

# TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Semester 4, Lecture 99

3 Nephi 12–14

The Beatitudes

Christ's Teachings

We were on [point] number sixteen, if I remember right. Today we would like to continue our probing and developing of the hypothesis that the sermon at the temple provides us with temple-rich material which when viewed in a covenant-making context takes on new and important meanings and significance. I would like to continue to test this hypothesis in terms of looking at each of the elements in the text to see if they can be understood in this way. I would like to remind you, of course, that in this kind of an approach to a scripture we aren't proving something in the sense that we can prove by deductive reasoning or absolute conclusions that this is the only or main meaning of the text. What I am striving to do is open your minds to the possibility that this is a possible way that one can read the text. It would then be up to you to compare and contrast this against other possible interpretations to see which you think works the best. Today we are starting with [point] number sixteen in the Sermon at the Temple, which takes us to where we left off last time, the Beatitudes. Thus we will be revisiting the familiar terrain of the Sermon on the Mount, but now from a different vantage point.

What do the Beatitudes have to do with a temple context? Did any of you think about that as you have been rereading these materials and going through this? What do you see here that works as a temple [ritual]?

Student: Maybe it is the beginning of the ceremony. They are promised all these blessings; then actually go into the covenants themselves.

What kind of blessings are promised in the Beatitudes?

Student: Eternal life.

Yes, eternal life. These are eschatological blessings, aren't they? "Blessed are the poor in spirit." What will the poor in spirit inherit? "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven." When will the meek inherit the earth? Only when the earth is sanctified and presented in its immortal state and becomes the celestial kingdom upon which the meek will dwell. Blessed are those who suffer persecution and ridicule for my name's sake, for great is their reward. Where? In heaven. Jesus is promising the eternal blessings, and at the outset of the ceremony tells what those things are in store for those who are worthy to obtain them. You get a foretaste of what this will be in the Beatitudes. Certainly the Beatitudes present us with a benchmark of righteousness—not just a routine, moral sense of righteousness. This list of virtues that you see presented in the Beatitudes is very similar to the list that you encounter in scriptures that talk about the process of sanctification. Look at 2 Peter 1; look at 1 Corinthians 13. Look at the list of virtues that King Benjamin in Mosiah 3:18–19 says a person must put on in order for the atoning blood to purify that person. That's the sanctifying power. Those are the virtues that you encounter in the Beatitudes—preparing the way for holiness and sanctification.

When you turn to other places where we might also find these kinds of virtues mentioned, you also run into ritual or mystery religion contexts. Take the phrase *pure in heart*. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Both of those phrases—*pure in heart* and *seeing God*—are

loaded with temple symbolism and meaning. The *pure in heart* phrase comes out of twenty-fourth psalm—a psalm that is very well described as an ancient temple recommend. “Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord?” That, of course, is to the temple. Who is worthy to enter the temple? Those who have clean hands and a pure heart. And what will they see when they enter the temple? The Doctrine and Covenants tells us those who enter the temple in Kirtland (this is D&C 97:16) will see God. These phrases are referring to temple-type experiences. Such is not completely lost, even on our Gentile scholars. You can find, for example, Hans D. Betz speculating about what on earth these Beatitudes should be understood to mean. His conclusion: The Beatitudes are the entrance requirements for the kingdom of heaven—his way of saying “temple recommend questions” perhaps. Georg Strecker concludes that the Beatitudes are “the conditions that must be fulfilled in order to gain entrance into the Holy of Holies.” You need to do a little research into why they are saying these kinds of things, but they see this list of Beatitudes in a very sacred context.

Another place where you run into lists like this is in Deuteronomy 27, which talks about how the old becomes new and what Jesus is doing. What did the Israelites do at the temple in Deuteronomy 27? One of the things was that the Levites had to stand up and pronounce curses upon the wicked. Cursed be the person who moves his neighbor’s marker stone out in the field. Cursed be the person who leads the blind astray, and things like that. Each time there are twelve curses that they all pronounce. Each time one of the curses was uttered, all of the congregation there at the temple had to say, “Amen.” This is a ritual sort of thing that they went through every year.

