

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Alma 47

Tragedy and Suffering in the Scriptures

Now we are on chapter 47 and some interesting phenomena emerge. You think everything will be an anticlimax after 46, don't you? Well, you're wrong. There are no anticlimaxes in the Book of Mormon, at least not many of them. We talked about the four types of civilization, and they are clearly marked in the Book of Mormon. That's a good mark of authenticity in the Book of Mormon. They are clearly in all history, but none of them is a hundred percent pure. They all mix, but one will always dominate in a particular area. Every one of them has its virtues and its vices. They run the cycle. This chapter 47 is interesting because it brings in a queen. You notice that there are queens in the Book of Mormon, mentioned twenty-two times, but never among the Nephites, just among the Lamanites. The Lamanites have queens. Why don't the Nephites have queens? What type of society do Moroni and Alma represent? The brotherhood. The ideal is if it could be the brotherhood; the Church is the brotherhood. You will always find the queens among the Lamanites, so this is a very basic thing. People complain, "Why are there no women in the Book of Mormon? That's unfair." It's obviously loaded. Brodie objected to it; lots of people do. Only [three] women are named in the Book of Mormon, but [two] are archetypes of women. The one is Sariah who is the mother in Israel. She is the mother of all the descendants of Lehi, and the other is Isabel. She is the mother goddess. She was worshipped in Central America and all throughout the world. In the Mediterranean and all the American cults the mother goddess plays a very important part. Of course, she is Babylonian and she belongs to that type of civilization. She is the fertility goddess; she is universal.

You notice what Alma tells his son Corianton. Why did you go over to the land Siron and play around with the harlot [Isabel]? She had enticed many away; the youth of the land were all streaming over to Siron. Why would they have to go to Siron to misbehave? It was out of the country entirely—to Siron "among the borders of the Lamanites," he said. *Sr* is the Egyptian word for sheep. But they had to go abroad. That's strange. And they had to go to this woman. She wasn't exclusive at all. Everybody went to her; she was the one. Well, she was the mother goddess. The rites of the mother goddess, which always come at particular times of year, are the rites of the hierodules, the sacred prostitutes. Everybody in Babylon, for example, as Herodotus tells us, had to go and have intercourse with the temple hierodules once a year. Every woman before she could be married had to serve as a hierodule. The book of Abraham begins with that. Remember the three virgins that were put to death because they wouldn't compromise their virtue? They were members of the royal family, and that was a very well-known story. If you didn't you were in trouble, and they didn't do it. The abominations, human sacrifices and the rest were pretty terrible. Abraham became a victim. We have that type of civilization. It's worldwide and it's ancient. That's our number two, the Babylonian. Remember what she is called? She is the rich, scarlet woman of Babylon. It's the old matriarchy [based on] agriculture—very stable, it goes on. All of these have weaknesses, etc. Another of those marks of authenticity in the Book of Mormon emerges where we have the queens only among the Lamanites. They are something different because the model society of the Nephites is that

of the brethren, and that of the Lamanites is number two. You notice the Lamanites are mixed; they are two and three. Three is the warlords. They are mixed here, and they are always mixed around anyway. But you know what the routine is with these.

What happens to the number one societies? You have the pure brotherhoods and Zion. We talked about monastic life throughout the world. You find these everywhere, and they are very clearly marked. They always have the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They share their property, work on the land, etc. They are brotherhoods, and you find them at all times and places. Very ancient, they go back to the Garden of Eden. What happens to them? They are destroyed by vanity every time, because they get the idea that they are too exalted. Leaders aspire to mystical heights and to godhood prematurely. Vanity gets away with them every time, intellectual and spiritual. Like the Pythagoreans, it fools them. They end up in the lodges of the various brotherhoods [such as] the Illuminati. In a work like *Zanoni* by Bulwer-Lytton, a very famous British writer and statesman, you see the vanity of the Illuminati and the Masons, etc. They spoil themselves by getting too high and mighty. They don't have revelation, but they dress themselves in fancy clothes, have their rites, etc., and become quite spooky after a while. They all go into occultism and that sort of thing. Number one, what we call the "brotherhoods," always ends up that way.

