

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

HUGH NIBLEY

Semester 1, Lecture 19

2 Nephi 9

Jacob's Teachings on the Atonement and Judgment

Is there anyone here who doesn't have a Book of Mormon? You have to have a Book of Mormon. That's all we're here for is to study the Book of Mormon—not to listen to me, but to look at the text of the Book of Mormon closely and follow it carefully because it has a great deal to say. After all, this was hand—delivered by an angel. There's every evidence that it was, so let's look at it. We are in 2 Nephi 9:8. We mentioned the infinite atonement. I said that this was a concise summary, that this was a shocking verse. What is the justification for saying a thing like this? Well, all you have to do is look around you and see that it is true. Look what it is: "And our spirits must have become like unto him [notice there is nothing in between here; we must have crumbled and rotted, and then he says], and we become devils, angels to a devil [that's some choice], to be shut out from the presence of our God [that's the opposite of atonement], and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself. Notice that combination, *misery and lies*. What is the Lord full of? *Grace and truth*. What's the opposite of that? *Misery and lies*. The opposite of *grace* is *misery*, and the opposite of *truth* is *lies*. He [Satan] is the father of lies and misery. "Yea, to that being who beguiled our first parents, who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret works of darkness."

What's this *angel of light* business got to do with it? That's very important to put that in there. He "transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light." He is not a Halloween horror. He is among us; he is one of the boys. He is right in the system. In fact, the system is his. That's how he is able to form the secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret works or darkness that fill the world today. Remember, he told us when he lost his temper what he was going to do. He was going to take money and buy up the power and rule in a horrible way upon this earth, and that's what he has done. If you make a long list of all the major crimes and follies of our times—drugs, militarism, sex, everything else—can you name any one of them that doesn't have money behind it? He says, "You can have anything in this world for money, and I'm the one that has it." That's how he is able to gain this control. That's what he says he will do—buy up the authority, the power, kings and presidents, armies and navies—and he will rule that way. So he has a very powerful tool to use, and he is using it very effectively today. This is very clear today. Consider the elections. What wins elections now? Every expert will tell us it's money. That's the answer; that will get you into office. So everybody is going crazy building up these chests, etc. Isn't it silly. So here we are. Does this sound like an exaggeration, as it certainly sounded like not long ago? But it doesn't sound like it anymore. We are warming up; these are the last days. Then he is happy.

"O how great the goodness of our God, who prepareth a way for our escape from the grasp of this awful monster; yea, that monster, death and hell, which I call the death of the body, and also the death of the spirit."

“Many noble souls all caught like rats in a trap,” says Homer. Caught ahead of time, they haven’t got a chance to get out. That’s the way he describes life, and that’s why Goethe says that Homer teaches us that life on this earth is a hell. But this is the point—all these noble souls are trapped ahead of time, not a chance to get out when you are in this situation. It’s a great tragic situation. That’s the awful monster *death* and *hell*, and it’s a proper term. “And because of the way of deliverance of our God, the Holy One of Israel, this death, . . . which is the temporal, shall deliver up its dead; which death is the grave.” In verse 12 he talks about a spiritual death. The grave is the temporal death, and the resurrection has been taken care of by the atonement. You are going to be resurrected whether you want to or not. But the spiritual death, you can have that. That’s real hell, “which spiritual death is hell; wherefore, death and hell must deliver up their dead, and hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies, and [notice they are restored] the bodies and the spirits of men will be restored one to the other; and it is by the power of the resurrection of the Holy One of Israel.” The body will go on living and so will the spirit, and it will be a horrible thing if you are going to be living in a sewer forever and ever.

“O how great the plan of our God!” I mentioned last time that the [word] plan is not found in the Bible, yet it’s found forty-two times in the Book of Mormon, only two times in the Doctrine and Covenants and only two times in the Pearl of Great Price. It’s found forty-two times in the Book of Mormon and thirty-six times in the book of Alma. Whatever happened to the plan? How did it drop out of the Bible? As I said, it has become popular with ministers today because it is a very comforting doctrine. To know that everything is running according to plan is certainly reassuring. Otherwise, comes the problem. What is the meaning of it? Where is it going? It’s nothing. Life becomes absolutely a name without some sort of plan and purpose. What are we here for? The questions we hear all the time. But why was the plan ever thrown out by the church? Was it in there? It’s in the Book of Mormon. We have these things in the Book of Mormon that match the Old Testament all the way through. I was thinking of atonement, you see. In atonement the Book of Mormon matches the Old Testament but not the New Testament. Of course, the Old Testament came first, and it represents the old Hebrew doctrine of the atonement which is centered around the temple. It always talks of it in terms of the temple—of sacrifice and the shedding of blood, the tent, the embrace, and all the things that go with the rites of atonement among the Jews. The Nephites had these things. So this is what atonement is in their terms. And always the language in Nephi and Alma and all the others is the same imagery that is used in the Old Testament in describing the sacrifices of the temple. But the temple was lost, and the rabbis took over. They were learned men, but they were not priests. Then you had something else. They did away with the plan, which was disturbing. They did away with a premortal existence; they did away with the Council in Heaven. They did away with all sorts of things having to do with this plan. Why, when it was such a good thing? Because the philosophers at the School of Alexandria took it over, and in their place you have the doctrines of St. Augustine. This takes the place of the plan. It’s *praedestinatio ad damnationem*, *praedestinatio ad salvationem*. You are predestined to damnation or you are predestined to salvation. There’s nothing you can do about it because it’s the will of God. “It all depends on his will,” as we read in Dante. This is the thing. St. Thomas takes it a long way here. It’s the will of God, and that’s all you can do about it. It’s decided.

