

# TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Semester 4, Lecture 86  
3 Nephi 6  
The Horse in the Americas  
War and Prosperity

Last semester we rushed it toward the end to get to the Lord's coming to the Nephites, so we are going to have to backtrack a little bit and go back to 3 Nephi 6. We are going to ask a lot of questions this semester, too. Last semester we began with Alma 46. I said that had everything in it. If there was nothing else in the book but that, it would prove the Book of Mormon and give us enough nourishment to go on to the end of time. This is just as good. This chapter contains more historical wisdom in as small a scope as you can ever get it. (That's a bad sentence, isn't it?) It's the most concentrated form of historical wisdom; it tells us everything. The whole story is right in this chapter, and it especially applies to us. Is Brother Barrows here? Let's read this first verse, and then I'm going to ask you why this is a good place to begin. 3 Nephi 6:1: "And now it came to pass that the people of the Nephites did all return to their own lands in the twenty and sixth year [note the date], every man, with his family, his flocks and his herds, his horses and his cattle, and all things whatsoever did belong unto them."

Now why is that a good place to begin a story? It ends one phase; it ends the war. It's the end of an epic, and we begin a new phase. That's exactly the way *The Odyssey* begins. "Now all those who were to be spared destruction had got home, having safely escaped the perils of war and the sea." In the long epic [*The Iliad*] they go through all the war and trouble. Then it says, now we are going to begin a new story. It's a new beginning, and everybody is safely home. Everybody takes a deep breath. It's a good place to begin after the war, isn't it?

I'm caught on one thing. Before I can go any further, you've got to explain something to me. Brother Bentle? This is an underhanded way of taking the roll. Sister Bergeson? See, I don't call roll. Brother Bowen?—a good Welsh name. Brother Burdett? You're here—good for you. What about this business of horses in the Book of Mormon? Has that raised any problems?

"It has, according to some of the archaeological scholars."

We can't get any further until we've taken care of horses then, because this is the main crux. This is the strongest argument, supposedly, that has been raised against the Book of Mormon. Well, what about these horses it's talking about here? What's the objection? Why shouldn't they talk about horses? Incidentally, this also introduces us to another thing—how we interpret the words. If you are going to be literal, according to this, every male over the age of twenty owned more than one horse. It says, every man returned to his horses. What that means is every man, such as they were, returned to as many horses as he had, such as they were. They did all return—every man returned with his family and his horses. It's generic. Whatever men there were that had horses returned to whatever horses they had. This is generic, as it tells us, because it [uses] the indefinite *whatsoever*; whatsoever man had whatsoever horses returned to whatsoever horses he had.

We are in 3 Nephi 6, and, fittingly, we begin with the third verse, where the bard takes a deep breath (it's an epic) and begins another phase of the story entirely. This is a new beginning [following] a definite ending to the war. Everybody has settled down. Everybody is back home and happy. They have returned to their farms. Now we expect a glorious period. We've got to get

rid of this “horses” business, though, because this worries us, doesn’t it? Is there any evidence that Indians had horses? Well, yes, they rode horses all over the plains. Well, when and where did they get those horses? Nobody knows, as a matter of fact. But, first of all, what about horses in Egypt? We know they had them in the New Kingdom because we have pictures of them, but if you go look for horses’ bones you’ll never find any—no evidence of that sort.

The classic example, of course, is the camel. Professor Albright, who was the foremost American biblical scholar who ever was, absolutely insisted that people in Abraham’s day didn’t have camels—the camel wasn’t ridden until the eleventh century. There were no camels. Well, let’s ask somebody here. Where do you read about camels in the Bible? Do you remember who rides camels? Remember who was riding away on a camel, and she had the icon hidden under the camel’s saddle? It goes back to the patriarchal romances. That’s the story of [Jacob] and Rachel. Abraham is placed at 1800–2000 B.C., way back there. In other words, the patriarchal narratives talk about everybody riding around on camels, yet the best scholars say they didn’t have camels. There’s no evidence that they had camels. All we have is the written record, but the written record is quite adequate, isn’t it? Where did they get the idea of their having camels and riding around on them? All it takes is just one piece of evidence and that changes the whole picture. So you are not going to prove a negative by the absence of something.