What happens to number two? They are always overrun by number three. We mentioned that. That's basic to geopolitics. Number two is your Babylon in civilization which is overripe to fall. With the scarlet woman of Revelations you find the perfect description of that. Who overruns it? Well, of course, the warlords of the steppes. Those in central Asia. The idea in Haushofer's geopolitics was that "who controls the heartland controls the world." That's the central basis from which you attack in all directions. Every time that's what has happened to those civilizations which are all peripheral, whether it's Chinese, or Babylonian, or Hindu (Indian, such as Mohenjo-Daro), or Egyptian, or Hittite. They [the people of the steppes] expand and overrun them, and then become absorbed by them. It has happened again and again in cycles. In the year 1200 [B.C.] the whole works was wiped out. There were all those civilizations that were great. In about 3,000 or 3,100 the same thing had happened earlier. Then in 1700 and 1200 it happened. Lots of work has been done on that. They overrun them and mix with them. But what happens to them? They are like a bubble that explodes—they expand so far. Remember, they are a very unstable form of society. They depend on the grass and loot, etc. They are the wandering tribes of the steppes. It's the Russian and Asiatic model. They expand as far as they can go. Here's the heartland; it's shaped like a shield. They went out and invaded the Mongol dynasties of China. The Tartars invaded China and set up various dynasties. The Moguls in India came in the seventeenth century. You find them everywhere in all directions.

What caused the Crusades? It wasn't the Moslems. They didn't go to get the holy places back from the Moslems in 1095 when the First Crusade began. They went because the Mongols had invaded, and in 1071 at a great battle they had overcome the Moslems and had taken over and closed all the holy places. They had taken everything over. They were the barbarians from the steppes. They were absorbed too. That was why the crusaders had to go and free the Holy Land and the Holy Sepulcher, because the Mongols had invaded. It's always these people who come out from time to time. Then what happens? Then their bubble explodes because they are an unstable form of existence. But they also are absorbed. Who built the Taj Mahal? It was a Mogul empire, one of the Mongolians. They had only been there a couple of generations; they were new. The languages of India are like the peeling of an onion. There are eleven different layers. They are all related

languages, but each one came in a different wave. They all came through the Khyber Pass.

So you have these walls—the Great Wall of China, the wall of the Asiatics in Egypt, the *limés* in Europe built by the Romans—great walls to keep the barbarians out. None of them ever succeeded in keeping them out. You have walls everywhere. But they come in and get absorbed, but not all of them. The ways of the steppes go on, and the ways of Babylon go on. The ways of the brotherhoods go on, diluted. Who is the winner in the end? It is number four, the poor old primitives, the people living in the brush—the digger Indians and people like that. But they are exploited and exterminated like crazy because they are helpless. They are being exterminated today. Very few are appearing again. But we know now very clearly that they always re-emerge, because when these others collapse that's what you go back to. That's generally conceded today. The archaeologists are looking for primitives, like the Indians. They are not primitives; they are descendants of civilizations that have disappeared.

For example, some of you missionaries may know that the Mayans are still the Mayans. Archaeologists visited them as primitive people. There is nothing primitive about them. They still speak Mayan, but they don't have the civilization anymore. Everywhere you go there are these people in very small numbers hiding in the outback, like the Australian aborigines. But they have always had greater times before, and they all represent that. "To this favor you must come" in the end. We go back to that. That's rather extreme, going back to the primitives, but it happens. It happens all the time. It has happened in North America. In Central and North America we have impressive ruins, like Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde, Canyon de Chelly. The magnificent ruins show that their children are still there, but they are now called primitives. Of course, you can't find a real primitive; there's no such thing. They are just survivors from other times. So the cycle runs—one, two, three, four. There are others in between. There are various mixtures. This is very clearly brought out in the Book of Mormon in chapter 47.

A question might arise here. You read this chapter and say, "Now, wait a minute. You say this isn't a let down. This isn't an anti-climax after that amazing chapter 46 with all that evidence in it." This has more evidence too, but you might say, "What do these sordid doings have to do with the plan of salvation? What does religion have to do with this?" What do we learn from Amalickiah's dirty tricks? And boy did he have a string of them. He knew every one in the book. What does this teach us? This is rather a depressing history of religion, isn't it? Well, just consider this. I've been frantically looking over all sorts of old traditions on the life of Abraham. They have been collected. He is the best documented of all ancient persons. Some say he didn't live. Don't fool yourself; he was a real person. But what a sad story. It was one prolonged horror of great darkness, as Genesis 15 tells us. His life was a continual trial—the ten trials of Abraham. He lived in a world that was a hell. This has been caught up with recently. In recent years Abraham has had great attention because of new documents, etc.

