. If you’re a Hopi, what are you? Are you of the Snake
Clan, the Turtle Clan, or the Bear clan? That makes all the difference. That’s where all the
ordinances and all the secrets go, in this particular group. And these people were divided
the same way, as our society is. Our real business is done in little groups, in confidential
groups and bodies. We come to agreement about things, and we have certain things in
common, like political parties. Political extremists, for example, will form bodies that are
closely knit and extremist and set themselves apart from the whole rest of the society.
They’re distinct from the rest of them. That could be a healthy thing sometimes or
otherwise, but the fact is we do divide up like that because we don’t see eye to eye. And
this is what happened here, a very natural thing. This is tribal structure, and it remains.
The word tribe, from the Latin tribus, means “for the three,” because there were always
three. Everything that was done depended on a tribune. A tribune was only the governor
in charge of one part of the people. He was the tribune, and he spoke from the tribunal.
But that didn’t affect the Senate at all; they didn’t care. And the conscript fathers didn’t
bother about that. The tribunes had their own things. They worked with the plebs, but
there were the other tribes, the three tribes. The tribus means for the three. There were the
three main tribes. But this structure goes on.
In Israel the first thing you ask is, “What are you? Are you of Ephraim? Are you of Manasseh? Are you of Judah?” That’s where the wars went on. That’s where the politics went on between the Twelve Tribes all through the Old Testament right until they leave. Then it still goes on. So we’re dealing with smaller groups within [the society], and this is a perfectly normal procedure we’re having here. You have the fratries, you have parties, societies, and demes. A person who is devoted to his lodge places that before everything else, you see, and that to him is sacred, etc. So we don’t have the single nation we think we do—never have and never will have, because we have our various interests, and our loyalties conflict.

This is the essence of tragedy, conflicting loyalties. It’s not the good guys against the bad guys. The Book of Mormon keeps telling us that, and we won’t believe it. We say, yes, it’s good guys vs. bad guys. But the essence of tragedy is the incompatibility of two good things. The two great tragedies are the *Oresteia* and *Oedipus*. We have the one trilogy, but we don’t have the other. What happens? In the one case, Orestes has a choice. His mother has killed his father, and he’s required by the ancient law to avenge his father’s death. But you’re not supposed to kill your mother, so that’s the tragic situation. How does he solve it? He goes mad—that’s the only solution. You can’t do it. And it’s the same thing with [Oedipus.] He innocently married his mother, and also killed his father. He took an oath that he would take vengeance on the man who killed his father, who happened to be himself. When he found out, he wouldn’t face the facts—another case of madness. So he blinded himself. He didn’t go crazy like Orestes. His solution was to blind himself, cut himself off completely from society, and go off as a wanderer and a beggar. He had been the great king and goes off as a wanderer and beggar in the land because he can’t reconcile the two conflicting principles and can’t observe them both. So what are we going to do with these things? They’re facing us constantly. This is the essence of tragedy, two good things.

Here [in 3 Nephi 6:28] they enter into a covenant. These people are quite solid among themselves. They had the secret government. We have secret government today with parties and interest groups; we have underground things going on. We have covert operations, and we even accept them as legitimate now, though by very nature they’re vicious and extremely dangerous and very common in the Book of Mormon, you’ll notice. “They did enter into a covenant one with another [they made it very secret; they were making a society] . . . which was given by them of old, which covenant was given and administered by the devil to combine against all righteousness.” [They formed their own independent operation to get their release; the only way they could get out of it was to] . . . enter into a covenant to destroy them, and to deliver those who were guilty of murder from the grasp of justice.”

They were planning assassinations. That’s what they were going to do. After all, this isn’t the first time we’ve heard of judges being assassinated in the Book of Mormon. It had become routine practice, except at certain hours—you’re not supposed to assassinate a judge from 10:00 to 12:00. “. . . to deliver those who were guilty of murder from the grasp of justice, which was about to be administered according to the law [according to the constitution; they wanted their own law; remember, these were judges and lawyers]. And they did set at defiance the law and the rights of their country.” But there were other laws, and those were the laws they were going to follow, as it says here [in verse 30], “. . . they did covenant one with another to destroy the governor and to establish a king over the
land.” They’re going all the way to get rid of their executive checks and limitations. And they succeed.

It’s not surprising that they succeed, and the government that follows works pretty well. This is interesting. This shows us that all the time they have been divided up this way—that the infrastructure was already there for the tribes. They moved right into it. It didn’t shatter the country or anything like that. Just as if we would give up the federal government, we would still have states. That’s what the Confederacy wanted; that’s what we had the Civil War about. So here [3 Nephi 7:1]: “They did destroy upon the judgment-seat, yea, did murder the chief judge of the land.” They destroyed him upon the judgment-seat; that’s the standard solution, neat and easy. “And the people were divided one against another, and they did separate one from another into tribes.” They went off by themselves, because the infrastructure was already set up. In a crisis that’s what you do; you gather around your family. We had reduced it to the family shelter during the 1950s, which was an absurdity, of course—that every family is just for itself, and you get all the supplies you need, and above all, you supply yourself with weapons and make sure that nobody else shares what you have. That way you will survive a nuclear war [laughter]. Everybody was nuts about that in the 1950s, believe it or not.

Verse 2: “They did separate one from another into tribes, every man according to his family [that’s the nearest association, the safest, the one to take] and his kindred and friends [that’s the little larger circle, the relatives, the cousins, and the in-laws—and friends come into the circle]; and thus they did destroy the government of the land.” Everything was out of control, so they privatized everything and went back to the tribal system. Notice it says in the next verse, “And every tribe did appoint a chief or a leader over them; and thus they became tribes and leaders of tribes.” They went back to the old tribal government. They were ready for that all along. We have this, and we could do this today. There are plenty of people here in Utah [who have done it]. I’ve known people like [M. L.] Glendenning and others up in Idaho who wanted to go off and live by themselves, and they do it. Things get pretty rough because they want to live absolutely independent, and you can’t do that anymore.

And “their tribes became exceedingly great [see this infrastructure was already in place]. . . And there were no wars as yet among them [these tribes didn’t fight with each other as yet—that will come later]; and all this iniquity had come upon the people because they did yield themselves unto the power of Satan.” They just gave up and stopped trying. They started out being a righteous people, but you have to make an effort. You have to keep at it. Being righteous isn’t just the absence [of wickedness]—what you don’t do; but what you do do. That’s what makes you righteous. As I said, there’s no such thing as being an idle righteous person—an idle person isn’t righteous. You’re not necessarily wicked or anything like that, but if you’re going to be righteous, it’s something you have to work at. That’s what we’re here for—being tested, being tried and tempted—and it doesn’t just stop when we’ve made one hurdle. There are more to follow. So they yielded themselves unto the power of Satan. They had given up trying. Notice the word is yield. They gave up. It wasn’t that they were pushed into it or anything like that. They yielded to it.

Verse 6: “And the regulations of the government were destroyed [well, that’s exactly what they wanted, this privatization; they didn’t like government regulations, so they did away with them], because of the secret combination of the friends and kindreds of those who murdered the prophets [they were behind this; there’s unrestrained competition now].
And they did cause great contention in the land [as you might well expect], insomuch that the more righteous part of the people had nearly all become wicked [nearly all the righteous people, not just the wicked, and they had plenty of wicked to begin with—that’s pretty bad]; yea, there were but few righteous men among them [everyone accepted the system and went along]. And thus six years had not passed away since the more part of the people had turned from their righteousness [and it quotes the prophets here] like the dog to his vomit, or like the sow to her wallowing in the mire.” That’s the Old Testament pattern here.

Now this secret combination. Well, at the head of it, this powerful, right-wing coalition had existed all along. They were the hard-core king people, it tells us there, the secret combination. They placed at their head a man called Jacob to make him a king. But he wasn’t accepted; people hated him. He didn’t go over at all. They went too far, you see. These king people kept a nucleus, but “they were not so strong in number as the tribes of the people, who were united together save it were their leaders did establish their laws, every one according to his tribe.” They were united together. Notice, they were the united tribes, but the leaders of each tribe established their own tribal laws, and they were the laws by which they lived, “every one according to his tribe; nevertheless they were enemies.”

There was no love between them, but they were united in one thing, you see. Once the federal government had disappeared, they all regretted it. They missed it. They wished it was back, and they united only in hatred of the people that abolished it. One thing they had in common—they wanted to get it back again. “They were united in the hatred of those who had entered into a covenant to destroy the government.” They thought that was what they wanted, but they didn’t. The plan backfired, in other words, and this is what happened here. Too late they regretted the loss of the central government, which has its virtue and its necessity too. What are they going to do? Well, the king people were very unpopular, and Jacob skipped out. He got out as fast as he could. Verse 12: “Therefore he commanded his people that they should take their flight into the northernmost part of the land [the north is the frontier] and build up unto themselves a kingdom.” They were going up there where they’d be left alone to build a kingdom, and he would be king. The dissenters would go and join them. That’s the old pattern, you see. We’ve seen that in the Book of Mormon; the Nehors started it out.

Question: What was the church doing at this point in time?

Answer: It says there were a few who had gathered around Nephi. It was still there, but it was almost underground. We’ll see what happens to it.

They got away. Notice, “And so speedy was their march that it could not be impeded,” and they went out and settled. And here’s another of these racial problems. See, here’s another stock moving out, and they’re a mixed stock. They’re going out by themselves to become independent. You have another tribe here. Before long they would be speaking [another language]; they must have been speaking a different dialect already. And here’s the idea of splinter groups in verse 14: “They were divided into tribes, every man according to his family, kindred, and friends.” It emphasizes this because it’s very important. This chapter actually tells us about the end of the Nephite state. It’s the end. This is where the book should end, if something wasn’t about to happen. Big things are about to happen now. When it reaches this stage, you can expect something to pop.
“Nevertheless they had come to an agreement that they would not go to war one with another [that was sensible; that’s more sensible than we have been; now we’re finally agreeing that you’re not going to gain anything by that]; but they were not united as to their laws, and their manner of government, for they were established according to the minds of those who were their chiefs and their leaders. But they did establish very strict laws that one tribe should not trespass against another.” Territorial bounds were respected as is always the case, even with animals—wolves and foxes have their territories. The most lawless people in the world are the Arab Bedouins of the desert. They live by the ghazw, by raiding what they can get. But, nevertheless, even in the desert, there are certain tribal boundaries, certain limitations, and you can’t go over the boundaries. This is what they [the Nephites] had, these tribal boundaries. Of course, the main cause of war between tribes is infringing on the other’s boundary—and the European wars for that matter, such as France and Germany. All their arguments have been about boundaries—Alsace-Lorraine, the Netherlands, and Austria. Who owns what? It’s the same thing here. They’re not going to last very long, but it’s the proper arrangement. It’s the way things were done.

Verse 14: “But they did establish very strict laws that one tribe should not trespass against another, insomuch that in some degree they had peace in the land.” Well, they were not absolute fools, but they did stone the prophets. So the church was there and having a rough time. “And it came to pass that Nephi—having been visited by angels . . .” Now we have to have the deus ex machina. Something has to intervene at this moment, because they’ve reached rock bottom now. What’s going to move them off dead center here? This is the end. As I said, it would be the end of the book if it hadn’t been for the intervention of something else. “. . . visited by angels and also the voice of the Lord, therefore having seen angels, and being eye-witness, and having had power given unto him that he might know concerning the ministry of Christ, and also being eye-witness to their quick return from righteousness [notice how quick it was, always emphasizing the speed] unto their wickedness and abominations.” These lightning switches. They impress you; they impress the writer no less. He thinks it’s quite strange.

They were grieved and they went forth among the people and tried to do something, but it didn’t pay off. Nephi had power and great authority, but “they were angry with him [in verse 18] . . . for it were not possible that they could disbelieve his words [they knew he was right, and that made them furious] for so great was his faith on the Lord Jesus Christ that angels did minister unto him daily [these extreme conditions require extreme measures; we have them here]. And in the name of Jesus did he cast out devils and unclean spirits; and even his brother did he raise from the dead. . . . And the people saw it . . . and were angry with him because of his power.”

What was the mortal offense of Jesus? When the elders of the Jews, the high priests, and the Levites came together, they decided there was only one solution to the problem, and that was to put Jesus to death, get him out of the way. That was when he raised Lazarus. That was the thing that decided it. You go back and look there. They put up with everything, but when he raised Lazarus from the dead, that was too much. They decided that he would have to be put to death. The doctors came together then. And it’s the same thing here. When the people saw it they “were angry with him because of his power.”

And notice verse 21. You asked, where was the church? Here it is. “There were but few who were converted unto the Lord; but as many as were converted did truly signify unto
the people that they had been visited by the power and Spirit of God, which was in Jesus Christ, in whom they believed.” So the church was active, small, persecuted, etc. And here’s an account of what went on in the church. They had their miracles, their casting out of devils, and their testimonies. Verse 24: “Now I would have you to remember also, that there were none who were brought unto repentance who were not baptized with water [anyone who repented got baptized, so the church was growing]. Therefore, there were ordained of Nephi, men unto this ministry.” Nephi had ordained others. The church was growing, and they were baptizing people with water for the remission of sins. “And there were many in the commencement of this year that were baptized.” So just before the big disaster many were baptized. Well, the church was growing. Things were going all right—then. Not too all right.

But now we come to the exciting thing. Now we come to the wham-bang part of it. You’ll notice how cleverly [the writer] introduces it, I mean with what tension. He’s about to report something that may test our credulity here, so he begins with an ominously subdued modesty about the whole thing, a very matter-of-fact tone. 3 Nephi 8:1: “And now it came to pass that according to our record [he wants to make sure we get it right], and we know our record to be true, for behold, it was a just man who did keep the record [so he wouldn’t make anything crooked—that’s very important, you see]—for he truly did many miracles in the name of Jesus. . . . And now it came to pass, if there was no mistake [we must get this absolutely right, what we’re talking about here] made by this man in the reckoning of our time, the thirty and third year had passed away; and the people began to look with great earnestness for the sign [the thirty-third year, and this is building up the tension, you see]. . . . And there began to be great doubtings and disputations among the people,” a feeling of uncertainty. Will it happen, or won’t it? Well, this had happened before at the birth of Christ in the same way, when they pronounced a “Bartholomew’s Eve” for all those who believed.

Verse 4: “In the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm.” It starts out; now things are beginning to happen. It always hits suddenly, and it begins on low key here. And then POW! it “did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder.” Again I’ll refer to something here. It will save us time. If you go into books on earthquakes and check this out, you’ll see that the order of the events is all very correct and accurate. Now this is rather important because [of what] we used to think. In my childhood, as proof of the Book of Mormon the missionaries used to refer to the Rocky Mountains or the Sierras, because the Book of Mormon says mountains were cast up. There are mountains all right, so that proves the Book of Mormon. Well, that’s absurd. That’s not what the Book of Mormon tells us at all. The Book of Mormon just describes a No. 12 earthquake—No. 8 on the Richter Scale might do it. But the Assam earthquake in August 1950 was 12 on the scale. Remember, every time you go up a number, you double the strength of the earthquake, so you can imagine what a 12 would be if the last San Francisco earthquake was a 7.5 at the extreme. So this is some earthquake, and the order in which the events are described is very good here—all the things that should take place. So we’ve summed them up here in this very factual account.1

Well, it was a terror, about 11 or 12 on the Wood-Neuman scale. It is probably not the worst earthquake on record, because Assam was total destruction, and in this one we’re told there were some cities which remained. It was not total. It describes what happened at

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the epicenter. There were cities that remained; whereas, in the great Assam earthquake of 1950 the damage was total over a large area. I’m going to read you an account of that Assam earthquake. My friend George Allen, who owns the oldest bookstore in America, in Philadelphia, married a princess of Assam at this time. The news came through, and we heard a lot about Assam, which is in the northeast corner of the Himalayas there. On August 15, 1950, there was an earthquake that was total over 10,000 square miles and [killed] 500,000 people. Only 14 people survived. Imagine an earthquake [that killed] 500,000 people over that area. Well here’s a description of it.

“On the morning of August 15, 1950, the day of the biggest and strangest earthquake in our times, it gave no inkling of what was to come.” All of a sudden just this terrible storm and then the earthquake. All the seismographs in the world went mad. This was terrific. The instruments had gone completely crazy. Nobody was able to locate it. It took a couple of days just to discover where it was because the shocks went round and round and round the earth, it was so great. “In hundreds of seismological stations throughout the world astonished scientists were reading that message from the greatest earthquake since the birth of modern seismology fifty years ago. The energy unleashed was the equivalent of three million atom bombs of the Bikini model. Stranger things were to follow. By all the rules the scene of the cataclysm should have been invaded by reporters, scientists, and relief workers.” Nothing—it was just wiped out completely. Instead, they didn’t even have to bother. They were afraid of the Chinese going [in there]; that’s the Chinese border with Tibet. No worry after that—the map had completely changed. “Where there had been rivers before, there were mountains now. Rivers that ran in one direction now ran in the opposite direction.” These things happen. We saw something a few years ago happening like that. Just a couple of years ago down in Sanpete County mountains were moving backwards. But this is sudden, you see.