This predestination doctrine of St. Augustine was taken over by the Lutherans and by the Calvinists especially. What happens to you is because you were predestined that way. Of course, you didn’t live before you came here; you didn’t earn it or anything like that.

Origen tells us that in the early church they taught that you earned your position here before you came here. But that had to be out. All creation had to be instantaneously, simultaneously, and complete. Everything was completely there all at once, so you had no background or anything. You just find yourself here, and what's going to happen to you depends entirely on the will of God, whether you are damned or whether you are blessed. This doctrine takes its place, so they didn't need it [the plan] anymore. And they fought it. They not only didn't like all these elements of the plan, but they fought vigorously. You get that in something like those many volumes of Goodenough.

Then he goes on: "And the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal, and they are living souls, having a perfect knowledge like unto us in the flesh, save it be that our knowledge shall be perfect. Wherefore, we shall have a perfect knowledge of all our guilt, and our uncleanness [it is all stored away in us right now, for that matter; a good psychoanalyst could get most of it up without having to have a record book or any account of your wicked deeds; it's all stored right here, and you're going to take it with you], . . . and the righteous shall have a perfect knowledge of their enjoyment, and their righteousness . . . when all men shall have passed from this first death unto life, insomuch as they have become immortal, they must appear before the judgment-seat of the Holy One of Israel [that's going to be a time], . . . and they who are filthy shall be filthy still [don't think you will be automatically purified, he says]. . . . And they shall go away into everlasting fire, prepared for them; and their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever and has no end."

And what do you have to do to avoid this? "But, behold, the righteous, the saints of the Holy One of Israel, they who have believed in the Holy One of Israel, they who have endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame of it [You are expected to do that; after all, what is the purpose of money? It is to avoid these things—to avoid the crosses of the world and the shame of it], they shall inherit the kingdom of God, which was prepared [in the plan in the Council in Heaven] for them from the foundation of the world, and their joy shall be full forever." Now, that's a scriptural passage too. Why don't people believe that at the time the world was founded there was a plan prepared? There it is again, "according to the wisdom of the kingdom of God which was prepared from the foundation of the world."

Verse 21: "And he cometh into the world that he may save all men if they will hearken unto his voice [we come to a very interesting situation here about the reality of these things]; for behold, he suffereth the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam." He atones for the family of Adam. The question arises, how is it possible for anyone to suffer that much—to suffer the pains of everyone living, every living creature? Isn't there a limit to suffering? There is a limit to physical suffering. Let's consider two things: (1) How can you suffer for somebody else? and (2) How can you suffer for everybody and everything—men, women, and children, the whole family of Adam? How can one person suffer that much? Well, there are certainly limits to physical suffering. We have all had pain. At a certain point people pass out, but it's amazing what you can take. There's no problem there at all. If you have read Solzhenitsyn, you know what they have to suffer in Russian prison camps. There's a limit to that, but what about mental suffering? There is no limit to it at all, just as there is no limit to imagination, and no limit to comprehension, and no limit to empathy. There's no limit to what you can comprehend and take in. You know yourself that you can expand, and there's no limit to it. You can

imagine how it is with the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Son of God. His capacity for those things is very real. It tells us why he suffers—“for the sins and abominations of his people” it will tell us later on. It says he sweated [blood] from every pore, and it wasn’t from the pain of nails or the cross of thorns. You might not have been aware of that. That physical suffering is great, but it’s nothing compared to what he suffered. In Mosiah it talks about his sweating blood from every pore.