You notice the book of Abraham catches [this situation]. It begins with Abraham "in the soup." He is going to be sacrificed. It begins, "In the land of the Chaldeans, at the residence of my fathers, I, Abraham, saw that it was needful for me to obtain another place of residence." He couldn't hang on there any longer. He protested with his own family, and his own father wanted him put to death to the mother goddess. It was that bad. They "utterly refused to hearken to my voice," he said. He protested and was thrown out. From then on he was a wanderer in the earth. He was finally buried in the cave of Machpelah, which he had to buy from the Hittites. He wanted to rent it from them. He

never had anything. He never had a land of his own. He was the wanderer and the stranger everywhere in a world that was absolutely wrecked by blight. There was a drought and terrible times. Remember, the famine waxed sore and they always had to move. They moved into Egypt, got into trouble, and had bad times in Egypt. They moved out to Gerar and had bad times with Abimelech. Then they moved over to Sodom and Gomorrah, and all hell broke loose there. They had a real atomic blast there, a tremendous thing that wiped everything out. The five cities of the plain were all gone. It was an awful time Abraham went through and horrible people he was dealing with. His archenemy Nimrod was trying to put him to death all the time, and the five kings. Everybody was betraying everybody else. He had arguments with Lot. Abraham is not a happy history. It's a very sad one, the trials of Abraham. He had to undergo those trials. If he was going to have the supreme reward, he had to be willing to face everything and suffer everything. He is the type. You must do the works of Abraham if you would have the rewards of Abraham. We are living in a world very much like Abraham's world. We have this opportunity when these dispensations come, these great turning points, like Abraham's. Remember, he was the founder of everything. Everything comes from Abraham, the father of many nations.

He had three wives. One wife was Sarah, who is the mother of all Semites. But he also married Hagar, who is usually called "the daughter of Pharaoh." She was an Egyptian woman. Ishmael was his son, and Ishmael got the very same promise that Isaac got—that he would be the father of many nations. This mixes in with our Book of Mormon because Lehi was of Manasseh. Ephraim and Manasseh were the sons of Asenath who was the [daughter] of the high priest of Heliopolis in Egypt. She was the pure blood of Ham. She was a princess in Egypt, and we're descended from her. It's all mixed up here. Hagar was of Ham and Sarah was of Shem. What about Japheth? Those are the people of the East. The Greeks knew that. Of course, Noah's third son was Japetus. They were descended from Japetus, who was Japheth. After Sarah died it seemed to be all over. Then he married Keturah, who was a descendant of Japheth. She had six sons by Abraham. He taught them all the advanced arts, sciences, sophistication, mathematics and things that he had exchanged with the Egyptians. They [his sons] were the great founders of Western Civilization. Wherever you go the six sons of Keturah leave their mark, in southern Italy, Greece, etc. These are the traditions.

Once you start mixing genes like that it's amazing how far you can get around, as you know if you have worked with genealogy. You are related to everybody. It's just absolutely astounding how you can get related to people. When you start listing what my kids have it's [surprising]. I had a Jewish grandmother, and that mixes them with Judah. Then there is Scotch, Irish, English, Welsh, lots of Scandinavian, and also lots of Slavic too from the Baltic states. We've got everything, including Arabic. If you start looking around you will get these things. It's not an exaggeration. The Book of Mormon is very interesting in this because we have this simplistic idea that they are either Nephites or Lamanites. Don't kid yourself. Again, in this chapter you will read that they were not just Nephites and Lamanites. The cultures divided up differently that way.

We discussed this sadness. What do you have in the book of Genesis? You have the Fall, a sad story. You have the Flood, a great tragedy. You have the terrible days of Enoch when he reached forth his arms, wept, and said, "I will refuse to be comforted." Then the Lord showed him the coming of the Lord later. The Lord told Enoch, worlds without number have I created, "and among all the workmanship of mine hands there has not been so great wickedness as among thy brethren." This is some world we are on. If you can pass

this test, you are ready for the long haul, but it is a real test. Then what do you get in Exodus? Nothing but suffering and sin and the folly of Israel in the desert. Then he [Moses] gives the five books of the law. He ends with Deuteronomy in which he said, you never listened to a thing I said while I was with you. It will be still worse when I leave you. You've never kept the law, and you never will keep the law until the Messiah comes. There are terrible pictures there.

Then in the Psalms it's all mourning and sorrow, etc. The first Psalm establishes the balance. There's the balance between the two. It starts out, "Happy is the man who does not sit in the counsels of the wicked, [why are they always dwelling on wickedness this way?] and does not go along with the councils of evil. But he continually contemplates the law, and the law is his joy day and night. And he shall be as a tree planted by a pool of water that bears its leaves in due time and its fruit does not fail. But the evil [he always brings them in] they are like dried and withered trees and fruits and withered leaves, like chaff that the wind blows. God knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish." There's the balance of ways, and you have your choice between them. Throughout the Book of Mormon there's never the promise on the land without the curse on the land. You are going to have to deal with both of them. This is the bad time we are in now. Let that be a comfort to you. You are going through your bad time now.