“Instead, the tortured mountains, the homeless rivers, the vanished villages have remained undisturbed since that awful thing happened.” The quake lasted just eight minutes, but took three years for it to subside. It was three hours here [in the Book of Mormon], but then for three days it continued to shake. So the aftershocks went on for three days and the big one was three hours. “It took over three years for the forces of destruction to run their course here. Its intensity was 12, or in the terse language of the Wood-Neuman scale, damage total. Beyond stretched a vast area of lesser destruction. . . . Some 10,000 square miles, home to an estimated 500,000 people, were turned into a wilderness of desolation. [This scientist was sent in to investigate, and he said], I have traced only 14 eyewitnesses”—who survived from that. He had to run them down.

It was fantastic, the quantities of rock, etc. Here’s the Assam Rifles. They were in position on one of the mountains, and the commander at the start gave the order for his men to secure their mules but not one man was able to stand up or walk. “They could not even crawl. Several vomited as if violently sick. A gaping fissure opened up before their eyes 10 feet wide, 20 feet deep, and unknown length. When the worst shocks were over after nearly 10 minutes, four soldiers and a mule could be seen at the bottom of the chasm. The men cried for help, but before anything could be done, the fissure filled up with yellow-brown sulphurous-smelling mud, and the men and mules disappeared.” In this part of the basin, especially over the Mammoth, on the other side of the basin, these things are happening now. And places that they had made subdivisions and were going to develop have been completely abandoned now because of the fissures that are breaking and the hot springs that are suddenly bursting out—fumeroles and things like that. It’s like Sodom and Gomorrah; the south end of the Dead Sea did the same thing.
Well, this is one thing that is stressed in the Book of Mormon too. “One thing is stressed in all reports, the awful rumble that heralded the outbreak of the quake, the noise muffled at first seemed to come out of the very bowels of the earth. Birds rose on the wing with a rustle and a flutter. People stood or crouched motionless as the noise grew in volume until it reached a deafening roar, louder than anything any of the witnesses had ever heard before [the Book of Mormon talks about that.] At this point the ground began to move. In the earthquake center it moved with a rapidly increasing vertical vibration. People, cattle, rocks, and small buildings were tossed into the air like peas on an enormous kettle drum [a phenomenon rare in most earthquakes]. It ground the solid mountain like grain between two giant millstones [this is your Book of Mormon description too]. Strong winds raised the dust till visibility was reduced to a few feet [of course this terrible darkness is described here], and breathing became a nightmare.”

There was a monastery of Lamaist monks up there, and when the monks tried to resume contact with the outer world, they found that the earthquake had seemingly transported them to a faraway place. The same thing happened after the earthquake [in 3 Nephi]; remember they all met at the temple marveling that the whole land had changed. They didn’t recognize anything. Well, here it is again. “... that for their sins they had been reincarnated together with their immediate surroundings on some desolate planet devoid of all other human life. As they probed the howling wilderness around them, there was not one landmark even faintly reminiscent of the country they had known so well. Where there had been a mountain summit with sheer cliff-like rocks rising for hundreds of feet, there was now a scooped-out bowl of dust of a curious pink color. Rivers had disappeared. Others had sprung up and were running in the opposite directions, where the old surface of the land would have been uphill.”

And so it goes on here with other things, and of course the fires. It changed the whole map of things. “Halfway through the earthquake countless craterlets one to three feet in diameter opened up in a low-lying land and spouted great quantities of sand and water.” Remember in 1812, the great earthquake in the central United States was bad as this, when a whole area of more than 10,000 square miles sunk 30 feet—the whole central United States from Tennessee west. “The phenomenon was natural enough, for the alternate tensions and compressions of the ground opened fissures, thus sucking down the groundwater. As on them the fissures closed, sand and water were forced violently out of the miniature volcanoes.”

The Book of Mormon description is one of the best. “In the report by the Assam superintending engineer, it was stated that the . . . river, usually 150 feet wide and five feet deep, is now totally silted up. There’s not the slightest trace of a channel. Water covers the surrounding countryside for miles. The Cecey River, usually 250 feet wide and 20 feet deep [there’s a real river] has vanished totally without a trace.” A great river [disappeared], and so it goes. These things happen. And then the animals come, and this is in the book of Moses. There was an earthquake that shook, and “the roar of lions was heard out of the wilderness” [Moses 7:13]. And this is what happened too. They said the snakes came out of the jungle. They thought they were going mad. “The snakes soon drifted away, but the elephants and tigers continued for weeks to terrorize the distraught natives. Again the Assam Rifles came to the rescue.”

The treasurer of a tea factory in Upper Langipur had taken refuge in a deserted Siva temple when the snakes arrived. “The jungle lion was about 300 yards away,” he said. “As
I sat on the ruins I suddenly thought I had gone mad. Out of the jungle there came one great slithering mass of snakes—thousands of them. As they came closer, I recognized them as hemidriads, crites, bamboo snakes, and common cobras—all of them venomous and deadly." What a pretty picture, eh?

But the point is these things happen and on such a scale. But the description in the Book of Mormon is remarkable not for its spectacular and tremendous nature but for its restraint. It says nothing that isn’t characteristic of a big earthquake. It wasn’t the worst. I’d put it at about 8 because lots of places survived and lots of people survived, etc. But the description of the various phenomena that accompanied it [is accurate, such as] the tsunamis, because this was on the coast. This [the Assam earthquake] wasn’t. This [the 3 Nephi account] was on the coast so you have the tsunamis, the cities buried in the sea, and the commonest cause of destruction being fire—which is the commonest cause, and so forth and so on.
TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 3, Lecture 83
3 Nephi 8–11
Great Catastrophes

We don’t have time for anything anymore. Why do we go into such detail about the earthquake and storm? Well, it’s very accurate; it describes a typical one. But there’s a point to all this—a point to showing that all nature, all the earth, is in tremendous uproar. This is going to be followed by more uproar, and then suddenly comes the voice of the Lord. But first we have to see that the earth is dependent on him. He’s going to say personally, I did all this myself. First, it tells us at the beginning [3 Nephi 8:5–6] “there arose a great storm” and also “a great and terrible tempest.” It would appear that the storm developed into a hurricane. Well, here we read from some books on earthquakes. Major earthquakes are so often accompanied by “heavy rains, thunder and hailstorms, violent tempests,” etc., that some specialists insist that “there is some evidence that certain weather conditions may ‘trigger’ an earthquake,” as with the Japanese earthquake of 1923. Great earthquakes are almost always preceded by great storms. Aristotle said it was the air pressure that did it, as a matter of fact.

And then there’s an awful lot of noise. Verse 6: “There was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it were about to divide asunder.” Why would you have the thunder before the earthquake? This is a puzzling thing, but that’s the way it happens, as it says here. “In accounts of earthquakes we always hear of the frightful noise which they produce. . . . But in addition, it seems that sometimes the earthquake can be heard before it is felt [this is difficult to explain]. . . . One should feel the shock before hearing it.” Nevertheless, it comes first, and it makes a terrific racket. The thunder seems to shake the earth, since “the sound always appears to come from the ground beneath the observer. [And] . . . one thing is stressed in all reports: the awful rumble that heralded the outbreak of the quake, . . . a deafening roar, louder than anything any of the witnesses had ever heard before.” So we’re right on track here. First you have the storm; then you have this tremendous noise, louder than anything else; and then you have the dreadful groanings and tumultuous noises and exceedingly sharp lightnings.

According to eyewitness accounts, the great earthquake that completely destroyed the old capital of Guatemala on September 11, 1541 (this is right down in Book of Mormon country, you’ll notice) was preceded by “the fury of wind, the incessant, appalling lightning and dreadful thunder indescribable” in their violence. One of the still unexplained phenomena of earthquakes is that “all types of lights are reported seen. . . . There are flashes, balls of fire, and streamers”—every type of lightning. It says there were “exceedingly sharp lightnings”—well, that would come next—indescribable in their violence and appalling lightning and thunder. Then next, the Book of Mormon says there were high winds. Occasional whirlwinds even carried some people away, it tells us 3 Nephi 8:12,16. In the Japanese earthquake of 1923 the wind reached a velocity of 50 miles an hour, and “the fires, in turn, set up minor tornadoes”; and in the Assam earthquake.

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“strong winds raised the dust until visibility was reduced to a few feet.” Verse 8: “And the city of Zarahemla did take fire.” Now, most of the destruction in the Book of Mormon was caused by fire, not by the earthquake, like the San Francisco earthquake. This is always so in earthquakes, because people have open fires, lamps, and things, and they start everything burning. It would appear from the Nephite account that the main cause of destruction was fire in the cities (3 Nephi 8:8–11), which agrees with all major statistics through the centuries; for “earthquakes are largely a city problem,” mainly because the first heavy shock invariably sets fires all over town. In the Japanese experience “wind-driven flames were shown to be more dangerous than the greatest earthquake.” The flames are the worst.

Verse 9: “And the city of Moroni did sink into the depths of the sea.” Remember, the seas are nearby on both sides here [in Central America], and this tsunami or sea wave “is the most spectacular and . . . appalling of all earthquake phenomena,” we’re told, and almost invariably follows a major shakeup on the coast. Along with this, however, we have in the Book of Mormon record what seems to be a permanent submergence of coastal areas when “the waters . . . [came] up in the stead thereof.” Such a submergence happened on a spectacular scale in the Chilean earthquake of 1960: “We would have taken these [permanently] flooded stretches for coastal lagoons,” a geologist reports, “if here and there we had not seen roads that ran straight toward them and into them, . . . roads that vanished, or sometimes showed under the stagnant water, branching into what had been the streets of a town.” In the New Madrid earthquake in Missouri in 1811 two vast tracts of land were covered with fresh water both by the damming of streams and the bursting out of numerous earthquake blows or fountains, flooding the newly submerged areas.

Verse 10: “And the earth was carried up upon the city of Moronihah, that in the place of the city there became a great mountain.” Well, here’s a spectacular mountain. This is a woodcut from [1538], and this is what happened here. In 1538 a mountain came up and suddenly covered a town on the Bay of Naples. Of course, since then there has been the great one at Surtsey in Iceland in the 1960s, and there has been the one in central Mexico, where these mountains came up and actually covered the town. Well, it goes on here, and ever since [the 1538 earthquake] the mountain has been known as Monte Nuove, or New Mountain. The quakings “did last for about the space of three hours,” in the Book of Mormon, and then there were three days of aftershocks, described as tremblings and groanings.

And this is important. Verse 20–22: “There was thick darkness. . . . The inhabitants could feel the vapor of darkness. . . . Neither could there be fire kindled . . . so great were the mists of darkness.” This, like much else in the account (e.g., that God “did send down fire and destroy them,” 3 Nephi 9:11), suggests nearby volcanic activity. Of course, this is right in a string of volcanoes all down Central America there. Earthquakes are preparation for the volcano that follows, as in the Chilean 1960 quake which triggered the activity of long-dormant volcanoes in the area. (We’ve had more terrible things happen in the 1980s in Chile, as you know.)

Most of the victims of the great catastrophes of Pompeii, St. Pierre (Martinique, 1902), and Mount Pelee (1906) died of suffocation when earthquake dust, volcanic ash, steam, and hot gases (mostly sulfurated hydrogen gas) took the place of air. In some areas, the Book of Mormon reports, people were “overpowered by the vapor of smoke and darkness”—and so lost their lives. There it is, this vapor of smoke and darkness that comes down. It shuts everything out. Even without volcanic accompaniments, however,
major earthquakes kick up a terrible dust, according to Sieberg. They’re accompanied by phenomenal vapors and astonishingly thick air. According to 3 Nephi 8:20–21, the vapor of darkness was not only tangible to the survivors but defeated every attempt to light candles or torches for illumination. And here’s an example of the same thing from [the Greek island of Thera in 1400 B.C.], eight times as violent as Krakatoa. The overpowering thickness of the air extinguished all lamps and made it impossible to light them.

The Book of Mormon also mentions the rising and sinking of the land, forming new hills and valleys—with no mention of major mountain ranges, nothing like that. This is just the way it happens. In the New Madrid earthquake of 1811–12, “over an area of 30,000 square miles the land surface lowered by amounts of 6 to 15 feet [the whole central United States] and over a much smaller area was raised by similar amounts.” So you’d have a differential of 30 feet there. Hydrographic surveys after the Japanese quake of 1923 showed that over an area of 500 square miles, some areas were lowered as much as 700 feet, and adjacent areas were raised as high as 820 feet. So you have a 1,500-foot difference between areas sunk and raised.

In the Nephite catastrophe, some cities escaped total destruction. See, this is not an exaggeration. They didn’t lie at the center of the earthquake zone, but were south of it, we’re told. There’s a well-known quote here: “Central America lies in the heavy earthquake belt,” as well as being both a coastal and volcanic area—a perfect setup for the disaster described here. And everything looked strangely changed after the debacle, with seams and cracks everywhere [verse 13] “highways were broken up, and the level roads were spoiled, and many smooth places became rough.” It’s just like the photographs we see following the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco. They are spoiled; that’s a thing you notice. Well, we need no further commentary.

It’s talking about all this physical stuff. Why does it go into that so far? Remember, the Book of Mormon begins with Moroni, who was an angel. He was not something Joseph Smith imagined—he came and talked with him. He gave him this book, told him where to find it. They had at least five different discussions and talked back and forth about these things. And this shows us everything in an entirely different setting. We see this whole thing against the background of the eternities. Here’s someone who has come from another world. The angel Moroni has come. We have to do everything differently now, because he was real—that’s the point. He wasn’t an imagined angel. But the Book of Mormon has just one theme. Every chapter, almost every sentence, points to that one theme, the coming of Christ—that he will come or that he has come. It’s always that God would come down, just as Moroni came down and talked with men here. He would be with them, with his own. It’s a visit of God himself to ordinary mortals. He’s the Creator—he introduces himself as that. Everything in the Book of Mormon centers on that one single event and on that one single person, it’s going to tell us. He goes through this list of disasters we’ve just mentioned here, and then the Lord comes. Then he renames them all himself and says why he caused them—that he’s responsible for that. We’ll come to that.

The concentration with intensity on this one person, this one event, suggests something like the singularity of the scientists, the quantum physicists—that everything in the universe concentrates in one point. Well, it’s a parallel to that because there’s this intense concentration on one thing. But the point is we’re all included in it. We’re all invited to the party when the Lord comes. This is what the voice says. This is what we’re told throughout the Book of Mormon. The Lord wants us all to be in on it. There’s a standing
invitation to all of us to come to the party, and we refuse. Remember, the Lord gave the parable about the man who gave the big feast for his son. He invited important people to come. One person said he was too busy; he had to inspect a field he had bought. Others had bought some oxen and things like that. They were just too busy to come, and he wasn’t pleased with them at all. Notice the kind of busy-ness that will keep us out of the kingdom. They were all busy making money, so they couldn’t come to the party. The Lord was very angry with them, but we have this invitation. What we do is prefer another kind of party, don’t we? This is your Book of Mormon story—the glitzy, sexy, rich, snobbish party. That’s the kind of parties we like—wild parties, too, MTV type of parties. Well, yes, they’re parties.

Now look what happens. Then we have the results here: “And there was not any light seen.” Notice this great darkness. You might say, well, this is symbolic. The symbolic and the real go right together here. They were in darkness [spiritually], and they were truly in darkness here. They brought this on themselves; we’ll see that. Verse 21: “And there could be no light, because of the darkness, neither candles, neither torches; neither could there be fire kindled [this is a very thick air, a sulphurated stuff, and it’s full of vapor; enormous amounts of dust are kicked up, so you can’t light a lamp at all]; . . . and there was not any light seen, neither fire, nor glimmer.” It was utter blackness with the mists of darkness. The same thing happened at Pompeii. Remember, we have an eyewitness from Pompeii. Pliny the Younger was there and lost his life.

Verse 23: “And it came to pass that it did last for the space of three days that there was no light seen; and [you can imagine] there was great mourning; . . . great were the groanings of the people, because of the darkness.” This is a terrible part, this dramatic part. Notice again the description of these phenomena. They are not in scientific terms, so they’re quite accurate as they’re reported by [ordinary] people. This is as they would appear to human beings. We’re seeing the whole thing from the human point of view. This is the way it looked—the groanings, the darkness, the terrible thunders, and then the human reaction to it. This is all the human story we’re having here. It doesn’t give us figures. It doesn’t say it was probably 10 or 11 on the Richter Scale, or something like that, or as high as 12 on the Wood-Neuman. That’s what the Assam earthquake was. This is a human story, but notice how we’re involved with our environment here. They’re all mixed into it. It’s part of what happens to us, of course. We feel very personally involved when the earth starts shaking around us. Some of you have been in earthquakes; I’ve been in some pretty bad ones. They cried, “O that we had repented before this great and terrible day [they knew they were guilty], and had not killed and stoned the prophets.” All along they knew they were guilty. Then why would people do such a thing? 3 Nephi 9:1: “And it came to pass that there was a voice heard among all the inhabitants of the earth, upon all the face of the land, crying: Wo, wo, wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth except they shall repent.”

