

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Semester 4, Lecture 94
3 Nephi 9–13
Christ's Ministry and Teachings

People ask for assignments. Well, we have an assignment; it's to read 3 Nephi. We're going fast over some stuff now. Turn to 3 Nephi 6, and since we have all read it [I'll ask a question]. Is Sister Ivins here? Sister Ivins, this sixth chapter— isn't it something? Didn't it just knock you off the Christmas tree? What's the remarkable thing about it? I think it's the most powerful editorial for us in the whole Book of Mormon, probably. I say that about every chapter, but this one really does it. This one covers all the ground. You'll notice it starts out with a model society. They've been through a long war and suffered terribly. They return as a model society. They reform very wisely. They rehabilitate the enemy and all this sort of thing and begin immense prosperity. And then they start becoming spoiled. Then business becomes everything, and they're divided into classes. Then, lo and behold, you get a secret government, the lawyers take over, and everything collapses. That's the sixth chapter—what a marvelous cycle! It's probably the most condensed cycle. Is it the story of American capitalism? Well, read it carefully; it's very condensed. There's an awful lot [in it], but the next chapter does just like it. And what is the result of that? Thank you very much, Sister Ivins.

Is Tanya Ivins here? Ah, now the next one. The seventh chapter is a different thing, and you've studied it with great care, that being the assignment. A remarkable thing happens: A totally new social system emerges from that. And what is it?

“Tribes.”

Yes, they go back to their original tribal organizations. The tribes had always been in place. The thing was set up and just waiting to take over. They had the whole inner structure going all the time, just as all the Indian tribes do. It's not the tribes that count—it's the phratries. It's the groups inside, the brotherhoods, that always keep the families together, keep the name, keep the clan. It's the Turtle Clan or the Bear Clan or the Snake Clan. It's not the tribe. So they're back to their old tribal system.

Speculating a little bit, Brother Johansen . . . (he's caught in the snow; the Scandinavians couldn't be stopped by snow). Brother Clark Johnson, this could go on forever. This is their normal way of existence, but what has put a stop to the whole thing? We're back to a tribal organization; we're back to square one now. Have we got to go through that dismal routine again? What happens to arrest the whole thing and start a wholly new ball game?

“Destruction.”

Mass destruction. It's not one of the great world destructions, but it is such as we do have. We've had such mass destructions. They talk about the summer of 1983 and things like that, that shook the whole world, changed the whole world. Yes, it changes the demography, it changes the topography, and it changes the culture, too. But only locally. Notice, this is local here. It tells us most cities weren't destroyed. There was an epicenter where the destruction was nearly complete, but people escaped. Others hadn't even heard of the earthquake. It wasn't a sudden, drastic shifting of continents or anything like that—though that was what was behind it.

Well, then I notice the ninth chapter here. They have the new democracy set up. It hadn't lasted very long, had it? Let me see now—we've got all kinds of Johnsons here. Clark Johnson, now what happens? Notice, in every one of these chapters, the whole picture changes as if you had to turn off the lights, change the sets, wait between the acts, and have an intermission. You come back and it's a different scene, after the first one. So now what happens? I would call it the lowering of the shield, or the space shield, or something like that. And you get that in the ninth chapter. What am I talking about, Brother Johnson, when I think of that? Now the people are all gathered here at the temple, and then something happens.

“After the destruction, Christ proclaims [answer inaudible].”

They hear a voice. Now, this is out of the world—this is something. I say, it's just like lowering the screen that they do in these science fiction things, you know. You have a protective screen that shuts you from space. And we do have such a screen around us. We can't see through it at all. The screen is lowered, and all of a sudden in the ninth chapter here they hear a voice speaking through to them, “Wo, wo, wo.” It talks to them, and there's rejoicing, etc. The voice comes through out of outer space, so to speak. The earth does have a magnetic shield, and this is very basic. This has become a very strong issue now, of course, the idea of the nemesis. When a giant meteorite or asteroid strikes the earth—as it does every 26 million years, something like that—it gives it such a jar that the differential that goes between the core of the earth and the inner shell, which is liquid, [breaks down]. See, the inner parts of the earth rotate at different rates, and that produces this current. When the earth is heavily jarred, we're told, it breaks down that magnetic shield. And then, bang! In come the solar rays from one side, a solar wind, and in come the cosmic rays from the other, and in come the showers. The Heavyside layer disappears. About every 26 million years they say that happens. It completely changes the earth and wipes out ninety percent of the species. New species emerge. Well, this is the sort of thing that goes on here. This isn't as bad as that, but we do have that shield that's between us and the outside.