Then there are the historical books of the Bible from then on: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and Samuel. What do you have there? Stories of blood and betrayal. The stories of the patriarchs are bad enough, but when you get to the histories [it's particularly bad]. That's why we know it's sound, good history. It doesn't idealize the kings. It doesn't make our people all heroes and the others all villains, the way the Israelis are trying to do today. Not in that time. It's frank. It shows David, Solomon, Rehoboam, and all of them as the rascals they were. That's the bad side of their character, though they were great men all the same. Then we get to the wisdom literature, and we read some of that. "Vanity of vanities," it's all nothing. There's "nothing new under the sun." There's "nothing but woe" to man here, who is "born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." Nothing but trouble.

Then we come to the New Testament where "the light shines in darkness and the darkness comprehends it not." It's all a big buildup to the Crucifixion. They won't accept him; they won't hear him or anything like that. This is very important. Jesus and the apostles were in the world but not of the world, so the world hated them with a relentless hatred and couldn't destroy them quickly enough. We say "being in the world but not of it." If you are of it, it will love you. If you are not of it, it will hate you. If you are in the world and not of the world, don't expect to succeed in business. You are persona non grata; you'll never succeed. The Lord says the world will hate you. Abraham was unwelcome everywhere he went. Joseph Smith from the moment he announced his mission was in deep trouble all the time with everybody. The Lord said, who convicts me of evil? If you have nothing against me, why are you so mad at me?

It's a cultural shock and fear. Whenever the angels appear, everybody is scared to death. John 14-17 is the best example of that. It just keeps repeating that all the time: Whom the world cannot receive. The world seest me no more; I'm leaving it. The apostles say to him, why do you give these things to us and not to the world?" He says, because to you it is given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. All this is in John 14. He says, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." (John 14:30.) I'm leaving because the prince of this world cometh. If you are not of the world, the world will hate you. He says that's an

absolute guarantee. He repeats it. John 15:18-20: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own [you would be successful and be elected]: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you . . . If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

He says, if I had not done the miracles I've done so they could see them, they [wouldn't] be without excuse. Why do I do this if the world is going to reject me? Because they must be given a chance. But now they are without excuse because they have "both seen and hated both me and my Father. . . . They hated me without a cause." The prince of this world is judged. "I leave the world and go to the Father. . . . In the world ye shall have tribulation," etc.

John 17 is very much like 3 Nephi. He goes through this the same way when he prays. Verse 9: "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; . . . And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee." So they are in the world all right, but they are not of the world. Therefore, they are hated and they are in trouble all the time. Verse 12: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name. . . . the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." I don't take them out of the world; they have to suffer for a while, he says, but "they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

So it keeps harping on that. The first person who said we can be in the world and not of the world and succeed was a Christian of the third century by the name of Diognetus, who wrote on that. People were worried because the church was getting too popular. As Brigham Young said, nothing could be worse than to be a fine popular church and have the world approve of us. Then we would know we were of the world, a very bad sign. So here we are.

John 15:21: They will be one "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." But the world rejects them. He said he came to give the world a chance, but now they are without excuse. But we give success as our reason for being in the world. We say, "We are in the world so we can succeed." But if you are [not] of the world you won't succeed; they won't accept you.

This very interesting chapter (Alma 47), a chapter of sordid crimes and misdemeanors. It's such a contrast with chapter 46, but it's just as loaded with evidence material as the other. Of course, it's not the evidence primarily but what we learn from it. We say, "Why did they tell us this sordid story?" Well, the scriptures tell us almost nothing else. This man Amalickiah knows every dirty trick in the book. Anyone who wrote this book must have known a great deal about human nature. Of course, this reminds us so much of Shakespeare because of his tragedies and his king plays, which are plays of betrayal and that sort of thing. Here we have a real Shakespeare villain Iago to begin with, an ambitious person. "Now we will return in our record to Amalickiah and those who had fled with him . . . and went up in the land of Nephi among the Lamanites . . ." They stirred up trouble. Remember that wonderful talk that Brother Maxwell just gave about murmuring ["Murmur Not," General Conference, October 1989]. He [Amalickiah] was a good murmurer, and it could spread. People want to listen to that, and he didn't have much trouble doing that. Amalickiah wasn't able to pull it off among his own people. In Alma 46:29 it tells us that his own people were doubtful concerning the justice of his cause. He was a very, very smooth man, a skillful talker, it says. But still they knew he wasn't

honest. Boy, you are going to see some tricks now. Some fled with him to the land of Nephi among the Lamanites and they started stirring up the Lamanites to anger by spreading dirty stories and rumors.