But did every man have a horse here? Sister Burton? Brother Buss? What kind of fossil horses do you find in America in the early days? [answer inaudible]. It began in America, didn’t it? It was an eohippus, the little tiny thing, not much bigger than a jackrabbit. They wouldn’t have ridden those around, so we make jokes about that. But what about the intervening phases? What’s missing? There are all sorts of big gaps in it—what could have been there and what couldn’t. It’s very hard to determine these things. It was J. B. S. Haldane, the great British biologist, who said that the evolution of the horse is more certain than the proof of the Pythagorean theorem. It’s more certain than any mathematical demonstration. Since he said that, it has been shown that the evidence of the descent of the horse is as full of holes as anything. There’s no unbroken record whatever to be established. But this is the way it goes.

When the horses came, the plains Indians were the greatest riders. Do you learn to ride and do people change customs overnight, Brother Call? Is a custom like riding acquired readily and quickly by people? H. G. Wells wrote a story with his great historical imagination, telling exactly how man first domesticated the horse. Primitive man was hanging from a bough, and a horse ran under him. He let go and fell on [the horse’s] back and was riding him. So he became a rider. But we know from Mesopotamian records, which are very ample, that men drove horses as teams, even as four-horse teams, for a thousand years before anybody rode them. They never rode horses. They drove them and had them pull wagons. Why don’t people take advantage of those things? Well, look at us. Have you ever ridden a buffalo? The cape buffalo is supposed to be the most ferocious animal in the world. We don’t ride buffaloes at all, but in Southeast Asia little boys ride them. Naked little boys with sticks ride them all over, and the great beasts obey what they want them to do. We’d never dream of doing a thing like that. After all these thousands of years we’ve known that we could exploit our cattle by riding them, but we don’t. Other people will never ride a horse.

Another thing you might say is that there is definite proof that the Arabs never knew the wheel because they never ride wheeled vehicles. They don’t ride them at all. They’ve known the wheel for thousands of years, but you won’t find them using wheeled vehicles. In fact, they are suspicious. When the bicycles first started being used, they wouldn’t touch them. They were forbidden because they said, the *dūlāb* (wheel) was driven by the *iblis* (devil). The devil makes the front wheel go, but you make the back wheel go. You are collaborating with the devil when you ride a bicycle, so they wouldn’t ride bicycles. The thing is that through thousands of years the Arabs were never found using wheeled vehicles, though they knew all about them, that they were

practical, etc. Flinders Petrie, the Egyptologist and father of Egyptian archaeology, pointed that out. The Egyptians had certain inventions, and they knew their neighbors had [other inventions]. But they never adopted those conveniences, and the other way around. The neighbors never adopted their conveniences. They worked very well on both sides. It's a very strange prejudice we have about these things.

My friend at Berkeley, Woodrow Bora, studied for years the horse in America. Do you know where the great horse exchange center was in New Mexico? Is Brother Clawson here? Where did the Spanish and the Indians used to buy and exchange their horses in New Mexico? It's a well-known place beginning with *Santa* and not a long word after that. Santa Fe was the place where they traded the horses. But the interesting thing is that those horses didn't come from Mexico; they weren't Spanish horses. They were going into Mexico from Santa Fe, and they all came from the plains. But that was in the sixteenth century. The Spanish hadn't even been here before. The horses were coming down. And what's more, as I said, these customs are never adopted—riding, driving, etc. People are extremely conservative in those things. Yet we find the Indians are the best bare-back riders in the world. They just have to see a horse and off they go. We are told that when the horse appeared down in Peru in the Incan empire people were terrified. They'd never seen a horse, and they ran away. Why didn't the plains Indians and other Indians in Florida run away from the horse? They didn't. There is no sign of their being even impressed by horses. They were far better riders than the Spanish; they knew all about it. There are all sorts of blanks and holes we know nothing about here. You can't make an open-and-shut case of the horse at all. The moral is that the problem isn't solved yet, and you can't prove a negative. So this shouldn't slow us down; we should go right on here. But when they see [the word] *horses*, please immediately call you up on that. But again, you can see that the language is used very generally here. There is much more we could say about horses, but it is not necessary now.

