

# TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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3 Nephi 6

Style of Writing in the Book of Mormon  
Pride, Gain, and Power

Somebody asked if we are going to have a syllabus. I think when the Book of Mormon is thoroughly studied, which it may be in years to come, it will be agreed that it's the most perfect book ever written—in structure, in form and everything—exactly what the message meant to convey. This chapter we are looking at today (3 Nephi 6) is miraculous in its structure, its simplicity, and its directness. So why would we need a syllabus? I think it's an impertinence to ask for a syllabus when we have the supreme syllabus in the Book of Mormon. It is a syllabus. Remember, this is the syllabus of hundreds of volumes of records. We are told that. So this is the syllabus, and this is the one we pay attention to. Since I don't have the roll today and can't ask questions (that's a horrible thing), let's talk about the style of the Book of Mormon. To start out I should ask somebody a question here. What do you notice in the first two verses? What do they have in common? What particular stylistic use do you find in the opening sentences of these two verses?

“And it came to pass.”

You immediately realize that the Book of Mormon is formulaic—that the ancients wrote in formulas, just as we do today. We don't write in separate, individual words; we think and speak in formulas. But the ancients did it much more than we do. If a thing has been perfectly and well said, you can do no better than to quote it. So if you look down in the margins of your Book of Mormon and at the bottom, or in other scriptures, or if you look at your concordance, you'll find that all scripture is a lot of quotes from other scriptures. Everybody is quoting everybody else all the time, and that's so with ancient literature, too. There was no copyright then; you were free to use anything, and you should be. This copyrighting and stealing of ideas is utterly absurd. As Upton Sinclair used to say, the purpose of a person's ideas is to have them stolen. You are not supposed to keep an idea to yourself. It's the same thing with an invention. You get your pay; that's all right. But there's this nonsense about royalties and stuff like that. We'll turn that all back to FARMS.

So there's this idea of “it came to pass.” This is one of the things the Book of Mormon has been criticized for. Mark Twain said, “If you leave out all the ‘it came to passes,’ the Book of Mormon would be a pamphlet.” Do you have to have these things? Well, you certainly do. It helps the Book of Mormon and everything else. It was Martin P. Nilsson, the great Swedish scholar, who called that “the epic technique.” When you are reciting, and when you are reading a long passage, you have to take a breath once in awhile. You have to lubricate the wheels. You can't face a person in every sentence with a brand new statement, a brand new idea, starting cold. You must put padding between the sentences. And in Semitic languages it's absolutely required to make it easier. A third of all the lines in the *Odyssey*, for example (we quoted that last time) are repeated lines. You repeat, you take a break, you take a breath, and you keep going. This keeps things going. It also keeps the reader's attention; it doesn't drag. For example, I picked up this morning a very old writing from the time of Seti II in the thirteenth century B.C. It's a famous story, which comes nearest to the writings of the patriarchs. It's like the patriarchal romances, very closely related to the Bible, very much like Genesis. It has the story of Joseph and other things like that and it's Egyptian, going back to the time of Seti II. And what do I find here? It starts out with this expression: “And now it came to pass after many days.” It sounds very much like the

Book of Mormon, doesn't it? "After many days" of all things. That's a usage we don't find in the Old Testament, but the Egyptians were fond of it. The Book of Mormon is supposed to be written in the language of the Egyptians and the learning of the Jews.

So we get down to the next sentence and it says: "Now it came to pass that after it dawned on the second day, there came to pass . . ." Something happens there. *Hr ír* actually means "next in our story" or "as to what comes next." The actual expression "it came to pass" is this one here. You'll see this is the one they go crazy about. Every sentence in this long story begins with either *íst rf* or *behold*, or *it came to pass*. It's required. This one starts out here: "And it came to pass when the time of plowing had come . . ." Then we get a real *it came to pass*, which is this expression *wn ín*. Now that really means *it came to pass*. The other is an expression that keeps things going, but here's this *hr ír* again. "Now it happened after the next day dawned there came . . ." Then here it is again. "It came to pass after many days." It goes on with these things. Then we get a *wn ín* again. "Then it came to pass that he said to his brother that it came to pass . . ." Now the next page is nothing but *it came to pass* in every sentence. Notice, they're written in here. You can fill them in with red. This is a copy. Where it's written in red, it's rubric.