This was one of the great points of criticism of the Book of Mormon. They would say, “Well, the circulation of the blood wasn’t known until the time of Harvey in the seventeenth century, so how can he be talking about sweating blood from every pore?” They made a big thing of that. But, of course, the word *pore* is an ancient word, Latin *porus*. You will find it in ancient works on medicine, in Galen and Hippocrates. They knew about pores and sweat. There were cases in which people did sweat blood. So it’s not a point of knowing about the circulation of the blood or the cause for that; it’s the fact that people did [sweat blood]. The thing is that he [the Savior] sweat blood at every pore so great was his anguish because of the wickedness and abominations of his people—not because he was in an uncomfortable situation at all. But it is possible to suffer like that. It’s possible for God to suffer that much. Remember, there’s no limit to what you could suffer. Of course, we know that physical suffering is a joke compared with mental anguish. Such a thing as schizophrenia is unspeakably worse than any physical pain you could possibly have.

This is what the Lord suffered, and I can see that it’s possible for him to suffer that much, for every living creature. But how could it vicariously affect someone else? There are various theories about that—Abelard, for example. As you know, atonement means various things. But the fact is that if I am fully aware of his suffering for me, I should be terribly afflicted by that too. That should upset me terribly. That was one of the purposes of the Crucifixion, according to Anselm and especially to Abelard. He said that the thought of it fills us so with pity, anguish, and remorse that we repent when we think of that. It does affect us and change our lives unto repentance. “And he suffereth this that the resurrection might pass upon all men, that all might stand before him at the great and judgment day.” That’s the atonement again. “And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God [but ninety-nine percent of all men haven’t been baptized, as he tells us next]. And if they will not repent and believe in his name, and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned.” That is it because they have refused; they have despised it and turned it down. But if you have never heard about it, as verse 25 says here, that’s another matter. As I said, at least ninety-nine percent haven’t. “Wherefore, he has given a law; and where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment there is no condemnation.” He has given the law, and they should not refuse it or they will be damned, etc. But the law is that there is no punishment and no condemnation if people haven’t heard the law. “The mercies of the Holy One of Israel have claim upon them, because of the atonement [that frees them]; for they are delivered by the power of him. For the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them.” That’s what he is talking about here, and that’s the vast majority of the human family. Of course, this the rationale for the temple work and everything behind it.

And this is another thing: the Jews very firmly believe in and the rabbis still teach atonement for the dead. What can you do for them? They say there are three things you can do for them: You can pray for them, you can give alms for them, and you can study

the scripture for them. That's the best you can do. But anciently, it all went back to the temple. It was in the time of the Maccabees that that was lost. It's a very interesting story. The temple was used for work for the dead, and it still survives in the *kaddish* which is the prayer for the dead. This is on the Day of Atonement. That's when you bring all things together and you have the *kaddish*, which is the prayer for the dead.

But here he is talking about those who have never had the chance because the law was not given to them. "They are restored to that God who gave them breath, which is the Holy One of Israel [that's fair enough]. But woe unto him that has the law given, yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us [we have them, he says], and that transgresseth them, and wasteth the days of his probation, for awful is his state!" Now what is sin? Sin is waste. That's all it is after all. It's the misdirection of life. You use your energies, your appetites, desires, and passions, your gifts, and everything else, and misdirect them and waste them. You have a limited time here. You are given your great chance, and you waste that. Can you think of any sin that isn't waste? Even the most vilely immoral things. What are they wasting? That's waste in a big way, you see. Sin always tears down and destroys. You always lose something by it—something you can't get back again. So you dig yourself in deeper and deeper with sin, and the whole thing is waste. It's waste and loss. You have misdirected all your energies, and that certainly is what sin is. And it's also a state of mind. An act that is virtuous in one situation can be wicked in another. But again there's the waste of your insight, your mental energy, and all the rest, and the misdirection of it.

Verse 28: "O that cunning plan of the evil one! [there's your plan again; he has his plan too, you see]. O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men!" This is an outburst of the wisdom literature. There is a lot being written today about Hebrew wisdom literature and Egyptian literature. They are being compared today for the first time in a big way. Everybody is writing about them. They always suspected that they were very much alike because Egyptian is full of Bible quotations. The Egyptologists wouldn't accept it. They thought that was impossible—that couldn't be. They explained it as pure coincidence. Well anyway, today it's the big thing that the wisdom literature of the Jews and the Egyptians is very much alike. They are things having to do with the folly of men—their teaching of wisdom and ways of getting along in the world, etc. There is also wisdom that breaks out into oration like this and becomes very eloquent: "O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! [They are hopeless.] When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves [it's a very interesting thing], wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish."