Notice that nice things were going on here. They hadn't used up all their food yet; therefore, they had plenty to go on. They had a seven-year supply, but they didn't need a seven-year supply. "They did return to their own lands." This is a happy ending, you see. Every man had gone back to his own home—everyone who had escaped death, of course. Others didn't. Verse 2: "And they did return to their own lands and their possessions, both on the north and on the south, both on the land northward and on the land southward." So with everybody happy there's an ending again.

What makes that introduction particularly appropriate for the present moment in history, Brother Clay? (This is a good one.) This is a happy beginning of a new era. All of a sudden things are peaceful after fourteen years of war. They had a terrible time. All of a sudden the whole area is at peace, the north and the south. Everybody's back home and happy. How does that remind you of something that is happening today? And how broad a hint do I have to give? [answer inaudible] You refer to it exactly, of course. It looks all of a sudden as if everything is going to be lovely, doesn't it? This is very encouraging. It's another turn around, and it's a good thing. Everybody is much happier than they were—a new opportunity, a new chance, a new leaf. That's why I called your attention to the twenty-sixth year [verse 1], because if we turn in the same chapter to verse 17 we see it was the thirtieth year. Now we are going to have a little mathematics. Brother Clayton, the happy story began in the twenty-sixth year. Now we come to the thirtieth year. How many years between? We don't use slide rules anymore, but have you got a computer with you? [laughter]. In the twenty-sixth year everything was hunky-dory. This is exactly how a Gilbert and Sullivan comedy ends. It would go this way: "Oh joy, oh rapture unforeseen, The cloudless skies are now serene." Everybody's happy. This is a happy ending. In this year they begin with a happy ending, but how long does it last? Notice verse 17 here. From the twenty-sixth to the thirtieth year is how many years?

"Four."

And what happens? Look at the last sentence there: “They were in a state of awful wickedness.” It took just four years for the whole thing to collapse. Should that be a warning for anyone? This is a very rich chapter. This is going to tell us why it happened, exactly how, the process, everything else. It’s going to be all laid out for us here. It’s a marvelous thing. That was Brother Clayton who did the calculating for us. Now we come to the next one. Incidentally, we should ask you this. Is Sister Cox here? Have you read the Book of Mormon up to this point?

“Yes.”

Oh, great. What were Moroni’s policies toward the enemy and the opposition? Was he a get-even man?

“No.”

Never. He always called them his brethren. The minute they showed any signs of weakening, he would immediately want to parley and discuss things. But the funniest thing was that after the war was over, what did he do? Did he throw them all into concentration camps, make them pay enormous indemnities? No, he was a very wise man. He took their word for it and let them go home. That was that. This happened time and again. You notice that was a wise policy, and this policy is going to make for prosperity here. Notice, they go back and they are going to be very generous with the opposition. We talk about the robbers here. It was the war of the robbers, like the Roman robbers. Notice, verses 3–5 describe their liberal policies here. Remember after World War I, Brother Darrow? After World War I, do you recall the Treaty of Versailles, the League of Nations, etc.? Well, that’s too bad. Of course, I was there, as far as that goes. Just a couple of years after that I was there on my mission, and the tension was terrible. It was awful. It didn’t settle anything, because what happened? The French were determined to make the Germans pay for the whole war. They caused it; they were going to pay for it. Old Clemenceau wouldn’t move; he wouldn’t budge. Wilson’s League of Nations was adopted by everyone, but the U.S. Senate turned it down. So that collapsed. The English and the French, especially the French, were going to get the last pound of flesh from the Germans, and what did it lead to? I’ll give you ten guesses, Sister Davenport.

“World War II.”

Ah, you guessed it. After World War I came World War II. But it was that. The Germans were strapped; they were desperate. They got more and more desperate. That happens, so that’s not wise. Sister Davenport, after World War II, was it the same sort of settlement? Were we just as hard on the Germans and the Japanese, saying you’ll pay every penny of this? Who were the people who reorganized the general plan for the European theater? What did they call it?

“The Marshal Plan.”