President Grant used to tell a story about having a debate with somebody who made great mockery of this passage here. How could you have a voice that wasn’t loud and yet could be heard by everybody? Then President Grant would give the example of radio, which had been introduced long after that. “For the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice [it’s his inning], because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people; and it is because of their iniquity and abominations that they are fallen!” This is where it leads, what you’ve been doing.
Now, this is an interesting thing. This you get a little later on, and it’s what you call an aretalogy, when God announces what he does and what his power is. He speaks to himself. It’s a doxology when we praise God. It’s an eretology when he announces to us what his power is. Notice how many times he says I, in every verse. “Behold, that great city Zarahemla have I burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof. And behold, that great city Moroni have I caused to be sunk into the depths of the sea [he goes down the list here]. And behold, that great city Moronihah have I covered with earth, and the inhabitants thereof, to hide their iniquities and their abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come any more unto me against them.” In all this, keep in mind the nature of their sins. This concentrates all our attention on one person, all this storm, etc., as to the culmination of everything. He did it all. How did he direct this colossal release of energy? This tells us why. They need not cry and say, “Why did this happen to us? Why weren’t we warned?” He is going to tell them fully later on why they weren’t. You knew perfectly well what you were doing—you brought this on yourselves [he told them].

But as far as these major shiftings [are concerned], this was a great tectonic upheaval. It had been cooking for a long time, probably. But again, we must see these things on the background of the eternities. This is for the benefit of everybody in the long run; in the eternities they’ll see why this happened. This particular dispensation was going to misbehave themselves at the very time this was going to happen. Remember, the nature of a miracle is always timing—it happens to happen at the same time. When all the biblical miracles happen, it’s the timing.

Well, the Lord knows these things. [For example] a comet is on a collision course with the earth. Well, that can be predicted or prophesied. You don’t know about it. Why did it happen that the people happened to be wicked just at that particular moment? That particular generation will be tested; they’ll remember this. This will be a lesson for them in the hereafter—one particular generation got socked with this, and they got hit hard. They had reached a culmination. They were the worst.

Verse 6: “And behold, the city of Gilgal have I caused [notice Gilgal—round city, circle city] to be sunk, and the inhabitants thereof to be buried up in the depths of the earth.” Now I was in Germany on a mission not long after World War I, and everybody was saying the same thing: “There is no God. If there was a God, he never would allow these terrible things to happen. And here God says he’s causing them to happen. Well, there’s something wrong here. If ever a war was brought on by the people themselves, it was World War I. They were making for that; they were determined on it for years and years, just as we are determined not to make peace. We don’t want to make peace—we’re very cleverly avoiding it every chance we can get. (Well, that’s another story. I hope it won’t be too short a one.) But he goes on and tells us he has caused it. Verse 7: “And waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof, to hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come up any more unto me against them.” It keeps mentioning the blood of the prophets and the saints. It had been prophesied. They had received ample warning.

Verse 8: “And the city of Gimghimno, all these have I caused to be sunk, and made hills and valleys in the places thereof; and the inhabitants thereof have I buried up . . . [there are fourteen “I’s” in this section right here] . . . that great city Jacobugath, which was inhabited by the people of king Jacob, have I caused to be burned with fire”—“I caused to
be burned with fire because of their sins and their wickedness, which was above all the
cruelty of the whole earth, because of their secret murders and combinations; for it
was they that did destroy the peace of my people and the government of the land.”

Now look here. “The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away.” God can give, and above all,
his gives life. Men can’t give life. Take not the life you cannot give. But men are the great
takers of life. We destroy life on a massive scale, and we’re preparing to destroy it on still
more massive scales right now. This is the only nation that refuses to stop making nerve
gas and advancing in biological warfare. But the fact is that God gives us all these good
things, and we pervert the whole thing. We spoil it. In that case, “the Lord giveth and the
Lord taketh away.” He has a right to, but the Lord giveth and man taketh away. We can’t
give life at all, but boy are we expert in destroying it. So, we’re the great destroyers. We
bring these things on ourselves here.

Verse 10: “... because of their wickedness in casting out the prophets, and stoning those
whom I did send to declare unto them concerning their wickedness and their
abominations. And because they did cast them all out, that there were none righteous
among them, I did send down fire and destroy them”—just like Sodom and Gomorrah. If
there had been fifteen righteous, that would have been different. They would let me visit
them, so I’ll visit them now, he says. “... that the blood of the prophets and the saints
whom I sent among them might not cry unto me from the ground against them.” Things
cannot go on just the way they are. There comes a point when future generations can’t be
benefited. I mean, they don’t have a chance growing up in such a world, so it has to be
brought to a halt. We can’t go on committing atrocities indefinitely anyway.

Lots of people were spared. Verse 13: “O all ye that are spared, ... now return unto me,
and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you.” Now, this is the reverse;
this is what he wants. “I say unto you, if ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life.
Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you [he will forgive them now], and
whosoever will come, him will I receive. ... Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I
created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are.” Now he introduces
himself here. This is it, you see. This is the whole thing. This brings us all into the family,
etc. [it’s the same thing in the book of Moses; this is God, you see]. I was with the Father
from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father
glorified his name. I came unto my own, and my own received me not [as the scriptures
say]. And as many as have received me, to them have I given to become the sons of God.”
Notice, this is from John too here. [They are invited] to join the family and to receive
redemption which cometh by the law of Moses and is fulfilled in [Christ]. From this point
they are ready to go on. This is a new order that is being introduced on the earth when the
Lord came down personally to introduce it.

Verse 18: “I am the light and the life of the world [that’s the total of everything]. I am
Alpha and Omega [speaking their language, he would probably use aleph and taw], the
beginning and the end. And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood
[he’s doing away with the law of Moses]. And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a
broken heart and a contrite spirit [they were in a mood to hear this now, you see]. And
whoso cometh unto me will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost.” They were ready
for promotion now. The question is going to come up in a minute, why on earth would
he give the gospel to these people who are bound to reject it? Everybody is going to reject
it. Why keep plugging away at it, if they’ve shown they can’t take it? Well, you give them
the full benefit of the doubt—all the time in the world. As I said, it’s a standing invitation
to the party, and you can accept it. Remember, it must be seen against a background of what’s to come. This is just a brief minute here. The Book of Mormon keeps hammering away at this idea. This is preparation. It’s a time of probation, and it’s a time of testing. It’s a very short test, but a very good one. We all have the same test. Then hereafter, this will determine where we’re going for the long haul ahead. There may be other stages after this, but for now, it’s very important for what we’re qualifying. These are qualifying tests we’re taking now. What world do you qualify for? We see what these [destroyed] people quality for. There’s no reason why they should stay around any longer. Let’s clear off the stage so we can go on with the testing, so to speak.

Verse 21: “Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world”—to get you back again. We know we’ve gone away. That’s what redemption is. It means buying you back again after you’ve been lost. This is what he wants. “Whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive [he keeps saying little child from here on—this is very important; a little child is completely honest]. . . . Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again.” Remember, the work is all his. Why is it all centered in one person? We know all things center in one, but this is the way it was planned in the beginning. This was the plan, that he would bear the load alone, but he would share [the glory] with everyone. He’s sharing the Father’s work and glory. “This is my work and my glory,” the Lord says, not to make me more glorious, but “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” [Moses 1:39]. That’s what it’s all for. If you’re going to go for eternal life, you can’t go on behaving the way you are now. We have to have these shakeups, the tests, etc.

Now, there’s much emphasis on this that follows about the little children and laying down his life. 3 Nephi 10:1: “All the people of the land did hear these sayings and . . . there was silence in the land for the space of many hours [dead silence]; for so great was the astonishment of the people that they did cease lamenting [they’re totally receptive now] and howling for the loss of their kindred. . . . There came a voice again unto the people, and all the people did hear, and did witness of it, saying: O ye people of these great cities which have fallen, who are descendants of Jacob.” Now this is the point; I talked about a standing invitation, a standing offer. It’s there. Israel has refused it, and the world has refused it. The question rises, then why bother with these people who will never listen? So that they will be without excuse, as the Lord says. In other words, to resist this invitation, to resist doing what you know is perfectly right, you have to use all sorts of cleverness and sophistry and arguments and call all the lawyers in, etc. in order to reject it. You have to be very clever to do that, and they’ve worked at it. And he offered it to them, and they worked at a good excuse for not coming to the party.

Verse 5: “And again, how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings.” This is a hen of anything, a sage hen that we have up in the mountains or chukars or a hen partridge—any bird that gathers her chicks. It doesn’t have to be necessarily a chicken, a Plymouth Rock or something like that. Any kind of hen would gather her chickens under her wings. “O ye people of the house of Israel, who have fallen; yea, O ye people of the house of Israel, ye that dwell at Jerusalem, as ye that have fallen; yea, how oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not [see, it was all up to you]. . . . How oft will I gather you . . . if ye will repent.” All is forgiven right now if you’re ready. Any time, it’s all there as long as you’re here [on earth]. “But if not, O house of Israel, the places of your dwellings shall become desolate until the time of the fulfilling of the covenant to your fathers.” And it had here. So “they began to weep and howl again because of the loss of their kindred and friends.” Well, they
had a legitimate purpose for weeping in that case. They’d lost their friends and families. Remember, these are the better people, the ones who were spared. After three days of mourning, “the darkness dispersed from off the face of the land, and the earth did cease to tremble . . . [it wasn’t shaking anymore], and the earth did cleave together again, that it stood . . . and the wailing of the people who were spared alive did cease; and their mourning was turned into joy.”

Now, this is survival of the fittest. The more righteous of the people survived. It was selective—you can see that. Where would they naturally go? To the temple, and that was the place that wasn’t shaken. The temple was still there, and that’s where the righteous would go. Their own good sense would save them in that case. But this was selective migration to the temple and elsewhere. Verse 13: “And they were spared and were not sunk and buried up in the earth.” What they [the Father and Son] were doing is striking the old sets. All this sudden death is quick and merciful, actually. There are marvelous things in the book of Enoch about that. Get it over as quickly as you can. When the time comes, [they] just make it a matter of hours and don’t drag it over a generation with everlasting plagues and things like that, not a Thirty Years War. He says [verse 13], “And they were spared, and were not sunk and buried up in the earth; and they were not drowned in the depths of the sea; and they were not burned by fire, neither were they fallen upon and crushed to death; and they were not carried away in the whirlwind; neither were they overpowered by the vapor of smoke and of darkness.” That’s an important thing—suffocated, you see.

Now, if you find this puzzling or extravagant, [he gives an explanation]. It tells us in the next verse, he’d expect you to find this a difficult thing. “And now, whoso readeth, let him understand [try to get this straight, he says]; he that hath the scriptures, let him search them.” They’ve been telling you about these things. All these things are found in the prophecies. Are they “not unto the fulfilling of the prophecies. . . . Behold, I say unto you, Yea, many have testified of these things at the coming of Christ, and were slain because they testified of these things [don’t say you didn’t ask for it]. Yea, the prophet Zenos did testify of these things, and also Zenock spake concerning these things [these are prophets we now know existed between Moses and Elijah]. . . . Behold, our father Jacob also testified concerning a remnant of the seed of Joseph. . . . And it came to pass that in the ending of the thirty and fourth year, behold, I will show unto you that the people of Nephi who were spared . . . did have great favors shown unto them, and great blessings poured out upon their heads [this is still the point: we are dealing with the two ways, the two roads, and we go all the way when we’re on the two roads], insomuch that soon after the ascension of Christ into heaven he did truly manifest himself unto them.”

Now here we come to the eleventh chapter where he comes. This is the whole thing the Book of Mormon is coming toward, and afterward it all looks back to this. We have thirty pages of Christ’s words here. That’s more than you find in [any gospel] in the New Testament. I notice you have 28 pages in Matthew, 16 pages in Mark, 21 pages in Luke, and 24 pages in John. But in the Book of Mormon we have 30 pages of Christ’s teachings. We have a better source for the teachings of Christ. Of course, he says I’m going to teach you what I taught them there. It parallels the New Testament quite closely, but very significantly it gives more. So Joseph Smith has written the fifth gospel here. What a horrendous burden for a mortal to take that on. How would he dare do that sort of thing? Well, see what happens here now.
Well, there were a great multitude. They didn’t need to be directed or summoned, you’ll notice, “A great multitude gathered together . . . round about the temple [I think that would be spontaneous, wouldn’t it?] which was in the land Bountiful.” And they noticed the marvelous changes that went on. Everything had changed; you’d hardly recognize it. As I said, after the Assam earthquake the monks couldn’t recognize any landmark. It all changed, and it was the same thing here. Verse 2: “And they were also conversing about this Jesus Christ . . . And it came to pass that while they were thus conversing one with another, they heard a voice as if it came out of heaven [now this is God the Father who fills the immensity of space]; and they cast their eyes round about . . . and it was not a harsh voice, neither was it a loud voice; nevertheless, and notwithstanding it being a small voice it did pierce them that did hear to the center, insomuch that there was no part of their frame that it did not cause to quake . . . and did cause their hearts to burn.”

Now, here we have an interesting parallel in 1 Kings 19:10 and following. Remember, after Israel had completely rejected Elijah’s mission and there wasn’t a single righteous person among them—they were utterly depraved, just like the people in the Book of Mormon—then Elijah gave up. He went out by himself in the desert and said, I give up Lord, take me away. I’m finished—I’ve had it all. The Lord spoke to him and said, I’ll take care of this. Then what happened? He wrapped his head up, and a tremendous wind and terrific storm came. Then a tremendous earthquake and a terrific blast of flame followed—all this volcanic stuff. That’s the same kind of country over there, just like Central America—very active. But the voice of the Lord wasn’t in any of these. After it was all over, then he heard a still small voice. Naturally, the ministries say, well, that’s the voice of conscience. It wasn’t the voice of conscience; it gave him specific instructions. It told him that he should go and appoint Hazael [to be] king of Syria, and he should appoint Jehu [to be] king of Israel, and that he should appoint Elisha to be his successor as a prophet. It gave him these specific instructions to keep the church going. That’s what the still small voice told him. Of course, we like to think the still small voice is the voice of conscience. Well, conscience was there, but it went far beyond that, you see. The same sort of thing happened there. The still small voice came to Elijah and told him what to do. And here it is. This is the Father talking here, though.

It says [in 3 Nephi 4]: “Again they heard the voice, and they understood it not. And again the third time they did hear the voice, and did open their ears to hear it; and their eyes were towards the sound thereof; and they did look steadfastly towards heaven, from whence the sound came. And behold, the third time they did understand the voice which they heard, and it said unto them: Behold my Beloved Son . . .” This is the Father is speaking, and everything is turned over to the Son. He turns it all over to him [and says] he will speak for me. It was the same with Joseph Smith, with the apostles on the mountain, and with the baptism of Christ. “Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him.” Listen to him, you see. Now we come to an amazing thing. You think of the great anticlimax. They have been working up toward this. This is something that would tax the imaginations of Steven Spielberg or [George] Lucas with special effects. There are no special effects at all—just a man dressed in a white robe comes down. They think he’s an angel.

Some years ago I was in Cedar City visiting President Palmer who was a great Indian man. He was a member of the Paiute tribe, who had been initiated, etc. He went out to the place where he had been initiated and told me about the rites, and we went out to the various stations of the place where they do these things, etc. He told me some very interesting things about what happened, the legend and the like. Then, just a week later, I
was visiting the Hopis, and they showed me the Hopi Stone. Very few people have seen
the Hopi Stone. I was standing out in the dusk. It was getting dark. Mina Lansa was in
charge. See, they have a matriarchy, and she is in charge of keeping the sacred records,
especially the Hopi stones. There are four of them, and this is the big one. She started
saying “Come here, come here, come here,” and it was dark. I thought, what have I done
now? These people are very touchy, and I may have offended someone somehow. I went
into her house. It was the northernmost house in old Oraibi there, on the mesa. All the
elders were sitting around the room, and there was a little kitchen table in the center with
an oil lamp on it. She said, “Sit down here.” So I sat down at the table. She went into the
other room and came back with something wrapped in a blanket. She unwrapped it, and
that was the Hopi Stone that very few people get to see. It was beautiful, red porphyry—
heavy, so big, and an inch and a half thick, highly polished, covered completely with
characters on both sides.

I recognized immediately what the main theme was, and I started to talk to them about it.
It showed the people holding hands. I had learned this from President Palmer just a week
before; this helped me out. The people were wicked, and there was a great destruction, a
great earthquake, and terrible things happened. The people were frightened, and they were
totally in the dark. They didn’t know what to do, so a voice came and told them all to
hold hands. So they all held hands, and then they heard a voice above them. They looked
up to heaven and they saw a little point of light coming. It got brighter and brighter and
brighter, and a man came down. It was Mashiach, the Messiah. I started to tell them this,
and Mina Lansa grabbed the rock out of my hands. She said “You’re a smart man. You
know a lot, but you don’t know everything.” She wrapped it up and took it out. She
wasn’t going to hear any more. But they recognized it, and it caused a great hum to go
on, etc. So they have this legend about the Savior who came from above (the Southwest
Indians still have it) and he descended while the people were waiting in the blackness.
They could see him, and he came down and taught them.