The Egyptians have an interesting word for *everything*. It's *nt-t ĩwt-t* (I'll write it on the board; it's a very simple thing). *Nt-t* means *whatever is*, and *ĩwt-t* is *whatever is not*. The word is *everything*. When I say *everything*, that means everything I know about and also everything I don't know about because that exists too. The part I don't know about is vastly larger than the part I do know about. So when I have the idea that I have covered a subject or that I know everything, [I'm mistaken]. To use the word *everything* is folly unless you use the other thing—what I know and what I don't know, everything which is there and also the stuff which is not there and we're not aware of. Reality includes two things, doesn't it? We say it only includes one. That's the principle of Descartes. He says it's necessary to assume that all you have is all there is, because otherwise you are not

going to be able to argue. You're not going to be able to form your syllogisms, etc. unless you assume that what you have is what's there. You can't put the other in your calculations. You can't use that, though some sophisticated mathematics does. You have to make allowance for what isn't there. But with the Egyptians whenever they said they knew something, there was also the part they didn't know. Always consider that, which is the greater part. We just know a little tiny bit. But these people suppose they know of themselves. Of course, their wisdom is foolishness.

As I said, this is out of this wisdom literature, which was available to all these people. "Wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish [it's not going to get them anywhere]. But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God [the other part they don't know]." Then all of a sudden he breaks out into this. He has been talking about the plan; notice in verse 28, "O that cunning plan . . ." Then all of sudden he says, "But wo unto the rich." As I said, this is money. This is the way it is done. He gives this long list of horrendous offenses here: the disobedient, the liar, the murderer, [those who commit] whoredoms and worship idols. But at the head of the list is the rich. He states as a general principle that because they are rich, they despise the poor. Otherwise, they wouldn't be rich; they would follow another course. This is what implements the other plan that he just talked about—that vain, cunning plan of the evil one. As he said, "I will take the treasures of the earth." He worked his plan out with Cain; he made his covenants with Cain. He had an atonement with Cain, and they become one. What did Cain do? He said, Now I am free—his property falls into my hands [paraphrased]. Money will make him free. "For because they are rich they despise the poor, and they persecute the meek, and their hearts are upon their treasures [otherwise, they wouldn't have them]; wherefore, their treasure is their god [you live by your portfolio or your Dow Jones rating; nobody cares about anything else anymore]. And behold, their treasure shall perish with them also [because it is temporal treasure it will perish]."

Question: How can we know when we are rich? Answer: Well, that's a very interesting thing. *Rich* was defined very well by Brigham Young and by Paul in 2 Timothy: "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. Who seeks for more falls into temptation and a snare." He uses the word [which means] *trapped in the rapids*, the same word that Sophocles uses in the same situation. They get caught in the rapids and swept along by many foolish desires, wishes, and lusts. They want more and more; there is no limit to what you can want. That's a proverb you will find all over the place. The Greek tragedies are full of it, etc. There's no limit to the greed of a person; the more they get, the more they want. These are well-known truisms. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." If you want more than that, you are in real trouble, he says, because you are. He says that this has brought many from the faith because they want more than that. They despise the poor and the meek. If you have more than you need, of course, you are rich. If you have less than you need, you are poor. There should be some sort of balance there. By definition [the rich] have more than they can possibly need or eat. And if you are poor, you have less than you need or should eat. The solution is obvious, isn't it? But we are not going to do that, no.

And their riches will perish also. We know classic examples of that. We have all seen *Citizen Kane*, that old classic—the sadness and the tragedy of it. He surrounds himself with all this junk—more and more and more to make him feel secure. And this was William Randolph Hearst; he did that. He had his great inherited wealth, and he also added to it with his newspapers, though he lost a lot of it. He went to San Simeon and started collecting this junk about him. He had one rule. Professor H. R. W. Smith used to go

down there to catalog his collection of Roman vases. He had a great collection of Roman vases, etc. Professor Smith would go down to catalog them and the like. Hearst insisted that under no circumstances should the word *death* ever be mentioned in his presence, as if he could avoid it. In fact, Huxley, not Julian Huxley but his brother, wrote a novel about it. (I'm really gone today, absolutely no good at all. That's happening too often now, isn't it? I have all these projects going at once.) Anyway, Aldous Huxley wrote this book, *After Many a Summer Dies the Swan*. It's a novel about William Randolph Hearst, and it's very good. It's about a man whose doctor finally invented a nauseating cure to extend his life for a long time. It was the intestinal flora of a carp. He claimed if you ate that it would restore your hormones, etc. So he ate it, but death caught up with him finally. But it is sad that it has to come to the richest. You collect all your riches, and then you have the *dead hand* because you want to keep it in the family. It haunts the English families with all this stuff going down. They are trying to hang onto it, and it's so tragic. As I said, there's the *dead hand* in law. You keep this property after you are dead. You want to make sure that you have control of it after you are dead. Well, of course, that's perfectly silly, but that's an obsession with them. Their treasure will perish with them. That's all there is to it, and there's nothing you can do about it. Sorry about that.

