An Examination of the Strategies of Instruction Employed by Prophets and Teachers in the Book of Mormon and their Potential Application to Current LDS Instructional Settings

Bruce A. Van Orden
Brigham Young University - Provo

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE STRATEGIES OF INSTRUCTION EMPLOYED BY PROPHETS AND TEACHERS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON AND THEIR POTENTIAL APPLICATION TO CURRENT LDS INSTRUCTIONAL SETTINGS

A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of Ancient Scripture
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Bruce A. Van Orden
April 1975
This thesis, by Bruce A. Van Orden, is accepted in its present form by the Department of Ancient Scripture in the Department of Religious Instruction of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Paul R. Cheesman, Committee Chairman

Robert J. Matthews, Committee Member

August 8, 1974

Monte S. Nyman, Department Chairman

Typed by: Lois G. Van Orden
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The former President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Harold B. Lee, stated recently in the keynote address to the 143rd Annual General Conference of the Church:

It will be clearly understood, then, that the great responsibility that the leaders and the teachers in the Church have is to persuade, to teach, to direct aright, that the commandments of the Almighty God will be so lived as to prevent the individual from falling into the trap of the evil one who would persuade him not to believe in God and not to follow the leadership of the Church. ¹

Clearly it is the desire of the Church leaders to have teachers who will guide the membership in learning the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ and applying these principles to the fullest extent possible. Such teachers must be qualified to undertake this momentous task. Joseph Fielding Smith has said:

The matter of teaching is one of the greatest importance. We cannot estimate its value when it is properly done; neither do we know the extent of the evil that may result if it is improperly done. Whether in the Church schools, the seminaries, auxiliary organizations, or in the priesthood quorums, the greatest qualification required of a teacher is that he have faith in the principles of the gospel; that he believe in the principles of revealed truth as they have come through inspired prophets in our own day as well as in times of old; and that he shall exercise his privilege as a teacher in the spirit of prayer and faith.²

¹Harold B. Lee, General Conference Address, Official Report of the One Hundred Forty-Third Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 1973 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d.), p. 10.

Teachers in the Church are not merely those who function with that specific title in any one of the Church organizations. Jay M. Todd, Managing Editor of The Ensign, prefaced a special section on teaching in that magazine with the following statement:

All of us are teachers, regardless of whether or not we are called by that honored title. If we counsel a friend concerning a problem, if we talk with an associate about the affairs of the day, if we talk with our children, if we do almost anything with someone else, we become a teacher, an influence in another's life.

Dr. Earl V. Pullias has similarly noted, "In a sense, every person is a learner and teacher, for to live is to learn, and one's life inevitably instructs those who are touched by it."²

Asahel D. Woodruff,³ John Henry Evans,⁴ Paul H. Dunn,⁵ Howard R. Driggs,⁶ and Charles R. Hobbs,⁷ each noted educators in the Church, have also determined that every person in the Church is a teacher of the gospel.

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⁴John Henry Evans, How to Teach Religion (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1912), pp. 9-12.

⁵Paul H. Dunn, You Too Can Teach (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Inc., 1962), pp. 15-18.


Bruce R. McConkie has added this definition of "teacher":

Those appointed to serve as instructors in the church organizations—those whose responsibilities are to conduct classes, present gospel lessons, guide class members in paths of righteousness—are called teachers. Both men and women, priesthood bearers and non-priesthood bearers, may serve in these positions from time to time.

Certainly this vast array of teachers in the Church needs direction and training. This is largely provided by Home Teaching, Family Home Evening, personal priesthood interviews, conferences of the Church, the Church Education System, and the Teacher Development Program.

Statement of the Problem

The problems with which this study will deal are based upon three premises:

1. There is a tremendous need in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for qualified, spiritually-motivating teachers.

2. The Book of Mormon has a record of many outstanding teachers and examples of teaching.

3. Teachers in the Church today can improve their effectiveness by learning from the teachers and the instructional process as found in the Book of Mormon.

This thesis will answer these seven questions:

1. What are the philosophical principles of religious education given by the writers of the Book of Mormon?

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1 Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Inc., 1966), p. 776. (Italics not mine.)
2. Are the notable prophets of the Book of Mormon such as Alma, Nephi, Jacob, and Mormon also teachers of record?

3. What in the personality, character, and development of the prominent prophet-teachers in the Book of Mormon is worthy of emulation by teachers in the Church today?

4. Which strategies of instruction did the prominent teachers in the Book of Mormon utilize in their specific teaching confrontations?

5. Which of the successful teaching approaches could be applied by teachers in the various instruction settings in the Church today?

6. What role do the un-named teachers in the Book of Mormon play?

7. How can the example of the un-named teachers in the Book of Mormon be applied by the teachers in the Church today?

Justification of the Study

The writer has mentioned above the Church agencies responsible for training teachers. These agencies have aids to assist them. But each of these agencies could use additional material. Each teacher or prospective teacher in the Church should also seek out any worthwhile reading that would increase his capacity to be a more successful steward.

The Book of Mormon, perhaps better than any other of our
standard works, has numerous "teachers" that can be observed and from whom much can be learned.

The Book of Mormon contains the stirring words and powerful examples of many convincing teachers. But just as the whole is greater than the part, so is the book greater than any of the individuals it portrays. For the book is in very deed the written word of God. It contains the elements of first-class teaching—convincing precept, noble example, a wealth of illustrative detail. Together the teachers who fill its pages have produced a book which is a greater teacher of righteousness. It has brought hundreds of thousands to a knowledge of the truth and continues with increasing power to carry its great message to the world. 

The writer has observed that many volumes have been written for the benefit of teachers of religious education, both in the Church and from sectarian sources. However, in these volumes nothing has been said about the instructional process as described in the Book of Mormon. This thesis will help to fill that void.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is operated under the direction of the priesthood. There is no professionally-trained clergy. Lay members of the Church, some immediately after baptism, are actively involved in the many teaching settings in the Church. Those that would benefit from this study are not only the general and local authorities of the Church. Also others would find application to their assignments who have the following formal callings: priesthood quorum presidencies and instructors, advisors in the Aaronic Priesthood and to the Young Women, advisors and members of the Young Adults and Special Interests, officers and instructors in the Sunday School,

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1The standard works of the Church include the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price.

Primary, and Relief Society auxiliary organizations (including Teacher Development in-service leaders), Home Teachers, and missionaries. Employed instructors in the Church Education System, particularly to religion classes or lectures, could learn from these findings. Counselors in one-on-one situations could learn as well. Finally, it is anticipated that fathers and mothers would find much that would help them in their responsibilities.

The writer emphasizes that the teachers in the Church have many written sources for development, in-service training, and enrichment. The Book of Mormon does not provide the only source, but certainly is one very good source. The findings of the writer in this study are not to be construed as the only principles of religious education to be used in the Church. They are not in competition with nor are they to replace any other educational aids produced in or out of the Church.

Some principles of teaching and learning could be applied in classroom situations. Others could be used in sermons for sacrament meetings and conferences. Still others would be better applied in more informal conditions. The suggestions from this thesis cannot be applied at each setting on every teaching level. However, the writer desires that the teachers in the Church and home will obtain an optimum fulfillment of their educational opportunities and goals.

The writer also wishes to emphasize that teachers in the Church today, when implementing the instructional example of Book of Mormon prophets, should not in any way assume the traditional role of prophets, seers, and revelators, unless properly called and sustained as such. Rather the teachers should desire to teach exactly what the
prophets teach and utilize their righteous examples of teaching methods and character traits.

The writer's bias is that by adhering loyally to ancient and modern prophets' direction more successful teaching in the Church will result.

Delimitations of the Problem

This study will not include the examination of modern pedagogical methods, devices, or audio-visual aids that could be used in the classroom. Neither will this study investigate the religious education principles espoused in or outside the Church.

An analysis or discussion of the doctrines and prophecies taught by the prophets of the Book of Mormon will not be included in this study. Mention of these doctrines and prophecies are only made with the intent to illustrate the emphasis placed upon them by the teachers of the Book of Mormon.

The writer will not examine the "process of conversion" in the Book of Mormon as did Dr. James R. Harris. Nor will the writer allude to the missionary methods from the New Testament as did Glenn L. Pearson.

__________________________

Definitions Pertinent to the Study

Teaching in this thesis is the act of causing others to know and apply principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Teaching involves the dissemination of information and the learning of skills through a variety of methods and means. Teaching includes precept, example, and experience.

Teachers in the Book of Mormon sense are those called of God to represent Him and to teach the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ to His children upon the earth. A limitation of this title is not placed upon those who hold the office of Teacher in the Aaronic Priesthood or who are set apart as teachers in the Church organizations. A teacher does not necessarily need to be in a classroom to function as a teacher. The term, "teacher," will be used loosely to refer to all potential types of instructional settings.

Religious education is any setting where those teachers (according to the above definition) instruct our Heavenly Father's children as directed to do so by the priesthood leadership of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is not limited to professional religious instruction in the Church Education System, but would also include teaching at every level in the Church. This definition does not include theological seminaries of any other church whose curriculum consists of religious education. Bruce R. McConkie's definition applies also in the framework of this thesis.

The Church does not maintain theological seminaries, according to the sectarian pattern, in which selected individuals are trained for ministerial careers. There is no paid ministry in the Church, and the salvation of church members depends on individual knowledge of the truths of salvation rather than on the knowledge that a scholarly minister may have. But the Church does maintain schools,
colleges, and universities in which all types of learning are available, and it does maintain seminaries and institutes of religion in church owned buildings adjacent to public institutions of learning so that students may study gospel truths in their free school periods or after the regular school schedules.

But even more important than these special educational provisions is the fact that all the priesthood quorums and the organizations are so set up and arranged that they are teaching agencies for gospel truths. Standing counsel also exists for all individual members of the Church to search the scriptures and study the principles of the gospel in private and on their own initiative.

The Church as referred to already in this chapter and in future chapters is, "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." The church that existed in Book of Mormon times will not be capitalized.

Method of Approach to the Problem

This study will primarily include data derived from an analysis of the Book of Mormon itself. Explanatory and substantiating statements by general authorities concerning the Book of Mormon examples will also be included. The conclusions drawn and the suggestions offered will be those of the writer. However, he will adhere closely to what the Book of Mormon says. The Book of Mormon examples will be the only source for the conclusions and suggestions.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the general philosophical principles of teaching and learning from the Book of Mormon. These principles are enumerated and taken out of the historical context. They do not necessarily correspond to each other.

Chapter 3 is the analysis of the prominent teachers in the Book of Mormon. After the preparation, purposes, character, personality, and

1McConkie, op. cit., p. 627. (Italics not mine.)
inner feelings of each one are discussed, the writer lists a number of suggestions for application to teachers in the Church today.

Chapter 4 enumerates specific teaching confrontations found in the Book of Mormon. After each confrontation is discussed, the writer lists suggestions for present-day application.

Chapter 5 specifies the activities and role of the un-named teachers in the Book of Mormon. The application of their example to teachers in the Church today is also discussed.

The conclusions of the study are in Chapter 6.
Chapter 2

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Introduction

The writer, in searching the Book of Mormon for any mention, implied or otherwise, of teaching, observed numerous philosophical principles, truths, or suggestions that relate to religious education. Some of these principles are expressed outright in the Book of Mormon, others were derived by the writer from a circumstance or set of circumstances in the Book of Mormon. Many of these suggestions are based upon references (not directly related to each other) throughout the Book of Mormon.

The writer wishes to emphasize that these principles are not in competition with nor are to be compared with principles of education which are or have been applied to secular studies in non-religious educational settings. These are principles, which if applied, will assist in the reconciling of man to God in the teaching settings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The writer does not imply that only these principles should be used in the Church's religious education, but rather that these are the principles which the Book of Mormon offers to the teachers. These principles have not been compared

1See the definition of "religious education" in Chapter 1.
with suggestions for religious education already published in or out of the Church.

The writer has separated these principles into the following subdivisions: teachers' point of view, students' point of view, parents only, prophets only, and general.

**Teachers' Point of View**

1. Teachers might be mocked or murmured against, because they testify of wickedness and abominations.\(^1\)

2. Teachers can become grieved at the hardness of the hearts of their students and consequently pray unto the Lord in their behalf.\(^2\)

3. Scripture records should be obtained and preserved so that growing children will be able to be instructed in the ways of the Lord.\(^3\)

4. Teachers should be willing to forgive rebellious listeners. The teachers should also exhort their listeners to pray unto the Lord for forgiveness.\(^4\)

5. A teacher's intent is to bring people to God.\(^5\)

6. A teacher should ask his students, "Have you inquired of the Lord?" if students have questions about principles of doctrine.