They saw a man descending in a white robe. Isn’t this an amazing thing? This is the time
really to pull out all the stops and put on a tremendous show—close encounters of the
fourth or fifth kind, etc. But it has none of that at all. Here are a few easily understood
things he told them. He said, this is what I want you to do. If you do them, we can work
together in this. Here’s what you must do; this is what you’ve been waiting for. This is
why you’ve gone down in this stage of existence. This is going to start things rolling
again. The world is in a bad way. Then he established an order of things which was going
to exist for 200 years and produce this magnificent society that followed.

So this is the testimony [verse 8]: “They saw a Man descending out of the heaven; and he
was clothed in a white robe [what could be simpler?] . . . and they durst not open their
mouths. . . . They thought it was an angel.” They thought they saw an angel, the same as
in the Old World. And he announced and said simply, “Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom
the prophets testified shall come into the world.” This is the center of the Book of
Mormon right here, isn’t it? I can never read this without choking up. He bore the whole
load. “I am the light and life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup. . . . I
have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.” See, we’re all in this
together. We must obey all these things. We must do all these things and go through all
this. My father worked out his kingdom in fear and trembling, and I must do the same.
But we’re privileged to share all the way, and this is what we get from now on. Seventeen
chapters of the teachings of the Lord follow this. We’re not going to be able to get through that this semester, are we?

Verse 12: “When Jesus had spoken these things the whole multitude fell to the earth.” Then notice, this is what happened. As I said, we’re all sharing in it, and this is the fascinating thing here. He comes personally to them. He shows them the signs and tokens, and he introduces himself to every one of them, one by one, you see. He has no favorites here, and he doesn’t introduce himself as a member of anything. There’s that marvelous line in the Book of Mormon, “The keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there.” (2 Nephi 9:41). He will personally talk with you and bring you in. You are just as important as anybody else in the kingdom of God, he says.

Verse 14: “Thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails [see, the signs and tokens] in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know [that’s what a sign and a token is for, you see] that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.” [And] . . . the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into his side, and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet [by which he identified it himself], and this they did do, going forth one by one”—everyone individually. That’s the nice thing. He employs no substitute, no servant there. He doesn’t stand on the balcony and wave his hand and say, “bless you, children” to over a million people, and that takes care of them. No, he’s very personal. They “did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands [they testified, it’s just as real as anything] and did know of a surety and did bear record [they all became witnesses]. . . . And when they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord.” See, everyone had witnessed, but they had all witnessed the same thing, so they could cry with one accord. This is why you get this perfect unity in the Church, even though we’re complete individuals, because we’ve all had the same experience [which makes us] all identical. This is the trend in science. All things are related, and in the gospel, of course they are. They all come together here.

Verses 16–17: “They did cry out with one accord, saying: Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him. [Nephi was called to come forth, and he kissed the Lord’s feet.] And the Lord said unto him: I give unto you power that ye shall baptize this people when I am again ascended into heaven.” Now notice, we learn in Helaman 14–15 that these people had already been baptized. The church was among them. Anyone who joined the church had to be baptized by Nephi, and they were there. But we’re told that they must also repent; they must be spotless, because he’s coming back to meet them tomorrow. They have to be washed all over again after they have been baptized. He says, I’m coming back; I’m going to clean you up. If there’s anybody sick among you we have to straighten that all up before we begin. (Well, we’ll come to that later.)

Verse 21: “I give unto you power that ye shall baptize this people. . . . And again the Lord called others, and said unto them likewise; and he gave unto them power to baptize. And he said unto them: On this wise shall ye baptize.” Now here we find something we don’t find anywhere else [about] baptism, this all-important ordinance. As Origen tells us, and especially as St. Basil (one of the eight great Fathers of the church) tells us, Look, we’re told that they baptized in the early church, but we nowhere have a record of how they baptized. We nowhere have the form of how they did it. We know they married, but we have no marriage ceremony anywhere [they said]. Those people didn’t have any records of that, and it puzzled them very greatly. Those things were not handed on, and yet these
were the ordinances. Later on, the church had to invent sacraments, which they picked up from four different sources. That’s another story. But here he’s actually telling you how to baptize—the words you speak, and how it is done. We all know this now. You immerse them in water, baptize them in my name, etc.

Verse 27: “Baptize in my name. . . . The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one; and I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one.” And you’re going to be one with us and with each other, exactly as we are one. That comes in later. The 14th through 17th chapters of John deal entirely with that—how we can be one, how they are one, etc. This, of course, had been the subject of the greatest of all controversies in the Christian world—how God can be absolutely one, and how he could have a son, and how there can be others and yet be one. There’s nothing more “one” here than Christ the way he appears in the Book of Mormon, who is the center of everything. But as he says, this is the very thing people argue about. They’re going to argue about it, but you’re not going to argue about this. Notice, in the next verse he tells them: “And there shall be no disputations among you, as there have hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there have hitherto been.” See, just after mentioning the mystery of the Father and the Son, which is not going to be so mysterious after all, he tells them you’re not going to argue about this. You’ll understand it, but don’t argue about it until you have understood it. Then you won’t argue about it.

Verse 29: “He that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil [we begin with this—there is no contention; do not contend], who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another. Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another [there is no righteous anger]; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away. Behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, I will declare unto you my doctrine.” I’m going to do that now. Can there be any dispute about this, then?

Verse 32: “And this is my doctrine. . . . I bear record that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me.” No disputation about this is possible: All men everywhere—not just all bad men or all people who don’t belong to my church, my party, or something like that. “And whoso believeth in me and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God.” That’s after this, after we go on. This big stretch that lies ahead of us, the ages. I don’t know where or what they are. They’re really going to be great stuff, but this is what you inherit. You’re not going to inherit it here. You’re not going to have it here, but you’re going to inherit the kingdom of God. If you don’t believe and won’t be baptized, you’ll be held back, damned up or held back. The Egyptians use the same word. Every individual is fully qualified; otherwise you wouldn’t be here. You’re fully qualified for the test you’re taking now. Otherwise, you’d be sent to some other world and some other test to be taken. That’s what Origen told us. He said, the brethren used to teach that in the early church; we don’t know about it any more. He was a member. He was the first and the greatest of the theologians. He’s the bridge between the early Fathers and the apostles and the rest of the church. He said they used to teach that this was preparation. But the fact that you’re here shows that you’re responsible. The fact that you’ve been trusted to come here and you’ve asked to come here shows that you’re quite qualified to understand and receive it. And if you don’t [receive it], it’s because you reject it.

Verse 35: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and I bear record of it from the Father [entirely between individuals, you’ll notice]; and whoso believeth
[singular] in me believeth in the Father also; and unto him will the Father bear record of me. Notice, he’s talking always just to the individual person, and this is the common gender—it means he and she. In Greek you use just one gender when you’re talking about people. Notice how personal and intimate this was. To you personally, this one person who believes in me, “will the Father bear record of me, for he will visit him with fire and with the Holy Ghost.” Now we go to another level here. There’s nothing here in the plural, you’ll notice. This is all in the singular—Father in the singular, Son in the singular, and you in the singular. Remember, he had just introduced himself to them one by one. “And thus will the Father bear record of me.” And then you go further than this. Everyone gets this private, individual attention here, the private treatment. As God is, man may become, so we’re in on the circuit. The Book of Mormon removes all differences step by step. The first step is when the Holy Ghost bears record. And record, recordare, means “to put back into the heart.” It means “to intensify in the heart, to have a knowledge and remembrance of what you had before.” This has to do with your previous existence. See, your heart is your core. To record is to stir up again in the heart. And he says this is why the Father will bear record of me, and the Holy Ghost will bear record. That will recall these things to you. That’s what a record is. “All fond records will be wiped out,” as Hamlet says.

Verse 36: “And the Holy Ghost will bear record unto him of the Father and me [here we’re still in the singular; this is his personal testimony from the Holy Ghost]; for the Father, and I, and the Holy Ghost are one [he brings that in, and you are supposed to get in on this too; you are supposed to be one too]. And again I say unto you, ye must repent [you can see now why you must repent; you can’t in your filthy condition get away with this now], and become as a little child, and be baptized in my name, or ye can in nowise receive these things. And again, I say unto you, ye must repent, and be baptized in my name, and become as a little child.” Again, what could be more emphatic? He wants us to start at square one. If you are going to go on from this point, what you do is be baptized to wash away all the filth you have, dig up the nitty-gritty. That’s what you’re doing when you repent—getting it all out of your system. Then you wash it away, and then you can start again. But you have to start again here, he said. This is the big thing now. That’s the whole thing the Book of Mormon is about, you see. It’s putting this thing on a very tangible basis; these things are real. [We need to] become as a little child. Are there no small children in eternity? Would we miss them? No, we don’t need to be. This doesn’t mean to be stupid or ignorant, but wide open. That’s why you can spoil and disillusion and abuse little children so easily. That’s why child abuse is such a horrendous sin, you see. “Wo unto them [who offend one of these little ones]. . . . It had been better for them that a millstone had been hanged about their necks, and they drowned in the depth of the sea” (D&C 121:19, 22). And offending little ones seems to have become a specialty in our age. It’s a strange phenomenon that’s come out.

But you must become as a little child. You must be perfectly clear and clean in this thing and willing to receive. And this is my rock, he says; there’s no other way, “and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them.” What gates do when they prevail is they hold you back, or they hold you out, or they hold you in. They imprison you. Gates are closed, and you can’t get by. If you are in hell, the gates will prevail against you. But if you’re built on the rock, this is the only way of making progress. The gates must be open. There’s an enormous amount written in Egyptian literature about this. The gates must be open if we’re to make any progress in the next world. Verse 40: “And whoso shall declare more or less than this . . . cometh of evil.” There are just two ways. Don’t declare more than this.
Don’t add to this doctrine, or [teach] any less, you see. If you start fooling around with it and start speculating, you’re building on a sandy foundation, because you can shift your stand, shift your position. It’s like moving a goal post. That’s what a sandy foundation is. You want it with your arguments and your reasoning “and the gates of hell stand open to receive such [then they’ll receive you] when the floods come and the winds beat upon them.” Then the last word to them here is that everyone must know about this. “Therefore, go forth unto this people, and declare the words which I have spoken, unto the ends of the earth.” Everybody has to receive it. Now he’s going to call Nephi and the rest.

I’m going to give you the subject to write on for the final. It’s a very interesting subject to write on. The Book of Mormon is an unpopular messenger. Quite a few years ago a very important, very rich, very well-known member of the Church told me we’d have to get rid of the Book of Mormon. It was embarrassing. It was driving the best minds out of the Church; it was a disappointment and the like. Well, my question is this: Should the Book of Mormon be taken more seriously? Explain.
TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 3, Lecture 84
3 Nephi 11–15
The Lord Teaches His People

Notice what happens. He [the Savior] comes to them. If you were writing this, it would be the biggest challenge of all when you came to the big climax—the Lord finally comes. Now what does he do? What does he say? Does he just repeat the New Testament? Well, he does and a lot more too. The Lord teaches them what he taught the Jews before the Resurrection. He comes to the Nephites after the Resurrection as a resurrected being. And, of course, he begins by filling them in. He says, these are the things I taught the Jews before my ascension to heaven. He tells them that, filling them in up to there. It’s all the gospel, everywhere the same gospel. From then on he takes it up and says, these are the things I taught the apostles after the Resurrection. During the last thirty or forty years, any time [someone has found] a very early Christian writing, it almost always has the title, “The Secret Teachings Which the Lord Gave the Apostles after the Resurrection.” We know he taught them after the Resurrection. We know that before the Resurrection they didn’t understand what he taught at all. After the Crucifixion they broke up and all went home and thought it was all over. Then when he appeared first to the women and then to John and they came and reported, the apostles wouldn’t believe it. They said, you’re crazy—he’s not going to come again. Then when he did appear to them, Thomas wasn’t the only who doubted. He was actually the least doubting of them all. But that’s another story.

When he came to them after the Resurrection, what did he teach them? At the end of Mark it says: beginning with Moses and the prophets he taught them all the things concerning himself. Then their eyes were opened, but we don’t have a word of that sermon [in the Bible]. Those were the secret teachings the Lord taught the apostles after the Resurrection. They all turn out to be the same, and we have them here. This is what we find in the Nag Hammadi Scrolls. These became distorted to form various gnostic doctrines, etc. But the Lord taught the apostles lots of things after the Resurrection. He appeared no [fewer] than twenty-seven times. I have some long articles on that particular subject. “The Gospel of the Forty Days” it was called. For forty days after the Resurrection he came and taught the apostles, and we don’t have one word in the Bible of what he told them after that. This is what sent them out on their missions—this is what they were going to teach. But this we have in the Book of Mormon. We have it included here, but first we must get filled in here.

We got to chapter 11, which was a tremendous climax with the great multitude gathered together, etc. You notice that Christ comes to every individual; it’s all on an individual basis. He takes them by the hand, he gives each one the signs and tokens, and he blesses them one by one. Then in the blessings and promises he gives them, he says, I and the Father will come to him, meaning “to him and to her,” using the common gender and always using the singular that way. He assures them that they are in the same program as the Father and the Son. I am teaching only what the Father tells me to, he says. I am simply doing his will. The Holy Ghost is in on it, and now you are in on the same thing. We are bringing you in on the very same thing [he says]. How do we take that
tremendous leap? Well, this is done in the chapters that follow. (We have to go through these rapidly.) 3 Nephi 11:35: “And unto him will the Father bear record of me, for he will visit him with fire and with the Holy Ghost.” This takes us up to the very highest level.

Then we come to 3 Nephi 12. We said this individual settlement is paid. We make our covenants and have our standing with the Lord, but we are not alone in this. We don’t just go our several ways after that if we have all had the same experience and we know heart-to-heart exactly what the other person has gone through. We have the greatest feeling of unity with the others—“that they may be one even as we are one,” as the Lord repeatedly says in John 14–17. So we don’t go our several ways. We must all live together in eternity; we are all going to be in this. We all have identical understanding with those who rule and reign forever. This is going to be something, and very interesting questions arise as to our individuality, etc. We are all going to be together for endless ages.

The next step here, the purpose of the twelfth chapter, is to get us together; you’ll see that. He called the Twelve, and notice what he does here. First of all he appoints the Twelve, but he doesn’t appoint them as superiors, but as servants. He doesn’t appoint them as a higher rank. Notice what he says here—there’s no rank. They don’t belong to a higher peer group; they are just part of your group. “He stretched forth his hand unto the multitude, and cried unto them, saying: Blessed are ye if ye shall give heed unto the words of these twelve whom I have chosen from among you [they are just your people; they are not from a higher rank, a higher order of beings, or a different peer group] to minister unto you, and to be your servants.” [They are] not to boss you around or to lay down the law for you. In other words, they are absolutely equal with you; there’s no difference whatever here. There’s no sense of rank. This makes it very clear. We are all starting out in the same thing together. How do we get along together? We don’t pull rank on each other at all. “. . . and unto them I have given power that they may baptize you with water.” I have given them power, but the power they have is only mine. They are just acting as proxy for me. Notice, at all times the ordinances of the temples are by proxy. The Book of Mormon gives us the formula here, “Being commissioned of Jesus Christ [he told me to do it; I’m just doing it for him], I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. . . . Therefore, ye shall do all things in the name of the Son, and repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore.” So it is the Son who is doing it all. Remember, we talked about that intense concentration on this one person, and it still goes on here. We are still all as equal as anything can be. They will baptize you for me [the Savior says]. As I said, all baptism is by proxy.

After that I will personally baptize you to a higher order of things, and that is with fire and the Holy Ghost. They don’t baptize you with that. That is bestowed on you. He says here in verse 1: “I will baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost; therefore blessed are ye if ye shall believe in me and be baptized, after that ye have seen me and know that I am.” They have seen him now; [they need] to believe that he is the Savior, that he is what he says he is. These people are able to believe in him. Then he says, others will not have seen the way you have, but “more blessed are they who shall believe in your words [you are just handing it on] because that ye shall testify that ye have seen me, and that ye know that I am.” John starts out with what we have seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, felt with our hands. That’s what we testify of, and the world doesn’t receive our testimony because they don’t think it’s spiritual enough. “Blessed are they who shall believe in your word.” They haven’t had the same privilege. You are just carrying it on. This is what the gospel is, handing it all around. “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the
immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39)—to see that everybody gets it. We all [the righteous] get into this same glorious continuation. It’s going to be a long haul ahead. It won’t be anything like this world, so it will be quite a wonderful thing.

Verse 2: “Yea, blessed are they who shall believe in your words, and come down into the depths of humility and be baptized.” This is the way they will accept it, you see. This is not the same life as before when you’ve borne witness like this. Did you actually see that? Did that actually happen? Did the Lord really come down? [They will ask] all these things. That’s it—we’ve seen it. It’s all right if they believe in your words. Then comes the test; they have to humble themselves to believe that because they weren’t there. They have to accept it. They have to “believe in your words, and come down into the depths of humility” and be willing to take a chance on it and be baptized. Then they shall be visited; I’ll take care of that [the Savior says]. Then they shall receive the higher order too. They will recognize their total ignorance, come down in the depths of humility. If they accept your baptism of water, which is my baptism—you are just baptizing for me—then I will confirm it with the other baptism, he says. You are confirmed with the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. I’ll take care of that. So we are all going to be one big happy family; we are all entering in it together. Notice what they must do here.