Here I do think it's relevant to talk about the “cone of time.” That is what this book is about, incidentally. He's very intriguing on this subject of the cone of time. I'll draw you a picture of it. You know what this is, the cone of time. I'll show what it's supposed to be like. This is an event; it is called “an event.” We'll make it a real distinctive event. It's a brilliant flash of light that lasts only 1/100th of a second. So the light starts going out from here in all four directions, of course, and here. We'll make it to here and to here. This is as fast as it goes—the well-known 186,300 miles a second. It goes here, and the next second it's here. You have to be here to see it; then you have to be here to see it. But time is passing meantime. Here is a second, or whatever the unit is—a second or a year. You have to be here. The light has traveled this far in this much time, so if you're out here, you'll see it. See, this is the cone. If the next second, the next light year, or the next hour you're out here, then you'll see the flash again. And if you're out here, then you'll see the flash again. The reason it's a cone [is that] it happens in both directions. It goes down this way, too, the past, and also it's round. It goes out in all directions but also all directions like a globe, so it's like the shell of a bubble that you're actually on here.

So here we're going out, and here is one light year. Here is one light year distance, and here's the distance of one light year when the two correspond. You see it—you see the flash now. That's not imagining it. A nova or a quasar suddenly flashes, and a thousand or ten thousand years later we see the flash, the same flash. It's the real event, the same event and no other. You say, oh yes, but if you get closer up to it, then you see the real thing. No, you don't. Light takes time to travel anyway. Remember, one of the basic measures of light is the time it takes to cover the thickness of an electron, which is ridiculous, but that's exactly the unit of time that's used.

So here we have this, and we go out here. Now the point is here—if you travel out here, you can see it. If you get it at the right time and the right place, you'll see it. But what if you travel along here right at the speed of light and you keep looking at it? Well, it keeps shining steadily, doesn't

it? The light is shining, and as it goes out, you go out. You go out all along here, and this is your experience of the light. But it's only a flash. It only lasts for a 1/100th of a second. This can't be the same event. Yes, it's the same event. It's not any different at all. This is your experience of it. In other words, time has ceased to exist. You can see in all the space movies that if you go with the speed of light, as Einstein said, time has stopped. And the nearer you get to it, the slower time goes—Fitzgerald's rule, etc. So here we go out here. The irony of it—what I'm getting at here: What is our experience of reality? You have to be at the time and place to experience that. Any place else this is already happening. If you happen to be here, you will see it, and this hasn't happened yet. So this is nonexistent for you, and this is nonexistent for you. That's finished. It's over and done, and this hasn't happened. Only this very second that you're living in [is reality]. This is the well-known philosophical paradox.

How long does it take for the future to become the past? Well, we came in here two minutes before the class, and the class was still future. Now, already, five minutes after, it's all past. It's as dead as the pharaohs now. It's past forever and ever. A hundredth of a second [before] it was still future, and there was still brilliant hope. A hundredth of a second after, it's all past, and there's nothing you can do about it, you see. So the fact is, we just live in this reality here and only see what's along here. How thick is this cone? Well, it's thinner than the thinnest membrane or film. It's the thickness of time; it has no thickness at all. So again the poets are right when they talk about that. Shakespeare said, "We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep." Well, here we are; we'll make a model. "Our little life is rounded with a sleep." Here's our life in the middle, you see. This is sleep—we don't know what happens there. This is sleep—we don't know what happens here. And what about our little life here? Well, it's just a dream anyway, isn't it?

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.

Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, act IV, scene 1

And I immediately think of the vapor trails of a plane. That's the rack. When a cloud starts breaking up, that's the rack, you see. And so we come along making a brilliant trail here. All we know of life, all we have to show for our existence is what we remember. If you forget from day to day, you don't exist. That's the agony of Alzheimer's, isn't it? That's true. Then our vapor trail starts breaking up, doesn't it. And before long it's into nothing. Our memory isn't much good. It's an interesting game. I play it all the time now to see just how much I can remember. Does it make any difference? The whole thing is all fused together anyway. Now the interesting thing, of course, is that this is a very important part of the gospel, and the Book of Mormon, too. Hereafter our memories will be perfect. They'll be vivid, which means, right along here your light is shining at present all the time. The time stands still, and you can see this light. If you go with the speed of light, you look back and it's a steady light, not a hundredth of a second—it lasts forever.

It's the same way with our experiences here. They'll be eternal, when we shift gears that way. We talk about our vivid memories that we bring back. A good hypnotist can do marvelous [things with memory]. And many times you can hear of people at the point of drowning or some other extreme crisis. Their whole life will flash before their eyes, and they really mean it [when they

claim this]. They see the whole thing. Our memories play strange tricks; we are strange beings, you see.