In Egyptian you write in two dimensions, because you have to have depth. You have to have a stereo effect. Everything that is inspired and to be read as scriptures is written in black. But any comment the writer himself has to make, which is not divinely inspired (not the *ntr*, the divine words) is written in red. That's rubric, the red ink. So these are all in red ink. *It came to pass* is his own idea that he puts in there to grease things and to introduce another statement of the scripture. So here's the next line, *it came to pass*, the same thing. Seven times on one page it begins with *it came to pass*. We turn the page and it starts right out again *it came to pass*. Here's a long thing in rubric because he is making his own comments. "And behold, when came finally the time of sowing [the other was the time of plowing; this is the story of Joseph and his brethren] then it came to pass . . ." He puts them both in there. Here it is again. You have to put *it came to pass*. You can't just start a sentence out cold. Just as in Arabic it would be very bad taste to start out "I saw a dog." You have to say *'inna*, "Behold, I saw a dog." You have to say that. We mustn't worry about this. Actually, this is strong evidence for what we have here. This *it came to pass* business should be here. It's not out of place at all; you don't have to apologize for it.

We are going to ask somebody if style is important. What does the style of a writing do? Well, of course, it conditions our response. It establishes the mood of the writer. If a writer is trying to fool you, he can't do it. There's a massive work by a German writer called Friedrich Blass on the detecting of ancient forgeries, or what the writer was up to. The writer can't fool you with any long document; it's impossible. There's no such thing as a clever forgery; it doesn't exist. Only if people want to be fooled can they be fooled, but there's no clever forgery. The rule also is that a historical text is the hardest to forge, because it's not somebody's ideas. Anybody is free to have any ideas he wants, you see. But if he is writing a historical text, like Joseph Smith, [it's very difficult]. Having written this big book, he hands it to the world and says, this actually happened—this is true. These are not just my reflections, like science and health, like [the writings of] Mary Baker Eddy, or the writings of the Church Fathers, which are commentaries on the scriptures. They [presented] their ideas and argued with each other. Everybody can write commentaries, inspired works, spiritual-uplift poetry, and all sorts of inspirational literature. You can grind that out by the ream; there's nothing to it. But sit down and write a history, hand it to people, and say, this really happened at such and such a time and such and such a place. This happened and you are invited to expose it or explode it if you can. That's a very dangerous game to play. The more you add the more dangerous this becomes exponentially. You don't just add another detail, because adding two details together makes it four times as hard. Do those things really come together in the picture? You go on adding and have a huge book with every aspect of a civilization in it.

You think you can fool somebody with that? No wonder they won't touch the Book of Mormon—nobody. Even the great Eduard Meyer who laid so much emphasis on the study and criticism of Joseph Smith never read the Book of Mormon. That's a very interesting thing; they won't do it. Of course, you can read it through. We read it through, like going through the Louvre on roller skates or something like that. We want to say, I've read it through and that's that. With every problem and every study of grammar, or anything like that, you should read the whole thing through first fast. You don't learn it then, but you get an idea of what you're dealing with. It puts things in place and position. Do read it through by all means, as fast as you can—in one day if you can. That's the way you do it. Then you can settle down to things, but it's important to do it the first time that way. You must move fast when you learn things.