Well, look what Jesus does. Instead of the list of curses, he has the list of blessings. As he says things like, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God,” I like to imagine the congregation saying “Amen”—just as they were used to saying “Amen” to the curses. The combination of the cursing and the blessing, to link that one more step closer, is found in the 2 Enoch literature. I refer you to 2 Enoch, sections 42, 51, and 52. In 2 Enoch 42, you have, for example, a list of beatitudes again, and they describe the person who is worthy to enter into the third heaven. You remember in the Enoch literature you have an ascension vision, where the prophet moves from one heaven on up until he finally reaches the ultimate heaven. At each stage it is described who is present at these different points. 2 Enoch 42 talks about those who enter into the “paradise room” or that stage. “Happy is the person who reverences the name of the Lord. Happy is the one who carries out righteous judgment. Happy is the one who speaks truth to his neighbor. Happy is the one who has compassion on his lips. Happy is he who understands the work of the Lord.” There you have a group of beatitudes oriented around lips, understanding, heart, etc. This is from 2 Enoch, James H. Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, volume one. If you want the references, I’ll be happy to give those to you.

When you get into sections 51 and 52, it’s interesting that you have both—the beatitude followed by the curse. Blessed is the person who does the good thing; cursed be the person who does the bad thing. That also is spoken in connection, interestingly, with temple material. 2 Enoch 51 says, “It is good for everyone to go into the temple of the Lord.” Section 52 then describes to people how they should praise the name of the Lord in the temple, and it is with these beatitudes and cursings. So I think when we are looking for a context, we don’t need, as Betz does, to go to the Greek mystery religions, where these beatific kinds of expressions (*macarisms*, they are called because in Greek *makarios* is the word for “blessed”) are used as initiatory promises. We can stay right at home in the Israelite temple and Christian material to find this stuff.

[inaudible comment from a student].

Yes, good point. When you start keying into something like this, the text just begins to explode right in front on you with all these different meanings. Why is it this way? What’s going on

here? Linkages and connections. I made the claim in our first lecture that the Sermon on the Mount is like Grand Central Station; sooner or later everything goes through this text. When you start putting the connections together, some exciting things happen.

Number seventeen: What do we turn to next after the Beatitudes? The language about the salt. “I give unto you to be the salt of the earth.” There has been a lot of literature written about the importance of salt in covenant making, in purification, etc. I go no further than Doctrine and Covenants 101:39, where we have a definition of who comprises the salt of the earth. It says that it is those people who enter into the everlasting covenant—“they are accounted as the salt of the earth.” Again, that is very explicitly in our literature connected with covenant making and a covenant clue. You can, of course, also find other things, like the code of instruction used for the scribes in the time of Jesus. We have this from Rabbinic sources—the scribes taught that in order to be righteous a person must be modest, humble, industrious, and salted. No one quite knows what the word *salted* means in that context, but it is in connection with their becoming a member of this group.

Number eighteen: We have a reference to light—becoming the light of the world. “I give unto you to be the light.” And the commandment is given to “let your light so shine before men.” Is it [going] too far to suggest that we have here a creation image? In the beginning “God said, Let there be light.” In the creation of the new heaven and the new earth, he says, “Let your light so shine.” The righteous become the light shining unto the world. Perhaps there is some symbolism there and a little clue as to why the creation story is so frequently associated with temple material, even in the Jewish literature and other places in the ancient world.