---

\(^1\) 1 Nephi 1:19; 2:11; 8:26-27; 17:48-49.

\(^2\) 1 Nephi 2:18; 2 Nephi 33:3; Alma 4:7-8; 31:24-35.

\(^3\) 1 Nephi 3:19-20; 4:13, 15; 5:17-22; 9:5-6; 19:3; 2 Nephi 4:15; 5:30-32; Omni 17; Words of Mormon 7; Mosiah 1:3-7; 28:18-20; Alma 3:11-12; 37:1-6; 3 Nephi 26:2; 4 Nephi 48-29; Mormon 1:1-5.

\(^4\) 1 Nephi 7:21.

\(^5\) 1 Nephi 6:3-6; 19:18.
The teacher can promise the students that they will receive an answer, if they harden not their hearts, ask in faith, and are diligent in keeping the commandments. ¹

7. A teacher sometimes needs to labor and exhort with all the energies and faculties of his soul to help students to keep always the commandments. ²

8. A teacher should not take credit for the power of God which is in him, but should rather admonish his listeners to worship God and honor their parents. ³

9. Teachers are instruments in the hand of God. ⁴

10. A teacher does not seek for power and authority over his students, but for the glory of God and the eternal welfare of his students. ⁵

11. A teacher is desirous for the welfare of the souls of his students. ⁶

12. Teachers should use scriptures abundantly to teach from and to explain points of doctrine. ⁷

¹ Nephi 15:8, 11.
² Nephi 15:25; 16:24; Words of Mormon 18.
³ Nephi 17:55; 2 Nephi 1:27.
⁴ 1 Nephi 1:24; 3:24; Words of Mormon 7; Mosiah 23:10; 27:36; Alma 2:30; 26:3; 29:9; 35:14.
⁵ 2 Nephi 1:25; Alma 1:26.
⁷ 2 Nephi 6:3-4; Jacob 4:16; Alma 12:1; 21:9; 30:44; 3 Nephi 20:11; 22; 23:6, 14; 24:1; 25; 26:2.
13. Teachers of righteousness must oftentimes teach soberly and forcefully to shake off the blood of the people from their garments. In other words, the teachers must warn the people so that they are no longer responsible for the sins of the people. ¹

14. Teachers should instruct in plainness, because that is how the Lord works among his children. ²

15. A teacher will be more successful if he speaks by the power of the Holy Ghost, because the Holy Ghost can carry the message into the hearts of the people. ³

16. A teacher must frequently warn against various forms of sin, telling his students the awful consequences of sin. ⁴

17. A teacher should exhort his hearers to come unto Christ and partake of his salvation. ⁵

18. A teacher should speak the word of God with power and authority. ⁶

19. Teachers should remind their students what wonderful things God has done for their righteous ancestors. ⁷

¹Nephi 9:44; Jacob 1:19; 2:2; Mosiah 2:27-29; Mormon 9:35; Ether 12:36-38.
²Nephi 31:3; 33:6; Jacob 2:11; Mosiah 2:40; Alma 5:43; 13:23.
³Nephi 33:1; Alma 8:30.
⁴Jacob 3:12.
⁵Nephi 9:50-51; Omni 26; Ether 12:41; Moroni 10:30, 32.
⁶Words of Mormon 17; Mosiah 13:6; Alma 5:3; 17:3; Helaman 6:5; 3 Nephi 7:17.
⁷Mosiah 7:19-20; Alma 9:8-11; Helaman 5:6-7; Ether 6:30.
20. A successful teacher reminds his students that we often bring upon ourselves our own afflictions. He then instructs them that placing our trust in God will bring relief from our afflictions.\(^1\)

21. Wicked teachers who teach falsely pervert the ways of the Lord.\(^2\)

22. A teacher who speaks the truth may sometimes find his hearers angry, and they will perhaps consider him to be mad.\(^3\)

23. A teacher should teach that the Law of Moses was a shadow of things to come.\(^4\)

24. Even under stress, a teacher should not retract his words if they are true.\(^5\)

25. A teacher begins with uninformed listeners with basic concepts such as faith in Christ and repentance.\(^6\) After these first basics are taught, baptism is the next logical step.\(^7\)

26. Teachers should teach only that which has been spoken by the mouths of the holy prophets.\(^8\)

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\(^1\)Mosiah 7:25-28, 35; 9:3, 17-18; 21:15-16.


\(^3\)Mosiah 13:4, 8; Alma 14:3.


\(^5\)Mosiah 17:9.

\(^6\)Mosiah 18:7; 25:15; Alma 16:13; 3 Nephi 7:16, 23.

\(^7\)Mosiah 18:8-17; 25:17-18; Helaman 16:1.

\(^8\)Mosiah 18:19.
27. A successful teacher who has been an instrument in the hands of the Lord should not glory in himself, for he is unworthy of that.¹

28. A leader can effectively send out a written word among the people to instruct them in what he wants them to know.²

29. A teacher should instruct his students to awaken to their sense of duty to God and to walk blameless before Him.³

30. Satan may get hold upon the hearts of a certain people. Nevertheless a teacher should labor much in the Spirit, wrestling with God in mighty prayer, that he will be successful in overcoming the influence of Satan with the people.⁴

31. Teachers are to impart the word of God without any respect of persons.⁵

32. Teachers can become men of sound understanding when they search the scriptures diligently.⁶

33. A teacher is more apt to teach with power and authority from God if he gives himself to much prayer and fasting.⁷

¹Mosiah 23:11.
²Mosiah 2:8; 29:4.
³Alma 7:22.
⁴Alma 8:9-10.
⁵Alma 16:14.
⁶Alma 17:2.
⁷Alma 17:3.
34. A teacher should remember to pour out his soul in prayer and thanksgiving when he sees that the Lord has blessed him in his labors.\(^1\)

35. After a teacher realizes that his student will believe him, he can teach him about all things, relying heavily upon the scriptures.\(^2\)

36. A teacher is not to boast in his own strength, wisdom, and success, but rather only to boast in his strength in God.\(^3\)

37. A teacher cannot glory too much in the Lord or say too much of His great power and love.\(^4\)

38. A teacher's intent is not to destroy his brethren, but to save their souls.\(^5\)

39. A teacher ought to be content with what the Lord allows him to do.\(^6\)

40. A successful teacher will also rejoice in the success of his brethren.\(^7\)

41. A teacher should teach what he observes to be the most important question in the students' minds.\(^8\)

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\(^{1}\)Alma 19:14.

\(^{2}\)Alma 22:12-14.

\(^{3}\)Alma 26:11-12; 38:11.

\(^{4}\)Alma 26:16.

\(^{5}\)Alma 26:26.

\(^{6}\)Alma 29:1-3, 6-8.

\(^{7}\)Alma 29:16.

\(^{8}\)Alma 34:5; 40:1; 41:1; 42:1; 3 Nephi 15:2-8
42. After a teacher uses scriptures to testify of a truth, he should then bear his own testimony.¹

43. A teacher should use boldness, but not overbearance. He should bridle his passions, be filled with love, and refrain from idleness.²

44. A teacher should acknowledge his unworthiness before God at all times.³

45. A teacher's bad example in sinning can cause the listeners to not believe the words of God taught by other teachers.⁴

46. Teachers who understand the true points of doctrine are to teach the people to put an end to their strife and contentions.⁵

47. Teachers should acknowledge their errors and confess their faults when false teaching occurs.⁶

48. A teacher will suggest to his students that they go to their homes and ponder the things they have been taught.⁷

49. False teachers will lead people away to do all manner of iniquity.⁸

¹Alma 34:7-8.
²Alma 38:12.
³Alma 38:14.
⁴Alma 39:11-12.
⁵Helaman 11:23.
⁶3 Nephi 1:24-25.
⁷3 Nephi 17:3.
⁸4 Nephi 34, 38.
50. Teachers are to instruct their students to walk humbly before the Lord.¹

51. Teachers are to labor diligently to remove gross errors of doctrine from among the people.²

52. Teachers should labor diligently despite the hardness of their listeners. If they do not, they themselves will be brought under condemnation.³

53. Teachers may on occasion need to teach fear in the Lord with exceeding harshness to keep a group from leading themselves to spiritual destruction.⁴

Students' Point of View

1. Those who are guilty take the truth to be hard, because it cuts them to the center of their being.⁵

2. Many individuals will trample the words of God under their feet and not listen to the voice of His counsels.⁶

3. It is necessary for students who are unholy to be taught the consequences of sin.⁷

4. The Lord has stated, "Wo unto him that rejecteth the word of God!"⁸

¹Alma 37:33; Ether 6:17, 30.  ²Moroni 8:6.
⁵¹Nephi 16:2; Mosiah 13:7; Alma 14:3.
⁶¹Nephi 19:7.
⁸²Nephi 27:14.
5. Sad will be the state of the individuals who think they need no more of the word of God, because what they do have will be taken from them.¹

6. "And also trust no one to be your teacher or minister, except he be a man of God, walking in his ways and keeping his commandments."²

7. Students, whose teachers ignore any instruction of a divine nature, can become "a cunning and a wise people, as to the wisdom of the world."³

8. Only a penitent person can understand eternal truths. A person with worldly desires cannot.⁴

9. When a group of people humble themselves, they prepare to hear the word of God.⁵

10. When a people "wrest" the scriptures, they go far astray from a point of doctrine.⁶

11. Whoever takes hold of the word of God, which is quick and powerful, will be led to Christ in a straight and narrow course across an everlasting gulf of misery, which was prepared to engulf the wicked.⁷

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¹ 2 Nephi 28:29-30
² Mosiah 23:14; see also v. 17.
³ Mosiah 24:7; see also v. 1-7.
⁴ Alma 26:21.
⁵ Alma 32:6.
⁶ Alma 41:1.
Parents Only

1. A father should warn his sons with all the feeling of a tender parent.  

2. A father should exhort his sons to all diligence.  

3. Parents must labor diligently to persuade their children to believe in Christ and to be reconciled to God.  

4. And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry, or naked; neither will ye suffer that they transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrel one with another, and serve the devil, who is the master of sin, or who is the evil spirit which hath been spoken of by our fathers, he being an enemy to all righteousness.  

But ye will teach them to walk in the ways of truth and soberness; ye will teach them to love one another, and to serve one another.  

5. Parents are to pray continually for their sons in the ministry.  

Prophets Only

1. A prophet will speak about things which are and which are to come.  

2. He who prophesies should do so according to the understanding of men.  

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1 Nephi 8:37.  
2 Nephi 10:2.  
3 Nephi 25:23, 26, 27.  
5 Moroni 8:3.  
6 Nephi 6:4; Jacob 4:13.  
7 Jacob 4:13.
3. All prophets have prophesied or taught concerning the coming of the Messiah.  

4. Prophets should direct the teaching of decadent people. They need to be warned of the consequences of their behavior if they do not repent.

General

1. The Holy Ghost gives authority to speak the words of God.

2. All scriptures can be likened to us, so that they might be for our profit and learning.

3. The scriptures testify to the truthfulness of what the prophets have said.

4. A blessing can be given to some: "If ye are brought up in the way ye should go ye will not depart from it."

5. Men are vain if when they are learned they esteem themselves to be wise. "But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God."

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1 Mosiah 13:31-35.
3 1 Nephi 10:22.
5 1 Nephi 22:30-31; Alma 33:14-19; 34:7-8.
6 2 Nephi 4:5.
7 2 Nephi 9:29; see also v. 28.
6. The use of more than one witness is provided by God to establish His word and for the testimony of Christ.\(^1\)

7. The Lord has commanded that there are to be no priestcrafts.\(^2\) "Priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not for the welfare of Zion."\(^3\)

8. In the latter days priests of different faiths will contend with one another, will teach with their own learning, and will deny the Holy Ghost, which could have given them utterance.\(^4\)

9. Because of pride, false teachers, and false doctrine, churches in the latter days will have become corrupted.\(^5\)

10. Even the humble followers of Christ in many instances in the latter days will go astray because they are "taught by the precepts of men."\(^6\)

11. All the wise, the learned, and the rich who preach false doctrines will be thrust down to hell.\(^7\)

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\(^1\) Nephi 11:2-3; 29:8; Alma 10:12; 33:17.