Now we come to the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are in Matthew 5. People always say, well, this is general philosophy; this is general rules of behavior; this is wisdom literature. Well, it’s specific instruction which is perfectly clear in Matthew 5. The apostles asked, who are qualified to be members of the church? Who will we accept? Remember, the church and kingdom are something very special. If they are willing to be baptized, that’s a test—if they are humble enough to be baptized and to come down in the depths of humility. So the Beatitudes are not wisdom literature. These are specific requirements to qualify one for membership. Notice, the Beatitudes begin in verse 3: “Yea, blessed are the poor in spirit who come unto me.” Who are those who will be accepted? Those “who come unto me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

The kingdom of heaven is wherever the commandments of God are being obeyed. They are willing to come into the kingdom, and they will receive the kingdom if they are poor in spirit. If they are humble and come to me, then they will blessed. They will be qualified to enter into this great covenant that we are going to be in here. As I said, this is not just wisdom literature. These things are all qualities which people should possess; nevertheless, it’s very specific here. Verses 3–9 are basic qualifications, you notice—they who mourn and they who are meek, and who hunger and thirst for righteousness. These are rare souls, you see. They shall be filled with the Holy Ghost. And the merciful are qualified. You will be judged as you judge, the Lord tells us. And blessed are they, above all, who are pure in heart. You are not going to see God if you are not. No unclean thing can stand in the presence of God. “And blessed are all the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

Verse 9: “And blessed are all the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.” Well, God’s [kingdom] is the peaceable kingdom, of course. Notice, these are the qualifications that everyone should have, these Beatitudes in verses 3–9. Then in verse 10–12 [we find] what they can expect in this world. Remember, this is not your final reward here. This is all the testing, he says. “And blessed are all they who are persecuted for my name’s sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” They will revile you and persecute you and do all manner of evil against you. Well, of course, if you deserve it that’s something else. “... for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you.” The
apostles are in the same position as the ancient prophets, and so are all the members. That's what he's talking about. As I said, they are all on the same level. So verses 10–12 are what they can expect in this world. It won't be very [pleasant], but they will be blessed and will be able to pull through.

Verses 13–16 are about the taking on of these obligations. If you take these obligations on, you have a responsibility. Now you are “the salt of the earth.” A little salt goes a long way. There are only a few of you, but you go a long way. You are expected to react and to do something. If you are not [doing something], you have lost your savor. There's no point in giving this to you if you are not going to pass it on, because I’m passing it on to you. We’re passing it around, and there is no point to doing this [if members don’t share with others]. So you have to let your light shine; you have to be a light unto the people.

These things are all in logical order; you can see that. This is taking on the obligations that go with it. What about the former obligations? What about the law of Moses that the rabbis argue about endlessly? Well, that's still in effect, he says; that hasn’t been done away with. It still holds. But what do we do? He says [verse 17]: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law of the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfil.” It’s like the Word of Wisdom. Is the Word of Wisdom the law we live by? Do we discuss it endlessly and analyze it? No, we accept it as a matter of course, just like you accept the old law of Moses—the Ten Commandments, [for example]. The Lord says in the first two commandments they are taken care of. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy might, mind, and strength. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (D&C 59:5–6). Well, if you love the Lord thy God with all your might, mind, and strength and your neighbor as yourself, you are not going to steal and you are not going to lie. You wouldn’t even think of that. You don’t have to be given those commandments every day. When you go out of the house, Mama doesn’t tell you, “Now, don’t kill anyone today; don’t tell any lies today or anything like that.” No, you just don’t think of that. It’s written in your heart; the Prophet Moses said it must be.

Verse 20: “Therefore come unto me and be ye saved; for verily I say unto you, that except ye shall keep my commandments [you have to keep these commandments], which I have commanded you at this time.” This is bringing them up to date, as it tells us in chapter 23. This is the minimum now. The law of Moses was the minimum before. You kept the Ten Commandments—not to commit adultery, worship idols, and things like that. They aren’t really active laws for us. You keep them—of course, you do. He says, they are not done away with by any means, but they are fulfilled if they are written in your heart. You don’t even need to rehearse them; you’ll never do that kind of thing. But these things carry us further now; these are further obligations. He says, unless you live up to my commandments which I give you at this time, you won’t enter the kingdom of heaven. This is the next step that you’re going to have to take.

Then he goes through the Ten Commandments here and gives them another interpretation. You can see what it is—very obviously fulfilling the law. We have the Ten Commandments on how to treat each other in verses 21 and following. It is written that “thou shalt not kill,” but to despise a man is worse than to be angry with him. To be angry with him is to have murder in your heart. He tells you here not to think of a thing that you wouldn’t do. He talks about adultery. When you look upon a woman and lust after her, you shouldn’t do that because it’s as bad as the deed. The thought is parent to the
deed, of course. You wouldn’t even think about a thing you are not going to do. Don’t think about things you’re not prepared to do—you’re wasting your time. Don’t curse or despise one another, because, as the Jews tell us, in another person you are looking upon the image of your Maker. To hold that in contempt is a terrible thing. Remember, the law of Moses is that you shall not beat anyone, no matter what his crime is, more than forty lashes “lest thy brother appear vile before thee.” You must not degrade another human being to the point of being vile before you. He may deserve it, but you cannot degrade the image of God to a vile and contemptible thing. Hold [no one] in contempt; that’s a terrible thing. “Thou shalt not kill” is one thing, but just to be angry with somebody, see in that person a lesser being, and say “raca” which means “curse you” [is to be] in danger of the council. You say he is a fool. To despise a man is worse than to be angry with him. Cool contempt is far more withering than rage. There are enemies who hate each other’s guts, but they respect each other. On the other hand, to hold a person in absolute contempt is worse, and that’s a thing we are guilty of a lot.

Verses 23–25: And no matter what, be reconciled to him. God will not receive you if you are indifferent and cool to these things and not willing to go all the way. If you have anything against your brother, be reconciled with your brother no matter what, because you’ve got to get along with him. “Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him.” Never burn your bridges behind you, because you are going to have to settle these things in the end, just as you have to end the war after all is said and done. Jack Welch loves to comment on this. These are very interesting rules of Jewish law he is talking about here [in verse 26]. You have to pay the judge’s fee or you won’t get out of prison. He’s giving that as an example. [Then we have the verses on adultery mentioned above.] Sin is a state of mind, after all. You may eat or drink something or do something, quite unaware of what you are doing. In another case, you can perform the same act and be very guilty, such as stealing or something like that. You might take something away and have no idea it belongs to somebody else, but if you know it belongs to somebody else, that’s different. It’s your state of mind that makes a sin what it is.

Incidentally, this about the lawyers and agreeing with [your enemy—verse 25]—any [good] lawyer will tell you that’s right and the best thing. Dallin Oaks used to be in my priesthood quorum; he was in my ward when he was the president here. He used to tell us in the priesthood quorum that any settlement out of court is better than any settlement in court. He said, the worst settlement out of court is better than the best settlement in court. Whatever you do stay out of court! That’s what the Lord is telling you here. When you put things on that basis, you don’t do that [go to court].

Then he talks about the lusts of the flesh. You have to deny yourselves these things. To refrain from doing them you refrain from even thinking about them. To refrain from these vices does take restraint. This really happens. When you yield to them, you are cast into hell because they are so futile here. It’s so pitiful—to be carnally minded is death, you’re not going anywhere, you’re sick, etc. Denying yourself is real here. Every moment we make choices to the exclusion of other things; you have to do that. Is it wrong to deprive yourself? Today we say, “Oh, never deprive yourself of anything.” Well, that’s absurd; you have to deprive yourself of everything except what you are doing this very moment. We make choices to the exclusion of all those nice other things we could be doing. “I want it all, and I want it now,” we say today. You have to have it now.
That means hell hereafter. Hell is knowing what you are missing; look at all the things you missed because of that. Remember, the essence of hell is Tantalus who was always trying to eat the food and it was snatched away from him; or Sisyphus who is always rolling the rock up the hill, and it always slips down again; or the things that are always and forever out of your grasp. Satan says it’s because of what I’ve lost. “Farewell, happy fields where joy forever dwells; hail, horrors, hail.” These great joys could have been, and he has missed out on all of this, which is really hell. It wouldn’t be hell unless you could see a happier state, unless you knew that you were qualified for much better things than that, and here you have stuck yourself into this. But here you must deny yourself all sorts of things. Admittedly, these things are a temptation. There is legitimate pleasure to be found in some things. But do you engage in them without license? All appetites, desires, and passions must be kept within the bounds the Lord has set. We have appetites, desires, and passions. We wouldn’t enjoy eating if we didn’t. If we didn’t enjoy eating, we would starve to death. We don’t eat because we will die if we don’t; we don’t drink because we will die of dehydration if we don’t drink; we don’t go to sleep because we would drop dead if we didn’t get some sleep. It’s because we like to do those things. Nature has us enjoy it while we are here. There are things you can enjoy, and things you don’t have to enjoy.

The hero of Thomas Mann’s *Magic Mountain* is Pete Peppercorn, a fabulously wealthy Dutchman. He looked for all the delights you can find in this life, and he finally came out with the idea that the simple, majestic gifts of life [are best]. He could go into ecstasy about a glass of water. He could afford the costliest wines in the world, but the good water was better than the wine. He decided on the simple gifts of life after he could have everything else. You all know Nabokov, the Russian novelist who wrote *Lolita*—a vastly gifted man, but, you might say, very much inclined not to cross himself in these things. He was a gourmet and looked for everything he could eat. He finally came to the conclusion that the perfect food on which no improvement could be made at all, the utter delight, the culinary perfection, was a boiled egg. You can have the simple things, but you have to do without a lot of things. I have never eaten baked Alaska, but I’m not suffering for that. I don’t know what I’m missing, I suppose.

Here [in verses 31–32] it is talking about these things—easy divorce and easy virtue that can’t be engaged in, impatience of restraint by covenant and promise. We make covenants and promises and from then on they restrain us. You have to remain within the laws of chastity; you are bound by them. You may resent other people having gone into that. I know it often happens. One of the main reasons for finding fault with the Church and trying to turn it to derision is that people are not free to indulge their lusts while they are in it because they have made covenants. Lots of people have given it up because of that. It would be easier to misbehave if they didn’t feel these obligations. But [there’s this feeling] I want it here and I want it now, no matter what went before and no matter what comes after. The moment is everything. That’s what verses 31–33 are talking about. Far from looking to eternal life, we can’t keep consistent just for a few months.

Verse 33: “And again it is written, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.” This next verse is about perjury. Unsteady and uncertain creatures that we are, we should not make definitive commitments and promises and threats because we can’t keep them. Time and again in the Book of Mormon they swear solemn oaths that they will do something. Some people swore that they wouldn’t eat until they had killed the Prophet Joseph and things like that. Well, you have no control over those things at all. I can swear by your head, but you can’t make one hair black or white. You
can’t add a cubit to your stature, he says, so don’t swear by things that you can’t carry out. What can you carry out? Very little, even things that you think would be very easy to carry out. If you say, I’ll never do this again, or I’ll do this at a certain time, you don’t know what the conditions will be. It will be totally beyond your control at a later time, so never make oaths and commitments of that sort. Notice, he says, you don’t swear by the heaven or the earth. How can you? You can’t make an engagement that you can’t keep. (We are going too fast here.)

The next thing is how to avoid contention with all this going on. You just bear your testimony and respect the testimony of others. That’s all you can do; you can’t twist a person’s arm. I can’t have a testimony for you. I had a dream about you; therefore, you [should do this]. No, you don’t do that. Verse 37: “But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay [you make your statement and that’s it, yes or no] for whatsoever cometh of more than these is evil.” Then you are getting into your fine print, into your legalistic arguments, and all sorts of things. I can only testify for myself, and you can only testify for yourself, he says. Let there be no contention—testimony alone. We are not supposed to have a disputation. The first commandment he gave them was that there should be no more disputation [3 Nephi 11:28]. He was talking about the Father and the Son being one, etc. He said, no, you won’t argue about that anymore. There have been contentions all the time. My first commandment is that there shall be no more contention. All contention is of the devil; it is not of me [the Savior said]. I can bear my testimony, but I can’t force it on you. You can bear yours, but you can’t force it on me. That’s as far as we can go. If the Holy Ghost is going to bear witness to you, that will happen. But I can’t force the Holy Ghost to do it. Anything more than that is evil.

Verse 38: “And behold, it is written, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.” Our entire obsession today is with revenge; this is the theme. John Wayne or his loved ones suffer violent wrongs from a very villainous person, and the rest of the movie is taken up with his elaborate revenge. We just love every bit of it, the way the guy is “going to get it.” Revenge is the name of the game today; it’s the great human interest in all our crime shows. That’s why we have to have happy endings all the time, because they amount to revenge, which is our obsession. “But I say unto you, that ye shall not resist evil.” What can you do in that case? You turn the other cheek also. Well, that’s absurd. Are you crazy? This isn’t the real world [we might say].

Well, what do you do? How do you resist evil? By doing good; that’s the only thing. You can’t fight it if a person is going to be that way. You can’t control the other person’s conscience; you can’t make him righteous by shooting him. It’s possible that he might repent. Time and again there are many stories about the angels wanting to come down and reap, or the story of Capernaum with the Lord talking to the apostles. Why doesn’t God smite these people with lightning seeing how terribly wicked they are? Why does he allow this to go on? [they ask]. He says, because they might repent sometime. That’s what we’re here for—their probation as well as your probation. You have chances to repent too, and they might repent. This has happened; we’ve seen this happen here with the Lamanites. And these vicious Gadiantons become not only good citizens but excellent missionaries. We get wonderful people who were very bad before, and the other way around. As [Ezekiel 33:18–19] tells us, though a person has done righteously all his life, as long as he is on earth he may completely turn the tables. When he turns to wickedness, all his former righteousness will be forgotten. And if a person has done evil all his life, if he should repent and turn away from that, all his former evil will be forgotten. It’s the life he
is living now that counts here. As long as you are here you can still repent, so don’t take it upon yourself to punish the wicked. This is a great lesson in the Book of Mormon from now on. After the Nephites fall, the whole theme is revenge, and we find a great deal said about that. “But, behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked,” Mormon says, “and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished” (Mormon 4:5). Don’t worry about the justice of God. He will overtake the wicked, but if you try to punish them you are wicked too. So we say, yea, yea, and nay, nay. We don’t argue about things, and we don’t resist evil—you turn the other cheek. Of course, this we all know from the Bible. You cannot eliminate it. What do you do? Well, you do good. That alone will defuse it if you do that.

This is where Brother Oaks used to make it strong. Verse 40: “And if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” But whatever you do, don’t go to court. If he wants you to go a mile, go two miles with him. “Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away.” This is an important thing too; lend without interest. Of course, this is the reversal of today’s whole fiscal structure—the stock market, banking, and everything else—that you lend with interest. You give as little as you can, and you take as much as you can. That’s the secret of success. That makes our whole life this hollow thing. Remember what the fool tells King Lear?

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{That sir which serves and seeks for gain,} \\
\text{And follows but for form,} \\
\text{Will pack when it begins to rain,} \\
\text{And leave thee in the storm.}
\end{align*}
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Shakespeare, King Lear, act II, scene 4

This is the way you do in business all the time. Here’s a man with whom we have sung company hymns every morning for thirty years. Suddenly he takes a golden parachute and leaves everybody else out in the cold. He has saved himself because everybody was “that sir which serves and seeks for gain [that was the motive]. And follows but for form.” We all sang the hymns and were loyal to the company. But then all of sudden there was a hostile takeover, and the whole thing collapsed. But he packs when it begins to rain and “leaves thee in the storm.” He descends in his golden parachute and leaves you holding the bag. There’s some beautiful imagery for you. I’m really rushing along at a feverish pace this morning. We ought to cover the whole Book of Mormon today, you know.

We know this, of course. This is a line from Antigone. In the play by that name she says to her brother, “I am one who has been taught to love with those who love and hate with those who hate.” To be loyal to your society was to love whom they love and hate whom they hate. This is the same thing [in verse 43]: “And behold it is written also, that thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy [it says it was written, and that was the code]; But behold I say unto you, love your enemies.” As Brother Kimball said, they will cease being your enemies in that case; that’s the only way they will ever cease being your enemies. Unless you kill them—there’s the answer, of course. As we learn a little later on, “God will not that man should shed blood, but in all things hath forbidden it since the beginning of man” (Ether 8:19). That’s not the solution. What you do is “pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you.” Well, you’ll heap coals of fire on their heads by doing that.
How do you confront evil? By doing good. If your enemy knows you are praying for him, this is something your enemy can’t prevent you from doing, no matter how strong he is. He can’t prevent you from exercising this powerful prerogative of prayer on his behalf, if necessary. You have him in your power, so to speak. You have an influence on him. If you pray for them who despitefully use you, you have the ascendant position. You are in the dominant position if you can pray for them, knowing that the Lord will answer your prayers. This is the only way you can be the children of your Father who is in heaven. No children of God will hate God’s other children, no matter who they are, because God puts up with them too. There are some very wicked ones, and God loves all his children equally. In some who do his will he delights. But why would he feel so sorry and mourn and be wrathful against those who are wicked? Because he loves them. If he didn’t care [he wouldn’t do that]—like the parents today who don’t care. “If my parents would only get mad at me, if they would say something to me, if they would only pay attention to me,” [young people say]. We have so much of that today.