The Marshal Plan by General Marshal. Who was in charge in Japan? MacArthur, and he took a very liberal stand, you see. They regarded him as the image. He could have been absolute dictator, but he wouldn’t do it. He wanted to restore Europe along democratic lines and gave them great freedom. There was as little oppression as possible. He gave them what they wanted, and the Marshal Plan helped Europe out, including the Germans as well. Of course, the Germans and the Japanese were the ones who staged the miraculous comebacks. It was a much wiser settlement, and that’s the kind of settlement they made after this war. You see how it pays off here in these three verses. Verse 3: “And they granted unto those robbers [who were bad people] who had entered into a covenant to keep the peace of the land [you have to trust them], who were desirous to remain Lamanites, lands, according to their numbers.” So they rehabilitated them, and there were no reprisals, and they gave them lands to settle in. “And they had formed their laws according to equity and justice.”

Well, you don't have anything to worry about. It should all be happiness. It should all be "peaches and cream." The cloudless skies are all serene, and it tells us that very soon. There is no reason in the world why everything shouldn't work perfectly. When you establish things in justice and equity, how rare that is. What that amounts to is grace and truth, actually. Grace is charity and equity, and truth is justice. Remember, the Lord is full of *grace* and *truth*. When you have those two you have everything. So naturally, what result would you expect from that? Do you detect that in the next verse, Brother Frost? If you will look sharply at verse 4, it tells us how this plan worked out. What was the immediate result of this sensible solution?

"A great comeback."

Prosperity, you bet. There was a terrific postwar boom—it really went wild. It created a boom too much though. Verse 4: "And the twenty and sixth and seventh years passed away, and there was great order in the land [that's fine]; and they had formed their laws according to equity and justice." Now this is the situation we are in today, we say. What will be the "fly in the ointment here?" People are sort of worried.

On Saturday night I was visited by one of the most eminent architects in Yugoslavia. He's a member of the Church and very active. He is designing buildings in Kiev, Lithuania, and all over the Russian area. He's Yugoslavian, and he's the head of a large architectural firm. He said, "This is good; it will last for five years." I corrected him and said, "No, three years—four years at most." But coming back to it, five years might be it, because five years seems to be a standard limit. When the Saints went to Kirtland, Joseph Smith prophesied that they would be good there for five years. We have the five-year rule. Here's what happens; it lasts five years. Should we start worrying already? What are we going to do about these things? Start taking the Book of Mormon seriously is what we should do.

Verse 5: "And now there was nothing in all the land to hinder the people [cloudless skies, all serene] from prospering continually [ah ha, what's the "fly in the ointment?" Is it economic? Is it political? It's because of what the people are—if the people weren't "damn fools"], except they should fall into transgression." Alas, we have human nature to face here, don't we? From here on you expect the happy ending. It may turn sour very soon, and we find that it does. In just the thirtieth year they had reached a stage of awful wickedness. We want to know how that was possible.

This verse 6 is an interesting one, too. Brother Hansen, in verse 6 the question is the judges. They appointed judges. We know that the system of judges superseded that of the kings under Mosiah. How would the appointing of judges insure the peace? What's the threat here? Is the thing going to last? Verse 6: "And now it was Gidgiddoni, and the judge, Lachoneus, and those who had been appointed leaders, who had established this great peace in the land." So it was the judges who established the peace. Why was it judges? Why wasn't it the king? Ten guesses. Of course, they didn't have a king. The judges were the government. But why judges instead of the legislature? They had a lot of organizing to do, but the judges were permanent here. This was a life position with these people. The judges are in and everything comes back to them. Well, where does everything rest in the end in this country? With the Supreme Court. They can invalidate an act of Congress if they declare it unconstitutional. That's all they have to do, so in the end it all rests with the nine old men and what their ideologies and philosophies are, etc. Is that the most stable system in the world? Well, if you don't have good, honest judges you might as well close up shop. Where are you if the judge isn't honest? What is a common theme of the prophets in the Old Testament? That the judges are crooked, that they accept bribes. Isaiah and Jeremiah talk about the easily bribed judges, etc.