Number nineteen: We then turn in 3 Nephi 12:19–20 to Jesus beginning the instruction in earnest as to what a person who will enter into this covenant must agree to do. The first instruction is that you must come with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. This, as we have said before, is none other than the new law of sacrifice. The temple connections here are obvious because sacrifice was the main thing that was done in the ancient temples. Now it is replaced with the new law that takes the place of the shedding of blood under the law of Moses. Interestingly, for those New Testament scholars who argue that Matthew was responsible for putting together this collection of sayings of Jesus and, therefore, that it reflects material that would have been used or known in Christianity maybe twenty or thirty years after the time of Jesus, the text in Matthew 5:19–20 is their Exhibit A to prove that the Sermon on the Mount could not have been written by Jesus. It is not only Exhibit A, it is about the only evidence that you have within the Sermon on the Mount to present that argument. What is the essence of the argument? It is the use of the phrase *least of these*. Whosoever shall teach people not to keep the commandments, he shall be known as the “least in the kingdom of heaven,” *elachistos*. Paul, you will remember, in 1 Corinthians calls himself “the least of the apostles.” And what was he out there teaching? Well, he was teaching people that they didn’t need to live the law of Moses any longer. That, of course, presented enormous conflict in the early Jewish-Christian communities, as reflected in the epistle to the Galatians. There was a conflict. How much of the law of Moses do we need to keep? The logic is that the reference in Matthew 5 has to be a reference to Paul after the time Paul called himself that. Now, whether you agree with that logic or not, it is striking that when you go to the Book of Mormon those verses are among the very few verses that are absolutely absent. What you have in the sermon at the temple in the place where that text about keeping the least of the laws [is found in the Bible] is the presentation of the law of obedience and sacrifice. Interesting. Make of that what you will.

Number twenty: The next point Jesus says, again turning to the old and bringing about the new, “Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, and it is also written before you [the Nephites had these records, of course, in writing as well] that thou shalt not kill.” Jesus then said: I don’t want any anger; I don’t want any ridicule; I don’t want evil speaking. Why is this so important? Why does this amount to the equivalent in significance of murder under the old rule?

Well, the Lord placed enmity in this world for one reason, and one reason only. Hatred is here so that we can hate evil. What does the devil do with that enmity? He says, fine—all right, God, you have let evil into the world; then I will take that evil and with it I will make people hate one another. He misdirects our hatred and our anger—a typical strategy that Satan is going to try to employ. Jesus says if we are going to reverse that, we’ve got to rid our lives of anger and hostility, especially toward a brother. It says you can’t call another *Raca* (fool). It’s a derisive word, laughing at what he is doing. Why? When you laugh at a brother or a sister in whom resides the spirit of God, you are ridiculing God himself. The early Christians taught that doctrine, and for that reason you have councils referred to in the early Christian literature where people were brought before the council because they had spoken evil of one another. This was grounds for excommunication. This is worse than death itself. Why? Because it reviles and defies God and his presence in the community that is being formed. How? By the covenant relationship that these people are entering into. Gentile and Jewish scholars have noticed this kind of thing. In the Dead Sea Scrolls the *Manual of Discipline* places a very high premium on the need for harmony within the community. I’ll read from a commentary on the *Manual of Discipline* 7:8: “Anger against a fellow member of the society could not be tolerated under any circumstances. Punishment applied in any case of a member harboring angry feelings.”

This is an important element of bonding the community together, and for that reason the Sermon at the Temple and the Sermon on the Mount move to the next element, number 21, a discussion of the need to reconcile. If you know that your brother has hard feelings against you, it is your responsibility to go and reconcile yourself first with that person. Then you can come and present yourself to the altar. But what does Jesus say in the Sermon on the Mount? If you have any hard feelings, leave your sacrifice at the altar and go and reconcile yourself. Then come. Why? So you can present yourself pure before God. Obviously, it seems to me this is understandable in a context that is talking about more than just getting along with the neighbor across the back fence. This is talking about the ritual integrity and the covenantal harmony of the community that’s being formed.

By the way, biblical scholars look at that passage and wonder what on earth it’s doing in the Sermon on the Mount. It appears to be intrusive into the text. You have, you’ve heard it said of old, thou shalt not murder; I give you the new law. You’ve heard it said of old thou shalt not commit adultery; I give you the new law, etc. There are three places where Jesus quotes from the Ten Commandments.

By the way, the Ten Commandments have recently been analyzed by Moshe Weinfeld at Hebrew University in Jerusalem as also temple related materials—presenting the requirements that a person must satisfy before approaching the temple in Jerusalem. I don’t know if you know this, but as you went up toward the temple in Jerusalem there were ancient warnings saying, “Caution, you are approaching sacred territory. Do not come any closer if you are not pure.” They would list the Ten Commandments or things like that so that people would know that these are the requirements. If you are not complying with them, you had better not come into this sacred place. There are also some Greek temples that have similar kinds of inscriptions on the foundation stones that require a person coming into the temple to be pure—not just through some kind of ritual, but also pure in conduct and in their heart.