Notice that they do not know themselves. They have a completely false self-image here; hence, the fine apparel and the rest. "And wo unto the deaf that will not hear [that is, when they can]; for they shall perish [they have the chance, you see]. Wo unto the blind that will not see; for they shall perish also. Wo unto the uncircumcised of heart, for a knowledge of their iniquities shall smite them at the last day." They will keep it with them—don't worry. They will know themselves then—"a knowledge of their iniquities shall smite them." It will catch up with them and really hit them then. But Freud tells us that it catches up with you right now; you can't escape from it. It will come out in all your neuroses, your rashes, your ulcers, and things like that. You will be a terribly miserable person because you cannot cover these things up. You know they are wrong, and you will know yourself then. "Wo unto the liar, for he shall be thrust down to hell. Wo unto the murderer who deliberately killeth, for he shall die [this list of offenders]. Wo unto them who commit whoredoms, for they shall be thrust down to hell. Yea, wo unto those that worship idols, for the devil of all devils delighteth in them. And, in fine [in short], wo unto all those who die in their sins; for they shall return to God, and behold his face, and remain in their sins [That's going to be pretty horrible, isn't it? Of course, there are ways out, but it is going to be an awful time]. O, my beloved brethren, remember the awfulness in transgressing against that Holy God [this is absolute, and here again], and also the awfulness of yielding to the enticings of that cunning one. Remember, to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life eternal."

There's this enticement, and what is his number one enticement? I don't need to tell you what that is. In Moroni 7:12 we read, "For the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually." So there's a constant drag, just like gravitation. It is working steadily, constantly, inviting and enticing to sin. On the other hand, in the next verse: "But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually." You have the two pulling in opposite directions there to decide which orbit you will go in. But it's up to you to decide which one you are going to take, isn't it? Is the force equal? If it was overpowering in either direction, you would have a good excuse. As I said last time, you would say it was too strong for you, and you couldn't resist it. Naturally, you wouldn't have a chance. But you are in the middle here, and you are being enticed and invited in one direction and enticed and invited in another. Of course, the one seems to have an overpowering drag now. It's like that poem by Clarence Day:

Might and right are always fighting
In our youth it seems exciting
Right is always nearly winning
Might can hardly keep from grinning.

No laughs, but I think that's a very funny poem. Well, we're back to 2 Nephi 9. So there are the enticings in either direction. And what is the enticement he [Satan] uses? You know the number one, the one thing we can't resist, the one thing you can't do anything without, the one thing you can do everything with, etc. I won't name the dirty word; we will just go on here. Notice here when he talks about repentance, they think "they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish" (verse 18). Now, repentance is knowing yourself, *gnōthi seauton*. The Greeks called it that—to know and recognize what you are. It's a painful process. The first step you make is to recognize your situation and what you really are—to face yourself. You are not going to repent unless you do that, and that is very painful. A very simple definition of repentance is *know thyself*. That was written above the doorway of the Shrine of Delphi, the holiest center of wisdom in the ancient world.

Verse 40: "Do not say that I have spoken hard things against you." How often do we preach these things today, but we don't like them? You notice that these are not smooth things. Remember, they asked Isaiah, "Speak to us smooth things; we will listen to you if you talk smooth things." You get this later in Abinadi and a lot of other prophets. We speak the things that we want to hear, but you don't need to hear those things. If the Bible only told us what we wanted to hear, we wouldn't need it. Yet those are the things we are willing to hear, and the other things we can smooth over very easily. We wouldn't need the words from the prophets if they were not hard to take. So the people said to Isaiah, "Speak to us smooth things." The false prophets are very glad to oblige. "I know that the words of truth are hard against all uncleanness; but the righteous fear them not, for they love the truth and are not shaken [a real test]."

Now, here's the other inscription from Delphi, *mēden agan, nothing in excess*. It means *follow the straight and narrow*. You don't go too far to this side or too far to that side. It means you must be strict in the low road, as he says in escaping from his enemies. Verse 41: "Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him [so you can stay on it all right; and here is one of my favorite verses from the Book of Mormon; this is really a beauty], and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there." What a comfort in that, to know there is no middle management. There are no officious clerks. This is one of the great resounding passages. He will take your hand personally, identify himself, and show you the signs and tokens—as he did when he came to the Nephites, one by one, even the children, and gave them each a personal blessing. Well, you may think that would take forever and ever, but you'd be surprised. There's plenty of time, etc. There are certain things that are not limited. I like to tell the story of John Hayes because he was my next door neighbor. He was registrar at BYU for forty years, and he knew the name and family history and personal tastes of every student who ever registered here. He was just an ordinary man, but he was interested in them. A person would come back twenty years later, and he would ask the most intimate things about them, "Did your father ever get over his gout?" or something like that. How is that possible for one person? If he had been there for another ten years, it would have been the same thing. Thousands and thousands of names and people—he just knew them, and that was that. He was the registrar, and he worked at

it. He wasn't chosen as registrar because he had that talent; he just developed it. It's a marvelous thing to be able to do things like that and know that there is no limit to some things. It's the same with the Lord; he knows you by name personally. He doesn't stand up on a balcony with a million people in front of him, wave his hand and say, "Bless you children," and that's it. It's all a very personal thing with the Messiah. That's why the Book of Mormon and the Bible speak so warmly of these things—that he is our Savior, etc. He has saved us and we are indebted to him. But it's the straight and narrow that leads to him.