This style is very important because Joseph can't fool us. He may fool us with the history, which would be very hard, but the style is just as hard to fool us with. For one thing it is written in a number of styles. There are a number of books by a number of authors. They have been copied down and edited by Mormon and Moroni. This is another test. Brother Hilton at Berkeley got together a group, and they were going to study the Book of Mormon. They were not Mormons. They were Jews, Catholics, and everything. They were professors at Berkeley, and they were going to make a statistical study of the Book of Mormon, studying each of the books separately. You can get that report [on this study], and I've got to find out what the latest thing is on that. How can you study a person's style objectively and test it mathematically, if this book was written by Moroni and this book was written by Nephi? They were two very different men. One of the marvels of the Book of Mormon is the delineation of character in a very short space. In a few words it brings out with vivid clarity these beautiful little vignettes. You know exactly the kind of person Abinadi was—there's a lot about him—or King Noah was. It just has to say a few sentences and you have a vivid picture of the person.

So here we put things together and we find that these people [wrote in different styles]. Did Moroni write in the same style as Nephi did? For example, take the book of Ether. What do you mean by style in this case? How can you measure it objectively? Does it sound right? That's important; you get the feeling. The feeling is a very important thing. But there are certain [details]. A certain person uses certain expressions again and again. He is fond of using particles that another person doesn't use, he's fond of using a different conjunction, or he may use *behold* a lot oftener than somebody else uses it. Another may prefer *it came to pass*—so it goes. There are all sorts of ways in which you give yourself away [in writing] if it's long enough to form a pattern, and the books in the Book of Mormon, fortunately, are long enough—except for the short, dismal period after they settled in the New World and had a hard time, struggling along with all the short books. But you can measure them, and the styles of the Book of Mormon are very distinct. Each book was written by a different person. This makes it very clear, even though they were edited. But the style is important here. The style is not the form. It's all formulaic. It all follows the same form, as we write in the English form, but everybody has his own style. Bach wrote *partitas* in every form you can imagine—French, Italian, German dances, etc. But it was all Bach. It all had his inimitable style. It had the correct form of each of these musical idioms, but it was his style and it was immortal. Everything he touched turned to gold. There were no imitators or anything like that. Well, it happens with other composers, too.

What would we say is the main theme or feeling of the Book of Mormon? What do you feel most when you read it? Why does it move people so much? What is the thing that hits you most with the Book of Mormon? It's what Aristotle called *spoudaiōtēs*. I'm sorry we don't have the roll, so we can't ask about that; we'll have to pass it over. *Spoudaiōtēs* is usually translated as "high seriousness." He means to be understood; he wants to be believed. Whoever wrote the Book of Mormon in every book has this earnest zeal to get across. I guess if you were giving it a rhetorical form, [one of the] seven rhetorical tropes, you would call this a *swasoria*, or you could even call it

a *protreptic*. A *protreptic* is a missionary talk trying to get you to join our church, and a *swasoria*, as you can see by the word, is an attempt to persuade somebody. They are two types of address rhetorically. *Pro* means “to our side,” and *treptic* means “turn over.” [It means] “turn over” or “step over to our side.” Well, it’s not so *protreptic*, but it certainly is a *swasoria*. He’s trying to persuade us to believe in Jesus Christ. The title page of the Book of Mormon tells us that’s its purpose. It wants to persuade you Gentiles and everybody else to believe in Jesus Christ. It is frankly a sales pitch; it is really after us.

But there are sales pitches and [different] sales pitches, as you know. You can easily detect this; it’s a surprising thing. With all the rhetorical skills we have in public relations and our various skills in journalism, it’s almost impossible to fool a person who doesn’t want to be fooled. The appearance of great sincerity, whether in a politician or someone else, doesn’t fool you for long. It comes across for what it is. This is where the Book of Mormon is not going to fool you at all. It certainly couldn’t have been written by some old minister, Spaulding or anybody else, because it would be the most tremendous blasphemy that ever was. Here he’s telling you all about Jesus Christ. He’s putting words into the mouth of Jesus Christ. He’s calling you to believe this and bears his testimony, and yet he knows it’s just a novel, just a fake. That’s the explanation they still give. Fawn Brodie said Joseph Smith wrote it as a practical joke to fool his family and said, “I’ve got the damned fools fixed now.” That’s quoting. This kid goes to all the trouble of writing this enormous term paper, this vast piece of work just to fool his family. It’s not very convincing, yet they consider Mrs. Brodie the authority on the subject. And she hadn’t read it [the Book of Mormon]. We have her papers up at the University of Utah, and her Book of Mormon has a little mark here, a little mark there, and that’s it. She hadn’t studied it at all. It’s very obvious in what she wrote anyway; we won’t worry about her.