Now this is what I'm talking about, the Lord appearing here. You hear this voice coming out of nowhere. That shouldn't happen—that's "nonsense." Common sense doesn't tolerate that sort of thing, etc. There's the story of King Oswui. That's the whole reason we have the gospel. Remember, King Oswui was the first English king converted. He was having a banquet in his great hall, and a Christian monk was present and was teaching him. During the gaiety of the banquet, the hall was lit with a fire. They had the two ends that were open to let the smoke out. They had two beams crossing with horses' heads on them, and they let smoke out. That was a thing they had to have. A sparrow flew through one of those and was panicked in the light. It flew around for a moment in panic and then flew out the other one. King Oswui noticed that and said, look at that sparrow. He comes in out of the dark unknown. He sees a brilliant flash of light for a minute. All he is is confused; then he's gone, and that's it. He said, that's our life. That converted him to Christianity, which he thought might teach him something of what went before and what comes after, but by that time Christianity was not teaching anything of the sort either way. They didn't believe in a physical resurrection. (I could read a paper on the subject, but I won't.) And they had thrown out the pre-existence, which was absolutely basic in early Judaism and Christianity.

Well, while I was looking at the cone of time, I saw a couple of quotations. I'm going to read them to you now, and then we'll resume with the Book of Mormon. Hawking says [in *A Brief History of Time*], "Maybe what we call imaginary time is really more basic, and what we call real is just an idea we invent to help us describe what we think the universe is like." That's what we were talking about. We're stuck with this time business. "A scientific theory is just a mathematical model we make to describe our observations." And Warren Wheeler, a great nuclear scientist in Texas, says, "Science can only describe. It never explains." It will never tell you why. All it can do is describe phenomena. But to resume Hawking's quotation, he says, "It exists only in our minds [that is, the model we make of the universe], so it is meaningless to ask which is real or which is real or imaginary time [it's like Shakespeare]. It is simply a matter of which is the more useful description."

And our friend Gary Zukav says, "Now we'll see that physics may require a more complete alteration of our thought process than we ever conceived possible or, in fact, than we ever could conceive." We don't just change a few ideas and say, well this is abstract; in theory this is very interesting. No, he says, this requires a more complete alteration of our thought process than we ever conceived or, in fact, could conceive. It's the same as the saying of Nels Bohr on that subject. And Bell's theorem is one thing that's really new in physics today. "Bell's theorem tells us that there is no such thing as separate parts. All parts of the universe are connected in an intimate, immediate way, previously claimed only by mystics and other scientific people. Bell's theorem shows that common sense ideas are inadequate even to describe macroscopic events, events of the everyday world."

And Henry Stapp says "Our ordinary ideas about the world are somehow profoundly deficient, even on the macroscopic level [the things you see around you]. Events in the world at large, the world of freeways and sports cars, behave in ways that are utterly different from our common-sense view of them. It should be obvious now that we do not see reality if only because we see so little." We have tunnel vision, you see. We have to work with the knowledge we have, but when more knowledge is offered, we reject it, as a rule. Don't do that. That's a silly thing to do. Remember, as he said, we only see one percent. We can see lots of stars, and we can see out 15, maybe 20 billion light years with new telescopes and all the marvelous things, but they say we see less than one percent of what's really there. It's nearly all dark matter, as far as we're concerned. So we don't know what's going on anywhere, he says.

We have only our memories to show for our existence, and they are a quickly fading vapor trail, as Shakespeare puts it so neatly. So we come to this ninth chapter, and it lowers the shield and shows us that there is something behind it—and this follows then. In the tenth chapter another world really breaks through. It's interesting that Christian theologians today have suddenly become enamored of that expression, *breakthrough*. Christianity was a breakthrough in the ordinary lives of men. It was something different. Well, of course it was a breakthrough. How much are they willing to recognize there—a breakthrough, a recognition, an intellectual breakthrough.

These are the survivors here [in chapter 10]. We're talking about the people at the temple. Notice, the Lord speaks here, and he laments that the whole world has gone wrong. This is the way we should have been. See, chapter 10 is the big breakthrough. There was silence for many hours. They ceased lamenting, and then they heard the voice. And what a calling down it gave! I wanted to do everything for you. I gave you a standing offer, and you would not accept it. I couldn't force you to do it; I wouldn't twist your arm. Your place shall become desolate (it means that quite literally). If you won't be gathered, your place will become desolate [the Savior said]. When they heard that they began to realize what fools they had been. They began to weep and howl for the loss of their kindred. There were three days of darkness and the mourning, etc. The more righteous part of the people, naturally, had gone to the temple, so you had a sort of selective survival here. The destruction hadn't been so great then. And then it lists the parts that were not sunk and buried; notice from verse 13 on. It tells us the places that were destroyed, but there were a lot of places that weren't destroyed. In other words, it wasn't complete destruction. It was just a major earthquake, probably 8.1 on the Richter Scale, or something like that. And notice it keeps saying, "not sunk or buried, not burned, not crushed, not carried away, not overpowered." This tells us that a lot of them were, you see.