It's very interesting; it said that one of the great trials Abraham had to suffer was the dirty stories they spread about Lot, because of the story of Lot and his daughters. Of course, they were immoral enough. The cities of the plain were destroyed. He said gossip pursued him all his days, even the righteous Abraham. This is the sort of thing you have. Amalickiah had no trouble stirring them up to anger against the Nephites. He fed the king with lies, and the king sent a proclamation throughout all the land that his people should gather themselves together again. They had just finished a war in which nobody won. It tells us the Nephites were just as sorry. There was mourning in all the land. Everything was ruined. They gained the victory, but they knew why they had to suffer. It was because of their own sins. It wasn't because of the guilt of the Lamanites at all. It's the usual story. [Alma] had a hand-to-hand duel with Amlici, another person. Notice they have [similar] names. These people are Mulekites; they are not Nephites. This cultural picture is more complex than you think.

He [Amalickiah] must have been very persuasive, but the people were fed up. They got a reaction, and believe me was it negative! Now they were in a dilemma. Here's the way it was. The people feared to displease the king, and yet they also feared to go to battle against the Nephites. They'd had enough; they were fed up. Incidentally, their terror of going to battle again is a great tribute to Moroni's great tactical skill. With very limited resources he was able to push them around until they surrendered. Then he would immediately grant them permission to go home with no reprisals or anything like that. All right you take an oath and you go home [he said]. There was no total victory or anything like that. Moroni was very sensitive. The minute he saw the tide turning, he immediately offered terms to the other side for surrender. And often they took him up. He was more respected by the Lamanites than by anybody else because they had to deal with him.

It's an interesting thing. A recent Civil War historian just pointed out that in all the writings of Lee and Lincoln, neither ever refers to the other side as "the enemy." It's the Confederacy or the Union, but they never refer to each other as "the enemy." That's an interesting thing, because everybody else was full of it.

Alma 47:2: ". . . they feared to displease the king, and they also feared to go to battle against the Nephites lest they should lose their lives." Then they actually went on a strike; they refused to do it. It was flat disobedience, a refusal to take orders. ". . . they would not, or the more part of them would not, obey the commandments of the king." It was a real strike, just like the Aussies in 1917. The Australians bore the brunt of World War II, beginning with Gallipoli when they took a terrible beating. Time after time for three years, they were held out on the British front where the terrible generals just sent wave after wave to slaughter. In 1917 the Aussies finally [went on strike]. They were the best soldiers in the war, but they wouldn't fight anymore. They refused to go back to the front. They were promised a furlough of just a couple of days, and that was taken back. The British command said, "No, men should be able to take more than that." So they went on a strike and were all put in jail. If it hadn't been for a pardon from the king, they would have been in jail to this day. There comes a time when you can only take so much, and these people were fed up. They absolutely refused to go against their enemies. Later on we're going to find out that Mormon says, I became an idle onlooker. I did utterly refuse

to go against my enemies. He wouldn't do it anymore.

The king was fit to be tied, of course. They had directly defied his command. That was insubordination of the grossest type. “. . . the king was wroth because of their disobedience.” He gave Amalickiah command of the whole thing. Amalickiah was a very impressive person, and there were some loyalist troops that would follow Amalickiah. This is the usual mixup. This is a very old story everywhere you find it. But the person who wrote this knew a great deal. He was telling a real story. [The king] commanded him that he should go forth and compel them to arms.” A police action, like at Archangel [USSR] when the White Army tried to force the Red Army to oppose the Germans, and it didn't work. He was trying to do the same thing. The loyalists weren't strong enough to do it. They were the larger army. But Amalickiah was “a very subtle man.” That's to say the least. “. . . he laid the plan in his heart to dethrone the king of the Lamanites.” This was a long range plan, and he worked it out beautifully.

This was routine among the Romans, of course. Phillip the Arab wanted to become emperor, and he did become emperor by a lot of plots. You know the stories of Livia plotting to get her son Tiberius on the throne after Augustus was in there—poisoning this person, that person, and the other person and getting all the others out of the way. This is a common procedure, the poisoning of the line to the throne. It's very dangerous to be in the line to the throne because you are in line for poisoning.