Our Father cares immensely for us, far more than we care about ourselves. So when we do evil he goes through all this trouble, etc. He seethes with emotions on our part. Remember he weeps in the book Enoch. God has created worlds without number; how can he weep? Enoch said he weeps and will not be comforted. The Lord said, “Wherefore, I can stretch forth mine hands and hold all the creations which I have made ... and among all the workmanship of mine hands there has not been so great wickedness as among thy brethren” (Moses 7:36). Yet these were to be kept in prison until the Day of Judgment; then they are to be rehabilitated, we are told. They were to have the gospel preached to them in prison. They were those who were disobedient at the time of Noah, as Peter tells us. And these were the ones that Enoch preached to, warning of the flood. He was the great preacher before the flood. When they were disobedient they were kept in prison, and these were the ones that the Lord himself went down and preached to—the spirits in prison. He put himself out in their behalf, and they were the lowest and the wickedest of all. Of all the worlds he created, they were the worst, and yet he went down to save them. It’s a marvelous thing; it [the atonement] covers everything.

Verse 45: “That ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good. Therefore those things which were of old time, which were under the law, in me are all fulfilled.” They are fulfilled. He has been filling them [in] up to now. After this he is going to tell you what comes hereafter. Then there’s this line we like so much and take so easily: “Therefore I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect.” You ask, must we be that perfect? Well, the perfect circle is an example here. To be perfect is to be perfectus, to do all you can at your level—to carry out everything you can carry out. Perficio means to carry everything through that you can. You can’t do all the things that God does, but you do what you can. You do not fail what you can do, and you will be perfect. How big does a circle have to be in order to be a perfect circle? A word that was used a great deal by both the Arabs and the Jews is tamim, which means “the perfect circle.” It’s a perfect closed circle. It doesn’t make any difference how big or small it is, it is the circle if it is perfect. The form makes it perfect. Its size is very secondary; it doesn’t count at all. You’re perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect, but not on anything like the same scale. But you must live up to every capacity and possibility. If there is anything that you haven’t done that you could have done, [you are not perfect.] Remember, in this life we can’t do a great deal because we are so limited. But if there is anything you deliberately left out, then you are
not perfect. Then you are responsible because you could have done it; it was within your scope. You say, “Well, that’s impossible.” If it’s impossible you won’t be responsible for that.

Now we go to the next chapter, which changes the subject to something else. Notice that this is progressive. He is teaching them more and more. 3 Nephi 13 entirely reverses the order of things which people normally do. It completely rejects the economy we practice—“who serves and seeks for gain [that’s your motive] and follows but for form.” These things are expected of us—dress for success, etc. That’s following but for form. But when it begins to rain, he will pack and leave you in the storm. He’ll take off. This reverses that order and completely rejects the economy which we practice. Here the Lord comes after the Resurrection preaching to people. Why should he talk so much about the economy? That’s what this chapter talks about. Why? Because that is our obsession, and he is ordering us to break away from it here. When you give alms, you have your choice—you can be rewarded now or later. You have your reward in being recognized now, but you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. If you accept your reward here, you won’t get it hereafter. You lay up treasures in heaven, not on earth. He doesn’t say in both places. Do not lay up treasures on earth. He says here [in verse 24]: “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” No, if you serve one you will hate the other, just as sure as anything. He makes this very clear. There’s no objection to having your reward here if you enjoy that [sort of] thing—that’s fine, and they are welcome to it. Verse 2: “Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.” Those who do sound the trumpet, etc., and make themselves important. Let your alms be in secret so it will be between you and your Heavenly Father.

Hypocrites who pray to be seen of men have their reward; [this is] your outward religion. [If you pray in secret] he will reward these openly. Then the vain repetitions, which is multiplying words. We use that a lot. But this is the way you pray—then he gives them the Lord’s prayer, which is so much concerned with our economics. Verse 9: “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.” Thy kingdom come [which he says later] means “thy will be done on earth.” When his will is done that’s where his kingdom is. [We pray] thy kingdom come to earth here so that his will is done on earth just as it is there. This will be Zion then. Notice he says, “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” It’s usually rendered, “Forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” But actually the oldest texts of the New Testament all have the word debts; they use the economic word. Forget our debts as we forgive those who owe us debts—only to that extent. If we forgive others the Lord will forgive us. The Lord has a great deal to say about that, you notice—about the cruel master of the house, who the Lord leaves in charge. We are to be judged by the way we treat others.

“And lead us not into temptation.” Will God lead us into temptation? Yes. Remember, this is a time of probation. We don’t want the Lord to let us get more than we can take, you see. Don’t tempt us more than we can stand. [Cain] said the same thing, “My suffering is greater than I can bear.” So it was alleviated. “. . . but deliver us from evil.” Why should he do that? Because that is our purpose in being here. We are bound to go too far because of the Fall. Whatever we do, we are bound to overstep. The game is set up so that we would sin, so that Adam would fall, and we would be led into temptation. We don’t want to be carried in too far, but we are in it up to our necks anyway. “Deliver us from evil”—we are not going all the way. “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory . . .” This is left out, they say, in some of the New Testament texts, but Joachim Jeremias, who lives in Palestine and has been working for many years on this, has shown
that this is part of the Lord’s original prayer. He would have to end this way; it’s a formal ending to the prayer. This is not a late addition.

Verse 14: “For, if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” The way you can serve him is to serve them. If you want to give him something, you give something to his children. He doesn’t need it. What can you give me? he says. The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. You can’t give me anything. But you can help my children. That’s what you are being tested in, to do that. I want you to behave as I would behave in every circumstance [he says]. So if you forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will forgive you. But the hypocrites just appear to be doing these things; they appear to be fasting. When you fast do it in secret because it is between you and the Father.

Verse 19: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth.” No treasures on earth, please. Moth and rust doth corrupt here. Do not lay up treasures, but lay them up in heaven. “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” You can’t divide it that way. The light of your body has to be single. The next verse follows very logically. Your heart will be where your treasure is; it will be concentrated on that. You can’t divide it between the two. Your eye must be single, and your body will be full of light. “But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.”

“The motions of his spirit are dull as night,” as Shakespeare says, when he thinks of only those things. Speaking of being divided, “No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” The modern and ancient Hebrew word for banking and trade is mammon. These commandments are on economics, because this is what people’s hearts are engaged in. This is where the real temptation will be. It’s the hardest temptation of all to take. I really believe this last move that was made this week in the Church has taken a big step in its economic arrangement. It’s a form of the law of consecration. The ward consecrates just one big fund which all goes to Salt Lake City. Then [the General Authorities] give it back as we need it, which is exactly what the Law of Consecration is. You give it all to the bishop and get back just what you need. You don’t need more, and that’s what you get. But you turn it all over to him and trust that you’ll get what you need. That’s exactly what they’ve decided to do now. Everything the ward has gone in to the Twelve. We decide what we need, and we can get it back. You get back what you need, but not more. That’s the Law of Consecration being operated at the highest level in the Church, a very, very interesting development, I think.

Verse 25: “He looked upon the twelve whom he had chosen, and said unto them: Remember the words which I have spoken. For behold, ye are they whom I have chosen to minister unto this people. Therefore I say unto you, take no thought of your life.” Give it up! This isn’t a career for you; you are not going to take any thought of your life at all, what you shall eat or what you shall wear. Verse 30: “Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field . . . even so will he clothe you, if ye are not of little faith [it all has to be by faith; this is the important thing], . . . Take no thought, saying what shall we eat, or what shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?” But those are important. They are basic, aren’t they? Yes, of course they are, as verse 32 says. “For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” Of course, you do. You can’t use that argument of necessity: I’m going to work all day long just for what I’ll eat and drink and wherewith I’ll be clothed—that’s the purpose of life. No, that’s not it at all. Your heavenly
Father knows, so he will provide it. You do his work and he will take care of you. You do the work and the lunch is free, so to speak.

Verse 33: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” These are the things that will be added to what you need. You don’t [work for] them; they are added. The word it uses for added means they will be added over and above all these other things. You seek first to do all your work. These things are not part of your work. They are added to you, given to you as a bonus. This is free. A bonus is what is added after. All these things you need, your heavenly Father knows you need them, and they will be provided.

What is he talking about in chapter 14? There will always be bad ones. How do you handle them? That’s what this chapter is dealing with. He turned again unto the multitude and said, in the first place you don’t judge them because you are a bad one yourself. “Judge not, that ye be not judged. . . . With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” Don’t talk about how wicked the other person is when you are more wicked yourself. The mote is in your brother’s eye. He has a little speck in his eye, and you have a big beam. The word for mote that’s used in the New Testament is a “speck of dust,” and the beam is a husk from grain. It’s a bigger piece of dust. You have a much bigger one in your own eye, and you are trying to get the dust out of [your brother’s] eye. This is normal procedure. It’s a vicious and obsessive practice of hypocrites—let me pull the mote out of your eye [they say].

Then who are the dogs and swine [in verse 6]? “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” What about these people who won’t accept the gospel? This is not running down dogs or swine. The word he uses is conarium, which means “pet doggy.” You don’t give all the food on the table to your pet dog. For one thing it would make the little puppy sick. It’s not his food. They are not ready to receive it, and they wouldn’t appreciate it. They would just turn again and trample you; they wouldn’t know what they were getting at all. This isn’t holding them in contempt, but things should be distributed where they can be appreciated and used. The dog will bite you, and the swine will just tread on the pearls. They don’t mean anything to him. That’s why things must be done appropriately, of course. This also has to do with the secrecy that was taught to the apostles.

Then you must make the first move. What are you waiting for? It’s all spread out before you, like a feast. Verse 8: “For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.” But you must make the first move. “Thy servant hath sought thee diligently; now he hath found thee,” said Abraham, but he had to seek him first. And you are able to do it, the Lord tells them here. He’ll give you the very best, and you ask for that. Here’s the rule of our one-to-one relationship: God says, if you want to please me do as I do. Verse 12 is the golden rule, of course: “Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.” This is a feeling of charity, warmth, and empathy. That’s what you’d call empathy, isn’t it? What would I like? Well, that’s exactly what he would like, you see. In other words, put yourself in their place. You have to do that to carry this out, and many of us can’t do that because we’ve been taught to be out for Number One—I’ll get what I can.
Then here are the two ways. The false prophets in sheep’s clothing are “ravening wolves.” They insisted on judging by appearances, but you can’t judge by appearances. You have false prophets in sheep’s clothing, as Samuel the Lamanite tells them. Then you know them by their fruits. And there are plenty of unworthy people who will say, “Lord, Lord . . .” They won’t enter into my kingdom unless they do the will of my Father. “Many will say to me in that day: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?” The name can be used for those purposes. We hear the name of Christ used all the time. Evangelists, priests, and everybody else use it all the time, but when they say that, they profess they had the power of the name. He will say, “I never knew you.” They acted without authority at all. Because of what they were doing, by their fruits ye shall know them.

The next chapter is to prepare you for what is ahead in the hereafter. The law of Moses is still being carried out, it tells us in verse 2 and following. This will be your share in the whole thing, from verse 11 on. Verse 13: “And behold, this is the land of your inheritance; and the Father hath given it unto you.” He tells the Nephites that this is to be their land of inheritance. It’s a funny thing. We scoff at the Indians today because almost all the tribes regard the land that is given to them as holy. We think of that as paganism. Yet we don’t hesitate to call Palestine “the Holy Land.” We think it is holy because it was given to Israel. The Book of Mormon tells us this is the promised land, and here he tells them, this is the land I’m giving to you. “This is the land of your inheritance; and the Father hath given it unto you. And not at any time hath the Father given me commandment that I should tell it unto your brethren at Jerusalem.” This is your holy land, so we should not hold the Indians in contempt for regarding it as such.
We should notice some things here [such as] the theme of the other sheep in 3 Nephi 16. Notice, suddenly it broadens out immensely. The other sheep all must be considered. Every individual in the whole world is going to get the full treatment. Here we see the earth from space, as one world, in this 16th chapter here, with all these other tribes. Then why is Israel so small in that case? Verse 1: “I have other sheep, which are not of this land, neither of the land of Jerusalem, neither in any parts of that land around about whither I have been to minister.” I have to go to them; they’re just as important as you are. I have sheep everywhere. I won’t be able to stay with you, so I’m leaving the writings with you. I command that you write down these things [the Savior said]. That’s what scripture is for, to have the words of the Lord after he’s left. Verse 4: “And I command you that ye shall write these sayings after I am gone [the people of Jerusalem will find out about you from them] . . . that they may receive a knowledge of you by the Holy Ghost, and also of the other tribes [these sayings from the Book of Mormon will reach other tribes—and then] . . . shall be manifested unto the Gentiles, that through the fulness of the Gentiles, the remnant of their seed” may come forth. And, of course, it has here.

By why is Israel so small? Why not give it to everybody anyway? Well, that’s very clear. They are the nucleus—they are the cadre. They hold the fort, and the instant any others qualify, they will be accepted. They are included in Israel. Turn to verse 13, just across the page here, “But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel.” They’ll be Israel too. But Israel is the ones he can trust in. But they haven’t worked either. They’re the best, but they’re not nearly good enough. That’s what we have here, you see. So they [the Gentiles] are included. Israel is responsible; therefore, Israel is the one that gets the punishment if it doesn’t work, because the others haven’t had the chance. With the Lamanites and Nephites it’s the same thing.

Verses 5–7: “And then will I gather them in from the four quarters of the earth; and then will I fulfill the covenant which the Father hath made unto all the people of the house of Israel. And blessed are the Gentiles, because of their belief in me [they come in]. . . . Because of the unbelief of you, O house of Israel, in the latter day shall the truth come unto the Gentiles.” [Israel has] failed. We’re going to give the Gentiles a break. The Gentiles will have their time. “But wo, saith the Father, unto the unbelieving of the Gentiles . . . [who] have scattered my people.” Now here we get the ultimate prophecy of the Book of Mormon, the great warning. Of course, the great prophecy comes later, but this is the great warning. This is the message of the Book of Mormon to the world at present, and see if it doesn’t fit like a glove here, from verse 8 on in chapter 16. They have “scattered my people” and trodden them under feet. What has happened? I have some horrendous examples I might give you, but we don’t have time for them. “And because of the mercies of the Father unto the Gentiles . . . after all this, and I have caused my people who are of the house of Israel to be smitten . . . and to be slain, and to be cast out from among them, and to become hated by them, and to become a hiss and a byword among
them.” The Jews and the Indians alike have been just ground down to nothing. The Jews emerged, but the Indians are still down there.

Verse 10: “At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel [when they go bad, after receiving it; notice they’ve received the gospel now, but if they sin against it, here’s the description of the Gentiles today] . . . and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations [we’re talking about one nation, those of the Promised Land, of course] and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisies, and murders, and priesthoods, and whoredoms, and secret abominations [all these things, then] . . . I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.” Does that mean we don’t have the gospel anymore? No. Notice, the emphasis here is on the fullness of the gospel. Do we have the fullness of the gospel now? No, we don’t. We have only parts of it. “And then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto my people, O house of Israel [and give them the fulness of the gospel, which they don’t have] and I will bring my gospel unto them. And I will show unto thee, O house of Israel, that the Gentiles shall not have power over you, . . . and ye shall come unto the knowledge of the fulness of my gospel.” They haven’t yet reached it. Don’t we have the fullness?

Verse 13: “But if the Gentiles will repent and return unto me, saith the Father, behold they shall be numbered among my people, O house of Israel. And I will not suffer my people, who are of the house of Israel, to go through among them, and tread them down” if they behave themselves. But if they do not, what will be the condition in the land then? These conditions in verses 15–16 are hard to imagine. But do we have the fullness? Usually in this class I have handed around [President Spencer W.] Kimball’s great bicentennial address in which he tells us how much of the fullness we have. It’s very much to the point. This was for the bicentennial, and he says here, “I am speaking of the general state of wickedness in which we seem to find the world in these perilous yet crucially momentous days; and thinking of this, I am reminded of the general principle that where much is given, much is expected. . . . But when I review the performance of this people in comparison with what is expected [the fullness, see], I am appalled and frightened. Iniquity seems to abound. The destroyer seems to be taking full advantage of the time remaining to him in this, the great day of his power. Evil seems to engulf us like a great wave, and we feel truly we are living in conditions similar to those in the days of Noah before the flood.”1

And, of course, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of Man. They ate, they drank, they married, they gave in marriage, they bought, they sold. It was business as usual, and suddenly the flood hit them like that. Then there are three things he takes us to task for: our contempt for the environment, our love of money, and our trust in the arm of flesh—in military might. He talks about these. When I see “many of the dark and miserable practices of men . . . I have the feeling that the good earth can hardly bear our presence upon it. . . . That such a cry is necessary among a people so blessed is amazing to me. . . . Sadly, however, we find that to be shown the way is not necessarily to walk in it. . . . Few men have ever knowingly and deliberately chosen to reject God and his blessings. Rather, we learn from the scriptures that because the exercise of faith has always appeared to be more difficult than relying on things immediately at hand, carnal man has tended to transfer his trust in God to material

things. Therefore, in all ages when men have fallen under the power of Satan and lost the faith, they have put in its place a hope in the ‘arm of flesh.’ . . . Do we have more of these good things than our faith can stand? Many people spend most of their time working in the service of a self-image that includes sufficient money, stocks, bonds, investment portfolios, property [and Brother Kimball had been a banker, you know], credit cards, furnishings, automobiles, and the like to guarantee carnal security throughout, it is hoped, a long and happy life.” He says it is foolish, forget it. Then he quotes Mormon 8:39: “Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not?” And he talks about Babylon to fall.