It's like a play, you see. They're striking the old set the last day of the play. I have a lot of kids that were in drama this way or that. The last day of the play the whole cast has to stay and strike the set. They not only strike the set, but in the meantime the set for tomorrow's play is already set up and ready to go. That's what we're doing now. They're striking the set all around us, but are we building up Zion? Are we building the new set that should be there when this comes down in a cloud of dust? We've become awfully good at demolitions today. You notice how they can demolish those buildings? Bingo, in a couple of seconds. What we're good at is garbage and demolition. What a civilization!

Well, here it was, you see. In this tenth chapter it tells us something of survival. It gets them ready now. What's going to happen? It says the people of Nephi were spared, and they had been shown great blessings and great favors "insomuch that soon after the ascension of Christ into heaven he did truly manifest himself unto them" (verse 18). So the story is not over. There's going to be another episode. Well, there's some encouragement for us. We can feel good about that for a change.

Now we come to chapter 11. This is perhaps the most powerful statement in the Book of Mormon. I never can read it, because I choke up every time I try to do it. And it's very simple—that's the idea. The stranger is one of their own. You do not dispute. You repent and get your act together, he says. I am pulling the family together, he says. I want to bring you back to the Father again. He appears entirely to individuals. He always appears to individuals. That's what an atonement is. He greets them one by one, he gives them the signs and tokens one by one, he converses with them one by one, he blesses the children one by one. He gives each person to understand; for example, it comes through here in 3 Nephi 11:15. That's the one by one. Then verse 35 is another interesting one. He says, "This is my doctrine, and I bear record of it from the Father; and whoso believeth in me believeth in the Father also; and unto him [notice it's in the singular—whoever believes in me, I will come to him] will the Father bear record of me."

Notice, here is the cast of characters, and it's not the multitude or the mob or the chorus. It's the Father, the Son, and the individual. The Father also will come unto him, and the Father will "bear record of me [singular], for he will visit him [singular] with fire and with the Holy Ghost." That's an individual. He's not going to visit the church in the abstract or something like that. He comes to every individual there. And then in 3 Nephi 17:21 he says, "And when he had said these words, he wept, and the multitude bare record of it, and he took their little children, one by one, and blessed them [gave each one a blessing—that's something, to receive a blessing from the Lord as your own], and prayed unto the Father for them. And when he had done this he wept again." Well, why the weeping? This enormous contrast. There's joy also—we come to that.

And then there's this one to consider, verse 25. Now we have the multitude. There is a well-known Greek grammatical expression: "The whole multitude rose as a single man and waved his hat." Of course, it was a single man; he waved his hat. But listen, "And the multitude did see and hear and bear record; and they know that their record is true for they all of them did see and hear, every man for himself." He didn't say, well did you see him? You were impressed because everybody else was yelling so they must be seeing something. No, every man saw for himself, even though it was the multitude we're talking about. They heard and they bore record. There were 2,500 of them—men, women, and children. So this is this individual appearance. This is so very important to us here. And then we have a new beginning. This emphasis on children that we get in chapter 11 here is this new beginning. Only the children are uncontaminated. The angels come down and teach them. They don't wither in the presence of angels.

Now chapter 12 is very important. This is where we have the beatitudes; that's the Sermon on the Mount. Notice what a summary. This chapter in these 48 verses summarizes the moral teachings of the Lord here. But what it emphasizes here is there is no rank. The Sermon on the Mount as it's given here and in the New Testament (I was looking at it this morning) is given to the disciples in answer to the question, "Who are qualified to be taken into the church?" They're not general statements. They apply at all times. But remember what he says. The disciples came to him, and he just gave it to the disciples in the New Testament. But here he's not talking to the disciples in an unbelieving world. Here he's talking to all the believers. They're all his disciples here, and he talks to them, but still the same thing applies. What are the qualities of a member of the church? What do they have to have? They should have various qualities. He begins with the third verse: "Yea, blessed are the poor in spirit who come unto me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And again, blessed are all they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Now he's talking to the multitude who have come to him. This is very appropriate, and it applies all the way through here, doesn't it.