\(^2\) Nephi 26:29; Alma 1:2-6, 12, 16; 2:1-2.

\(^3\) Nephi 26:29.

\(^4\) Nephi 28:4-9.

\(^5\) Nephi 28:12; Mormon 8:28.

\(^6\) Nephi 28:14.

\(^7\) Nephi 28:30.
12. Truths from God are given line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Those that receive truth will be given more.¹

13. In the last days the gospel will be taught, especially from the Book of Mormon, to the Lamanites and Jews, by the Gentiles.²

14. If a teacher speaks harshly against sin, it will offend no one except those that are of the spirit of the devil.³

15. It is impossible for man to find out all the ways of God. No man can know His ways unless they are revealed to him.⁴

16. Blessed are those who have labored diligently in the Lord's vineyard.⁵

17. As many as are not stiffnecked and have faith will have communion with the Holy Spirit and will receive revelation.⁶

18. False traditions occur because of generations of false teachings. False traditions can cause a people to be ferocious, full of hate, and blood thirsty.⁷

19. How blessed will those individuals be who have published peace or who will do so.⁸

¹ 2 Nephi 28:30.
² 2 Nephi 30:3-5.
³ 2 Nephi 33:5.
⁴ Jacob 4:8.
⁵ 1 Nephi 13:37; Jacob 6:3; Alma 21:17.
⁶ Jarom 4.
⁷ Mosiah 10:12-17.
20. The time will come when the salvation of the Lord will be declared to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.¹

21. Because many will not hearken to the voice of the Lord, they will be cast out and there will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.²

22. All will be warned of their iniquities, but not all will depart from them.³

23. Words of truth will stand as a testimony against the wicked.⁴

24. Everyone who is baptized is "to stand as a witness of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye be in, even until death."⁵

25. Reading and relating the affairs of a certain people may have a marked effect upon the listeners.⁶

26. When interested students cannot hear the word of God in one assembly, different groups with separate teachers should be established. Nevertheless there is still only one church.⁷

¹Mosiah 15:28-29; Alma 29:8.
²Mosiah 16:2.
³Mosiah 16:12.
⁴Mosiah 17:10.
⁵Mosiah 18:9.
27. Wickedness within the church is a great stumbling block to the spiritual development of those who do not belong to the church.¹

28. When pride, craftiness, and contentions exist among the people, the only way to possibly reclaim them is in "bearing down in pure testimony against them."²

29. Children of God are commanded to gather together often "to join in fasting and mighty prayer in behalf of the welfare of the souls who [know] not God."³

30. The Lord will occasionally pour out His Spirit to prepare the minds and hearts of the people for the word of God.⁴

31. How wonderful it is for laborers in the Kingdom to still be "brethren in the Lord" after many years of absence from each other.⁵

32. A convert teaches the same words he has heard from his instructor.⁶

33. Not all will listen to the words of God.⁷

34. When missionaries see that certain people harden their hearts, they are to go to a more responsive people.⁸

¹Alma 4:10.
²Alma 4:19.
³Alma 6:6.
⁴Alma 16:16.
⁵Alma 17:2; 27:17-18.
⁸Alma 21:12.
35. Missionaries should go wherever they are led by the Spirit of the Lord preaching the word of God.¹

36. When religious freedom is established in a land, the word of God will have much less obstruction.²

37. After a people have been once enlightened by the Spirit of God, and have had great knowledge of things pertaining to righteousness, and then have fallen away into sin and transgression, they become more hardened, and thus their state becomes worse than though they had never known these things.³

38. By unselfish and courageous example, including even the loss of life, many people can be converted to the truth.⁴

39. The Lord will verify his word to his servants in every particular.⁵

40. He who repents, exercises faith, brings forth good works, and prays without ceasing will be given to know the mysteries of God.⁶

41. There is a great call of diligence of men to labor in the vineyards of the Lord.⁷

42. Satan can use an individual that he might work devices to destroy the children of God.⁸ It is better for that soul to be lost

¹Alma 21:16.
²Alma 23:3.
³Alma 24:30; see also v. 14.
⁴Alma 24:25-27.
⁵Alma 25:17.
⁶Alma 26:22.
⁷Alma 28:14.
⁸Alma 30:42, 53.
than to have him bring many souls down to destruction.\(^1\) The devil will not support these, his children, at the last day, but will speedily drag them down to hell.\(^2\)

43. The preaching of the word of God has a greater tendency to lead people to do that which is just than the use of the sword.\(^3\)

44. The word of God can be preached in meeting houses, in houses of the people, and in their streets.\(^4\)

45. God can impart his word by angels unto men, women, and children.\(^5\)

46. Those who preach the word of God are no less serviceable to the people than those who strive to preserve their liberty by the sword.\(^6\)

47. Teaching the word of God must be undertaken again after many years of war that a regulation be made again in the church.\(^7\)

48. It is a Satan-inspired plan for people to be distinguished by ranks, according to their riches and their chances for learning.\(^8\)

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\(^1\) Alma 30:47.

\(^2\) Alma 30:60.

\(^3\) Alma 31:5.

\(^4\) Alma 32:1.

\(^5\) Alma 32:23.

\(^6\) Alma 48:19.

\(^7\) Alma 62:44.

\(^8\) Nephi 6:12-15.
49. Members of the church are to meet often to pray and hear the word of the Lord.¹

50. The meetings of the church are to include preaching, exhorting, praying, supplicating, and singing as directed by the workings of the Spirit.²

51. The words of Christ are declared by the ministry of angels to chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him.³

52. It is a gift of the spirit to be able to teach both the "word of wisdom" and "the word of knowledge."⁴

53. The word of God shall hiss forth from generation to generation.⁵

¹Helaman 3:35; 4 Nephi 12; Moroni 6:4-5.
²Moroni 6:9.
³Moroni 7:31.
⁴Moroni 10:9-10.
⁵Moroni 10:28.
Chapter 3

ANALYSIS OF THE PROMINENT TEACHERS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

Introduction

The writer has chosen for this chapter twenty-two different teachers, or as the case may be, sets of teachers (e.g., sons of Mosiah) from the Book of Mormon to analyze. Each in his right was an outstanding personality and instructor of righteousness. Each has qualities, character traits, and instructional abilities that today's teachers in the Church may desire to emulate.

Certainly all the teachers in the Book of Mormon testified of Christ and taught repentance. In addition, responsibilities common to most of these teachers were speaking for God, witnessing what they had seen and heard, declaring a definite message, warning of judgments to come, instructing and administering the church, teaching children, and keeping records.

Following are the questions the writer desires to answer concerning these teachers: What preparation did this teacher have for this ministry? For what purpose was he called to teach? What groups did he teach? Why did he teach what he did? What is the nature of his internal feelings to his listeners? What are this person's outstanding character traits? What effects did his teaching have? What could a modern teacher learn from this teacher in the Book of Mormon? This chapter will not pursue the strategies of instruction used in the
various teaching confrontations. This area is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Rather this chapter will provide descriptions of outstanding teachers that instructors today will desire to emulate. At the conclusion of each description, potential application to LDS teachers is discussed. Dr. Pullias has said:

What the individual is as a person has a profound influence on his effectiveness as a teacher. Personality and character are the instruments by which all teaching is done. Teaching is in a sense the mediation of experience, or of the result of experience, to those who are learning. The self of the teacher is a sort of prism which breaks up the "light" that is being considered and casts it into fresh relations, and hence gives it varying color. ¹

Most of these enumerated "teachers" were certainly also prophets. According to Joseph Fielding Smith, a prophet by definition is primarily a teacher. "A prophet is one who teaches by the voice of inspiration the words of eternal life, and who officiates in the saving ordinances of the gospel. Prediction is only one qualification of a prophet."² Of course as we apply the examples of these prophet-teachers to today's settings, we must remind ourselves that teachers may not arrogate to themselves the complete mantle of a prophet that Nephi, Alma, Mormon, etc. had. This does not mean that a teacher cannot speak with authority, however.

Lehi

The prophet Lehi appears first in our list of prominent teachers from the Book of Mormon. His preparation for the ministry


consisted of having possible developmental experiences as a successful desert trader,\(^1\) having possible contact with the prophet Jeremiah and other prophets,\(^2\) and having frequent visions.\(^3\)

The groups that Lehi was called to teach were the inhabitants of Judah's capital, Jerusalem,\(^4\) and all the members of his caravan, especially those from his own family, who departed from Jerusalem into the desert wilderness and eventually made their way to the American continent.

Lehi's purpose in teaching the people in Jerusalem was to declare unto them their "abominations" and that Jerusalem "should be destroyed, and the inhabitants thereof; many should perish by the sword, and many should be carried away captive into Babylon."\(^5\) As one would expect, Lehi was not well received by his audience, but rather "the Jews did mock him because of the things which he testified of them."\(^6\) Indeed the Jews were so angry with him that they sought his life, as they had so many times the lives of other prophets in Israel's recent history.\(^7\) Before Lehi could be stopped, he had testified

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\(^1\) Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert and the World of the Jaredites* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Inc., 1952), pp. 36-46.

\(^2\) 1 Nephi 1:4; 5:13.

\(^3\) 1 Nephi 1:6-15; 2:1; 8; 16:9; 2 Nephi 1:4.

\(^4\) 1 Nephi 1:13, 18.

\(^5\) 1 Nephi 1:13.

\(^6\) 1 Nephi 1:19.

\(^7\) 1 Nephi 1:20.
plainly to his wicked listeners: "of the coming of the Messiah, and also the redemption of the world." ¹

Lehi's purposes in teaching his family appear to be many-fold, but generally the over-all objective seems to be the preparation of a righteous seed to inhabit the "promised land"² to which they had been led. ³ Specifically with Laman and Lemuel, his two eldest sons, Lehi had need to teach plainly because of their "stiffneckedness" and constant murmuring. ⁴ With Nephi, chosen to lead the colony after Lehi, Father Lehi's purpose was to merely commend him for his diligence to prophecy concerning his future greatness. ⁵ Early in his youth, Nephi had carefully heeded the counsels of his father, ⁶ and had turned for further instruction from the Lord Himself. ⁷ Nephi's tutor then became the Spirit of the Lord, rather than his earthly father, ⁸ although Nephi never forgot that his priesthood leader was his father. ⁹ With his other sons and with Zoram, Lehi taught very important principles of the gospel and prophesied about the future. ¹⁰ He also reminded them

¹ 1 Nephi 1:19.
² 1 Nephi 18:23.
³ 2 Nephi 1:1, 5, 9, 19-20.
⁴ 1 Nephi 2:11-12.
⁵ 1 Nephi 2:19-24.
⁶ 1 Nephi 1:1; 2:19.
⁷ 1 Nephi 2:16.
⁸ 1 Nephi 10:17-22; 11:1.
¹⁰ 2 Nephi 2 and 3.
that they and their seed should be blessed with Nephi's seed if they were faithful.\(^1\) A more direct study of Lehi's methods in teaching his posterity is included in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Lehi firmly desired that the members of his colony have a firm foundation in the understanding and practice of the principles of the gospel. Hence we see his determined urge to fulfill the commandment of the Lord in obtaining the brass plates of Laban, so that his posterity might benefit from the inspired writings of the prophets.\(^2\) Once obtained these sacred records provided teaching material for Lehi and also his son Nephi. "And we had obtained the records which the Lord had commanded us, and searched them and found that they were desirable; yea, even of great worth unto us, insomuch that we could preserve the commandments of the Lord unto our children."\(^3\)

Lehi had tender internal feelings for those he taught, as exemplified by his expressions of deep concern for the spiritual welfare of the people in Jerusalem\(^4\) and of members of his family. "And as I partook of the fruit thereof it filled my soul with exceeding great joy; wherefore, I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also . . . ."\(^5\)

Due to the rebellious spirit of Laman and Lemuel, Lehi took especial care to exhort them "with all the feeling of a tender parent,

\(^1\) Nephi 1:30-32; 2:2-3, 8:2-3, 25; 4:11.
\(^2\) Nephi 3:19-20.
\(^3\) Nephi 5:21.
\(^4\) Nephi 1:5.
\(^5\) Nephi 8:12; see also Nephi 8:3-4, 14-18, 35-37; 2:9-11.
that they would hearken to his words . . . . "\(^1\)

On one emotionally charged occasion, Lehi pleaded with his sons thusly:

"O that ye would awake; awake from a deep sleep, yea, even from the sleep of hell, and shake off the awful chains by which ye are bound . . . . Awake! and arise from the dust, and hear the words of a trembling parent, whose limbs ye must soon lay down in the cold and silent grave . . . . My heart hath been weighed down with sorrow from time to time, for I have feared, lest for the hardness of your hearts . . . ye be cut off and destroyed forever . . . . O my sons, that these things might not come upon you, but that ye might be a choice and a favored people of the Lord . . . . Awake, my sons; put on the armor of righteousness. Shake off the chains with which ye are bound, and come forth out of obscurity, and arise from the dust.\(^2\)

As it turned out, Laman, Lemuel, the sons of Ishmael, and their respective posterities did not hearken to the words of Lehi. The families of Nephi, Sam, Jacob, Joseph, and Zoram, however, did listen and were blessed accordingly.\(^3\)

One trait that all modern teachers could learn from Lehi is his faithfulness. Would that the Lord could say to all teachers as he did to Lehi, "Blessed art thou, Lehi, because of the things which thou hast done; and because thou has been faithful and declared unto this people the things which I commanded thee . . . . "\(^4\) Lehi was willing to give up all of his many possessions for the sake of his ministry.\(^5\)

Parents could learn from Lehi's example of properly teaching his children. Elder Marion D. Hanks has said:

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\(^1\) Nephi 8:37.