Well, it’s a great talk. This is the thing here. Do we have the fullness of the gospel? Unless we live up to it, we don’t. “In spite of our delight in defining ourselves as modern, and our tendency to think we possess sophistication that no other people in the past ever had—in spite of these things, we are, on the whole, an idolatrous people—a condition most repugnant to the Lord [well, that’s our condition now; I don’t need to go into detail here]. . . . Can we not take the Lord at his word and exercise a particle of faith in him?” [President Kimball asked]. He’ll take the fullness of the gospel from among them if that wickedness is going to happen, he says. We have it, but do we have the fullness? And he’ll hand the fullness over to Israel who do not have it now. But if the Gentiles repent, that will be fine.

Let’s get to the happy stuff in chapter 17. After this mounting pageant we’ve had right from the beginning of conflict and folly, we reach the grand climax in the Book of Mormon, and lo and behold, it is all good news. It’s a happy book, now. You expect, with this culmination, everything will break loose, and this is the dismal end—that the people always look forward to the things of this world. This is the happiest book in the world, you see. The terrible questions give everyone gnawing doubts all their lives, and this is the first time they are confronted head on. They are in the Bible after the resurrection of the Lord, and he comes to the apostles then, you see. He comes to the saints there and visits them for a period of forty days. That’s the joyful news which we don’t have in the New Testament, but here we have it. So this is what happens. Notice first of all 3 Nephi 17:2. These things that are happening, dramatic as they seem, are not an emotional or sentimental display, or anything like that, of what we vapidly call spiritual. None of that. The glory of God is still intelligence, and to appreciate what is happening here, the brain and intellect must be clear and active. So he tells them here, “I perceive that ye are weak, that ye cannot understand all my words [that you can’t understand what I’m talking about] which I am commanded of the Father to speak unto you at this time.”

What do you do about it? He says you go home and think very hard about these things. Verse 3: “Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said [concentrate—think about them, you see], and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand.” See, it’s not just seeing a vision or going into ecstasy or having a warm feeling or something like that. He wants you to understand these things and prepare your minds for tomorrow. You have to be able to receive these things. What’s he going to do? He’s going to give them great things, and for that they must be cleaned up and made ready. Now get rid of all your sickness. You can’t be distracted by itches, toothaches, earaches, and backaches. That will take your attention away from the gospel. See, the gospel is not the healing mission of the Seventh-Day Adventists, for example, or the healing of the Christian Scientists. The gospel begins where that ends. If they’re sick, the
Lord says, make them well. If they’re hungry, feed them, and then preach them the gospel.

He saw they were in tears. They didn’t want him to leave them. The epiphany doesn’t last long. He has to go to all these other sheep. He has to go the rounds, and so they were in tears. I thought Christ was everywhere, that his spirit enters into your heart. You hear all that, but we see some different things here. “... as if they would ask him to tarry a little longer with them. And he said unto them: Behold, my bowels are filled with compassion towards you. Have ye any that are sick among you? ... lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, or leprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf, or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will heal them [he’s going to clean everything all up], ... for I see that your faith is sufficient that I should heal you.” With one accord they brought their sick and he healed them, every one. The preaching of the gospel is not a medical mission. That’s a very important part of it, which prepares people for it. But it begins where the healing ends. I know what to do if I’m sick—no problem there. I don’t have a problem to get well. But the gnawing problem is what do we do after we’re well? Then what do we do? This is the thing. That’s where the gospel comes in, and we could never figure that out for ourselves. Notice here [verse 10]: They bathed his feet with their tears after he had healed them.

Then he commanded that their little children should be brought. Notice, he’s always insisting on the children here. Why is that? Verses 12–13: “So they brought their little children and set them down upon the ground round about him ... [and] he commanded the multitude that they should kneel down upon the ground.” Why does everybody kneel? Because kneeling is a position of concentration. It’s not an ordinary position. You’re aware of being in a special condition; it’s the best condition to concentrate in. If you’re kneeling, you’re not going to fall asleep. You could fall asleep standing or lying down, but when you kneel, it’s not just an act of subjection. You lower yourself. That’s what humility is. *Humilis* means putting yourself on the earth; the *humus*, as you know, is the earth. *Humilis* is to be humble and to kneel on the earth. You not only put yourself in that position, but you’re more receptive. You’re alert and waiting. You’ve struck this special posture and you wait in that posture until you’ve finished what you’re doing, what you’re going to receive, or what you’re going to concentrate on. And so they all do this quite often here.

Then it says here [verse 14]: “Jesus groaned within himself, and said: Father, I am troubled because of the wickedness of the people of the house of Israel.” And he himself also knelt on the earth and prayed to the Father. What he prayed cannot be written. Does that mean that it’s impossible to write, or that it’s not permitted to write? Either one. In this case it happens to be both. Verse 16: “The eye hath never seen, neither hath the ear heard, before, so great and marvelous things as we saw and heard Jesus speak unto the Father.” And you notice the theme here is joy. Notice verse 17: “And no one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us unto the Father [of being admitted to the universal discourse] ... but so great was the joy of the multitude that they were overcome.”

You’ll notice the hardest thing to support is joy. You can support suffering and pain with toothache and everything else without end. I mean there’s no limit to the suffering. But how do you contain joy? It’s the hardest thing in the world to do, as you know. When you’re overwhelmed with joy you have to excuse yourself; you have to depart. Remember
when Joseph met his brethren? He was the great ruler of Egypt, but he had to go into the other room and cry his eyes out because he was so happy to see them. And so it is here. Notice verse 20: “And they arose from the earth, and he said unto them: Blessed are ye because of your faith. And now behold, my joy is full [and what did he do? He wept]. And when he had said these words, he wept, . . . and he took their little children [again], one by one and blessed them.” See, he doesn’t just say bless you children, but the children deserve a blessing. Jesus gave each child his patriarchal blessing, just as he met the people one by one, not in the plural. “And when he had done this, he wept again.”

Now the question is, why would God weep? The classic treatment of this is in Moses 7:28–30 in the Pearl of Great Price. This is as magnificent a passage of prose as you’ll find in English or any other literature. It is the most marvelous of prose, but that isn’t the thing we’re going to read it for. It tells you why God can weep. So this is what happens: “And it came to pass that the God of heaven looked upon the residue of the people [as Jesus does here], and he wept; and Enoch bore record of it, saying [this is a marvelous passage of nature literature]: How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the mountains? And Enoch said unto the Lord: How is it that thou canst weep, seeing thou art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity? [weeping is a human fault, you see]. And were it possible that man could number the particles of the earth, yea, millions of earths like this, it would not be the beginning to the number of thy creations [what a statement]; and thy curtains are stretched out still; and yet thou art there, and thy bosom is there; and also thou art just; thou art merciful and kind forever.”

How does he do it, to stretch forth infinitely? When you reach that stage [you can]. This is the state of glory that he’s working for on our behalf. Verse 31: “And thou hast taken Zion to thine own bosom, from all thy creations, from all eternity to all eternity; and naught but peace, justice, and truth is the habitation of thy throne [this is the ultimate that you can possibly imagine of worlds without number]; and mercy shall go before thy face and have no end; how is it thou canst weep?” If you have filled the whole universe and mastered the whole thing [how can you weep?] “The Lord said unto Enoch: Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands; and I gave unto them [the knowledge they needed] their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency.” So they were not only free to act, but they had the knowledge to act on. With all the knowledge which is still the best course to take? Well, he said, I gave them instruction; I gave them commandments. He gave them all you’d want. “. . . gave I unto man his agency; And unto thy brethren have I said, and also given commandment, that they should love one another [this is the reason for weeping], and that they should choose me, their Father [after all that]; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood [this is the human race at that time, you see] And the fire of mine indignation is kindled against them, and in my hot displeasure will I send in the floods upon them,” and so forth. So this is why he can weep. That such a thing should happen is overpowering. What’s going on here, you see, is something quite overpowering.

We are in 3 Nephi 17:23 now: “And he spake unto the multitude, and said unto them: Behold your little ones.” You may have seen—it’s been in the news for the last week—that 40,000 children a day die of hunger and malnutrition, and such simple things as dehydration, because there’s no one to take care of them. No one cares for them. Here we are rolling in wealth and this goes on. “Behold your little ones. And as they looked to behold they cast their eyes towards the heaven, and they saw the heavens open [now the angels come down], and they saw angels descending out of heaven as it were in the midst
of fire [this is a demonstration of what is available to the undefiled human race as such; this is not a sentimental interlude, you see]; and they came down and encircled those little ones about, and they were encircled about with fire [this is a form of energy, as you know]; and the angels did minister unto them.” What do you mean by minister? Well, if you check the various places in the Book of Mormon [you see] it means they talked to them. In the first chapter of Luke, the Christmas chapter, the angel comes. When Gabriel appears to Zacharias in the temple, he says I have come to chat with you, to have a conversation with you. He says the same thing with Mary. When angels come and minister, what they do is bring the word. That’s what their ministry is, to bring the word, so they come and talk with us. But minister is a two-way road. You talk back and forth. It’s not just a vision or revelation—they come to chat and discuss. That’s what ministry is—to take care of you, to explain things to you, to satisfy you. This is what happens in the New Testament. The multitude saw it, and they talked with them.

Notice, the angels play this key role in the Book of Mormon for the initiated at a very special time, but they appear just to children. They come for special reasons, and you can see why this is. Why don’t angels come to us? Even Mary had to be assured that she wasn’t unworthy. She felt guilty. Zacharias was terrified and struck dumb. To the shepherds in the field, the angels first had to say, “don’t be afraid,” and so forth. And on the Mount of Transfiguration they were “sore afraid.” This is what’s so sad about it—we could enjoy the presence and visitations of angels if we weren’t so darn guilty. The case of the children proves it. They come to children because there’s no one else in the condition to receive them. See, I wouldn’t want to see an angel. As my grandfather said when he was in the First Presidency, “If an angel would come through that door, I’d go right out the window; I couldn’t face it.” No, we couldn’t. The culture shock would be too much, but children can. We want angels to visit us, but they can only visit communities like this of these little children, to whom we give such a bad time. And then, he says, they actually saw this. This thing really happened. Verse 25: “And the multitude did see and hear and bear record [that these things really happened]. . . . All of them did see and hear, every man for himself.” There it is again. One doesn’t say, well I know all these people believed it. They said they believed it. He said he saw it. Did you see it? No. Every man testified for himself what he had seen and heard, about 2,500 of them.

And then comes the sacrament. He calls for bread and wine and has them sit down on the earth. He took the bread and wine and blessed it “and gave unto the disciples and commanded that they should eat. And when they had eaten and were filled, he commanded that they should give unto the multitude.” Notice, the apostles minister. They’re deacons; they pass the sacrament. They’re ministering to the people. They’re the waiters; they’re waiting on them. He wants to make this clear. It’s not that they’re superior because they have the privilege of doing that, but they’re the ones who are obliging the people by passing the sacrament. Verse 5: “Behold there shall one be ordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall break bread and pass it and give it unto the people of my church, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name.”

Now he always eats after the resurrection. He has many appearances after the resurrection, but he always eats with them. Why does he do that? That marvelous passage in Luke 24:36 explains [this]. It’s after the resurrection and the apostles are talking among themselves. Again, it uses the same words, autôn lalountôn, chatting, conversing, exchanging ideas. That’s the very one that’s used when the angels come in the beginning of Luke. The angel
comes and speaks to Mary and others. That’s what they do—they minister. Well, they were talking to each other, and suddenly Jesus himself appeared in the middle of them. They were absolutely dumbfounded (πτοθέντες is a very powerful word) and ἐμφοβοι, terrified. Now these are the apostles that believed on the resurrection; but when Jesus appeared among them, they were terrified and utterly amazed. They thought they were seeing a ghost, a spirit. This is interesting. And he said to them, why are you so disturbed, and why are you of two minds? Why can’t you make up your mind? Why are you going to discuss this? It uses the word dialogue here. Why do you make this a dialogue? Why does this double-mindedness appear in your hearts? You’re asking yourselves, could this be or couldn’t it be? Why aren’t you sure? But they weren’t sure, so he rebuked them for that. He said, look, these are my hands, these are my feet—the same that I had when I was with you before. And he said, come on, feel them and see “for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see me have.” He was resurrected, and to prove it this is what he does, you see.

Then they still were amazed and didn’t know whether to believe him or not, for amazement and for ἱππαρα; they were struck with too much joy. They couldn’t make up their minds. So what did they do? He said, do you have anything to eat here? This was going to prove it to them. They still wouldn’t believe when he said that. They brought him a cooked fish and honeycomb, and he ate it in front of them to prove that he was really resurrected, that he was a human being. The ministry reads this in the churches, the people and the theologians read this, and they’ll say when Jesus appeared after the resurrection, he was a spirit. He came to the breast and bosom of everyone. How could you possibly make it clearer than this? They believed in the spirit stuff, as far as that was concerned, but they wouldn’t believe that it was really Jesus. All right, feel me—see and feel [Jesus said]. He said, a spirit isn’t solid the way I am. They still wouldn’t believe, so he said, do you have anything to eat—I’ll eat something. So he ate something. Well, as I say, the Christian world still says, yes, Jesus comes in spirit. After the resurrection, that’s the way he came. St. Augustine said, yes, I believe in the afterlife, but I’ll never believe in a physical resurrection. That’s too gross, too crass. We don’t have that.

So here [in 3 Nephi 18:6] he has the sacrament which he shares with them, you see. “And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done.” Remember that you ate it when you were with me. Remember, the sacrament has two purposes—to remind the people of the time when the Lord was with them, in remembrance of him, and to look forward to the time when he shall partake of the new wine with them again in his Father’s kingdom. So there’s the feast to come and the feast behind. We have both in the Book of Mormon. First, the people have to look forward, and, of course, this comes out in the Dead Sea Scrolls, in the appendix to the Serekh Scroll, where they have the sacrament. In the Dead Sea Scrolls when as many as twelve come together they’re supposed to have a sacrament. The priest puts out his hand and blesses the bread and the wine, because it is to represent the presence of the Messiah who is to come among them, the Messiah of Israel (I think it says of Ephraim). So they anticipated it, and the Jews had this very same thing. We see that the Book of Mormon religion is the same. You always observe to do this.

He doesn’t visit as a spirit. Verse 8: “He commanded his disciples that they should take the wine of the cup and drink of it, and . . . give unto the multitude . . . and this doth witness unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you.” You’ve made the covenant, and you’re willing to carry it out. This is another witness, you see, and you do it in remembrance of what’s happening right now. He says, you’ll do this
always in remembrance of me, because I have to leave you. This involves commitment. We’re committing ourselves in this deeper and deeper. We begin to build a bridge. This is this other world that people don’t even believe exists, you see. Verse 11: “And ye shall do it in remembrance of my blood, which I have shed for you, that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.” See, this is tuning in. You can do this.

Verse 13: “But whoso among you shall do more or less than these are not built upon my rock [he mentioned that before], but are built upon a sandy foundation.” Well, in the Southwest the Indians all live on the sand. That’s the wash. The Moenkopi Wash is the richest one, where the Hopis live. But they always put their houses on the rock. They don’t put their houses on the sand. When you build, you build up on the mesa, but your field is down below. In the sandy patches there is where you thrust the corn into the ground, and that’s where the underground water can be reached. But you don’t build on that. That can be very dangerous, because they do have flash floods, as you know, in the desert. They’re terrific, and they can change the whole terrain. So you build on the rock. It’s the same thing in the Near East, because it’s sandy country.

Verse 14: “Therefore blessed are ye if ye shall keep my commandments, which the Father hath commanded me that I should give unto you.” The Son is an example. He’s giving them instruction here. He says here in verse 16: “I have set an example for you.” We’re all in this together. I do it myself, he says. He prays to the Father, and he partakes of the sacrament. Then he says, “I say unto you, ye must watch and pray always lest ye enter into temptation; for Satan desireth to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.” He says this to the multitude, not just to the disciples. See, we don’t make this distinction enough in the New Testament.

Verse 19: “Therefore ye must always pray unto the Father in my name.” Of course, that’s the first commandment given to Adam. Therefore you shall do all you do in the name of the Son, and you shall repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore. Always pray unto the Father in my name. “And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive [credit is good], behold it shall be given unto you [he gives you a blank check here]. Pray in your families unto the Father, always in my name.” You don’t pray to the saints; you don’t pray to anyone else. You don’t pray to Jesus. You pray to the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. Now it gives the rule for the church here: “And behold, ye shall meet together oft; and ye shall not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together [you shall not cast him out of your meeting]. . . . But ye shall pray for them, and shall not cast them out. . . . Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine unto the world [he’s talking about the church]. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do. Behold, ye see that I have prayed unto the Father [so that’s what you do] and ye all have witnessed it.”