He took the part of the Lamanites who were in favor of the king. He took the loyalist troops with him and he went to Onidah, where the others had fled and encamped themselves. It tells us that Onidah was “the place of arms.” That's interesting because there is always a place of arms where you go to rally. It's Nottingham in England usually. It's like the field of Mars in Rome. You find the Mars fields all over Europe in ancient times. It's the *maidan* in the East. The *maidan* is the field of arms. In England they had the field of Mars in the villages into the nineteenth century, where they had the Morris dance or the Mars dance in the mazes. They went through a drill or sham battle that they used to have. This was the place of arms, the field of Mars and the *maidan*. They had appointed their own leader and set him up. They knew they were being used here. Verse 6: “. . . being fixed in their minds with a determined resolution that they would not be subject to go against the Nephites.” They weren't going to do that at all. This, as I said, is a tribute to Moroni. They were scared to death of the Nephites who were a smaller group and not nearly as warlike. So they gathered themselves on the top of a mountain called Antipas. This is a tradition too. After all, why do the Hopis live in the high mesas? Because they don't want to go to war. At one time they were the most terrible of all the fighters in the Southwest, but they didn't like it. There are some very interesting legends about this. They took to the mesas where their enemies couldn't get at them. That was the safe place. There they [the Lamanites] were at the hill Antipas, and you would run a risk to try to take over there. They had appointed their leaders, as the tribes always do. You appoint your leader. You would know your Caesar in the Gallic Wars. When the tribes started marching, immediately the first thing they would do is appoint a leader who was called a king. In the English Chronicles that is met with more than anywhere else. The **king** is the *kyning*, or the one who knows. He's the one who leads you out, and he is chosen. The kings of England are always elected by somebody or other. In the blood line, of course, this led to a lot of trouble, against Henry III etc. When things got pretty bad and the king was incompetent, the barons put on the heat, especially Simon de Montfort in 1265, and they took over. There was never a time when the king couldn't be deposed, if he was a bad one. That's the story of Richard II and Bolingbroke, etc.

It's the same thing here. You put your king in, and they come and go. They do the same thing in the Book of Mormon. Kings come in and kings go out. They are under popular pressure, and there is lots of plotting and intrigue going on. This is a number one intriguer that we have here. This Amalickiah really knew his way around. His intention was to gain favor with the Lamanites because they were the biggest number. That's the army he wanted to get rid of the king, to "place himself at their head and dethrone the king and take possession of the kingdom."

Some people just love plotting and planning. That's what makes so many of Shakespeare's plays so interesting. The king plays are all plots and plans, all sorts of schemes. That's why we love spy dramas more than anything else. Almost anything you'll turn on tonight on TV will be an intrigue and a plot with dirty work going on—along with the violence and the sex, the things that are absolutely mandatory to our lives now. The question arises, is peace possible in such a world? We have this very interesting thing here. This is the way they are going to do it. Verse 10: "And it came to pass that when it was night he sent a secret embassy into the mount Antipas . . ." He wanted to make a deal. Come down and speak with me and we will make a deal here [he said]. The man they had elected to leader was Lehonti. Everybody was onto Amalickiah, so he said, Un uh, I'm not coming down for you, buster. So he invited him again to come down, but he said, no I'm not coming down. The third time Amalickiah said, all right I'll come and meet you. Don't be afraid; you can bring your bodyguard with you. You know he is going to get rid of him anyway. But he durst not come down. You notice he knew Amalickiah. As we said, Amalickiah's own people were doubtful of the justice of his cause. They didn't trust him all the way. Nobody trusted him, but was he clever. The [fourth] time Amalickiah went up to the mountain, and Lehonti came down with his guards. Then what did Amalickiah do? He betrayed his own men. He had his own loyalist people surrounded by the guards of Lehonti. ". . . Amalickiah desired him to come down with his army in the night-time, and surround those men in their camps . . ." This was their deal. You bring your army down and surround my little army at the bottom there, the king's army, and I will deliver them into your hands. Then you won't have to go to war, bother about the king, or anything like that. He would deliver them up into Lehonti's hands if he would make him, Amalickiah, second leader over them.

They always had not only a king but also a second leader. Among the Romans they had a Caesar and an Augustus, who was a second-class Caesar. Caesars were always being bumped off by Augustuses so they could succeed them. Of the sixty-odd emperors of Rome by far the great majority were assassinated, and they were usually succeeded by the head of the military. A good example I mentioned was Philip the Arab. He was the head of the Praetorian Guard, the emperor's personal bodyguard. What did he do? In a cute trick he stabbed the emperor and became emperor himself. So Decius, who was with some soldiers up in Germany, came down and got rid of Philip. Then he became emperor, and a great persecutor of the Christians. So this is the world we live in. We are not going to leave this part out of the story. We are all going to see a lot of dirty work. We see it going on around us all the time today, and it gets worse.