\(^2\) Nephi 1:13-14, 17, 19,23.

\(^3\) Nephi 5:1-11, 19-21.

\(^4\) Nephi 2:1.

\(^5\) Nephi 2:4.
From the great scriptural affirmation, "I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents . . . ." we can teach with effective emphasis and sincerity, "I, John, desiring earnestly one day to become a goodly parent . . . ."

To become a goodly parent is a challenge and objective fit for the strongest and most determined young person, and the achieving of this goal lies squarely on the shoulders of the individual. One can become what he sincerely desires and wills to be.¹

President Spencer W. Kimball has added:

Though two of the brothers ignored those teachings, using their own free agency, yet Nephi and others of his brothers were strongly fortified and all their lives could draw heavily on the reservoir built and filled by worthy parents.²

If parents in the Church today desire for their children to grow up to the Lord, they must instruct their posterity as did Lehi.

A teacher may also realize from Lehi's experience, that the message from the Lord may go unheeded by the wicked. Although this may be the case, the message must be delivered with courage and diligence by the messenger.

Nephi

Nephi, who stands next to Mormon in length of writings in the Book of Mormon, had considerable recorded experience as an outstanding teacher of men. Nephi not only taught his own people and members of his own immediate family, but also assumed the prophetic role, addressing himself the majority of the time to readers of the Book of Mormon in latter days. In effect, then, we can properly say that we who study his teachings today are some of his most important students.

¹Marion D. Hanks, Improvement Era, LXIV (Feb. 1961), 97.
Nephi's preparation for his ministry is as extensive as his responsibilities later became. He was "born of goodly parents," and "was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father," and saw "many afflictions in the course of my days." In modesty Nephi further explained, "having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days; yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and mysteries of God . . . ."\(^1\)

Nephi went on to explain, that in his youth he sought to know the mysteries of God and cried unto Him. He was rewarded by a special spiritual experience where his heart was softened and he was caused to believe the words of his father, Lehi. Consequently he had no disposition to be rebellious like his older brothers.\(^3\) The Lord even revealed to Nephi, that if he would keep the commandments, he would be made "a ruler and a teacher" over his brethren.\(^4\)

After Father Lehi had received his tree of life vision, Nephi became desirous to "see, hear, and know, by the power of the Holy Ghost" on his own the same experiences as his father.\(^5\) He was rewarded in a miraculous fashion by being "caught away in the Spirit of the Lord, yea, into an exceeding high mountain," where he was personally tutored for some time by the Spirit of the Lord.\(^6\) This special instruction from

\(^1\) Nephi 1:1.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Nephi 2:16.
\(^4\) Nephi 2:22.
\(^5\) Nephi 10:17.
\(^6\) Nephi 11:1 ff.
a divine source together with the understanding Nephi developed from the scriptures (the brass plates) provided the background to his extensive future teachings.

Nephi indicated later, that at an undisclosed time, he had even seen the Savior, which experience, he stated, justified his being a special witness to the word of God.¹

Nephi claimed at the end of his ministry that he was not mighty in writing (although his writings have inspired many to good works), but that in speaking, his teachings were able to carry into the hearts of the children of men.²

The groups that Nephi taught were his rebellious brothers,³ his faithful brothers,⁴ his family generally,⁵ the people of Nephi that by necessity were separated from the families of Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael,⁶ and the future readers of the Book of Mormon.⁷

¹ 2 Nephi 11:3.
² 2 Nephi 33:1.
⁴ 1 Nephi 2:17; 2 Nephi 3:25.
⁵ 1 Nephi 16:24-25; 17:15; 19:22-24; 2 Nephi 1:24-27
⁶ 2 Nephi 5:6, 14;
⁷ 1 Nephi 6:4; 9:3-6; 17:3; 19:1-7, 18-21; 2 Nephi 4:15; 11:2, 6, 8; 25:3-4 (see all of 2 Nephi chapters 25-33 for words that were primarily addressed to future readers); Jacob 1:2-4, 8.
Nephi frequently reminded his readers of his noble purposes in teaching. Concerning the selection of materials that he desired the future readers of his record to see, Nephi explains, "For the fulness of mine intent is that I may persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and be saved."¹ Even though Nephi was privileged to see the latter-days and was therefore in a position to warn future generations of impending evils, he admitted that he was writing his inspirational material "for a wise purpose in him [the Lord], which purpose I know not."² Nephi's firm commitment is to teach all his readers (particularly is he concerned about his descendants) of Christ, that they "may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins."³

Nephi appeared confident that his efforts would be repaid and that his purposes in teaching future generations of the written word would be fulfilled when he exclaimed:

And I know that the Lord God will consecrate my prayers for the gain of my people. And the words which I have written in weakness will be made strong unto them; for it persuadeth them to do good; it maketh known unto them of their fathers; and it speaketh of Jesus, and persuadeth them to believe in him, and to endure to the end, which is life eternal.⁴

When Nephi passed on the prophet-teacher role to his brother Jacob, he reaffirmed that his preaching, or any revelation or pro-

¹ 1 Nephi 6:4.
² 1 Nephi 9:5.
³ 2 Nephi 25:26; see also 2 Nephi 25:25-20 and 2 Nephi 33:10.
⁴ 2 Nephi 33:4 (Note four specific purposes that Nephi feels will be fulfilled.) (Italics added.)
phesying that he was privileged to pass on were "for Christ's sake, and for the sake of our people."\(^1\)

In those frequent moments where Nephi was called upon to teach members of his own family, his purposes could be summarized in his own words: "that after this manner of language did I persuade my brethren, that they might be faithful in keeping the commandments of God."\(^2\)

Nephi's strength of character is apparent from his tender internal feelings toward his listeners and readers. Toward his rebellious brothers he did not assume a sanctimonious stance, lauding his own righteousness as opposed to their unfaithfulness, but rather "did frankly forgive them all they had done."\(^3\) Nephi also expressed his "being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts" and having "cried unto the Lord for them."\(^4\)

Later while explaining the significance of Lehi's dream to his brothers, Nephi expressed his deep concern for them:

Wherefore, I, Nephi, did exhort them to give heed unto the word of the Lord; yea, I did exhort them with all the energies of my soul, and with all the faculties which I possessed, that they would give heed to the word of God and remember to keep his commandments always in all things.

Nephi's determination for accomplishing the tasks assigned him are expressed in his oft-quoted statement:

\(^{1}\text{Jacob 1:4.}\)
\(^{2}\text{1 Nephi 3:21. (Italics added.)}\)
\(^{3}\text{1 Nephi 7:21.}\)
\(^{4}\text{1 Nephi 2:18.}\)
\(^{5}\text{1 Nephi 15:25. (Italics added.)}\)
I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.

The inner feelings of the soul of a man are perhaps no better expressed in all the Book of Mormon than are the words of Nephi in his psalm. The beginning verse from this magnificent exultation shows his soul's intentions with this psalm:

And upon these I write the things of my soul, and many of the scriptures which are engraved upon the plates of brass. For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children.

Nephi's feelings of love and concern for his people and for those, who would many generations later read his words, are evident from his words, "Behold, my soul delighteth in proving unto my people the truth of the coming of Christ." Nephi also explained:

But I, Nephi, have written what I have written, and I esteem it as of great worth, and especially unto my people. For I pray continually for them by day, and mine eyes water my pillow by night, because of them; and I cry unto my God in faith, and I know that he will hear my cry.

I have charity for my people, and great faith in Christ that I shall meet many souls spotless at his judgment-seat.

As to the effects of Nephi's teaching, we see that he was eminently successful with much of his family, including his own descendants, his faithful brothers, and their descendants. Nephi's word was also instrumental in leading his father, Lehi, to humility

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1 Nephi 3:7; See also v. 15-16.
2 See 2 Nephi 4:15-35.
3 2 Nephi 4:15. (Italics added.)
4 2 Nephi 11:4. (Italics added.)
5 2 Nephi 33:3, 7. (Italics added.)
and repentance in Lehi's own moment of weakness. In Jacob chapter 1 we learn that Nephi had established through his teaching a foundation of goodness in his people and that they "loved Nephi exceedingly" for it. Unfortunately Nephi's teaching never succeeded in bringing Laman and Lemuel and their followers to repentance or conversion. Certainly this was not the fault of Nephi, for his long-suffering, patience, and diligence in the direction of his rebellious brothers exceeded that which most men are willing to endure. However, Nephi's words to them will stand as a witness to them at the last day.

As for the effects of Nephi's teachings upon the future generations who will read his words as he had intended, no one, save the Lord, can say how much good and how many "miracles of forgiveness" have come as a result of or partially as result of Nephi's teachings. Those who reject his solemn testimony will be condemned at the last day. So Nephi's teachings are a witness for both good and evil to the inhabitants in the latter-days. Certainly Nephi fulfilled his responsibility to the future, as we see in his words:

I have spoken plainly unto you, that ye cannot misunderstand. And the words which I have spoken shall stand as a testimony against you; for they are sufficient to teach any man the right way; for the right way is to believe in Christ and deny him not; for by denying him ye also deny the prophets and the law.

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1 Nephi 16:20-25.
2 Jacob 1:10; see also 2 Nephi 5:6.
3 2 Nephi 5:20; see also 2 Nephi 33:14-15; Moroni 10:27.
4 2 Nephi 33:15.
5 2 Nephi 26:28. (Italics added.)
From Nephi's example a teacher in the Church today could learn the desire to discover the truths of God for oneself, the price one must pay to obtain those truths, the determination in fulfilling one's assigned task, the sincere charity and concern for students, the courage in saying that which is unpopular, the modesty in one's teaching success, the diligence and long-suffering necessary to obtain success, and the reliance one must have upon the Holy Ghost in order to obtain utterance. As Nephi said, "Neither am I mighty in writing, like unto speaking; for when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men."  

Elder Marion G. Romney has said:

Would that every officer in the Priesthood quorums could approach his labors with the spirit and determination of Nephi . . . . Observe that he did not complain that the assignment was difficult, that he had other work which took all his time, that they had done the best they could, nor that they had called on Laban once and that it would be useless to call on him again.

When Nephi realized that he would soon die, he anointed a man to be a king and a ruler over his people. Since the people had loved Nephi so exceedingly, they decided to keep his name in remembrance by calling all subsequent political leaders second Nephi, third Nephi, etc.

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12 Nephi 33:1. (Italics added.)

2Marion G. Romney, General Conference Address, Official Report of the One Hundred Twenty-Second Semi-Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 1942 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d.), p. 43.