That means no compromise. This is nature's fine tuning. As we mentioned before, that's what makes life possible in the universe—not going to the right or the left, keeping to the straight and narrow. Some say that's narrow minded; it's not narrow minded. That's the only thing that makes life possible, this fine tuning. If the earth were too far from or near to the sun, there would be no life. If it were too hot or too cold, no life. If it [the earth] turned too fast or too slow, no life. Everything has to be just right. The physicists tell us there are fifteen major constants that have to be finely tuned that way. When you get them all together, you get a world where people can live. But the chances are infinitesimally remote [of it happening by chance].

So here is the personal greeting we get: "And whoso knocketh [at the gate], to him will he open." Notice, he is the keeper of the gate, and if you knock at the gate he will give you that personal greeting. Incidentally, with the Atonement, as we were told, there was no other who could pay the price of sin. The Atonement makes the delegation of his authority impossible. He is not going to delegate it. He is the keeper of the gate, and he employs no servant there. We are talking about the Atonement when he greets you. This is the embrace we are talking about That's the Jewish *kpr*, which is the embrace at the veil, the *kapporeth* of the tabernacle. The ark was inside. When the Lord receives Israel on the Day of Atonement, it says the Lord speaks from the tent and accepts the sacrifice and accepts Israel. But again, there is only one who can atone; no one else can do that. So, of course, he is not going to delegate. He has atoned for you, and he is not going to delegate to anybody else. Believe me, that is reassuring.

Notice, you knock and he will open. But what if you come to him wise, learned, rich, and puffed up because of your learning, your wisdom, and your riches? "They are they whom he despiseth" (verse 42). Now, this is the most terrifying verse in the Book of Mormon—the idea of God despising anything, since he loves all creatures and loves them completely. How could he despise them? Well, the word is *despicio*. The person at the gate looks down; the gatekeeper is always in the little thing with the person down below. The keeper is above the gate. That's the *gate of appearances*, where the family looks down, etc. In Egypt you have some beautiful things. Above the gate of the temple or the palace, there is a balcony. There's where the royal family goes, and when visitors come they look down on them. But *despicio* means to *look down on*. It says, "He will not open to them." He looks down and sees, and he will not open to them. The gate is kept closed. "Yea, they are they whom he despiseth." As I said, it's a terrible thing because this is self-deification. That's what it amounts to. I've heard this from various teachers, etc. They would say, "Look, God and all that stuff, that silly religion of yours . . ." So many of my friends believed not only that it was absurd and they wouldn't believe it, but they didn't believe I believed it. They didn't believe for a minute that I believed this stuff. Now, isn't that funny? That was self-deification. They would say, "Look, you've got it all wrong; I'll tell you how it is. I'll give you the answers. Now, that's deifying yourself in the field of knowledge, and that's what they do, actually."

You see Carl Sagan making a pronouncement denouncing Plato and any kind of religion, as he does. Then he looks up into the sky while a celestial chorus sings in the background, an aura of holy light plays around him, and the vastness of space is shown. Then you [are supposed to] know there is no God, but here is the greatest thing in the universe right here, and it's Carl Sagan. They build it up to look just like that. As I said, they have the cosmic background, the swelling music, the ethereal light, and all the rest of it so this guy can show that he is God. Well, you see, that's the sort of thing that God is going to despise. They think they can displace him, the nincompoops.

Verse 44: "O, my beloved brethren, remember my words. Behold, I take off my garments, and I shake them before you." Of course, that was the ancient custom. In the Oration on the Crown, Demosthenes talks about it when a person is banished from Athens. And Paul said to the Corinthians, "I thank God that I baptized none of you" (1 Corinthians 1:14). In Acts 18:6 he denounced the Corinthians. He said, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." I'm through with you. At the beginning of his letter to the Corinthians, he said, I testify that I am free of your blood this day [paraphrased]. Then he literally shook his garments before them to show that he was free of their blood and was going to leave them and go to the Gentiles. He was through with the Jewish community at Corinth. It's a dramatic gesture. On Mars Hill in Athens the chief priest would shake a scarlet robe when a person was banished, to shake him off and get rid of him. It's like shaking the dust off your feet from a rebellious town or a wicked people. That is used in Acts a good deal, shaking the dust off their feet. But Paul shakes his garments, and he does the same thing here. He says, "O, my beloved brethren, remember my words. Behold, I take off my garments, and I shake them before you [as I said, it's a very old custom that was full blown in Lehi's day]; I pray the God of my salvation that he view me with his all-searching eye [he wants to be tested]; wherefore, ye shall know at the last day, when all men shall be judged of their works, that the God of Israel did witness that I shook your iniquities from my soul, and that I stand with brightness before him, and am rid of your blood."