People look at the use of the Ten Commandments here and say, “Why on earth doesn’t Jesus just stay right with the Ten Commandments? He sticks in these intrusive kinds of passages. As they understand it and with the limited tools they are trying to work with, it doesn’t cohere. It doesn’t make any sense why this should be there; therefore, it is viewed as intrusive and probably somehow a sign of a disparate collection. The view that we are exploring here doesn’t require you to go to that kind of a contortion to understand why this would have been a logical and important part of this instruction.

Number twenty-two is easily recognizable as the law of chastity. The old law of adultery is now upgraded to the requirement that a person must be pure in heart and remove from your heart all of the desires or impulses. You cannot even look upon a woman [with lust]; that is tantamount to breaking this sacred covenant—obviously a very, very high standard. Again, most Protestant scholars look at this text and say, “My goodness, this is impossible. Jesus couldn’t have expected anybody to live up to this; therefore, he must not have been intending this to apply to mortals in this human condition. It must only be something that will apply someday somewhere in the Messianic Age.” We have an interim explanation for that. It’s not just everyone in the world who should strive for this, but it is those people who are willing to enter into certain sacred covenant relationships involving sexuality and marriage for whom this high standard should especially apply.

I would like to draw your attention also to the fact that when we see in the Sermon at the Temple this law dealing with adultery, we encounter for the first time the notion of penalties. When you take upon yourself this requirement, two penalties are mentioned. First of all when you take this upon yourself, you take up the cross. In other words, you confront here the arresting idea that at this point the disciple is prepared to take upon himself the very symbols of the form of the mortal punishment that Jesus would suffer. That’s how serious you are about entering into this covenant.

The other thing in the Sermon on the Mount not present in the Sermon at the Temple talks about tearing out your eye or cutting off you hand. Bodily mutilation was not meant certainly by Jesus to be literal, but figurative kinds of things, where you are saying as you enter into this covenant, “May this happen to me should I violate this covenant.” That, by the way, was a common form of covenant-making in the ancient Near East. Usually, they would take a little animal. Delbert Hiller’s book called *The Idea of Covenant* (John Hopkins Press) describes the standard mode of taking a small animal and either cutting its throat or cutting its belly open as two people make a contract. It needn’t be a religious contract; it could also be just entering into some kind of a business deal. They would stand and say, “If I break this contract, then let this happen to me.” The animal represented the person who would be the violator. I think we are also encountering similar kinds of things in the Sermon at the Temple.

This also, as you go to number twenty-three, helps to explain the next point, which also is a great puzzle to most people who read the Sermon on the Mount. That’s the teaching about divorce. How can Jesus say that there should be no divorce except for fornication? Is he intending this to apply to all people universally, worldwide? Certainly the old law was a very easy form of divorce. All you had to do was present the bill of divorcement, and divorce could be immediately effected under the book of Deuteronomy. Jesus is saying, no, for this people, for you here a higher rule applies. That makes good sense, given the context.

The next point, number twenty-four, has also been misunderstood. This is Jesus’ teaching about oaths. You have heard it said of old “Thou shalt not forswear thyself.” In other words, don’t perjure yourself. Usually, this is viewed as a restriction or a prohibition against committing perjury on the witness stand in a legal proceeding. That’s the technical term under the law of Moses in the Ten Commandments. Jesus said, I don’t want you to swear any oaths, except by saying yes or no. Some people have said, well then Jesus is opposed to all oaths of any kind. We know that can’t be the case, because if you go to Matthew 23 you will see Jesus’ practical teaching about oath making. What he objected to there was not the making of oaths. People were swearing by the temple, etc. He said, fine, but just remember that when you swear these oaths you are swearing not by the temple or by the altar or by the temple gold. Don’t get into a big argument about which you are swearing by. You are swearing by the spirit that dwells in that temple. He wanted people to swear oaths. What then is he saying in Matthew 5 or 3 Nephi 12? Swear not at all, except in this way. I think he is talking about a specific context in which certain oaths are to be made in this way—there we will only swear in this manner. I think that [explanation] makes very good sense in a number of New Testament texts that we won’t talk about.