The style bears the weight of the message here. You notice that the Gettysburg Address was sincere; it doesn’t [try to] fool you. But other speeches we get about standing tall, the new wind, morning in America, and all this sort of stuff—how far does that fool anybody? This is a very different sort of thing. Matthew Arnold in his classic work on the translation of Homer said, Homer alone is great for four qualities that he possesses, and no other work possesses them. I’m going to ask you which of these the Book of Mormon stands out for. First of all, the most outstanding and the hardest to imitate of [qualities] of sublime writing like Homer (nobody else could ever pull it off) is that it’s preeminently rapid. You don’t expect a solemn epic to be rapid and move fast, but it does. He just rushes along. Milton moves at a majestic pace, but he is in no hurry, and other writers [are like that]. It’s almost impossible to write a serious work that really rushes along; you have to “milk it out.” But look at the Book of Mormon—look at the speed. Everything happens in 3 Nephi 6. You say, there’s nothing else left for the man to write; he’s told it all here. Where does he go from there? The poor guy is going to be awfully embarrassed. Not a bit of it. The next chapter is just as good, and he keeps going on and on and on. It rushes like a jet plane, and he never runs out of ideas. At the end he is going just as strong as at the beginning. Remember, it begins like a tempest with a rush and a roar—the fall of Jerusalem, the terrible tensions going on there, all the running around in the dark, etc. And it ends up at Cumorah with the most appalling and staggering description of people wiping themselves out, a horrendous thing. All in between there’s never a moment’s relaxation, including the long sermons and passages taken from the scriptures. So these things are very important, and the first is *rapidity*.

It is rare for it to have anything else, but the next is that he [Homer] is preeminently noble and lofty. There’s your *spoudaiōtēs*, you certainly get that in the Book of Mormon. We said preeminently rapid and preeminently noble. He also uses the word *lofty*.

Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed . . .

I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

[This is Milton, you see, but it is the lofty stuff; it's not fast.]

Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first  
Wast present [the Holy Ghost, you see], and, with mighty wings outspread,  
Dovelike sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,  
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark  
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;  
That, to the height of this great argument,  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men.

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book I

This stately prose moves along. It's lofty all right, but it's not going to move very fast. They are stuck in the garden for about three thousand lines. Adam and Eve keep chatting for several thousand lines. This is the way it goes.

Some of you may know Arthur Henry King who was here, a well-known professor of English from Cambridge, who came over and joined the Church. Now I think he is teaching in Arizona. He noticed this same thing, that in the writings of the scriptures that we have through Joseph Smith there's an entirely different tone; there's a majesty that you don't find anywhere. Others try to imitate it. The [Reorganized LDS] have tried to produce scripture, and they don't do it. It doesn't sound that way. Notice the stately rhythm here: "And now it came to pass [he uses both of the expressions] that the people of the Nephites did all return to their own lands." Notice, that's a *spondee*; that's very heavy. Beautiful, isn't it? Homer had to end every line with a spondee summing it up—the two long strokes that have a solemnity about them. Then lighter: ". . . in the twenty and sixth year, every man, with his family, his flocks and his herds, his horses and his cattle, and all things whatsoever did belong unto them." It's beautifully balanced prose. The only person who could match that beautiful balance of prose would be Edward Gibbon, I suppose, who wrote *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, a vast work in six volumes. There are some eminent Englishmen who actually memorize it by heart. It was once common for Englishmen to memorize Gibbons' entire history of Rome by heart. Can you imagine that? There are people who can do that, you know. We had a girl here who had a scholarship, and while she was there she memorized the Koran. Well, there are some schools in which you are not admitted to certain honors unless you know the Koran entirely by heart. We don't do that memorizing anymore; we don't carry the book around with us. It might help.