He tells us in verses 40–41 at the end here there is no other plan; no other arrangement will do. This is universal; it's the plan throughout all the other worlds. Again, you say, isn't that going to be rather monotonous? Is it as simple as all that, to go on for eternity after eternity? Well, we see the problems of multiplicity here, how you can multiply worlds and things like that. You can do it with the 16 notes of a scale, but the example that Arthur Clarke gives is the checker game. How many moves can you make in a game of checkers? Well, if you had a million computers and each computer made a million moves a second, how long would it take to play all possible games of chess? It would take 30 billion billion years. That's quite a while, isn't it? Each of a million machines making a million moves a second, you see. If you have 300 million or 30 billion, it doesn't make any difference. It's a very simple factorial. Just figure it out. But that's how complex things are, you see, all these combinations. With only eight notes to work with, how will you ever invent a new melody? Ah, this is up to you. This is where you come in. That's your anthropism all the way, you see. Nature isn't going to invent something that's beautiful and pleasing. Well, it does it all the time, but you have to be there to react to it, or it's not going to be there.

We're rushing through these chapters here. We've read them already and so we want to get on to, well, maybe, the Jaredites—they're a favorite. But we don't get to them yet. After 3 Nephi we get

to Mormon, then 4 Nephi and existence *à la wateau*. That's nice—we have to have that. But that's a short one. As Voltaire says, "Happy the people whose annals are a blank." If there's no history, it means you're having a happy time. Our history consists only in trouble and crime. If you turn on the TV, you're not going to be interested unless somebody's pointing a gun at somebody. That's all you'll find today. There's got to be trouble and big trouble and lots of violence. That incurable taste for violence that we're having now bids very ill in terms of the Book of Mormon.

Well, chapter 12 tells us that there is to be no rank. The Sermon on the Mount is on the qualifications of membership. Who shall be admitted to the kingdom? From verse 21 on, we're told that the old law is still in effect. The old law was well nigh perfect in its way. It's far more humane and covers more ground than our laws today. We talk about the fierce, savage old tribal vengeful God of the Old Testament. Don't fool yourself. Read the laws he gave them. Our laws aren't half so kind, half so just, half so considerate of the oppressed. So it [the old law] is still in full effect, and to be taken more seriously than ever before by the individual. Notice, he tells us here that conscience displaces police orders. You have to have your conscience, the Golden Rule. The first and second commandments he talks about.

I'm sure you have all read chapter 12, but notice this is in the New Testament, too. He says, "I have not come to do away with the law but fulfill the law." You do all this up to now. [For example, there's the savage old primitive law of the Word of Wisdom. People used to get hopelessly drunk, chew tobacco, and they'd take all sorts of things that were bad for them. They'd misbehave and pass out every night from two quarts of cognac, or something like that. This was the way they'd do. Now we're going to do away with that law. Does that mean, well thank heaven, we can now break the Word the Wisdom? Of course not. It means we don't even think of it anymore. It's contained in all the other laws. That's why the Lord says to the apostles, two commandments take care of everything. "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. . . . Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matthew 22:37–40.) If you love the Lord your God with all your heart, you won't have to be told not to go out and kill people and not to go out and lie or steal. Even from your enemies you're not supposed to do that—though with us it's a virtue, as Antigone says. We wouldn't have to be told not to do these terrible things if they [the commandments] become just part of our life. We don't even have to think of them. Do you have to rehearse and say, I have to remember first thing before I go out this morning I mustn't shoot anybody? Unfortunately I don't have a gun today. That's no joke. There have been civilizations that have sunk so low. That's going to be part of the course. I have some wonderful stuff from the ancient world to show you what people really go for. And to be so much like ours—it's just embarrassing.

We know the beatitudes here; we won't go through them. I'm talking about chapter 12 from verse 3 on. Who shall obtain mercy?: "And blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy [verse 7]. And blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." No impure thing can stand in the presence of God. If you were impure and had to stand in the presence of God, that would be worse than any hell you could possibly suffer, anything you could possibly imagine—to have that guilt with you. They [the pure in heart] can do it without being withered. "And blessed are all the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God . . . [and those] who are persecuted for my name's sake, for theirs is the kingdom."

Notice, here are the same old Ten Commandments, but he brings them up and makes them, as he says, matters of conscience. He says, "thou shalt not kill," but if you're even angry [you're guilty]. Fulfilling the law goes further here. If you have the urge to kill, the impulse to kill, there's where the danger is, you see. As they say, guns don't kill people; people kill people. Well, this is the people-kill-people part of it. Well, guns are a great help, you understand—they simplify matters vastly. [There are] over 30,000 murders a year with guns in this country alone; that

breaks an all-time record. Don't get angry, because when you get angry you shift gears into a totally different mood. You're devilish and fiendish in things you might want to do. For a moment you have the impulse to kill. If you had the ability, you'd do it, and that's terrible. Watch the anger, you see.