3Jacob 1:9.  
4Jacob 1:11.
Nephi's younger brother, Jacob, assumed the spiritual leadership of the people together with another younger brother, Joseph. Both had been consecrated priests and teachers by Nephi.¹ During Nephi's spiritual leadership, Jacob had already begun his teaching career by assisting Nephi in the ministry. As Nephi's assistant, Jacob addressed the people and explained important doctrines.² Jacob later was charged by Nephi to write what Jacob "considered to be most precious" upon the small plates of Nephi.³

Jacob had received in his youth ample preparation for his future teaching responsibilities. He had spent his earlier days continually with Nephi and naturally had grown from the latter's leadership.⁴ He had seen a vision of the destruction of Jerusalem and had been tutored by an angel.⁵ A most precious opportunity came to Jacob, when at an undisclosed time, he was even privileged to see Jesus Christ and behold his glory.⁶ About thirty years after Lehi's colony left Jerusalem (Jacob would have been in his twenties), Jacob and his brother Joseph were consecrated priests and teachers over the people of Nephi and "ordained after the manner of his holy order."⁷ While

¹2 Nephi 5:26; Jacob 1:18.
²See Nephi chapters 6-11
³Jacob 1:1-2.
⁴2 Nephi 2:3; cf. 1 Nephi 2:12; 2 Nephi 1:28.
⁵2 Nephi 6:8; Jacob 7:5.
⁶2 Nephi 11:3; 2:4; Jacob 7:5.
⁷2 Nephi 5:26, 6:2, Jacob 1:19.
laboring with Nephi, Jacob indicated that they "also had many revelations, and the spirit of much prophecy; wherefore, we knew of Christ and his kingdom, which should come." And before Jacob undertook his very solemn responsibility of warning his people of their evil way, he reminded his readers that he first obtained his errand from the Lord.

We can divide Jacob's students into four categories or groups:
1. the people of Nephi while Nephi was still living,
2. the people of Nephi after Nephi's death and after many had fallen into wicked paths,
3. an anti-Christ named Sherem, and
4. generally all the future readers of the Book of Mormon. In teaching these four groups, he had sometimes interrelated and sometimes separate purposes.

Toward group number one from above, Jacob described his purposes:

And now, behold, I would speak unto you concerning things which are, and which are to come; wherefore, I will read you the words of Isaiah. And they are the words which my brother has desired that I should speak unto you. And I speak unto you for your sakes, that ye may learn and glorify the name of your God.

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1Jacob 1:6. (Italics added.)
2Jacob 1:17.
3See all of 2 Nephi chapters 6-10
4See all of Jacob chapters 1-3.
5See Jacob 7.
6See the Allegory of Zenos and its interpretation in Jacob 5 & 6; See also chapter 4 and 7:27.
72 Nephi 6:4. (Italics added.)
Jacob, later in this significant discourse, described for his listeners the mission of Christ. President Joseph Fielding Smith has said:

One of the most enlightening discourses ever delivered in regard to the atonement is found in the ninth chapter of II Nephi in the Book of Mormon. It is the counsel given by Jacob, brother of Nephi. It should be carefully read by every person seeking salvation.1

Concerning group number two from above, Jacob had an especially difficult assignment. It so happened that "the people of Nephi, under the reign of the second king, began to grow hard in their hearts, and indulge themselves somewhat in wicked practices . . . ."2 As spiritual leader of the people, Jacob's errand was to denounce these practices, which were pride because of riches3 and unchastity in the form of unlawful concubines.4

Jacob's teaching of Sherem was necessary, because the latter had taught flattering words unto the people so that "he might overthrow the doctrine of Christ."5 Jacob was led by the Spirit so intensely that he was able to confound Sherem in all his words.6 Jacob also desired to restore peace and love to his people, which condition had been disrupted by Sherem.7

1Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Inc., 1957), IV, 57.
2Jacob 1:15.
3Jacob 2:12-14.
5Jacob 7:2.
6Jacob 7:5.
7Jacob 7:2-3,23.
Some of Jacob's most important students are, as also in the case of Nephi, the future readers of the Book of Mormon. Jacob's noble purposes in this regard are recorded in his words:

Now in this thing we do rejoice; and we labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates, hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive them with thankful hearts, and look upon them that they may learn with joy and not with sorrow, neither with contempt, concerning their first parents.

For, for this intent have we written these things, that they know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming; and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us.

It is from Jacob that we learn one all-important responsibility or purpose of teaching. In his own words Jacob describes it:

And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking upon us the responsibility, answering the sins of the people upon our own heads if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments, and we would not be found spotless at the last day.

As a member of the First Presidency, Hugh B. Brown has said in the same vein:

President John Taylor said on one occasion, speaking to the brethren of the priesthood: "If you do not magnify your callings, God will hold you responsible for those you might have saved, had you done your duty.

This is a challenging statement. If I by reason of sins of commission or omission lose what I might have had in the hereafter, I myself must suffer and, doubtless, my loved ones with me. But if I fail in my assignment as a bishop, a stake president, or one of the General Authorities of the Church—if any of us fail to teach, lead, direct, and help to save those under our direction

\[1\] Jacob 4:3-4. (Italics added.)

\[2\] Jacob 1:19; See also Jacob 2:2 and 2 Nephi 9:44. (Italics added.)
and within our jurisdiction, then the Lord will hold us responsible if they are lost as the result of our failure.  

Jacob also had other purposes in teaching which are universal in their application. Among them are to persuade hearers to come to Christ and partake of the goodness of God, to teach others to learn and glorify the name of God, to teach the consequences of sin, and to persuade all men not to rebel against God.

On occasion Jacob expressed poignantly his internal feelings toward his listeners and readers. For example:

I am desirous for the welfare of your souls. Yea, mine anxiety is great for you; and ye yourselves know that it ever has been. For I have exhorted you with all diligence. . . .

When Jacob preached against the abominations of his people, his tender feelings toward them are evident:

Yea, it grieveth my soul and causeth me to shrink with shame before the presence of my Maker, that I might testify unto you concerning the wickedness of your hearts.

And also it grieveth me that I must use so much boldness of speech concerning you, before your wives and your children, many of whose feelings are exceedingly tender and chaste and delicate before God, which thing is pleasing unto God.

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1 Hugh B. Brown, General Conference Address, Official Report of the One Hundred Thirty-Second Semi-Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 1962 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d.), p. 84.

2 Jacob 1:7.

3 Nephi 6:4.

4 Nephi 9:48; Jacob 4:12.

5 Jacob 1:8.

6 Nephi 6:3.

7 Jacob 7:27.
Toward those who would read his words in future generations,
Jacob ponders:

Behold, my beloved brethren, I will unfold this mystery unto you; if I do not, by any means, get shaken from my firmness in the Spirit; and stumble because of my overanxiety for you.\(^1\)

Jacob concluded his writings with the modest desire, "... and to the reader I bid farewell, hoping that many of my brethren may read my words. Brethren, adieu."\(^2\)

As to the effects of his teachings, this writer assumes that Jacob was essentially successful with each of the groups, for which we have a record that he taught. 2 Nephi chapters 6-11 has Jacob addressing the people of Nephi as Nephi's assistant. So dynamic and far-reaching are his teachings in this particular section that Nephi preserved them. Undoubtedly these teachings of Jacob, as well as all others he recorded on the small plates of Nephi, reached the hearts of the Nephites in the same manner they have reached the hearts of the readers in the last days. After Jacob's encounter with Sherem, peace and love were restored among the people of Nephi, and the Nephites "searched the scriptures." This fact connotes Jacob's success in instructing them.\(^3\)

Teachers in each type of organization and also Church administrators could find much in Jacob's example to emulate. One in his developmental years should show loyalty and devotion to his leaders as did Jacob. When increased responsibilities came to Jacob, he

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\(^1\) Jacob 4:18. (Italics added.)

\(^2\) Jacob 7:27.

\(^3\) Jacob 7:23.
shouldered them well, having learned proper principles from earlier experiences. The Church today provides tremendous training and developmental opportunities to the youth and the inexperienced.

Jacob relied heavily upon the Spirit, which all teachers must learn to do to achieve success as Jacob did. His genuine concern for his students is also a prime success factor for today's teachers.

Jacob first recognized the huge responsibility of his calling and then was willing to magnify his calling. This principle of leadership and teaching could be appropriated by dependable Latter-day Saints. A present-day teacher could also learn well from the other noble goals of teaching that Jacob had.

Enos

Jacob's son Enos appears as our next exemplar of outstanding teachers from the Book of Mormon. Typically when Enos is studied, his wrestle with the Lord for his own conversion is emphasized. The purpose of this study is not to diminish this aspect of Enos' life, but rather to indicate its value in Enos' subsequent successful teaching career.

When Enos finally entered upon his preaching responsibilities, he was most adequately prepared. But when his story begins in the Book of Mormon record, Enos was far from being prepared and he knew it. True, Enos had been blessed with the example of his father, Jacob,

\[1\text{See Jacob 1:15-19.}\]
\[2\text{Jacob 1:19; 2:2.}\]
\[3\text{See footnotes 2 through 5 on p. 48 of this study.}\]
and had been taught by his father "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." However, not until Enos was hunting one day in the forests did the words of his father concerning eternal life and also the joy of the saints, sink deep into his heart. Enos' dramatic and moving "wrestle" with the Lord is described in verses 2 through 8. Most descriptive of his struggle are his words:

And my soul hungered . . . . I cried unto him in mighty prayer . . . and all the day long did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came I did still raise my voice high that it reached the heavens.

Because of his faith in Christ his soul was healed.

Still Enos was not totally prepared to teach, even though he had personally been forgiven and had been born again of the Spirit. Enos felt an earnest desire for the welfare of his brethren, the Nephites, whereupon he "did pour out my soul unto God for them." While Enos struggled in the spirit for his brethren, the Lord revealed to him a firm promise pertaining to the Nephites. At this point Enos indicated that his faith was now unshaken in the Lord. This tremendous faith developed by Enos is certainly his most exemplary quality of character. With this superior faith, Enos implored the Lord for the

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1 Enos 1.  
2 Enos 3.  
3 Enos 4.  
4 Enos 8.  
5 Enos 9.  
6 Enos 10.  
7 See Enos 18.
benefit of the Lamanites, for whom he received from the Lord calm assurance. Only after Enos had succeeded in his strugglings in the Spirit for the welfare of himself, the Nephites, and the Lamanites, was he prepared to begin his significant ministry.

Elder Marion G. Romney has said:

Then there came over Enos the feeling for his brethren, and he prayed with all the energy of his soul for them, first for the Nephites and then for the Lamanites. I thought how true this is, that when a man has the spirit of the Lord, his whole desire is for righteousness and to build up the kingdom of God.

Enos taught two groups of people: his own people, the Nephites, and their enemies, the Lamanites. Concerning the Lamanites, Enos preaching and that of his associates was in vain. And only with harshness and extreme plainness of speech were Enos and other prophets able through their teaching to prevent total spiritual contamination among the Nephites.

Enos' first purposes in his teaching were to prophesy of things to come and testify of the power of his special spiritual experiences. Later, due to the stiffneckedness of his people, Enos preached and

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1 Enos 11-17.
2 Marion G. Romney, General Conference Address, Official Report of the One Hundred Fourteenth Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 1944 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d.), pp. 140-141.
3 Enos 19.
4 Enos 20.
5 Ibid.
6 Enos 22-23.
7 Enos 19.
prophesied about wars, contentions, destructions, death, the duration of eternity, the judgments and power of God, and the fear of the Lord. Had he not been so direct in his teaching, his people would have speedily gone down to destruction.¹ Enos' purpose in his attempt at instructing the Lamanites was "to restore the Lamanites unto the true faith in God."²

As with all successful teachers, Enos had strong internal feelings of concern for his students. That fact is to be observed in his strugglings in prayer in their behalf. His love for teaching his people is also evident from this statement; "And I have declared it [the truth which is in Christ] in all my days, and have rejoiced in it above that of the world.³

Other evidence of Enos' outstanding character are his diligence (as in the above scripture) and his assurance from personal revelation of his future exaltation:

And I soon go to the place of my rest, which is with my Redeemer; for I know that in him I shall rest. And I rejoice in the day when my mortal shall put on immortality, and shall stand before him; then shall I see his face with pleasure, and he will say unto me: Come unto me, ye blessed, there is a place prepared for you in the mansions of my Father. Amen.⁴

From Enos a modern teacher could learn faith, diligence, and true concern for his students. Particularly missionaries would do well to develop an Enos-like compassion and concern for benighted and

¹Enos 23.
²Enos 20.
³Enos 26.
⁴Enos 27.
uncultured peoples. Also a teacher could learn that if he would remain diligent all his days in his service to the Lord, he would be eligible, as was Enos, to see the Lord's face and enter His rest. This hope would help provide the courage necessary to be a master teacher.

**Benjamin**

After Enos died, the Nephites continued to have teachers of righteousness. But we have no detailed information concerning their experiences or even who they were. This period of slight information lasted nearly 300 years chronologically. Not until King Benjamin's roll as leader of the Nephites is described do we have sufficient information to analyze an outstanding teacher.