Number twenty-five: We then find in verses 38–45 the teaching about turning the other cheek, going the extra mile. If a person asks for one piece of clothing, give him two. The Lord lets his rain fall on the righteous and on the wicked. Well, it's at this point that we start looking for something related to the law of the gospel, and indeed the Doctrine and Covenants doesn't let us down. D&C 104:18 defines the law of the gospel as follows (this is the only place I know of in scripture where this term is defined): "Therefore, if any man shall take of the abundance which I have made, and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell, being in torment." What we have then in this part of the sermon can, I think, aptly be described as the law of love, the law of the gospel. It's a law, by the way, that is taught not only in the New Testament, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Book of Mormon, but it is also in the Old Testament. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" was not a phrase invented by Jesus in response to questioning Pharisees. He is quoting there from the book of Leviticus.

We then turn to a transition stage in the text. Jesus then says, I want you now to become perfect. What does the word *perfect* have to do with a temple context? Perfection, being perfect. Does that sound like a word that might have some potential here? It's almost like he is leaving one phase and says, all right, now we've talked about the law of Moses. We've left that room, and we are now going on. You remember which priesthood is involved in the law of Moses—it's the Aaronic Priesthood. Now we are going to make a shift; we are now going to go on and become perfect.

The word *perfect* in Greek (*teleios*) means "to become finished or completed," and it is a common word used in the ancient mystery religions to describe the person who has been fully initiated in the religious ordinances. Let me give you a couple of examples of that. Some of them come from "The Secret Gospel of Mark," which was published by Morton Smith. This is found in a letter of Clement of Alexandria around A.D. 200 [inaudible question] That is a quote from Arndt and Gingrich *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. The medieval lexicons were put together mostly by Catholics. Most of our dictionaries and lexicons these days are done by Protestants, and the Protestants have a general antipathy against ordinances. You aren't saved by ordinances [according to them]. That was one of Luther's main points, so whenever possible a Lutheran is going to give you a translation that is compatible with his view of salvation—which is salvation by grace. You become perfect in an ethical sense or a moral sense. That will be the primary meaning listed. When you go to the medieval texts, you will see that the sacramental dimension of these words receives much higher prominence.

As I have said, I go way back to "The Secret Gospel of Mark" from 200 A.D. This was published by the Harvard University Press in 1973. It's a very interesting text. We don't have the text of this gospel, but Clement of Alexandria tells us in this letter that there is a second gospel of Mark in his possession. He was the archbishop (I'm not sure that's the right title) of Alexandria at this time. He said, "We have a text that Mark claims to have brought with him from Rome after Peter's death. We keep it here, and we only show it to certain very worthy people under sacred circumstances. He had to write this letter that has been preserved because word had gotten out that this secret gospel contained certain things. Clement is saying, "No, it doesn't contain those things at all." He doesn't tell us what it does contain, but he does say (and I'll quote this from Morton Smith's own translation): It contains things "for the use of those who are being perfected [that's our word again]; nevertheless, Mark did not divulge the things not to be uttered, nor did he write down the hierophantic [the priesthood] teaching of the Lord, but he brought in certain sayings, which he knew the interpretation [of], as a mystagog [in other words, someone being inducted into the mysteries], would lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of that truth hidden by seven veils. [This is Clement again:] We read this only to those "who are being initiated into the great *mysteria*." The word is a very clear word out of the Greek mystery religions.

Well, we don't know what to make of this, but you can conclude, I think, that in early Christianity there was a text that was preserved. We don't know what it was. Maybe it was just the Sermon on the Mount; maybe it was the Sermon on the Mount with a few annotations; maybe it was something completely different. [Student comment about the Clement text. He said the text says the candidate was naked with nothing but a linen cloth over him.] Good point. We haven't got to the garments yet, but we will.

Anyway, Jesus then says, "I would that ye should become perfect." I don't want to suggest that that's the only meaning of the word, but it is certainly a powerful meaning of this word. You should also think of yourself as becoming perfect not just in going through an initiation or a ritual ordinance, but in living true and faithful to it. That will bring even greater perfection. Well, as you turn the corner into chapter 6 in Matthew or chapter 13 in the Book of Mormon, what do we next encounter? Almsgiving—giving of your substance to the poor. You are promised here that if you do this you will be rewarded in the open. We will come back to that in a minute.