Verse 14: "And it came to pass that Lehonti came down with his men and surrounded the men of Amalickiah . . ." So Amalickiah betrayed his own army. He betrays everyone. The king has betrayed his own people to Amalickiah. Then Amalickiah betrayed his army to Lehonti. Then the king's army became his while he betrayed Lehonti with poison. Now he is going to get rid of Lehonti as the next step in his *gradus ad parnassum*, as the Romans

call it. These are the steps of authority. You have to go through *gradus honorum*. There are various steps that everyone aspired to. Everybody wanted a career. Everybody wanted to get to the top. They were very competitive, so you get this sort of thing. “. . . when they saw that they were surrounded, they plead with Amalickiah that he would suffer them to fall in with their brethren . . .” Instead of destroying them when they surrounded [Amalickiah’s group] they joined them. So he had a super army now. He had the loyalists he led, and they were also joined by Lehonti’s people, of which he was second in command. But he is not going to remain second for very long, not if you know our dear Amalickiah.

Verse 16: “And it came to pass that he delivered his men, contrary to the commands of the king.” That’s an understatement. So now he is second leader. That’s the meaning of lieutenant, the one who takes the place of the other. *Capita* means “head man or top man.” The other one is the *locum tenens*, the one who holds the second place of the captain, who is the first place. So we have the captain, Lehonti, with Amalickiah as lieutenant. But again he is not going to remain that very long. “. . . Amalickiah caused that one of his servants should administer poison by degrees to Lehonti, that he died.”

Alexander VI, [Rodrigo] Borgia, became pope by poisoning a line of people. Finally, one cardinal stood in his [way], and he poisoned him. Then he became the great Pope Alexander VI. That’s the way you do. You poison a line of people and come in there. We always think of Borgias when we think of poisoning— Lucrezia and Cesare. They worked their way to the top by poisoning.

So the Lamanites appointed Amalickiah to be their leader and chief commander. Amalickiah was now the leader of the whole thing, so what did he do? He marched to the city of Nephi to overthrow his lord, the king for whom he was working. He was the king’s general; now he was going to overthrow the king. But how did he do it? Well, the king came out to meet him, to hail the conquering hero. This happens again. You hail someone coming back. The king came out to meet Amalickiah. He put forth his hand to give him the sign of peace and lift [Amalickiah’s servant] up, a custom they had taken from the Nephites. Notice these cultural exchanges that go on. He got stabbed being greeted. This is the direct method that Richard III uses. And, of course, [Amalickiah’s servants] raised a hue and cry to rouse up the usual suspects. This is what they do in *Macbeth* when they plot the murder of Duncan, the king. Macbeth has risen by degrees this way. First he’s the thane of Glamis, then he’s thane of Cawdor, and then he wants to be king. He is talking about the two guards. The king is sleeping in his bedroom with two chamberlains to guard him. They got them drunk at the feast. He says,

. . . when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
[especially as we shall raise hue and cry and make them guilty]
Of our great quell?

Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act I, Scene 7

She says, “I’ll gild the faces of the grooms withall, for it must seem their guilt.” (a play on words). She is going to smear them with blood so it will look as if they had committed the

murder. [She says,] These officers will be guilty for the crime we committed, because we will yell, “Look, his servants have killed him.” That’s exactly what happened here. It’s a well-known trick. Then she says, who will dare challenge our authority when we are king and queen. (I’ll think of it in a minute. I always have to wait a minute. I’m slowing down terribly these days. Well, that happens. Old age and that sort of thing.)

Verse 25: “. . . and the servants of Amalickiah raised a cry, saying: Behold, the servants of the king have stabbed him to the heart . . . [and] Amalickiah pretended to be wroth . . .” He gets angry about it and they [try to] round up the usual suspects. It’s a terrible crime that has been committed. “Whosoever loved the king, let him go forth, and pursue his servants that they may be slain.” That’s exactly what you would say. What loyalty this is! Macbeth had to announce that he had killed them because they would know. He says, yet I regret that I did it. Then Macduff says, why did you do that? He immediately becomes suspicious. Macbeth says,

Who can be wise, amazed, temp’rate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood.

Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act II, Scene 3

What man can be temperate and control himself in that situation? I had to bump them off. [Macduff] doesn’t buy that too well. Later on he says, “King, Cawdor, Glamis, thou hast it all, and I fear thou hast played most foully for it.” So he’s a typical Amalickiah. Of course, you could say Joseph Smith got it from *Macbeth*, being quite a student of Shakespeare—especially when he was twenty years old, working his head off on the farm. But it is a very common pattern; it happens all over the place. Livia was a very skillful poisoner, as you know. She poisoned everybody who got in Tiberius’s way, as you find out in Livy. Livy writes about Livia.