Anyway we have here the second quality, that it is noble. You have to admit the Book of Mormon is noble here, the way it moves. The third [quality] is that it is simple and direct in language—clear, simple, and direct. What is the expression the Book of Mormon uses? "In words of exceeding plainness." And it is in words of exceeding plainness, so you can't [misunderstand it]. The studies of Book of Mormon language all begin with a paradoxical fact. Shakespeare uses thirty-four thousand words; he contributed more to the language than any other person by far, including usages and everything else. This is what is phenomenal: The Book of Mormon uses only three thousand words. The most basic vocabulary, the least you can get by with, just stumbling and bumbling, is eight hundred words. But five thousand words is a minimum vocabulary. You are an ignoramus if you don't know more than five thousand, but the Book of Mormon uses only three thousand words, an amazingly limited vocabulary. They must, therefore,

speak with simple directness and plainness to get the ideas over. It doesn't use a particularly sophisticated word to describe a complex situation. It breaks it down and uses a few simple words that make it very clear what happens. We get that here: ". . . and all things whatsoever did belong unto them." Instead of a complex word, he breaks it down. They brought back all the things that belonged to them. After the war they got them all together again.

The fourth quality from Matthew Arnold is that it's simple and direct in ideas—in content, in the stories he tells, etc. We certainly get involved in it, but these are human events—people speaking to each other and doing things to each other. But he never gets us involved in sophisticated arguments, never gets us into deep and tricky matters at all. Even when Abinadi is arguing with the priests of Noah and they try to trick him, it's very simple and direct in ideas, language, and content. Anyone can understand it. We have children's [versions of] the Book of Mormon. There's no reason why you have to go to them—least of all these horrible animated cartoons, where Nephi, who is able to put on the armor of the mighty Laban, is a little kid about ten years old.

What else about the style? It does use what Martin P. Nilsson calls "the epic technique," taking a breather between lines, etc. Why the archaic language? There are more letters written and more questions about that than almost anything else. Why the King James language? Well, when missionaries go out and preach the gospel in Germany, what do they use? They use the Luther Bible, of course. Is it inspired? Well, as a matter of fact, the translators of the King James depended very heavily on the Luther Bible; we don't realize that. Luther beat them to the punch, and they borrowed a lot from Luther. It's a great translation. If we have any questions of what it means, we can always revert to the "original." We don't have the original text of either testament. The oldest text we have of the Old Testament is from the ninth century A.D., the Ben Asher Codex. We have eight thousand different ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, none of which are exactly alike. You can take your choice among them, so we make our constructions. But the Book of Mormon sticks to language that follows the King James Bible, as long as it serves, and so does the Doctrine and Covenants. If it has to be corrected or changed, he doesn't hesitate to give us the other. But we follow that. Why do we use the King James Bible? Because it is the accepted text of the Christian world. You are not going to preach the gospel without it.

What Bible did the apostles use in the New Testament, and what Bible does the Lord quote in the New Testament? He's quoting the Hebrews, but in our Greek New Testament, it's the *Septuagint*, because the *Septuagint* was the Bible accepted by the Jews (it was translated by the Jews, as a matter of fact) and accepted widely by the public. You have to use a text that people accept if you are going to prove anything by the scriptures. Naturally, we use the King James [translation] because the world will accept it, and it's good—it's great. It isn't always perfectly correct, but then we don't always follow it exactly. The Book of Mormon changes it when it is not [correct]; Joseph Smith didn't hesitate. There are two thousand differences in the Book of Mormon, so we have changes, corrections, etc. But it's strange that people make a big argument of that—oh, he's just copying from the King James Bible. Well, what language do you expect him to use when we are using common scriptures accepted by our whole society?