Benjamin's father was King Mosiah (the first of two Mosiahs we encounter in the Book of Mormon; Benjamin's son is the second). Benjamin succeeded his father to the throne over Zarahemla. Mosiah was a good man, who was able to interpret engravings from stone by the gift and power of God. It follows that Benjamin received excellent preparation for his future ministry from his able father. Further evidences of Benjamin's preparation are his combining of the king-record with the prophet-record and his serving valiantly as a young king and general in times of severe contentions with the enemy Lamanites.

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1 Jarom 11.  
2 Omni 23-24.  
3 Omni 20.  
4 Words of Mormon 10.  
5 Words of Mormon 13-14.
King Benjamin's sterling character is that which immediately impresses the reader. He is described as "a just man before the Lord,"¹ and also as "a holy man," who "did reign over his people in righteousness."² As a king (but atypical of royalty) Benjamin labored with his own hands that his people might not be burdened with taxes.³ So sincerely had he served his people that he could walk "with a clear conscience before God."⁴

The groups that we have record of Benjamin's teaching are the people of Nephi while contentions existed among them,⁵ his own sons,⁶ and once again the people of Nephi when he delivered his famous farewell address to them.⁷

Benjamin's first purpose in teaching was to rid his people of contentions that had arisen and once more establish peace in the land. Together with other holy men, Benjamin succeeded in exposing false Christs, false prophets, false preachers, and false teachers. Utilizing sharpness in speaking the word of God with power and authority, Benjamin and his helpers did overcome the stiffneckedness of the people and establish peace in the land.⁸

Benjamin's next purpose was to instruct his three sons concerning the value of the scriptures.⁹ These instructions include one of

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¹Omni 25.
²Words of Mormon 17.
³Mosiah 2:14-16.
⁴Mosiah 2:27.
⁵Words of Mormon 12-18.
⁶Mosiah 1:2-7.
⁷See Mosiah 1:10-18; 2:29.
⁸Words of Mormon 15-18.
⁹Mosiah 1:2-7
the strongest internal testimonies of the importance of scripture found in holy writ. Benjamin concluded these instructions by saying, "And now, my sons, I would that ye should remember to search them diligently, that ye may profit thereby . . . ."¹ For all we know Benjamin's teachings were heeded, for Mosiah, who became the next king turned out to be a very righteous leader in his own right.²

Benjamin's purposes in calling together his people so that he could address them for the last time were three-fold. First he decided to instruct his people pertaining to the future affairs of the kingdom, seeing that he would no longer be their leader or king.³ Second, he decided to give his people a name, that thereby they might be distinguished from other people. This name would not be blotted out, except through transgression.⁴ The name they received, of course, was that of Christ.⁵ Third, Benjamin desired to rid his garments of their blood, thus excercising the identical principle that Jacob had used previously.⁶

King Benjamin was free with his expression of internal feelings toward the individuals he sought to serve and to teach. Indeed, it is from Benjamin that we learn "that when ye are in the service of your

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¹Mosiah 1:7.
³Mosiah 1:10; 2:29.
⁴Mosiah 5:11-12.
⁵Mosiah 5:7-12.
⁶Mosiah 2:28; see also Jacob 1:19.
fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God."¹ Benjamin sought to exercise this principle of service in his every action.²

From Benjamin also we learn the true spirit of humility in serving. The King warned his people not to judge those in misery, saying they brought their misfortunes upon themselves. Then, emphatically he added:

For behold, are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend upon the same Being, even God, for all the substance which we have, for both food and raiment, and for gold and for silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind?³

Benjamin's love and concern for his people is amply evident from his concluding word to them:

Therefore, I would that ye should be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works, that Christ, the Lord God Omnipotent, may seal you his, that you may be brought to heaven, that ye may have everlasting salvation and eternal life, through the wisdom, and power, and justice, and mercy of him who created all things, in heaven and in earth, who is God above all. Amen.

Occasionally in scripture are recorded dramatic evidences of a people's acceptance of a prophet's call to repentance and acceptance of Christ. In Mosiah 4 is one such event described:

And now, it came to pass that when king Benjamin had made an end of speaking the words which had been delivered unto him by the angel of the Lord, that he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and behold they had fallen to the earth, for the fear of the Lord had come upon them. And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with

¹Mosiah 2:17.
²Mosiah 2:16, 21.
³Mosiah 4:19; see also v. 17-18.
⁴Mosiah 5:15.
one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men.

And it came to pass that after they had spoken these words the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience, because of the exceeding faith which they had in Jesus Christ who should come, according to the words which King Benjamin had spoken unto them.

The multitude in Mosiah 5 is quoted as with one voice covenanting to change their lives:

Yea, we believe all the words which thou hast spoken unto us; and also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually. And we are willing to enter into a covenant with our God to do his will, and to be obedient to his commandments in all things that he shall command us, all the remainder of our days, that we may not bring upon ourselves a never-ending torment, as has been spoken by the angel, that we may not drink out of the cup of the wrath of God.

So complete was the effect of Benjamin's address to the people that every single soul, excepting the little children, covenanted to take upon himself the name of Christ. The newly appointed King, Benjamin's son Mosiah, began to reign in righteousness. The people worked industriously and lived in peace. Such is the legacy of a righteous teacher.

What can a modern teacher learn from Benjamin's example? First, one could strive to achieve his ability with oration:

1 Mosiah 4:1-3. (Italics added.)
2 Mosiah 5:2, 5. (Italics added.)
3 Mosiah 6:2.
4 Mosiah 6:6-7
It is highly improbable that Benjamin had received much instruction in the making of sermons or speeches. What ability he had in youth had probably been improved through long experience as a teacher of his people and as their king. Most of his speeches were doubtless of a religious nature, if we may judge the spirit of the man in his last formal speech.

The oration is remarkable in many respects. It is characterized by dignity, simplicity, sincerity, and a warm religious feeling. It seems also to have been delivered with force and persuasiveness.

In addition to unquestioned speaking ability, Benjamin's real secret was his sincere love toward those whom he taught. The writer firmly believes that a teacher who truly loves his students and they know of his love will experience positive responses in his urging students to turn to Christ.

A teacher today should adopt the stance, as did Benjamin, of what he can do to serve his students rather than what the experience of teaching can do to serve him.

Benjamin was anxious to teach, particularly to his sons, the value of turning to the scriptures. All Church leaders, especially fathers, should emphasize to their students the importance of turning to the scriptures for answers to life's problems.

No teacher will have a lasting effect upon his students who is not humble. A teacher in the forward-moving Church would do well to often remember the following advice from Benjamin:

And again I say unto you as I have said before, that as ye have come to the knowledge of the glory of God, or if ye have known of his goodness and have tasted of his love, and have received a remission of your sins, which causeth such exceeding great joy in

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1 Sidney B. Sperry, Book of Mormon Studies (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union Board, n.d.), p. 54.

2 Mosiah 1:3-7.
your souls, even so I would that ye should remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long-suffering towards you, unworthy creatures, and humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily, and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel.

Abinadi

Apart from the main group of Nephites in the land of Zarahemla under Kings Benjamin and Mosiah was a group that had gone north to dwell in the land of Lehi-Nephi. Zeniff was the original leader of this break-off group. He ruled in righteousness, but his son, King Noah, became one of the most wicked monarchs described in the pages of the Book of Mormon. Together with his wicked priests, Noah lavished himself upon riches and indulged in immorality at the expense of his people, whom he taxed heavily. All the affairs of the kingdom were changed under his direction. His people were sinking into a state of deep depravation. To this ungodly condition was called our next prophet-teacher, Abinadi.2

Not a word is recorded in the Book of Mormon concerning Abinadi's preparation or even whence he came. Following is what Mormon does record:

And it came to pass that there was a man among them whose name was Abinadi; and he went forth among them, and began to prophesy, saying: Behold, thus saith the Lord, and thus hath he commanded me, saying, Go forth, and say unto this people, thus saith the Lord—Wo be unto this people, for I have seen their abominations, and their wickedness, and their whoredoms; and except they repent I will visit them in mine anger.3

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1 Mosiah 4:11. (Italics added.) See also Mosiah 4:17-21.
3 Mosiah 11:20. (Italics added.)
It is evident from the foregoing that Abinadi's purpose was to command the people in the name of the Lord to repent. Furthermore:

And except they repent and turn to the Lord their God, behold, I will deliver them into the hands of their enemies; yea, and they shall be brought into bondage; and they shall be afflicted by the hand of their enemies.  

Abinadi's message was rejected by Noah, who was quoted as saying:

Who is Abinadi, that I and my people should be judged of him, or who is the Lord, that shall bring upon my people such great affliction?  

The king even commanded that Abinadi be slain. Unfortunately the prophet's acceptance by the people in the kingdom was no better, for "the eyes of the people were blinded, therefore they hardened their hearts against the words of Abinadi, and they sought from that time forward to take him."  

After two years Abinadi returned in disguise and was once again commanded of the Lord to prophesy destruction upon the people "if they did not repent. Significant elements of the prophecy that was to be delivered by Abinadi were the people's being delivered into bondage, their being driven by men, vultures and dogs devouring the flesh of those slain, King Noah's life itself being valued as a garment in a hot furnace, and famines, pestilences, heavy burdens, hail, and insects.

1Mosiah 11:21. See also v. 20-25.  
2Mosiah 11:27  
3Mosiah 11:28.  
4Mosiah 11:29.  
5Mosiah 12:1.  
6See all of Mosiah 12:1-12.
Once again Abinadi was rejected and this time was thrown into prison. He was brought before a council of King Noah and his perverted priests. There they began to question him, that they might find something, with which to accuse him.

... but he answered them boldly, and withstood all their questions, yea, to their astonishment; for he did withstand them in all their questions, and did confound them in all their words.

Apparently Abinadi was able to maintain his audience with the king and the priests for some time, because Mormon recorded some very important doctrines that Abinadi was able to clarify to the priests on that occasion.

These doctrinal explanations of Mosiah were concerning the Law of Moses, the Ten Commandments, the coming and mission of the Messiah, the explanation of who Christ's seed are, the resurrection, the nature of fallen man, and the judgement of God. They are some of the most significant explanations in all our standard works.

After Abinadi's lengthy discourse, the general consensus of the king and his priests was that Abinadi should be put to death. But there was one among all the priests that was affected positively by Abinadi's courage and testimony. His name was Alma. It was this Alma who wrote the words of Abinadi, who was instrumental in converting a large group of people himself and leading them to Zarahemla, and who eventually was designated as head of the church in Zarahemla. So, in spite of the general rejection of Abinadi, his effect was felt for righteousness over many generations.

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1Mosiah 12:13-17.  
2Mosiah 12:19.  
4Mosiah 17:1.  
5See Mosiah 17:2-4.
Abinadi made it clear to those who were planning to put him to death that his words would stand as a testimony against them in the last day.\(^1\) When Abinadi was put to death by fire, Mormon informed us that he sealed the truth of his words by his death.\(^2\)

Even though very little personal history of Abinadi is recorded, some of his outstanding character traits became evident when he confronted his accusers. One is courage, which was shown when Abinadi refused to retract his words, even in the face of a tortuous death. Instead, Abinadi made it plain to the wicked priests that he even allowed himself to fall into their hands so that he could preach repentance to them.\(^3\)

Abinadi's courage in the face of this requirement is remarkable and indicates how fearlessly one can meet death when fortified with a testimony of the gospel. The prophet who prophesies of impending destruction unless the people repent has never been popular.\(^4\)

Another outstanding trait of Abinadi was his obedience as manifested by his immediate willingness to heed the commandment of God to cry repentance unto the people.\(^5\)

Another outstanding trait was Abinadi's capacity to speak mightily with the Spirit of the Lord with power and authority from God. At one point Abinadi was so intense in accomplishing his purposes

\(^1\)Mosiah 17:10.

\(^2\)Mosiah 17:20

\(^3\)Mosiah 17:9.


\(^5\)Mosiah 11:20; 12:1; 13:3
that "his face shone with exceeding luster, even as Moses' did while in the mount of Sinai, while speaking with the Lord."\(^1\)

Abinadi's internal feelings toward those whom he taught are not particularly expressed in the Book of Mormon. This was probably due to the gravity of his assignment.