The servants of the king saw what he [Amalickiah] was doing, and they got out of there. They fled, and that made them look more guilty. They showed they were guilty because they ran away. His plot was working out. They fled over and joined the people of Ammon. That was the sensible thing to do—join these good, peaceable people of Ammon. What a relief to get away from all that sort of thing. Verse 30: “. . . and thus Amalickiah, by his fraud, gained the hearts of the people.” The fraud will do it, you see. His public relations savvy was very skillful. You can win the hearts of the people by fraud. Look at Adolf Hitler. And Shakespeare’s Claudius does the very same thing. You can smile and smile and be a villain, as Hamlet says. And there’s Noriega. You can gain the hearts of the people this way.

Verse 31: “And it came to pass on the morrow he entered the city Nephi with his armies, and took possession of the city.” Now he’s everything, but he’s got to marry the queen. The queen smells a rat too. Now we’re going to have trouble here. It’s quite a career this man has. He’s very interesting. With an imagination like that, Joseph Smith could have written quite a novel. “Therefore, when the queen had received this message she sent unto Amalickiah . . .” Come in and tell me, oh dear Amalickiah, what has been going on. Isn’t it terrible, he says to her. She also asked him to bring witnesses of what had happened. She

was not going to take his word alone. Nobody trusted Amalickiah all the way. She said, bring witnesses and tell me how it really happened. So Amalickiah did. He went to the queen with his witnesses, his stooges, “and they all testified unto her that the king was slain by his own servants; and they said also: They have fled [doesn’t this show that they are guilty?]; does not this testify against them?” Flight always assumes guilt. “And it came to pass that Amalickiah sought the favor of the queen, and took her unto him to wife.”

It’s like the opening scene of Richard III. He had just murdered a man, and here is his wife at the funeral. He comes in and on the scene he proposes marriage to her. She knows that he has murdered [her husband] too. He’s such a smooth talker that he actually wins her over. Imagine that! The world is full of rascals. How loyal was the queen anyway, we begin to wonder, her husband being something of a bore? She at least found Richard interesting. “. . . and thus by his fraud, and by the assistance of his cunning servants, he obtained the kingdom; yea, he was acknowledged king throughout all the land, among all the people of the Lamanites . . .” Notice the people he ruled over were a complex. It wasn’t just Lamanites. He was a Mulekite himself. The Lamanites were composed of the Lamanites, Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites. They had kept their tribal identity. They probably had different dialects, just as the different villages of the Hopis have different dialects, close together as they are. “. . . and all the dissenters of the Nephites, from the reign of Nephi down to the present time.” We have this complex picture.

It names four different groups here. It tells us in this mingling around the dissenters became the hardest boiled of all. “. . . they became more hardened and impenitent, and more wild, wicked and ferocious than the Lamanites.” The Lamanites absorbed them, and this is what happens. Just as the civilizations absorb the warlord people, so the other way happens too. The warlord people can absorb them, and they make their ways more savage. “. . . drinking in with the traditions of the Lamanites.” In verse 23 it mentioned quite casually that the custom of the king raising the victor to his feet by reaching out his hand was a custom which they had taken from the Nephites. Now here the Nephites are taking customs from them, as they take customs from the Nephites. “. . . giving way to indolence, and all manner of lasciviousness [they become the more relaxed warlords now, but they are a mixture]; yea, entirely forgetting the Lord their God.”

Well, they are not the brotherhood anymore at least. The apostates are the worst here. Then we get a cultural picture again. We see what we would call the primitives. They almost went down to that level, “giving way to indolence, and all manner of lasciviousness.” No self-control particularly. They are no longer warlords here, you see. They are degrading; they are on their way down to what are called primitives. They will become innocent later on when they lose their resources and go back to nature again.

Let’s see, I wonder if chapter 48 will be an anticlimax after this. This was an unpleasant chapter, but this, children, is the world we live in, isn’t it? We have to face these things. Or do we have to face them? We have to know where we are. But what do you do in a case like this? How do you hold your own in this kind of a world? Well, that’s the beauty of it. We heard that at conference. What you do is have prayer, of course. You have direct access to the “Top Man.” You don’t have to go through channels or anything else. A lot was said about that—a lot about the authorities and how we are to respect them, how we are to go through them, what their office is, what our obligations are, etc. We know what we have to do, but always the way is wide open to the “Top Man.” You can go right through for satisfaction. That’s what we are commanded to do. So let not your hearts be troubled by this sort of stuff.