

# TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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## Semester 1, Lecture 2 Introduction Nephi's Heritage

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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