Verse 22: "And whoever shall say to his brother, Raca [is worse], shall be in danger of the council; and whoso ever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." That's the worst. *Raca* is cursing [and saying] may you die. But worse than that is to call him a fool. To despise a person is worse than to hate him, you see. To be despised is worse than anger. The worst thing you can do is to hold a person in utter contempt, and that's when you say he's a fool. Don't despise anybody. "Therefore, if ye shall come unto me . . . and rememberest that thy brother has aught against thee," clear it up. The Jews put it very nicely in the Talmud, when you think that way against your brother, no matter who it is. "I am insulting the image of God," it says. If that's the image of God, it should always be treated with respect. And you can't despise what you don't know or you don't understand. So to say "thou fool" is actually deserving of hell fire. If you kill your enemy or have that strong impulse to hit somebody, that's not as bad, actually, as to despise him. That's the best kind of punishment. You know how that is—to hold [someone] in complete contempt. First "be reconciled to thy brother." No matter what, be reconciled to him and agree with your adversary. Never burn your bridges behind you, because we're governed by impulse, you see, and we do foolish things. The other person may repent and we may repent. There are many stories about the angels pleading to God to go down and destroy the world in the time of Noah, when they were so wicked. And God said no, give them more time. He is long suffering—*ar-Rahmān ar-Rahīm*, as the Koran says. He is *rahīmān*, gentle. "There is no power and there is no might except to God, and he never uses it." He is gentle and forbearing. He gives men as long as they want, and then they destroy themselves. That's very near the truth, too.

And then he goes on here [verse 25]: "Agree with thine adversary quickly." Don't get into trouble or you'll get cast into prison, etc. Brother John Welch will tell you about this verse. He's a lawyer and has studied this. It has to do with the rules of the ancient law. Then this about not committing adultery. And what's verse 28? Pornography. They don't use the word *pornography*; it's a new word. Pornography is the same sort of thing, isn't it—lusting in your mind and the like? Verse 27: "Behold, it is written by them of old time, that thou shalt not commit adultery; But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart." To look with lust is pornography—the same thing, you see. These things are all bad. This law is going further than the old Jewish law.

Verse 29: "I give unto you a commandment, that ye suffer none of these things to enter into your heart." To refrain from doing a thing, you must refrain from thinking of it. Then you don't have to refer to the law books, you see. You don't have to read the fine print that the lawyers dig up. Then, to refrain from popular vices, it tells us here, takes real restraint. Notice 3 Nephi 12:30: "For it is better that ye should deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell." This admits, you see, that these temptations are strong. That's what you're here for—to be put up against them. To resist them requires great will and strength.

Question: "What does it mean to take up your cross?"

Take up your cross? That you will "take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell." The cross and crucifixion did not begin with the Romans. The *Ṣalab* are the oldest sect, "the Christians of the cross." Well, the carrying of your cross and the bearing of a cross is a very ancient punishment. The Assyrians loved it. They loved crucifixion, and you carry your cross. This is a term with which these people would be familiar, I'm quite sure.

And also, you'll notice there was a substantial percentage of crucifixion [in the New World]. If you look at Aztec and Mayan art, especially the Aztec, [you find] crucifixion, posting people up on crosses and nailing them up. [They had] cruel punishments—to be flayed alive, to be eaten by birds, etc. They're quite common in the art. The cross is very common. There is some interesting humor there—very humorous subject, you know. When he says “cross yourself,” that's another time. That means “check yourself,” of course—that ye should take up your cross, deny yourselves, and ye should be cast into hell.

There's an interesting thing that's never been solved. I had two years of Latin epigraphy with H. R. W. Smith years ago. He was the foremost Latin epigrapher in the world. He was at Oxford, and he edited the great *Corpus Vasorum* with the Latin graffiti and the Latin pictures, etc. This was in pre-Christian Rome—way back in Republican times. Always in the schoolroom pictures they had these crosses, and they [the scholars] never could understand why. And there's a school song that says, “The school term is to begin again; take up your cross and get back to work.” So it's a term with which the ancient world was familiar. It's not just Christian—not by any means.

Well, we continue here. Then he talks again about no divorce. It's very easy in Semitic cultures to divorce a person. All you have to do in Islam is to say to a woman three times, “I release you, I release you, I release you,” and she's no longer married to you. It's as easy as that. And it was easy with the Jews, too. But you can't do that anymore, the Lord says in verse 31, except for the cause of fornication, causing her to commit adultery. That's all.