Do we have any trouble with judges in the Book of Mormon? Did you ever hear of any corrupt judges there? Does anybody know of a corrupt judge in the Book of Mormon? There are various people when these Gadianton robbers take over. We'll see a lot more of that in the future, though. They certainly had them. Well, what about Abinadi? Who were the people who judged him? They were the judges, the high priests. What about the Lord? What about Israel? Where did the ultimate responsibility rest in Israel? Of course, it rested with the people, but who were those with whom the Lord dealt? The Scribes, the Pharisees, the doctors, and the lawyers. The Scribes were the officials at court, and the lawyers and judges were the high clergy. They were all the same, and they were the ones in charge of the trial of Jesus. Caiaphas, who tried him, was the high priest, but he was the chief judge, too. So it's a system of judges. If the judges are corrupt, what are you going to do? But these [in 3 Nephi 6:6] were good judges.

Now I run into something else. There were the horses. Now I run into a very suspicious word here in verse 6, which I hadn't noticed before. We might as well notice it now. Every time you go through, you get taken up on things. I noticed it later on, but not here. Brother Douglas Hart, what's wrong with this name *Lachoneus* in the Book of Mormon? We've been having a lot of strange, exotic names here. Well, the other Brother Hart, what's wrong with this name *Lachoneus*? Does it sound right? We have Nephi, Lehi, Sam, Abinadi, Laman, and Lemuel—the good old Semitic, Arabic, and Egyptian names. Now suddenly something like *Lachoneus* pops up. If we have any Greek or Latin majors here, they would say that sounds very suspicious—that sounds very classical to me. Do you know who the Laconians were? When you hear Laconia what does it mean? A few years ago if you asked that in a high school class, half the class would know what it was. We don't know anything anymore—that's true. Laconia is in the southeast Peloponnesus. Brother Hart, you know where the Peloponnesus is, don't you? The island of Pelops. It's the peninsula that hangs onto the south end of Greece. It sticks out into the Mediterranean. The southeast portion is very rich in harbors. That's Laconia; there's great ship building there. You've had this already in Book of Mormon classes, so Brother Harvey, or either of the brothers Hart can tell me, in the time of Lehi who was the king of Egypt? Who was the Pharaoh? It was the twenty-sixth dynasty, and it was Pharaoh Necho I. It was a new dynasty which had been established in the delta. He was a great power broker, a very powerful man, but he was being threatened by the Babylonians.

Who was the king of the Jews who pulled off his shoes? You should guess this one at least. Nebuchadnezzar. He was threatened by Nebuchadnezzar. A great land empire was in conflict with another great land empire, and Necho thought his great advantage would be to cultivate a fleet. Just at that time there happened to be invented a great novelty that revolutionized sea warfare. It was the invention by the Cilicians of the trireme. They invented the trireme, a very efficient, very sleek, very fast, very powerful warship that nothing could match. They were good, and that's where they made them, in Laconia and in Cilicia. Necho, who was the king of Egypt, bought up the whole fleet, including the crews and everything else. There was a good tradition for that, because he built his economic empire up and he was ruling in Palestine at this time by the power of his army. It was made up entirely of mercenaries, and the mercenaries were all Greeks. [Palestine] was swarming in Lehi's day with Greeks. For that matter, the Philistines were Greeks. They are very close. So here we have the name *Lachoneus* [verse 6]. The point is that there were Lachoneuses running all over Israel in the time of Lehi. They are just the people you would expect to be there. The ship builders, the sea people, and lots of sailors might be called that because they would come from Laconia and be running around. But these things we didn't know were going on, you see. If we knew about all these things that were going on underground, this wouldn't all look so strange. All of a sudden he pops up with a name that is about as Jewish, or about as Egyptian, as John Smith. It belongs here, believe me. He's one of the judges, a rather eminent name. This takes us to another subject. We'll deal with this separately later on about race in the Book of Mormon, which is much more complicated than we thought. Let's get on here with this exciting chapter.

So the people began to prosper and wax great. It was a happy time of law, equity, and justice, with nothing to hinder prospering except they should misbehave themselves. The good judge Lachoneus appointed leaders that were competent, and there was peace in the land. So what would you naturally expect them to engage in with peace after a long and ruinous war? I'll give you ten guesses, Brother Havens. What would you expect after a long, ruinous war? What do we have to do in Panama now for the next few years?

"They destroyed so many buildings and highways; they have to rebuild them."