The light is an example, and that’s the guide. That’s why the Son is so important. He gives it all to us. We have to get it all through him. “And ye see that I have commanded that . . . ye might feel and see; even so shall ye do unto the world.” Notice how literal he’s being. This is humility, incidentally too, on his part, to be felt and seen, etc. He descends below all things. He says, you feel and see that you might bear testimony, as John says—what we have seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, felt with our hands, that we testify of. People try to get around that and say John is spiritual; he only speaks of the spirit.
Well, he talks about his eyes and ears and feeling. That doesn’t mean a thing [to them], and it’s the same thing with the resurrection, about the nature of God.

Verses 27–28: “I give unto you another commandment. . . . Ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily.” Well, of course, [a person] can’t renew a covenant which he hasn’t made. This is a renewal of a covenant, a promise to keep the covenant. If he’s never kept it [he can’t renew it]. The people do not take this responsibility. Who is to decide whether they’re unworthy or not? Well, you know yourself, and others do by the pattern of behavior, or whether they have entered the covenant or not. But you have no mental reservations here. God is not mocked, you see. If you do this and don’t intend to keep it all the way or [if you] make reservations, then God is not mocked, and you’re to be very much warned against this. He says [verse 30]: “Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out from among you.” Everyone is free to communicate in the church. And if he repents, there’s still time. I know them; you don’t know them. “I know my sheep, and they are numbered [you must put up with everybody]. Nevertheless, ye shall not cast him out of your synagogues, . . . for unto such shall ye continue to minister.” There it is again, minister—associate with him, converse with him, because you never know. It may be “I shall heal them; and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them [so don’t judge anyone]. . . . Wo unto him whom the Father condemneth. And I give you these commandments because of the disputations which have been among you. And blessed are ye if ye have no disputations among you.”

What could be more unseemly—after he’d been with them, talked with them, and told them these things—than that they should go on squabbling among themselves? We don’t want any of that, he says. Verse 36: “He touched with his hand the disciples whom he had chosen, one by one [there’s that again]. . . . And the multitude heard not the words which he spake . . . he gave them power to give the Holy Ghost. . . . There came a cloud and overshadowed the multitude that they could not see Jesus. And while they were overshadowed he departed from them and ascended into heaven.”

Now there’s a reminder of that exciting passage from Thucydides where it says “that night, no man slept.” It’s like Christmas Eve—the tremendous excitement about the great thing that’s going to happen tomorrow. Everybody is rushing around spreading the news: The Lord has finally come. He’s going to be here tomorrow. Has anybody missed it? That’s what it tells us here [in 3 Nephi 19]. The multitude dispersed. Everybody went home, but they didn’t go to bed. Verse 2: “And it was noised abroad among the people immediately, before it was yet dark, that the multitude had seen Jesus, and that he had ministered unto them, and that he would also show himself on the morrow unto the multitude.” Well, be there. [This is] the great night—the excitement of Easter night, the excitement of Christos anest, the excitement of Christmas when we’re expecting the coming of the Lord. For little children have intense excitement. A great thing is going to happen; we’re going to receive a great gift tomorrow. We’re going to get the gospel tomorrow. They’re all excited about it. As I said, not a man slept.

Verse 3: “Yea, and even all the night it was noised abroad concerning Jesus [people went running around to make sure everybody heard it]; and insomuch did they send forth unto the people that there were many . . . [who] did labor exceedingly all that night.” As I said there was no rest, no sleep that night for anybody. Who could sleep, you see? “And . . . on the morrow, when the multitude was gathered together, behold Nephi and his brother . . .”
Here are the names of the Twelve Apostles. Notice they’re a mixture of Aramaic and Hebrew and Greek here, which is exactly the mixture of the population in the time of Lehi in Palestine, showing that these names had circulated among the people. They had the records and they studied them. They had the brass plates, which were much fuller than our Bible; they were big records.

Verse 5: “And behold, the multitude was so great that they did cause that they should be separated into twelve bodies.” This is a very interesting thing—so that they could be handled by the Twelve, etc. The very same process was followed in the ancient kingdoms. It was called in cespite. The people sit down in the grass. I’ve written an article in a classical journal about this. The person who was to be king would order the people to sit down on the ground in twelve groups, as many as there were tribes, but usually in twelve. Then he would order them to be fed. After they were fed, they would all cry in one voice and acclaim him because he had shown himself capable to supply life. He was the giver of life, substance, and food, and he was the one whom they could rely on as the king. The king had to give victory and prosperity, you see, so they would hail him. Well, this is the pattern it’s following, and this goes back to the beginning, to early times.

Verses 6–7: “And the twelve did teach the multitude; and behold, they did cause that the multitude should kneel down upon the face of the earth, and should pray unto the Father in the name of Jesus.” The disciples prayed and arose and ministered to the people. What would they do? They gave the speech here. Notice, the next verse proves what we mean by ministering: “And when they had ministered those same words which Jesus had spoken . . .” They ministered the words, see. They came and told them what the teaching was. They told [the people] what the Lord had told them before, so they ministered the words. That’s what you do when you minister. In other words, you come and teach. You talk with people, etc. “. . . which Jesus had spoken—nothing varying from the words which Jesus had spoken [the very same words]—behold, they knelt again and prayed to the Father in the name of Jesus. [What would they have said? We don’t know.] . . . They desired that the Holy Ghost should be given unto them.” And then they went down with Nephi and were baptized. They had all been baptized before. We’re told that anyone who wanted to be a member of the church before had to come to Nephi, and he assigned someone to baptize them, or baptized them himself. But now Nephi himself has to be baptized all over again. They have to be cleaned up. It’s going to be a new beginning now. Verse 12: “And he baptized all those whom Jesus had chosen [the Twelve, and they’re going to do the baptizing now] . . . The Holy Ghost did fall upon them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire [that energy or force field]. And behold, they were encircled about as if it were by fire [it wasn’t oxidation going on here; it was something else; we know it takes many forms]. . . . The multitude did witness it, and did bear record; and angels did come down out of heaven and did minister unto them.” Again, an example of greetings and thoughts.

Verse 15: “And it came to pass that while the angels were ministering unto the disciples, behold, Jesus came and stood in the midst and ministered unto them.” He dropped in again for conversation. He was going to talk to them. He went around among them “and he spake unto the multitude, and commanded them that they should kneel down again upon the earth, and also that his disciples should kneel down upon the earth.” As I said, kneeling keeps you aware. It’s stimulates concentration, actually. Why all this kneeling? Because this is a position you rarely assume in daily life, for one thing. It’s a reminder to concentrate. It’s not a casual or workaday occasion. Sitting or lying down or standing are
things we do all the time. The only thing we rarely do is kneel, unless we have to. I had to fix a car last night, and then you have to kneel. But normally that’s not what you do, so it has that special attitude that keeps you in concentration, keeps you [humble], and makes you think you’re going to be glad to get up. You want to make sure that you won’t drag things on there.

Verse 19: “And it came to pass that Jesus departed out of the midst of them, and went a little way off from them and bowed himself to the earth, and he said: . . .” Now we have these amazing things. In chapters 14–17 of John you find the same thing. [It is] even richer in this occasion, and look how we’re all tied together. Here in these four short verses we have 39 personal pronouns. Across the page in verses 28 and 29 you have 27 personal pronouns in two verses. I, you, he, them are personal pronouns. Notice, he’s tying the whole thing together as if it were a sort of a mesh, as it were. He begins this way: First he addresses the Father. That’s a proper noun, not a pronoun. But the pronouns are really going to fly now. “Father, I thank thee [here’s the relationship] that thou hast given the Holy Ghost unto these whom I have chosen [notice]; and it is because of their belief in me that I have chosen them out of the world.”

Notice the cast of characters here is Father, Son, Holy Ghost, those who are members of the Church—then those who are to be preached to by them, and then also there is the world which doesn’t figure. The world has to be taken into consideration, but this is out of the world; this is separating them. It goes on: “Father, I pray thee that thou wilt give the Holy Ghost unto all them that shall believe in their words.” Notice how it ties together with the Holy Ghost. The believers convert the unbelievers here. The converts are the believers. We’re spreading it out, you see. It began with the relationship between the Father and the Son, and now it’s going on. “Father, thou hast given them the Holy Ghost because they believe in me; and thou seest that they believe in me because thou hearest them, and they pray unto me; and they pray unto me because I am with them.” They’re praying to God the Father, you see, but they’re not seeing God the Father. They hail him [the Savior] here as God. He was God in their midst. He came down amongst them.

Verse 24: “When Jesus had thus prayed unto the Father, he came unto his disciples, and behold, they did still continue, without ceasing, to pray unto him.” Well, they prayed to the Father. We have some very interesting old Coptic writings that have come out recently that tell the same thing about Jesus coming and meeting with the people after [the resurrection], and he went aside three times and prayed. The first time his face was illuminated; the second time the apostles’ faces were illuminated like his. The third time he prayed to the Father he came back and the multitude were all shining; they were all glorious. And the same thing happens here, so you have a control on that in a very early Christian writing, which had been lost until the 1950s. “And they did not multiply many words.” When you multiply, you repeat over and over again, like “Allah, Allah, Allah.” You repeat it over and over again. You can do that all day long. That’s multiplying. When you multiply you repeat the same thing over again. Ten times four means four repeated ten times. You know that. So they did not multiply—it was not a repetitious prayer. It wasn’t a form prayer at all. They didn’t multiply words before him, “for it was given unto them what they should pray, and they were filled with desire.” The ideas flowed freely on this occasion. They knew what they desired, and they were desiring all sorts of things.

Verse 25: “Jesus blessed them as they did pray unto him [this is the way it is in heaven; like a gratified master he smiles upon them; they’re praying unto him now]; and his
countenance did smile upon them, and the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold they were as white as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus.” It was exceeding whiteness. That Coptic text tells us that’s the way it happened. We have an interesting parallel here. “And Jesus said unto them: Pray on; nevertheless they did not cease to pray. And he turned from them again, and went a little way off and bowed himself to the earth; and he prayed again unto the Father.” This is the second time, you see. Again, you notice the personal pronouns. “Father, I thank thee that thou has purified those whom I have chosen, because of their faith, and I pray for them, and also for them who shall believe on their words [see, it brings everybody into this same close relationship] that they may be purified in me, through faith on their words, even as they are purified in me. Father, I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world.” That excludes it. He is bringing them out of the world into this, because the world can’t go sailing on in the long stretch ahead into the eternities. It’s not set for that. It’s for the burning; it’s got to be completely changed and transferred before it can go on at an eternal level. But here we’re gradually inching, you might say, toward that state of eternal existence in which we’ll be able to live on a different level. But [he’s] always reminding them [that he’s there]. It’s physical, it’s real, you felt, you saw, etc. Don’t think you imagined it. I ate with you [he said], so you’re not going to go on as a drop in the ocean of being or something like that. As St. Jerome said, we have to accept the resurrection because the scriptures say it was physical. But, he says, the moment we are resurrected we will immediately start to dissolve, until we have been dissolved into the nothing from which we came. That’s the great Jerome who gave us the Vulgate Bible.

“Father, I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world, because of their faith [and here it is], that they may be purified in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one [now here’s atonement], that I may be glorified in them.” You see, they share the glory, and they are one because they are in each other. That expression is used a great deal in John, and of course it baffles everybody. How can you be in somebody else? Well, this has to do with another dimension of our being. After all, your existence doesn’t stop right where you end off there when you take a photograph. There may be even some Kirlian effect around you. You may even be glowing. These things happen, if you have fever or something like that. No, you extend your personality right here on earth beyond just where you stand—you know that. We can all project. That is the miracle of the word, but this is something far more than that, you see. We really begin to enter into things here.

Verses 30: “And when Jesus had spoken these words he came again [for the third time] unto his disciples; and behold they did pray steadfastly, without ceasing, unto him; and he did smile upon them again; and behold they were white, even as Jesus. . . . He went again a little way off and prayed unto the Father; and tongue cannot speak the words which he prayed, neither can be written by man the words which he prayed. And the multitude did hear and do bear record; and their hearts were opened [that’s how we have to understand it] and they did understand in their hearts the words which he prayed. . . . So great and marvelous were the words which he prayed that they cannot be written, neither can they be uttered by man.” Well, the question arises, how can you tell me something about them and the words he said. Can you give me an idea? The multitude did hear and bear record, and somebody comes and says, “Well he said marvelous things. Did you understand it?”

“Yes, we understood it with our hearts.”

“Well, tell me what he said. Can you give me an idea?”
And then he says, “No, I can’t.”

“Can’t you give me some idea?”

“No.”

I walk into a room where there are a lot of quantum physicists, highest bracket, having a conference. I listen to them for a while and then go out. Somebody says, “Well, Mr. Nibley, can you tell me what they said in there?”

I say, “Heavens, I can’t tell you. I can’t even dream what they talking about; it was way out of my star.” There are plenty of things you can hear and not report or understand or anything else. Yet at the time you could have been enormously impressed. But remember, we’re dealing with other dimensions here.

This is the teaching of the forty days, too [in verse 35]: “So great faith have I never seen among all the Jews; wherefore I could not show unto them so great miracles, because of their unbelief. . . . There are none of them that have seen so great things as ye have seen. . . . He commanded the multitude that they should cease to pray, and also his disciples. And he commanded them that they should not cease to pray in their hearts.” There you are again; there’s the other dimension. You can extend it from there, and you know what that means.

Verses 2: “And he commanded them that they should arise, . . . [and] he brake bread again and blessed it, and gave to the disciples to eat.” And they gave it to the multitude, and the wine to drink. The miracle of the loaves and fishes, you remember, was a sacrament. And this was a miracle. He supplied the wine and the bread here.

Verse 6: “Now there had been no bread, neither wine, brought by the disciples, neither by the multitude; but he truly gave unto them bread to eat, and also wine to drink.” There have been a lot of articles written recently about the loaves and fishes [being] really a type of the sacrament when the Lord supplies it. And it’s the same thing here, you see. He supplies it. “And he said unto them: He that eateth this bread eateth of my body to his soul [this is the sacrament]; and he that drinketh of this wine drinketh of my blood to his soul.” Then this always happens, as I said. After the king feasts them, then they all cry out with an acclamation and accept him as king. Verse 9: “Now when the multitude had all eaten and drunk, behold, they were filled with the Spirit; and they did cry out with one voice, and gave glory to Jesus, whom they both saw and heard.”

Then he’s telling them the words of Isaiah, which he quotes about remnants abroad. And then we’re back again to this warning about the Gentiles. Verse 15: “And I say unto you, that if the Gentiles do not repent after . . . they have scattered my people—then shall ye, who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them [these things are yet to be fulfilled, and how we are to imagine them I don’t know]; and ye shall be in the midst of them who shall be many; and ye shall be among them as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.” The Gentiles obviously in such a position must be prostrate; they can’t help themselves. But strange things are already happening in the world. I don’t know [how it will happen]. . . . The sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent it shall fall upon them,
saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles.” So now we’ve got a world war here. The rest of the world knows nothing of this, but the report is not limited here.

Verse 22: “And behold, this people will I establish in this land, unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a New Jerusalem. And the powers of heaven shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you”—when we achieve Zion, when we have the fullness of the gospel. “Verily I say unto you, yea, and all the prophets . . . have testified of me [this is what it was all about]. And behold, ye are the children of the prophets.” See, the rest of the world knows nothing about this. This is a special community kept apart by itself. Well, we’ve seen how that is. As soon as anyone is able to receive it, they will. On the other hand there are many enclaves we know not of. There are tribes scattered everywhere that you know not of, and I must visit them too [the Savior said]. Take that into account.

Verse 25: “Ye are of the covenant which the Father made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham: And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. The Father having raised me up unto you first, and sent me to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities; and this because ye are the children of the covenant.” They’re a special group, a special classification. But it’s not necessarily the blood. Remember, he says all Gentiles who accept it will be accepted into the covenant. All whom Abraham circumcised and whom he took into his family, with the exception of his son Ishmael were in the covenant as much as anyone, and they were the seed of Abraham.

Verse 27: He said, “In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.” We mentioned that before. [Abraham’s] three wives had children who represent the three—Shem, Ham, and Japheth. At a time when the world population was reduced to a nub, his offspring started to flourish like mad. They don’t have to be direct descendants of them, but the fact is they’re probably mingled with all the genes in the world. “In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed—unto the pouring out of the Holy Ghost through me upon the Gentiles, which blessing upon the Gentiles shall make them mighty above all, unto the scattering of my people, O house of Israel.” Now this prophecy is 100 percent filled, you see, with the people on both sides. Both Israel in the New World and Israel in the Old World were thoroughly scattered. The Jews were scattered, as you know, for 2,000 years and were nonpersons. And the Indians have been as scattered and as beaten down as anyone could be by now. And we’ll see what happens now.

Remember the subject [for the final] is: “Should the Book of Mormon be taken more seriously?” or “Have we underestimated the Book of Mormon?” I think we all have.