Item number twenty-eight proceeds with instruction as to how to pray. Jesus begins by telling people how they should pray in private. When you (the word there is singular) go to pray, what should you do? You go into your closet, and there you pray not with a lot of words and repetition, but just pour out your heart unto the Lord. Then Jesus says, "But when ye pray . . ." The word there is plural, so we are talking about a group prayer. Here is what you should say. Then he leads them, I think, in a prayer. We know it as the Lord's Prayer. Brother Nibley has not published this, but in Sunday School classes he has described the Lord's Prayer itself as an archetype of the mysteries. He sees in it the typical elements of all of the mystery religions—an *arche*, a protology or beginning. "Our Father which art in heaven." You begin in the heavens. [Then there is] an *omphalos* or something relating that to worldly events—the worldly bread, the debts. "And forgive us our debts. . . . Lead us not into temptation." Finally, [there is] what he identifies as the *sphragis* or the seal, which is placed on the prayer: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." So it might become just in itself a microcosm of the entire ceremony [inaudible student comment] Yes, an archetype of the ceremony itself. It contains the archetypal elements of the mystery religions' ritual.

We might pause and say something about this seal for just a minute: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever." Many of you are aware that in some of the early manuscripts, indeed, the better manuscripts of Matthew, you don't have the long ending to the Lord's Prayer. It just ends "Amen." That, of course, is not the case in the Book of Mormon, which gives you the long ending. Biblical scholars, Jeremias in particular, have argued that you cannot imagine a prayer being offered by a Jew (and Jesus was a Jew) that didn't end with some kind of doxology praising God. Jeremias isn't sure what doxology Jesus might have used, but he has no doubt that one would have been there.

The question is then why doesn't Luke (in Luke 6 and 11 when you have the sermon on the plain and the teachings of Jesus are comparable) end the brief prayer that he gives in chapter 11 with any kind of doxology. There the manuscripts are clear. It just ends with an "Amen." It might be that when you are in a temple context, you are more inclined to include a doxology, the praising of God. But when you are out in the fields teaching people how to pray, you would close with a simple "Amen." I refer you to Strack and Billerbeck who have gathered some Talmudic sources on this point. They describe the prayers that were offered in the temple on the day of atonement. They say after the people and the priests standing in the forecourt hear the name of the Lord cried out, then they all fall down on their faces, and they say, "Praised be the name of his glorious kingdom forever and eternally."

In the temple one does not answer simply “Amen.” How did one answer? “Praised be the name of his glorious kingdom forever and eternally.” In other words, it was a part of the special ending of a prayer. On the day of atonement that longer ending would have been appropriate. If we are right that Jesus is appearing to the Nephites on a day that had ceremonial significance, it cannot be counted as an error that the Lord’s Prayer ends with the doxology in 3 Nephi.

Well, we are to number twenty-nine. We now learn that fasting, washing, and anointing have something to do with this.

Number thirty: We then learn that total dedication to the kingdom of God is the next requirement. A man cannot serve God and Mammon. Your eye must be single to the glory of God. It’s interesting that phrase—the singleness of your heart and eyes to God—appears in Doctrine and Covenants 88 when it is again describing the process of sanctification.

Item thirty-one: Jesus then turns to his disciples and tells them, don’t worry about tomorrow. You will have sufficient for your needs.

Item thirty-two: He then talks about garments. In Greek the word *enduo*, from which our word *endow* is directly derived, has two meanings. *Enduo* means “to clothe, to put on clothing.” It also means “to take on characteristics, virtues, and intentions.” When a person is endowed, the person is clothed. Jesus told his disciples not to leave Jerusalem (Luke 24:49) until they were “endued with power from on high.” The clothing represents the robes of God’s righteousness. The atonement occurs when one is encircled by the robes of God’s righteousness, but this only occurs as these attributes are taken on—the attributes set forth in the beginning in the Beatitudes. Joseph Smith spoke frequently about the need to be endowed in the House of the Lord. It’s interesting that Jesus expresses this idea by saying to his disciples, I will give you clothing. And the word there is *endumata*. I will give you garments that are more glorious than whose? Than the garments of Solomon. He, of course, is always connected with the great temple.