Great projects, lots of chance for nice big fat contracts for construction, etc.—corruption all over the place. That's exactly what happens here. Isn't Joseph Smith shrewd to know all these things? He's got it all figured out. That 23-year-old kid on the farm sits down and writes it all out. Verse 7: "And it came to pass that there were many cities built anew [new cities—it's a boom time], and there were many old cities repaired." There had to be lots of repairs, lots of reconstruction in their inner cities. It was not just destruction, but they had been neglected. It had been a terrible war, and they had to use all their resources for other things. Naturally, if you have a lot of cities, what do you have to have connecting them? There are some nice fat contracts there, too, aren't there? Brother Hillam, what do you have to have connecting the cities?

"Highways."

Yes, you can have airports, but they didn't have them then. Highways, and we do know they had marvelous highways. We must remember, in 1829 when this was written, nothing was known about the great highway system that you find in Central America. It goes right up to Mexico City. You find highways all over, but especially in South America, as you know. They go right down the whole length of the Andes, these amazingly well-built highways. So they do have highways connecting them. That's from a later period, but they're built like the Roman roads. It was only very recently discovered that the great net of Roman roads in Gaul (France), for example, are simply overlaid over much earlier roads. There are pre-Roman roads that go back five or six thousand years. People have to get from place to place, and they take the closer route. There is a new photographic survey of England, showing the roads that go back to the fourth and fifth millenniums B.C. They had a wonderful road system. Watling Street, the main road that ran up the whole center of England almost as straight as an arrow, was there already then. It's an amazing thing. That's aside from the lay lines that the mystic people talk about today, connecting the sacred, prehistoric, megalithic centers. There are all sorts of things going on we don't know about, but this is natural. This is what you would expect.

Verse 8: "And there were many highways cast up, and many roads made, which led from city to city, and from land to land, and from place to place [a regular system. So it's the twenty-eighth year, just two years away] . . . and the people had continual peace." Two years is hardly something to boast about, is it? Even we could keep peace for two years. "But it came to pass in the twenty and ninth year there began to be some disputings among the people." And now we see where the trouble begins. What was the threat to this highly successful economy and would it last? Would you have any ideas about this? What would make you suspicious, Brother Hillam, that things weren't all going to be perfect once you heard about this great postwar prosperity, this boom? You would raise an eyebrow and say, can it last? Why? What's wrong with a boom? What's wrong with everybody getting rich overnight? We don't think so.

"It leads to corruption and things like you were talking about in the previous class."

Oh, but can't you avoid that? There's the famous saying of Lord Acton, "Power [like money], tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Will money always corrupt? Who uses money to corrupt people, to buy up armies and navies, popes and priests, kings and presidents, and rules with blood and horror? You know who. He uses money as his implement, so this makes

me very suspicious things are going to happen. We should read the verses as they come. “There began to be some disputings among the people; and some were lifted up unto pride and boastings because of their exceedingly great riches.” That has been the last main word of President Benson—pride is a thing to beware of. We get a false picture of pride, don’t we? It’s not necessarily pushing people off the sidewalk. Where does pride begin here, Brother Hilton? When I see pride, do I have to see somebody with long flowing robes and his nose in the air and wearing a crown, or something like that? Is that necessarily pride? That’s one form of pride. Is there anything in Central American art, from the jars, the vases, the murals, etc.? You’ve seen books of Central American art. What would suggest pride in those? There’s a very consistent feature; you recognize that type of art instantly, don’t you? You know it’s not classical Greek art, don’t you?

“There’s lots of gold.”