What could a present-day teacher learn from Abinadi's experience? A missionary could learn that part of his assignment is to warn the people that they must repent or otherwise face inevitable consequences. Abinadi's noble courage could be emulated by today's teachers in the Church to the point of not becoming discouraged, even though the teacher's humble message is rejected completely or in part at first. A teacher today would indeed very rarely need to face the same degree of opposition that Abinadi needed to do! One might also remember that God will protect his servants in some form until their message is delivered and their work is completed.\(^2\)

All teachers in the Church, regardless of their assignment, should comprehend the mission of Christ and the importance of the Lord's ministry. To be able to explain these with the same clarity and conviction of Abinadi would also be a desirable objective.

Alma, The Elder

The one personal convert of Abinadi, Alma, is our next teacher. This Alma is not to be confused with his equally successful son, also named Alma. For purposes of clarification this elder Alma is either referred to as Alma, the elder, or as Alma I.

\(^1\)Mosiah 13:5; see also v. 6. \(^2\)See Mosiah 13:1-5.
Alma had the unique experience of receiving preparation for his ministry from a prophet (Abinadi), who was calling Alma and his peers, the wicked priests, to repentance.\(^1\) Alma, alone among the priests and probably one of their younger members, believed the admonitions of Abinadi.\(^2\) Alma courageously pleaded with King Noah that he might release Abinadi, but to no avail. The off-shoot of Alma's defense of the prophet was the king's venting his anger by sending servants to slay Alma.\(^3\) Having concealed himself, Alma further prepared himself by writing the words which he had heard Abinadi speak.\(^4\) Mormon also recorded that Alma repented of all his iniquities before beginning to teach.\(^5\)

Alma began to teach privately the words of Abinadi to as many as would listen.\(^6\) Those he converted he took to a place called Mormon, where there was a fountain of pure water.\(^7\) Alma's purposes in preaching unto them are expressed in these words; "And he did teach them, and did preach unto them repentance, and redemption, and faith on the Lord."\(^8\) Alma's other teaching purpose with this first group of followers was to properly prepare them for baptism.\(^9\)

Alma's next purpose was to properly organize the church of God or the church of Christ.\(^10\) This was in part accomplished by calling,

\(^1\)See Mosiah 11 through 17.  \(^2\)Mosiah 17:2.  
\(^3\)Mosiah 17:3.  \(^4\)Mosiah 17:4.  
\(^5\)Mosiah 18:1.  \(^6\)Mosiah 18:1-3.  
\(^7\)Mosiah 18:4-6.  \(^8\)Mosiah 18:7; See also 25:15.  
\(^9\)Mosiah 18:8-16.  \(^10\)Mosiah 18:17 ff.
ordaining, and instructing special priests. Each one of these priests were placed in charge of fifty people and charged "to teach them concerning the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."

And he commanded them that they should teach nothing save it were the things which he had taught, and which had been spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets.

Yea, even he commanded them that they should preach nothing save it were repentance and faith on the Lord, who had redeemed his people.

Furthermore in establishing the church, Alma plainly instructed the members of said church how they should inter-relate with each other in the church.

Alma's next purpose in teaching was to instruct his people in principles of righteousness. Apparently this was with the thought in mind of preparing them to be worthy to be led by the Spirit in case of danger. Alma's people did subsequently suffer temporary setbacks from the Lamanites and from Amulon and the priests of Noah. However, through their worthiness and prayers, they were led into freedom and unity with the main body of Nephites in Zarahemla.

Now in Zarahemla, Alma's next teaching purpose, as commissioned by King Mosiah, was to preach repentance and faith on the Lord to all the Nephites there assembled. After this, Mosiah further granted that Alma establish churches in Zarahemla and ordain priests and

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1 Mosiah 18:18.

2 Mosiah 18:19-20; see also v. 24 and 26.

3 Mosiah 18:21-29.

4 See Mosiah 23 and 24.

5 Mosiah 25:14-17.
teachers over every church. This Alma successfully accomplished, creating seven churches.

And thus, notwithstanding there being many churches they were all one church, yea, even the church of God; for there was nothing preached in all the churches except it were repentance and faith in God.

Contentions arose by and by in the church, having their beginnings with the dissenters and unbelievers outside the church. It fell upon Alma to deal with these contentions. He felt incapable of doing so, but turned to the Lord. He received by revelation great inspiration and instruction pertaining to regulating the affairs of the church. Alma and his co-laborers became very successful in "teaching the word of God in all things."²

Alma's last recorded teaching purpose was to instruct his priests to fast and pray for his son, Alma, who had become dumb after an encounter with an angel.³

Alma, the elder, is a teacher with many admirable character traits. He was a man of prayer, especially in dealing with problems where he needed to rely upon the Lord for help.

Nevertheless, after much tribulation, the Lord did hear my cries, and did answer my prayers, and has made me an instrument in his hands in bringing to many of you to a knowledge of his truth.⁴

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¹Mosiah 25:22; see also verse 23.
²Mosiah 26:38; see all of ch. 26.
³Alma 27:23.
⁴Mosiah 23:10; see also 26:19.
Yet with his successes in the ministry he remained humble. "Nevertheless, in this I do not glory, for I am unworthy to glory of myself."  

Alma was also a man of "exceeding faith." Due to this the Lord covenanted with Alma that he would have eternal life. We also see in Alma a great loving concern for a wavering son.

Alma's internal feelings of concern for those whom he taught are evident in his pouring out his whole soul to God in behalf of the transgressors in the church, lest he should treat them improperly.

From Alma's example a teacher in the Church today could learn what aspects of the gospel he should emphasize and how they should relate to the other members of the Church. One could also learn to be humble as was Alma and to trust implicitly in the Lord. Especially when one cannot derive the answer to a problem from his personal experiences should he turn to the Lord for the answer. Alma prayed mightily to the Lord for all the transgressors in the church, including his son. The writer feels that teachers today should pray with like dedication for transgressors whom they teach.

Mosiah, Son of Benjamin

Three years before King Benjamin's death, Mosiah, his son, assumed the throne by appointment. Apparently Mosiah was named after 

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1 Mosiah 23:11.  
2 Mosiah 26:15.  
3 Mosiah 26:20  
5 Mosiah 26:13-14  
7 See Mosiah 18:21-29.  
8 Mosiah 1:10; 6:4-5
Benjamin's father, Mosiah, who was also a ruler over the Nephite people. It was this earlier Mosiah who discovered the people of Zarahemla and who was appointed king over both the Nephites and the people of Zarahemla when they were united into one people. For the sake of clarification, the King Mosiah that the writer now desires to analyze can be referred to as Mosiah, son of Benjamin.

We may assume that Mosiah received ample preparation for teaching from such a righteous father.

Mormon recorded that Mosiah, together with his two brothers, received instructions concerning the vital importance of using the scriptures. Indeed they were admonished, "to search them diligently, that ye may profit thereby." 3

As Benjamin became old, he gave special instructions to Mosiah because the kingdom was to be conferred upon him. Benjamin previewed with his son Mosiah on that occasion what he would later teach the body of Nephites. Mosiah was further charged to care for the sacred records and artifacts. 4

Finally in front of all the people, Mosiah was consecrated by Benjamin as a ruler and a king. 5

King Mosiah had many teaching purposes during his reign. First, he instructed his people that they should till the earth. Mosiah himself was likewise willing to till the earth, that he might not become a burden to his people. 6

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1 Omni 12. 2 Omni 14, 19.
3 Mosiah 1:7. 4 Mosiah 1:10-18
5 Mosiah 6:3. 6 Mosiah 6:7.
One of Mosiah's most important purposes was to function as a seer, one who could translate records of an ancient date. This was truly a gift from God that he utilized righteously and graciously.¹

Another of Mosiah's teaching purposes was to read or cause to be read the separate accounts of Zeniff and his people and of Alma and his people. Mosiah's instructions pertaining to these two accounts produced wholesome effects among his people.² It should be noted that Mosiah taught his people in two groups, one the people of Nephi and the other the people of Zarahemla.³

After Mosiah's wayward sons were converted, they desired to go among the Lamanites to do missionary work. Mosiah turned to the Lord and inquired if he should send his sons. The Lord's answer was reassuringly affirmative, and the sons were sent by Mosiah according to their request.⁴

Mosiah's last purpose in teaching was to instruct his people on the proper form of government and the maintaining of peace and liberty in the land. His discourse, contained in Mosiah chapter 29, has become a classic on the philosophy of liberty in Mormon thought.

Mosiah's continued purpose in teaching can be succinctly summed up by his own statement in the afore-mentioned last discourse:

And even I myself have labored with all the power and faculties which I have possessed, to teach you the commandments of God, and to establish peace throughout the land, that there should be no wars nor contentions, no stealing, nor plundering, nor murdering, nor any manner of iniquity; . . . ⁵

⁵Mosiah 29:14.
The effects of Mosiah's righteous reign and final written discourse were positive, including the fact that the Nephites established a representative form of government. The people's respect for Mosiah is expressed with Mormon's commentary:

And they did wax strong in love towards Mosiah; yea, they did esteem him more than any other man; for they did not look upon him as a tyrant who was seeking for gain, yea, for that lucre which doth corrupt the soul; for he had not exacted riches of them, neither had he delighted in the shedding of blood; but he had established peace in the land, and he had granted unto his people that they should be delivered from all manner of bondage; therefore they did esteem him, yea, exceedingly, beyond measure.

Mosiah's character appears to be above reproach:

And it came to pass that king Mosiah did walk in the ways of the Lord, and did observe his judgments and his statutes, and did keep his commandments in all things whatsoever he commanded him.

Mosiah followed in the footsteps of his father in not taxing his people, but worked for his own living with his own hands.

Concerning Mosiah's death, Mormon recorded that Mosiah had "warred a good warfare" and had "walked uprightly before the Lord."

A modern teacher could learn from Mosiah's example to be a humble and dignified administrator. This would apply mostly to bishops and stake presidents, educational administrators, and public officials. As Mosiah had done, one today should care much more for his students or constituents than for his own glory. This can in part be accomplished by relying upon the Lord for strength in making decisions.

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5 Alma 1:1.
Alma the Younger

Alma, who was commissioned by King Mosiah to establish churches in Zarahemla, sired a son by the same name. This younger Alma was one of the unbelievers with whom the elder Alma as church high priest was required to deal. Alma II was in his youth a wicked and an idolatrous man. He was a man of many words, who used flattery to lead many individuals in the church to do iniquity.\(^1\) It was while this younger Alma was one day secretly setting out to destroy the church of God that an angel of the Lord appeared to him.\(^2\) The angel announced that it was in answer to the prayers of the people and of Alma, the elder, that he was sent to the younger Alma.\(^3\) The angel made it clear that the church would not be overthrown, even if it were necessary to have Alma himself cast off.\(^4\)

It was with this encounter with the angel and with his subsequent fervent plea for forgiveness and mighty battle for his soul that Alma, the younger, received the major part of his preparation for teaching.\(^5\) Immediately after Alma regained his physical strength, having lost it during this ordeal, he "manifest unto the people that \(\text{he}\) had been born of God."\(^6\) From that time on, he told his son Helaman:

\(^1\) Mosiah 27:8-9.
\(^2\) Mosiah 27:11.
\(^3\) Mosiah 27:14, 16.
\(^4\) Ibid.
\(^5\) Concerning Alma's angelic vision and rebirth see Mosiah 27:10-31 and Alma 36:5-24.
\(^6\) Alma 36:23.
... I have labored without ceasing, that I might bring souls unto repentance; that I might bring them to taste of the exceeding joy of which I did taste; that they might also be born of God, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.  

Mormon, he who abridged the majority of the history found in the Book of Mormon, included more of the ministry of Alma than of any other ancient American prophet. Only the ministry and teachings of Jesus were described in as much detail as were Alma's. The writer has determined eighteen separate recorded purposes of Alma relating to teaching. Following is the list of those purposes:

1. To repair all the wrongs and injuries as fast as possible that he and the sons of Mosiah in their prior wickedness had committed.