Verse 33: “And again . . . thou shalt not forswear thyself.” But don't swear at all. Forswearing is perjury. But don't make any oath, because when you make an oath, you promise that you will do something, or else do something else. You have no command of that. [You say] or else you will pay a certain penalty or fee, but you're not able to determine that fee. For example, people often swore that they would never shave again until they had murdered the Prophet Joseph Smith. Well, they didn't keep their oaths. But when it's something the Lord says, you can't change a single hair of your head white or black. You can't add a cubit to your stature. You can't make any changes. How can you swear when you don't know? You see, I swear to do something by such and such a date, or else I will do so-and-so. You don't know whether you'll be in a condition to do that or not. He says swear not at all, for the heaven is his throne and the earth is his footstool. You can't swear by heaven—it's not yours. It's the throne of God. You can't control the earth, and as far as swearing by yourself, your head or anything is concerned, you don't know what the situation will be. So you're committing a very grave offense when you commit yourself to a future you know nothing about. To forswear yourself is perjury, but this is to make an engagement you very possibly won't keep. Notice [verse 34]: “Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair black or white.”

But what do you do in a case like that? You don't prove things this way or that way. A person swears in court that a thing is so. Well, how do you know that he isn't lying? You can forswear. Don't swear at all. You say yea, yea, and nay, nay. That's all you can do. You bear your testimony. There's no contention; testimony alone remains. There's no disputation; there's no point to it. When you teach, you point. See, the words *teach*, *touch* are the same as the Greek word, *dactile*, and the Latin *didactic*. *Deiko* means to show. It means to point to a thing. When you teach, all you can do is point to a thing. You can't put it inside the person or anything like that. All you can do is point to it and let him react, you see. And it's the same way here. When you say a thing is so (yea, yea and nay, nay), let him dispute it if he wants to, and you prove it if you want. But you bear your testimony and that's all you can do about it.

A few years ago a convention of Scottish ministers wrote to President McKay from Scotland defying him to make them believe the Book of Mormon, to prove that he could prove the Book of Mormon. They would twist your arm. You can't make a person believe in God. You can't

make a person believe in anything. All you can do is say yea, yea, and that's it. Bear your testimony, and let them see for themselves. The Spirit is the one that will bear testimony as far as they're concerned, but you can't have a testimony for somebody else. So he says don't do that, because "for whatsoever cometh of more than these is evil," comes from the devil. See, that's disputation. Once we start, you say it's black, I say it's white, and we can go on arguing forever because you're convinced, and I'm convinced. There can be "bad blood" between us, etc. But I can say what I think it is and let you think about it. And you can say why you think it's so, and let me think about it. That's as far as we can go. Any more than that is devilish and makes trouble.

And then the "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." I wish the Jews would at least observe that today—that Shamir would observe that in Palestine. There was a Jewish correspondent for the *New York Times*, who is now a citizen of Israel. He coined the phrase, "You put one of ours in the hospital, and we'll put 200 of yours in the morgue." Well, we used to think the eye for an eye was a rather savage rule, didn't we? But when you say, you wound one of ours and we'll kill 200 of yours, that is not an eye for an eye. That goes far beyond the wildest savagery, but I know some of them who are acting on that principle. I knew some of those people well when I was at Camp Ritchie. That's a long way back.

Well, what is our entire obsession? An eye for an eye. The opposite is you shall not resist evil. You can't eliminate it. What do you do? How do you resist it? By doing good. That will heap coals on the head of your enemy, and nothing else will do it. But you cannot do evil and resist it directly. That alone [doing good] can diffuse it. The classic example in the Book of Mormon again is the people of Ammon. They decided the only way they could resist evil was to do good. They had more effect than all the other armies and everything else. Remember when they refused to fight?

And if a person wants to sue you and take away your coat, let him have your cloak also. President [Dallin H.] Oaks was in my ward. He was in my high priest [group], and he used to teach us. He was a lawyer, as you know. One lesson he used to always drive home. He said any settlement out of court, no matter how bad, is better than any settlement in court, no matter how good. Whatever you do, never go to court. This was from a lawyer and judge. He became a [Utah] Supreme Court judge, and he still believes that. Any settlement out of court is better than any settlement in court. So it says if he wants to sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak. Let him have everything, but don't go to court about it. Go with him twain.

Verse 42: "Give to him that asketh thee." If he wants to borrow something, don't turn him away. The old arguments are no longer valid, you see. Here's Antigone, that you should love your friends and hate your enemies. That's the law of the ancient city state. It's just the opposite now: "Pray for them who despitefully use you." There's no way of stopping them from being your enemies, except that. If you don't accept them as your enemies, you don't have enemies then. They may be plotting against you, but they'll have to have some pretty good grounds for action, etc.

Verse 45: "That ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven." No child of God will hate the image of God, as the Jews say. No child of God is going to hate the image of God, no matter who it is. You have to concede that. And it's so funny, you see. Here we were [during World War II] talking about the Germans, just as we have talked about the Russians. Then suddenly one day, on May 7, 1945, we signed a piece of paper, and all the German prisoners around me were my best friends. We got along marvelously. No wrong at all, no bad feelings or anything like that. It's ridiculous, isn't it that we have to have this enmity?