Yes, there’s gold in everything for one thing. And they don’t just wear gold, but what else do they wear? [Answer is inaudible]. Right, they load themselves like a walking Christmas tree, with feathers and all sorts of clinking, rattling, and glittering garbage. Then they parade themselves. It’s comical in Central America. They overdo it so, whether it’s on the Mayan, or the illustrations of the Popol Vuh. It shows the grandees parading around with much too much hardware on. That’s a sign of pride, and it talks a great deal in the Book of Mormon about their precious, costly apparel. It doesn’t say beautiful apparel ever. It just says *costly*; that’s the main thing. That’s the only thing that interests us—that it has the proper label on it. The cost is what makes them great. This is the way the people were. “And some were lifted up unto pride and boastings because of their exceedingly great riches.” There are various ways. Boasting doesn’t mean you would have to go and shout it from the housetops. There are various ways in which you can show it. Look at the ads that say you have to own a Cadillac because it gives you prestige; it’s a prestige car. And you let everybody know. There are some very [persuasive] things. There was a good essay yesterday in the paper on the yuppie philosophy. It was to have good things, not just expensive things but things of good quality that are immediately recognizable on sight—a BMW, a Porsche. These things are forms of boasting because they display wealth. You don’t have to spend that much for a car, after all. You don’t have to spend fifty or sixty thousand dollars, but people do. It can be immediately spotted as such an object. This is a form of boasting. It’s the same thing with our labels on jeans —our fashionable design labels and things like that. You can size a person’s wardrobe up when you see it, total up the bill, and decide exactly how much he spent on it. This happens, and we do that deliberately. We try to make it obvious that we are wearing a particular brand of this, that, or the other. They are boasting because of their riches and making their riches obvious. It becomes invidious comparison.

Here it gives us the kind of culture they had. What follows is very important. See, Joseph is not leaving anything out here. How can they keep up this sort of thing? What is the style of economy? We see what their lifestyle is, but what are they? Barbarians digging treasures out and adorning themselves with shells from the sea, etc. Not a bit of it. This is very sophisticated civilization; we are told that. Remember, the Lamanites had been taught how to write, and it boomed business by the Nephites. What kind of civilization would you call this one, Sister Hutchings?

“They were divided into ranks according to their riches.”

Start reading verse 11 first; this is the most important.

“There were merchants and lawyers.”

Ah, now what would you say? Business and law were the big things then, weren’t they? There were merchants; it was a business civilization. Where you have a business civilization, you are going to have legalism and courts. You can’t do business without lawyers. They get all the

money, but you have to have them or they won't let you stir. This is part of it. It was legalistic. You say, well, isn't that a development of our own times? Isn't that rather characteristic of our own sophisticated civilization, where you have the markets that we do, etc.? Is this the way they always did business? Yes, it is. This is a Byzantine civilization; it's a very ancient type. (What was I going to say? Professor McCormick at Berkeley always used to ask the candidates the first question. He said, "What do I have in mind?")

There were many merchants, many lawyers, and many officers. So the result is that you are going to have wealth distributed accordingly. Some people are going to be very rich. It's a business civilization. What I was going to ask is What is the code word by which we designate such a civilization—a rich, lush, materialistic civilization? The ancient one. Remember, we talk about Zion, and in contrast to Zion what is the world of the materialists called?

"Babylon."

Babylon the great. That's Babylon. Chapter 8 of Revelation describes what Babylon is and the prophets. They use that as the code word. It describes that because Babylon was just such a civilization. I said Byzantine because that's later, but this is the Babylonian. But the Byzantine was very official. Everything was divided into ranks. In your particular office you had a particular mark on your garment according to how distinguished you were. And there were ranks for every calling. It was a very highly organized, bureaucratic society. Those are very efficient and then turn out to be very inefficient. But they were divided according to ranks [verse 12]. That's supposed to make for efficiency, etc. The ranks were judged, alas, not according to capacity or anything else, but according to riches. Do we do that? People try to do it according to riches. What about a corporation? Brother Ivins, do riches count for anything in the distribution of rank in a big corporation? Say you're going to give rank from the chairman of the board right on down, does their wealth have anything to do with their position in the corporation? Does it make any difference? Could a salesman be twice as rich as the chairman of the board? [answer not audible] Fat chance. It is the riches. As you go up the ladder you make more and more. That's taken for granted; this is the whole thing. They are sorted out either according to their income or the wealth they already have. Who is the gentleman who has this obsession with riches, ranks everybody in riches, and gives us the 300, the 400, the 500 richest people, etc. Do you know who that is, Sister Ivins? It's Malcolm who?

"Forbes."

Malcolm Forbes, of course. He makes a cult of wealth; it means everything to him. It's rank, who you admit and who you don't admit. You don't speak to certain people unless they are in a certain bracket, you see. And, of course, the Romans formalized that too under first Galba and then Otho. The Emperor Otho was a great big fat slob and enormously wealthy. He bought the empire. It didn't last him long though; it cost him his life. He divided [people] according to riches. If you didn't get 22,000 sesterces a year, you couldn't sit in certain places in the theater. It was all according to the money you got. Yes?