Moving quickly, we go to item thirty-three. We then are prepared for the judgment—how to withstand the judgment. First we are told the principle by which we will be judged—for in what manner you shall judge, so shall it be judged against you; with what measure you mete, so shall it be meted against you.

Number thirty-four is an interesting and again, as we mentioned, a very troubling passage for many. This is the requirement that you cast not your pearls before the swine. What on earth is this text talking about? In a temple context does it make any sense? By all means. Jesus goes on to say, and cast not your holy things . . . The clue couldn’t be more obvious. “Cast not your holy things before the dogs.” He’s talking about a covenant and an obligation of secrecy at this point. There are certain things that are not to be divulged. Interestingly, we also encounter a penalty. If you do, they will turn and rend you and trample you under feet. Those are common curses that you will see referred to in the Old Testament, reserved for those people who violate the covenant.

Point number thirty-five is 3 Nephi 14:7. We have the old familiar verse, but now think of it in a new setting. “Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” There’s a three-fold petition. Point number thirty-six promises that if it is asked properly who will be there to open unto you? The Father. He will give you a good gift, for what father is there if his son asks for bread will give him a stone. You are asking for the bread of life. Are you going to be stoned to death? If you ask for a fish, an obvious symbol of Christ, will you be given a serpent, the obvious symbol of Satan. You will be given a *gift*, another word for *endowment*.

Point number thirty-seven is the common and well-known phrase, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” What’s the thrust of that in this context? A man cannot be saved

except with other people. The first obligation of a person who has been converted is to want to share the principles of the gospel, the opportunity for salvation, with other people. What more could be given? If you would like to be saved yourself, you must make this opportunity available to other people.

In number thirty-eight we are told that we must enter in through a narrow opening. Strait and narrow is the gate that leads to life eternal. We are taught the principles of two ways. We are told that there are signposts and markers that will help to guide us on our way through the narrow gate. Interestingly, those words themselves are the words that are used to describe the function of certain symbols that appear on the veil, to describe and remind you of the undeviating course that a person must follow in order to enter into life eternal.

Point number thirty-nine is the discussion about becoming a tree of life—a tree that bears eternal fruit. For those that do not bear the right fruit, they will be cast out and thrown into the fire. Those who bear righteous, worthy fruit [will be rewarded]. The words here for *good* and *evil* are not your normal moral words, but are talking about those things that are exalted, or those things that are corrupt.

Finally, number forty: We are told that if we do this we will then be allowed to enter into the presence of the Lord. Not those who just say, “Lord, Lord” will enter into his presence. You must have more than even the ability to cast out spirits in his name. What is it that these people lack that Jesus will have to turn away and say, “I know thee not”? *To know the Lord* is a common expression in Amos and elsewhere in the Old Testament. Amos 3:2 is a good example. *To know the Lord* means to enter into a covenant with the Lord. The Hebrew word for know is *yāda*<sup>c</sup>. It has a broad range of meanings, but certainly one of them is covenantal. “You only have I known of all the families of the earth.” In what sense has God only known Israel? By means of the covenant.

That takes us not to the end of the Sermon at the Temple, but to the end of the familiar terrain of the Sermon on the Mount. We will finish next time with a few more comments about the Sermon at the Temple. I would like to give you a written assignment to be turned in on Monday. You’ve heard me talk about this for three lectures now. I would appreciate this; I guess I don’t have the power to require it. Nibley will decide if he wants to give any weight to such an assignment at all, but I would appreciate it if you would write a page or two reflecting on some of the implications of the interpretation and of the hypothesis that I have presented to you thus far. The implications are broad. As we said earlier, when you start to see this passage in a way that no one else has ever really looked at it before, the text begins to explode right in your hand. Things start to take on meanings, and connections start to come alive that you might never have thought of before. I would like you to reflect on those implications and the broader implications about what this means for the Book of Mormon itself. We have been told in prophecy that the Book of Mormon contains the fullness of the gospel. How well and how completely it contains that fullness we never have previously imagined. Thanks, I’ll see you next Monday.