Notice, he can only advise them, and he cannot assume the guilt of another because he's not responsible. What is he doing, getting rid of his responsibility? Yes, he is free of their blood now. He can advise them, but he can't assume guilt for them. They are responsible for their own doing, so he leaves them now and says this—showing again that things are not going too well with the Nephites. Verse 45: "O, my beloved brethren, turn away from your sins; shake off the chains [notice this tie where they tie words together here] of him that would bind you fast [you shake that; I'm shaking my garments; now you do a bit of shaking too]; come unto that God who is the rock of your salvation [but you must do this yourself, you notice—you shake off the chains]. Prepare your souls for that glorious day [he ends on an upbeat here] . . . that ye may not remember your awful guilt in perfectness [you need no accuser; you will remember your guilt all right], and be constrained to exclaim: Holy, holy are thy judgments, O Lord God Almighty—but I know my guilt." You will have to admit that God's judgments are just. This is what you will have to say, "I know my guilt." Notice, it is all individual. As the scripture says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." You can't justify your dirty work by the fact that everybody is doing it. And so we have here, "I know my guilt; I transgressed thy law, and my transgressions are mine; and the devil hath obtained me, that I am a prey to his awful misery." That's the saddest thing about him, of course, that he is utterly miserable and wants others to be miserable like him. You might say, "That's absurd, isn't it? Why should anyone want to be miserable? Well, you tell me. That's what we see all around us, nothing but people who make themselves miserable. Why do they need to do this?"

In verse 47 he says he is talking about real things: “But behold, my brethren, is it expedient that I should awake you to an awful reality of these things?” You think that we are just talking a lot of old-fashioned tribal mumbo-jumbo or something like that. Not a bit of it, he says. And this is where we all fall down; we don’t really accept the reality of things. We don’t take them seriously enough. And again, Jacob is not popular, we get from this. They don’t like him to preach this way. Later in the book of Jacob he really bears down on them even more. He says, If you were holy, I would speak unto you of holiness. But as you are not holy and you look upon me as a teacher, you asked for it [paraphrased]. Then he is back to this again, “Come, my brethren, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money.” See, he keeps digging them on that because, as we learn at the beginning of the book of Jacob, they started finding an awful lot of rich minerals around here. They started hoarding the stuff and getting very class conscious about it, etc. And remember, this is very characteristic of barbarians—to load yourself with all you can, women of central Asia, etc. I have lived in communities where the women wear all the money, all the family fortune, right around their necks—all these heavy, massive gold and silver coins. It’s both for display and because it’s in the family.

The idea that people are interested in collecting vast wealth doesn’t come with civilization at all; that’s a barbaric trait. The barbarians live by looting and plunder, as you know. They take their wagons along, and the ruler is able to rule because he is like Scyld Skeffing was at the beginning of *Beowulf*. He was a good king because he gave out many gold rings and many gifts. He bought his followers that way; that’s the way you do. He would go and loot with his men, and then he would reward them by sharing the loot among them. If you go way back to Homer, you find the same thing. The great rivalry and bitterness among the great lords of Troy that wrecked everything was because one person was jealous of another’s “mead of honor.” He got more than the other did when they divided up the swag. These people were just looters; that’s what they were doing. They were pirates and were always jealous of the “mead of honor” and arguing. Achilles calls Agamemnon a “greedy dog face” because he didn’t get enough. “Nothing ever satisfies you. You always grab the most. Whenever there’s a division, you are right there to grab. When the battle is on, I’m the one who does the work.” That’s the way they were all talking and thinking. This is the sort of thing that was happening in Jacob’s community. They were dividing it up, and it gets pretty nasty as we get into the book of Jacob. Don’t do that, he says. Verse 51: “Come unto the Holy One of Israel, and feast upon that which perisheth not [no money].”