Verses 46–47: "Those things which were of old time, which were under the law, in me are all fulfilled. Old things are done away, and all things have become new." So that's the cycle of life, you see. We're not going to be stuck forever in this rut. We don't have to stay the way we're

living—remember that. You say, “This too shall have an end.” That’s true, but better than that, there’ll be something better after it. All things shall become new. “Therefore I would that ye should be perfect.” Well, here’s this we like to quote—be perfect. That’s a simple rule. Any questions? Just be perfect, and all your questions are answered. If I have a question in math, all you have to say is, “Well, what would Einstein do?” Oh boy, I’ve got a solution now! That’s it. It isn’t that easy. As I was explaining last time, what they mean by perfect is *tāmîm*. That’s used for “the perfect circle.” The *tāmîm* is a perfect circle. It doesn’t have to be big or small to be a circle, but it has to be a circle. It has to be fulfilled within its particular department and its calling. You can be perfect in certain things, but that means *perpetual repentance*. Notice, this is an ongoing process, to be perfect. He doesn’t expect you to achieve that all the way. As Brigham Young used to tell the Saints, “Learn everything.” Okay, I’ll go home and learn everything. No, you won’t—he knew you wouldn’t. But if that wasn’t the goal, you wouldn’t learn very much. That’s the point. And if you’re not striving to be perfect, you won’t repent.

It’s like this line of [Hawking]. You see the picture here. He has some pictures of it. He draws a line of dots like this and says, here’s a second, you see the flash. You move up here and see the flash. Does it keep flashing? No, it only flashed once, he says. But how come? It just keeps flashing like this all the time. You can see it a thousand times. And a million years later it’s still going on. If you get the dots close enough together, it will be just one continuous flash, like a movie. But that’s absurd. Is it a real event? How can you get that much? Pascal expresses it beautifully—the immensity of the spirit is dependent upon the physical body the same way. He says, “You have to eat bread to survive, but how many thoughts can you get out of one piece of bread?” There’s no proportion at all between them, you see. We’re bringing the infinite and the finite together here, and they do unite in us here. We do have eternal spirits.

We’d better rush on to chapter 13. Now here’s another theme. The theme here in [chapter 13] is there’s no need for putting on a show or hypocrisy and display, or anything like that. This is your social behavior for the world in general here. It includes the Lord’s Prayer. This is the short Lord’s Prayer, but it has the old archaic ending. They tell you the Book of Mormon is a fake because it puts this ending in the prayer [verse 13]: “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.” But as Joachim Jeremias has shown, that is part of the old original Lord’s Prayer. And it’s so short here. Verse 9: “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. [Notice, it’s Zion on earth—it’s heaven on earth. Where his will is done, that is Zion, that is his kingdom.] Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” That is his kingdom. If it comes, that’s where his will is done. Of course, where the king’s will is done, that’s his kingdom. Where it’s not done, that’s something else.

And he uses the word *debts*. Notice, they like to slide over that in the King James [translation] and say “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,” but the word actually is the business, commercial word *debts*. The one thing that keeps us from being united and keeps the kingdom of God from being here is that men are subject to each other. They’re in debt to each other. It’s debt that enslaves us and holds us down. We can’t be free and equal in the kingdom of God [with that situation]. Remember, in Zion they had all things in common. “And the Lord called his people Zion, because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them.” (Moses 7:18.) That’s necessary here, so he’s talking about debts. And you see what the great obstacle is to everything now if you mention drugs, or war, or anything else. What’s the big problem in Russia? Economy everywhere you go, and you’re not going to straighten it out by appealing to the Dow Jones.

Verse 12: “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” What is the great temptation? In the Book of Mormon we’re told the four things with which Satan tries and tempts men. They are power, gain, popularity or authority, and the pleasures of the flesh—the vain things of the world. Those are the things [by which] we’re tempted. And don’t lead us into that, it

says. Actually, we have been permitted [to get involved in it]. We've been taken right up to the border, like the hero in *The Pearl*, that ancient Christian writing. Well, you can get into it if you want, or you can take as much of it as you want. It's entirely up to you. But don't lead us into temptation, and don't let us go too far here. Temptation we must have, but let's be careful about that. ". . . but deliver us from evil."

The time's up. I was going to go through this faster. This is a long book. This is not just an epitome. You can read all the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament in half an hour. That's exactly what it takes to read these, too. We've got it all here, but it's different—you'll notice that. It's not radically different, by any means. But see what it means here in this other setting.