We've seen the style here, and we go on now. We come to this tremendous verse 15 in 3 Nephi 6. It tells us what's wrong. Remember what happened first. The pattern is very simple. It says here the people had prospered; there was pride and wealth, class distinctions, and poverty. It tells us much more than that, doesn't it? When they returned everything was lovely. They actually rehabilitated the robbers. As a result of the postwar boom there had to be a great deal of public works—lots of rebuilding of roads and cities. There was lots of work, lots of contracts, and a lot of people getting rich all of a sudden. So you have great postwar wealth which leads to the usual pride and boasting. It's really pride although it doesn't look like pride, such as the fashionable Yuppie culture, etc. The general contempt we have for those not in that particular culture, the

feeling of superiority we have, and the subtle efforts to maintain ourselves as superior [are pride]. We have that in our society. A person wants to succeed. “I want it all and I want it now.” We get this all over the place. You have to have the signs; you have to wear the right clothes, etc. What makes it real pride is the impression that you are above others.

We don’t realize that we are all in the same boat; we are all a bunch of slobs really, when you come down to it. Read the sermon of [Benjamin], “I would that ye should remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness. . . . If ye do this ye shall always rejoice” (Mosiah 4:11–12). You won’t be beset by ambitions and frustrations; you really can’t fail in that case. If you start out at the bottom of the ladder, you are going to stay there. You’re depending entirely on the Lord. You remember his greatness and goodness. You can have anything you want that’s expedient; that’s the best part of it. Then he [Benjamin] says, you are less than the dust; you’re nothing at all, and I’m no better than you are. That seems like running down the human race. But he is talking in comparative terms, and it is true, of course. We can’t do anything; we are absolutely helpless. We come to the end of the line and what do we have? A good example of that is people who are utterly terrified.

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

That’s what Claudio says in a long speech. When we are faced with that, we are all paralyzed. We are all as nothing, and we can be reduced very quickly.

You notice in our nightly TV dramas how quickly the mood and the pride can change to utter humility as soon as the gun changes hands. The one who holds the gun is utterly contemptuous; the other [person] is just scum and nothing else. If by accident he should lose the gun and the other one should get it, then he’s the scum and the other becomes all powerful. He has the command. He holds the “bow of Nimrod,” and he can do what he wants. It’s this idea of holding people in contempt if we have power over them. Immediately, the power shifts hands, and they do the same sort of thing. How unstable as water and unreliable we are; how quickly we can change from one extreme to another. We see that happen all the time.

They got rich and were “distinguished by ranks, according to their riches. . . . Some were lifted up in pride, and others were exceedingly humble. . . . And thus there became a great inequality in all the land, insomuch that the church began to be broken up.” That inequality is important. Let me read you something from Sunday’s paper. (This is too good to miss.) Actually, it was for the “attorney of the year.” They had interviews with half a dozen of the foremost United States historians, and the leader of them is Henry Steele Commager. The article, which is a fairly long one, ends with his statement. They are talking about what the eighties brought us. Scientists view the past decade as a period of folly and stagnation. This is the closing statement by Commager. Remember what we just read? There was a great inequality in the land. He said, “The 1980s created for the first time a class society in America.” Don’t think we don’t need the Book of Mormon. For the first time we have a class society. There are permanently poor that don’t expect to be anything else, and permanently rich that don’t expect to be anything else except richer.

So there was great inequality, and that broke up the church in the thirtieth year. Why should that break up the church? Well, again, read [Benjamin’s] address here. Remember, we began in the twenty-sixth [with great prosperity]. I wasn’t being patronizing when I said, “How many years is it from twenty-six to thirty?” because that’s a staggering figure. After four years the whole thing is going to fall apart now. This can happen. Already in the articles and editorials, you notice, in

the paper, they are starting to talk about the breakup of the present happy situation in the world. It can't last very long, because we are too aggressive for one thing. That's one thing the Book of Mormon emphasizes all the time: If the people of the promised land are destroyed, it will be themselves that do it. The Lord tells Nephi right at the beginning in the second chapter, I will always cause the Lamanites to breathe down your neck, to keep you in remembrance, to stir you up to remembrance. As long as you follow my commands you have nothing to fear from them. I'm keeping them there to scourge you when you slip. They'll be there for that purpose, and I'm going to keep them there. You'll never be able to get rid of them; they will always be on your necks to remind you of what you should do. If you are ever destroyed it will be because you bring [it on yourselves]. You have nothing to fear from them. Of course, all our emphasis is on protecting ourselves from those [bad people].