Verse 52: “Behold, my beloved brethren, remember the words of your God; pray unto him continually by day, and give thanks unto his holy name by night.” Is this the Arabic *fatra*? The *fatra* is a prayer that you never stop uttering, day and night. If a Moslem does any rhythmic work, if he saws, he has to say *Allah*, Allah, the name of God with every stroke. Or hammering, or walking. They do an awful lot of walking in the desert. *Allah*, *Allah*, etc., is the *fatra*, the unceasing prayer. But this is talking about a normal way. We do things constantly. It means *constantly* and *regularly* when you do it continually. You say, “He fasted continually, or he studied continually, or he exercised continually. Or he was a man who smiled continually.” That doesn’t mean he never stopped in his sleep or anything like that. It means on a regular, reliable, constant basis. That’s what we do when we “pray unto him continually by day and give thanks to his holy name by night [your prayers in the day and your prayers at night]. Let your hearts rejoice.” There’s no reason why this can’t be fun, he says. There’s no reason why we shouldn’t enjoy this. He ends on an encouraging note here. In spite of all this, he tries to be cheerful. Verse 53: “He has

promised unto us that our seed shall not utterly be destroyed, according to the flesh [that's the best he can do], but that he would preserve them; and in future generations they shall become a righteous branch unto the house of Israel [that's good news].

Chapter 10, verse 1: "And now I, Jacob, speak unto you again . . . concerning this righteous branch of which I have spoken." This is a prophetic one. This goes for the land of promise. First, there is a review of what's to happen in Israel. The author of this book could have picked up this part easy enough from the Bible. But then when we get to verse 9, he starts prophesying into the future. Since that was 150 years ago [when the Book of Mormon was published], we can start checking up on that and see if that's the direction that has gone in. So he says in verse 2: "Many of our children shall perish in the flesh because of unbelief [that happens, but] our children shall be restored. . . . It must needs be expedient that Christ . . . should come among the Jews, among those who are the more wicked part of the world; and they shall crucify him [as I said, he could have got that elsewhere]. . . . But because of priestcrafts and iniquities, they at Jerusalem will stiffen their necks against him, that he be crucified [the gospel doesn't have a chance anywhere it seems]. Wherefore, because of their iniquities, destructions, famines, pestilences, and bloodshed shall come upon them; and they who shall not be destroyed shall be scattered among all nations." Of course, that was the great destruction of A.D. 70 and 130 when it was capital punishment for a Jew to be found in Jerusalem. The destruction was massive, as we can see from the Dead Sea Scrolls and from Josephus. The rest were scattered among all nations, and they are much more widely scattered than we think. I remember when I was studying with Professor Popper as his only pupil, in came a person from central China. In those days people didn't get back into inmost Asia. He came in and we were all excited to meet him. He came in Professor Popper's office, and he was a Jew who belonged to a community of Jews out there in central Asia—lost tribes or something like that, nobody had ever heard about. But they are scattered in places where you don't expect them. He said, "Yes, we have lots of Jews out there, and they are scattered all over out there on the plains.

Verse 7: "But behold, thus saith the Lord God: When the day cometh that they shall believe in me, that I am Christ, then have I covenanted with their fathers that they shall be restored in the flesh, upon the earth. And it shall come to pass that they shall be gathered in from their long dispersion." Then the gathering—of course, this is important. This is the standard pattern we had before in this tenth chapter. "Yea, the kings of the Gentiles shall be nursing fathers unto them. "Which they have been all through the ages, whether they wanted to be or not, consciously or not. Remember, we talked about the various royal families that you find in the Assizes of Jerusalem, for example, that ruled the world—all related to each other throughout Europe, etc. They were all heavily intermarried with Jews, especially Jewish women, who had an irresistible appeal to the kings, princes, and dukes of Europe. And their main ministers of finance were smart Jews they depended on, like Abravanel who financed Columbus, Joseph C. Oppenheimer who financed the Duke of Saxony, and other important men. They could be thrown out on a moment's notice; they had no rights and no defense at all. But they were mingled in everywhere. For 700 years they were not only in France but in Toulouse which we mentioned last time. Toulouse was practically a Jewish enclave. It became Moslem and the Moslems were very tolerant for a while. It became the Kingdom of Toulouse with a Jewish center, mostly of those who had fled from Jerusalem when it was destroyed at the time of Christ. In southern France you will find them all along there in the Vaudois, etc.

When I was on a mission a very interesting thing happened. I went up to practically a lost village in the Black Forest. It was called Pinache. The French name attracted me, so I went up and tracted. They immediately gobbled up the gospel. I noticed in the cemetery that they all had French names. Well, they were Waldenses who had been driven out in the seventeenth century. They had come there and settled, lived by themselves, and married among themselves. They taught these things, and they were just waiting for the gospel. It was a remarkable thing. Immediately, a man came all the way down to Durlac so he could come to meeting and see what was going on. But these little enclaves are scattered everywhere that we don't know about. When he says the Jews are scattered everywhere, he really means it. On the isles of the sea, you see their features everywhere and things like that which you don't expect. Well, the time is more than up now, and we had better scamper.