"In the same verse it says it says they were divided into ranks 'according to their riches and their chances for learning.'"

We haven't got to learning yet, you see. I'm going to ask you about the learning. Why would learning have anything to do with it here? There's this strange equation, learning and riches. It used to be just the opposite; that's what it was when I was growing up. We'll say *L* stands for *learning*, which is inversely proportional to wealth. The more learned you are the poorer you have to be. It was a luxury and a delight. You were willing to forego all sorts of things so you could spend your time doing these things that the world didn't consider particularly practical and wouldn't pay you for. You didn't expect to get paid when you studied things. When Aristotle

explained the Pythagorean theorem to a class, one young fellow asked, “Well, what good is that going to do me?”

Aristotle said to the monitor, “Give that boy a quarter so he won’t think he is wasting his time.” You have to do these things. Learning was a luxury for which you were willing to pay a high price. You were willing to starve for it and go without all sorts of things because of that enormous delight in learning. It’s just the opposite now; you won’t turn a page unless they’ll put on the line how much you’ll get for that. That’s morbid and tragic. This should never be. When I was young, this would be regarded as a monstrous perversion of values. But is it our standard today? Would you say it is? I would say it is. Do we tend to equate learning and riches today? Yes, we say you go to school because you make more money. President Barrows of the University of California at Berkeley shocked the world when he made that announcement. He was General Barrows, the one who led the campaign up in northern Russia after World War I. The only reason one goes to college is to increase his earning power [he said], a terrible thing to say. [inaudible question]

Oh yes, IBM. I mean MBA—same thing. It was the MBA, obviously, chances for learning. I don’t think it was particularly learning in the scriptures, or anything like that. The idea is the chances. They could learn what they wanted to, but if you had the money then you had the chance. You can be darn sure what kind of learning it was. “Some were ignorant because of their poverty, and others did receive great learning because of their riches.” Well, you wouldn’t say that of Diogenes, would you? See, Diogenes was the wisest man in Greece, but also the poorest. Alexander had an interview with Diogenes in Athens. You know the story of that interview, don’t you, Brother Johanson? (This is a dirty trick to call the roll; I’ve never done it before.) You know who Diogenes was, don’t you, Brother Johnson? He was going around looking for what with his lamp? Brother Jorgenson, you should know who Diogenes was. Who was he looking for with his lamp? He was going around barefoot, a very poor man. He had nothing and he said he was going around looking for what?

“An honest man.”

An honest man. In the Old Testament they call that a *mystery*. That’s what Jeremiah does—when you break a pot or do something and this stands for something else. That lamp stood for the light in the world searching for an honest man. He went around searching for an honest man, and he lived in a [barrel]. They said he didn’t work hard enough, so he would roll his barrel up and down the street busily during the day. They said, “What are you doing?”

“Well, I’m rolling my barrel and being busy like everybody else.” He had to do something. That’s about as much sense as our business makes—ninety percent of the things we do. When Alexander had conquered Athens, he said, “Is there anything I can do for you?” He was a great admirer of Diogenes, and you know what Diogenes said. Everybody, raise your hand if you know what Diogenes said to Alexander the Great. Diogenes said, “Yes, get out of the sun.” He was sunning himself in his barrel, and he said, “Please stand aside and let me get the sunlight.” That was what he asked. But as they walked away, what Alexander said, according to Callisthenes, was “If I wasn’t Alexander, the one man I would choose to be is Diogenes.” He didn’t take his cues from anybody else—he’s himself. He was making fun of the other people doing the business—busy, busy, busy work. You see, he was rolling his barrel up and down the street to show that he was busy like everybody else, and he was accomplishing just as much as they were. He was seeking for wisdom.

Here [in the Book of Mormon] “some were ignorant because of their poverty.” And you see the equation. Always until our own day, scholarship has always been considered a life of austerity. That’s the Hermetic standard, you see. Though they could have great wealth, they didn’t choose that. That’s corrupting. They weren’t all that way, were they? Some were lifted up. Do we have

any gems here? I see the time is up now. We'll resume here. Everybody above  $K$  better be here the next time, too [laughter].