In only four years just a few Lamanites were true to the faith (3 Nephi 6:14). What do you think of that? "They were firm and steadfast and immovable, willing with all diligence to keep the commandments of the Lord." There was something the people were not doing, very obviously, and it was the law of consecration. Now he is going to explain it to us, after staggering us in verse 14 by saying, look, only four years and this happened. How can that be? It's a natural question, so here's the answer. Verse 15: "Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this—Satan had great power unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity [Now we come to the character in the Book of Mormon known as Satan. Is he real? This becomes a very real issue, too], and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power." Note that *pride* comes first of the four things. The last chapter of 1 Nephi ends up with these same four things, warning the people against them. It's 1 Nephi 22:23. ". . . all churches which are built up to get gain, and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh . . ." Power and gain go together. He is talking about churches or any societies. The greatest abomination is this composite of gain, power, and becoming popular. You must become popular if you are going to stay in power. Now we have the techniques of the TV, etc. Especially TV has locked these four together very closely. Politicians don't ask you to go out and work for them anymore; they just ask for money to buy TV time. That will win the election. Eighty-five percent of the elections were won last time by those that put the most money in there. Well, it's all the churches who get gain, power, and popularity. Then what's the final payoff? The lusts of the flesh, the glitz, the high living. Those are the four things.

These are the things that have to be dominant in our prime-time TV, to which I return time and again. There's the gain; you've got to get the money. The money is behind all this—the drugs, the sex, the perversion, the pornography, the corruption. And they are after power. They must become popular. It is not only nice to be popular, but your power depends on it. And the lusts of the flesh are the payoff. It says the same thing in 3 Nephi 6:15 that we are looking at now. "Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this—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 [that's your popularity], and riches, and the vain things of the world [that's the fun stuff, the high living]. 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, the chronicler himself marvels that it should take so few years for all this to happen. What will the world be like four years from now? Could anybody even venture a guess? It would be wild if you dared to do such a thing. I don't worry at all whether I'm alive or not at that time. I'm going to have plenty of things to do elsewhere.

They were "carried about by the temptations of the devil whithersoever he desired to carry them." Notice here is the "me first, and I want it all." What is [the influence of] Satan? Some people don't think there is any Satan. What is the solution here? Can we think of any other explanation than evil? In the Book of Mormon we have this tug of war. Do we have to assume the existence of Satan? Don't we have enough evil in our natures to get along without having to be tempted by an outside character, some particularly fiendish person? Mosiah tells us about this tug of war.

Pride takes the lead of the seven deadly sins, but is Satan necessary [to explain the situation]? That's what I'm wondering about. There must be something like that when you consider what's happening in Mozambique today. There's a group of terrorists. Nobody knows where they are financed from, but they get weapons all right. They are absolutely out to destroy everything they come upon. They just destroy it and that's all. They have nothing to gain by it or anything else. It's an utter horror in Mozambique, a country the size of California. It would be a marvelous place, but they can't farm or do anything because of these terrorists. There was the same thing with certain Southwest Indians in the early days. There are the two groups, the one-horn and the two-horn societies. The one-horn is very dangerous. Don't let them ever catch you out. They are just out to kill. It's an amazing thing that we would find this sort of bloodshed. We're going to get lots of [people who take] delight in bloodshed in the Book of Mormon.

But here [in 3 Nephi 6] there's this Satan business. For one thing, pride is inseparable from our existence, from our ego. You have to have some pride; you have to have something to hold you up. You have to assert your individuality and be distinct from anybody else. You have to do that or you will wither. But the question is how far should you go? How far should you assert your own ego? They made a carnival of that with Hitler. We think of Nietzsche who introduced the "superman." Superman became the fascination of everybody; then we got the super scientist. Superman is still with us. George Bernard Shaw wrote a series of plays like *Man and Superman*. He thought that man could become superman. Certain people thought they were absolutely superman, so we had super scientists, etc. The first German romance was *Judith*. Judith is a character in the play, and Holofernes is the hero. He is the superman who has to experience everything. This obsession with superman actually took people over at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. I grew up in that; we heard this superman business all the time. [In the play] Holofernes is murdering some poor character on the coals. He is the commander, etc. The man who is being cooked says, "Ha, Holofernes, you don't have this experience. This is one experience you haven't had." So immediately Holofernes has to go and lie down beside him. He can't have this person say he has anything Holofernes hasn't got. He cooks himself because he can't stand the idea that somebody should have an experience that he hasn't had and should taunt him with it. Well, this is the superman. We are obsessed with that. Remember what Mosiah said, Consider your own nothingness and the goodness of God.

Good and evil are not imaginary situations; they should be but they aren't. I have something that I cut out. This is an interesting thing that can go on in the world. How would you explain a phenomenon like this in Lebanon, which is being absolutely chewed up. There's almost nothing left of Lebanon. "While shells slammed into Beirut Saturday night, the monied elite of the Fakra 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,' said one West Beirut resident who suffered much from artillery." All the town is being destroyed, and a few miles away these people are living in luxury and splendor with plenty of everything. It's an amazing thing. "The club proves a point, that Lebanon must prevail, however bad is the situation on the streets of the capital. The Fakra Club is a chalet development, just like a fashionable Florida development here. It boasts three restaurants, two bars, a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a squash club." So we have Park City within a short drive of [Beirut] which is being destroyed. It's a very tiny country which is being wiped out, and yet these people go on living like that. Well, what a weird world; it's something like a drama by Offenbach, isn't it? It's like eighteenth-century Venice. It's weird and ghostly that these things could happen.

Back to 3 Nephi 6. It's going to do some explaining here. Verse 16: "Satan did lead away the hearts of the people to do all manner of iniquity; therefore they had enjoyed peace but a few years." In this thirtieth year they were "carried about by the temptations of the devil whithersoever he desired to carry them." You have to give him that power though; they weren't

like helpless automatons. This condition is achieved also through the art of rhetoric, salesmanship, and the ancients were susceptible to it. Four years later “they were in a state of awful wickedness [that’s what it amounts to]. Now they did not sin ignorantly.” They weren’t helpless pawns of Satan. He has no power, it’s going to tell us, but the power we give him. All this misrepresentation and false advertising is to lead us astray and make us willing to follow. Being the objectors, “they did willfully rebel against God. And now it was in the days of Lachoneus . . .” Here’s that Greek name again of the governor. It points out the extremely complex nature of ethnology in the Book of Mormon.

Then it comes to the reaction. The Lord had to do something. Is he going to do this in our day? “And there began to be men inspired from heaven and sent forth.” Well, if the Lord wants to inspire somebody from heaven, what can you do about it. I think there are such men coming now. My wife is quite active in what goes on in Yugoslavia in the mission. Last Saturday we had a visit by an eminent architect from Yugoslavia. In fact, my son-in-law’s father is an eminent architect in Yugoslavia, who has restored the baths of Diocletian in Split. But these people are aware that strange things are happening; strange people are suddenly appearing who are not to be dissuaded. They have suddenly decided to do the right thing, regardless of what it may cost. We’ve never seen a phenomenon like this; suddenly people have decided to be good whether it pays off or not. This is the answer. What can you do in a desperate situation like ours? “There began to be men inspired from heaven.” So let’s look out for them. When President Benson tells us to read the Book of Mormon and look out for pride as number one and number two issues, he is being inspired from heaven, I believe.