2. To become custodian of the sacred plates and precious artifacts.

3. To serve as a successor to his father, Alma, as the high priest or leader over the church.

4. To lead the people politically as their first appointed chief judge.

5. To judge Nehor for his crimes and to speak out against the evils of priestcraft.

6. To rid the Amlicite curse from among the Nephites.

7. To establish the church more fully and to watch over the growth of the church.

\[\text{\begin{tabular}{ll}
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1\textsuperscript{1} & Alma 36:24. \\
2\textsuperscript{2} & Mosiah 27:32-37. \\
3\textsuperscript{3} & Mosiah 28:20. \\
4\textsuperscript{4} & Mosiah 29:42. \\
5\textsuperscript{5} & Ibid. \\
6\textsuperscript{6} & Alma 1:10-16. \\
7\textsuperscript{7} & Alma 2:16-33. \\
8\textsuperscript{8} & Alma 4:4-5. \\
\end{tabular}}\]
8. Seeing the afflictions and persecutions of the humble followers of God, to relinquish the job of chief judge and to dedicate himself completely to the teaching of the word of God and the building up of the church.¹

9. To teach by commandment the membership of the church in Zarahemla to reform their lives and concerning the necessity of being born again.²

10. To teach the people in Gideon by bearing testimony of the Redeemer and instructing them in the path to follow the Redeemer.³

11. To teach the people in Melek and in the wilderness part of the land.⁴

12. To teach repentance to the people of Ammonihah and to warn them of impending destruction if they would not repent.⁵

13. To answer the claims of Korihor, the anti-Christ, so that those who were being deceived by him might be reclaimed.⁶

14. To head a mission to reclaim the apostate Zoramites.⁷

15. To teach the cast-out and poor Zoramites how to obtain a testimony.⁸

16. To teach his three sons--Helaman, Shiblon, and Corianton--concerning the things pertaining to righteousness.⁹

¹Alma 4:15-20. ²Alma 5; see especially verse 44.
³Alma 6:8 and chapter 7. ⁴Alma 8:4-5.
⁷Alma 31-34. ⁸Alma 32-33.
⁹Alma 35:16 and chapters 36-42.
17. To remind Helaman, his son, of the importance of the proper care of the sacred plates.\(^1\)

18. Shortly before his departure from the people, to bless the earth and the church for the righteous' sake and to curse the land unto those who do wickedly.\(^2\)

Alma is a teacher in the Book of Mormon, for whom many remarkable character traits are described. First is his willingness to accept and obey convincing truth as it was presented to him.\(^3\) Not everyone who has received sacred spiritual manifestations has remained true to his trust as did Alma.

The willingness to accept and obey convincing truth illustrates a fundamental trait of Alma's character. We do not know by what process of living and thinking he gave his early youth to wantonness, but we do know that when his eyes were opened, he repented of his sins and turned to lifelong righteousness.\(^4\)

As a chief judge, Alma walked in the ways of the Lord and judged righteous judgment, creating peace in the land.\(^5\)

In a moment of extreme danger in battle, Alma exercised much faith and cried out: "O Lord, have mercy and spare my life, that I may be an instrument in thy hands to save and preserve this people."\(^6\)

\(^1\)Alma 45:2-14.
\(^2\)Alma 45:15-17.
\(^3\)Mosiah 27:32.
\(^5\)Mosiah 29:43.
\(^6\)Alma 2:30. (Italics added.)
On another occasion, this time in deep sorrow, because of the afflictions of the humble followers of God, "the Spirit of the Lord did not fail him."1

Once while in prison, Alma and Amulek were granted power to be loosed from their bonds and to walk away from the prison walls which had fallen to the earth, all "according to their faith which was in Christ."2 All the suffering in prison and the dignity which he showed while there indicate Alma's superior quality of endurance.

Alma expressed great joy in being allowed to be an instrument in the hands of the Lord.

I know that which the Lord hath commanded me, and I glory in it. I do not glory of myself, but I glory in that which the Lord hath commanded me; yea, and this is my glory, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God to bring some soul to repentance; and this is my joy.3

But Alma's joy was also for the success of his brethren.

But I do not joy in my own success alone, but my joy is more full because of the success of my brethren, who have been up to the land of Nephí.4

Concerning the missionary effort to reclaim the apostate Zoramites, the brethren were given great strength according to Alma's fervent prayer of faith.5 At the end of Alma's ministry, he was described by Mormon as "a righteous man: and as one who perhaps was translated.6

1Alma 4:15.
2Alma 14:28.
3Alma 29:9; see also v. 13. (Italics added.)
4Alma 29:14; see also v. 15-17
5Alma 31:38.
6Alma 45:18-19.
From the expression of Alma's internal feelings, we can appreciate better his success as a teacher. Concerning the wicked lawyer, Zeezrom of Ammonihah, who had caused Alma and Amulek exceeding disturbance, Alma prayed, "O Lord our God, have mercy on this man, and heal him according to his faith which is in Christ." \(^1\)

When Alma was finally reunited again with the sons of Mosiah after their successful fourteen years of missionary service among the Lamanites, Alma rejoiced exceedingly to see his brethren, particularly since "they were still his brethren in the Lord." \(^2\) This brethren in the Lord concept is one of the most beautiful for workers in the Church.

Alma's concern for spreading of the word of God and its acceptance by the world caused him to declare:

O that I were an angel, and could have the wish of mine heart, that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God, with a voice to shake the earth, and cry repentance unto every people! Yea, I would declare unto every soul, as with the voice of thunder, repentance and the plan of redemption, that they should repent and come unto our God, that there might not be more sorrow upon all the face of the earth. \(^3\)

Concerning the apostate Zoramites and their perverted mode of worship, including the prayer tower the Rameumpton, Mormon records:

Now when Alma saw this his heart was grieved; for he saw that they were a wicked and a perverse people; . . . O Lord, wilt thou comfort my soul, and give unto me success, and also my fellow laborers who are with me . . . . O Lord, wilt thou grant unto us that we may have success in bringing them again unto thee in

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\(^1\)Alma 15:10.

\(^2\)Alma 17:2; see also Alma 27:17-19.

\(^3\)Alma 29:1-2.
Christ. Behold, O Lord, their souls are precious, and many of them are our brethren; therefore, give unto us, O Lord, power and wisdom that we may bring these, our brethren, again unto thee.

And finally the tender words of a devoted father (Alma) to a loyal son (Shiblon), "And may the Lord bless your soul, and receive you at the last day into his kingdom, to sit down in peace. Now go, my son and teach the word unto this people. Be sober. My son, fare-well."

As to the successful effects of Alma's lengthy ministry we have many references to profound changes in human souls and bounteous growth in the church. But even the outstanding teacher Alma was not successful in every instance. "Now Satan had gotten great hold upon the hearts of the people of the city of Ammonihah; therefore they would not hearken unto the words of Alma."

Alma's success is summed up in his own words to his son Helaman:

For because of the word which he has imparted unto me, behold, many have been born of God, and have tasted as I have tasted, and have seen eye to eye as I have seen; therefore they do know of these things of which I have spoken, as I do know; and the knowledge which I have is of God.

Evidently there would be much that teachers in today's Church could learn from Alma's example. First one must remain steadfast in his labors after his conversion.

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1 Alma 31:24, 32, 34-35; see all of 31:24-38.
2 Alma 38:15.
4 Alma 8:9.
5 Alma 36:26.
The experience of each individual who is really born again is similar to this experience of Alma and the sons of Mosiah, although it may not be so dramatic. The effect upon each person's life is likewise similar. No person whose soul is illuminated by the burning Spirit of God can in this world of sin and dense darkness remain passive. He is driven by an irresistible urge to fit himself to be an active agent of God in furthering righteousness and in freeing the lives and minds of men from the bondage of sin.  

Second, a teacher should learn to feel and express joy for others' success.  

Third, a teacher could well learn that perhaps the only way to reclaim certain individuals in transgression is to bear down in pure testimony.  

Fourth, a teacher should desire with all his heart to be an instrument in the hands of God.  

I know of no joy on earth that can compare with that which comes to the heart of the man who is an instrument in the hands of God of saving some soul and turning it from that broad way that leadeth to destruction, into that straight and narrow path that leadeth to life eternal.  

But being an instrument in the hands of God does not allow a teacher to function beyond the capacities that the Lord has granted to him.  

1Marion G. Romney, General Conference Address, Official Report of the One Hundred Eleventh Semi-Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 1941 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, n.d.), p. 89. (italics added.)  

2See Alma 29:14.  

3See Alma 4:19.  

4See Alma 29:9, 13.  

5Heber J. Grant, General Conference Address, Official Conference Report, October 1922, p. 188.  

6See Alma 29:3-7.
I believe that we, as fellow workers in the priesthood, might well take to heart the admonition of Alma and be content with that which God hath allotted us. We might well be assured that we had something to do with our "allotment" in our pre-existent state. This would be an additional reason for us to accept our present condition and make the best of it. It is what we agreed to do.1

Fifth, a teacher should be willing to pray with all his soul to God for an individual or a people who have become corrupted in their ways.2

Sixth, a teacher should develop the capacity and the insight to deal with atheistic or agnostic claims, such as those advanced by Korihor.3 The writer feels that this Korihor story was inserted into the sacred plates by Mormon so that we in the last days might be able to counter the doctrines of the anti-Christ.

Seventh, each father in the Church should have the concern for his children, that he gather them together to "give unto them every one his charge separately, concerning the things pertaining to righteousness."4 A father will exercise spiritual insight in counseling what is needed for each child. Especially this would be necessary in the case where a child has strayed from proper paths. The writer has considerable appreciation for Alma's inspired counsel to his son, Corianton, in his correcting his specific wayward inclinations and in answering his special questions.

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2See Alma 31:24-38.
3See Alma 30.
4Alma 35:16.
Amulek

Alma was assisted during the better part of his ministry, especially after he abdicated his chief judgeship, by a valiant testifier of truth, Amulek. Amulek never assumed the leadership role, but firmly sustained Alma and others. On some occasions his testimony served as a second witness to the truths already uttered by Alma. ¹ Never could a more loyal assistant be found than Amulek.

Amulek had many sources of preparation for his teaching experience. He descended from a strong and noble heritage. ² He was a man of "no small reputation" in his community, and he had, prior to his work in the ministry, acquired many riches by the hands of his industry. ³ Once while journeying to visit very near kindred, Amulek was visited and tutored by an angel. ⁴ After his encounter with the angel, Alma came to dwell at his house. While sojourning with Amulek, Alma blessed Amulek, his women, his children, and his kinsmen. ⁵ The implication also is that Alma spent many days instructing Amulek in the word of God. ⁶

Amulek accomplished many teaching purposes during his ministry. First, he provided comfort and meat to a discouraged Alma during the dark days of the mission to the wicked city of Ammonihah. ⁷ Second, he served as a second witness to the truth to the city of Ammonihah by

⁷Alma 8:19-23.
crying repentance unto them.\(^1\) Third, he was called to assist Alma in teaching the recalcitrant Zoramites.\(^2\) Fourth, he taught through inspiration the poor of the Zoramites about the atonement of Christ, prayer, faith unto repentance, and the need to not procrastinate the day of repentance.\(^3\) This discourse of Amulek is among the most profound and noteworthy in the entire Book of Mormon. Fifth, Amulek accompanied Alma on teaching assignments to Jershon and then to Zarahemla.\(^4\) Sixth, posthumously, Amulek served as a righteous example for Helaman, son of Helaman, as he taught his two sons, Nephi and Lehi.\(^5\)

A glimpse at the extent of Amulek's labors is provided by the following description from Mormon:

And Alma and Amulek went forth preaching repentance to the people in their temples, and in their sanctuaries, and also in their synagogues, which were built after the manner of the Jews. And as many as would hear their words, unto them they did impart the word of God, without any respect of persons, continually. And thus did Alma and Amulek go forth, and also many more who had been chosen for the work, to preach the word throughout all the land, in all the region round about among all the people of the Nephites.

Amulek's **character traits** are inspiring to the reader of the Book of Mormon. Amulek expressed genuine willingness to accept the

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1 Alma 10:12; 8:29; see all of Alma 8-15.


3 Alma 34.

4 Alma 35:1, 14.

5 Helaman 5:11.

6 Alma 16:13-15. (Italics added.)
call from the Lord as presented by the angel and then completely obeyed the angel's instructions.\textsuperscript{1} Amulek on one occasion in Ammonihah was able to perceive the thoughts and know of the designs of those who would cross him in his words.\textsuperscript{2} In debating Zeezrom, Amulek humbly acknowledged that he said nothing which was contrary to the Spirit of the Lord.\textsuperscript{3} Amulek exercised with Alma admirable endurance while in prison, having to witness the execution of many loyal saints and facing death themselves.\textsuperscript{4} Amulek's deep compassion for the pains of the women and children is very touching.\textsuperscript{5} Following is the most indicative verse concerning Amulek's dedication:

\ldots Amulek having forsaken all his gold, and silver, and his precious things, which were in the land of Ammonihah, for the word of God, he being rejected by those who were once his friends and also by his father and his kindred.\textsuperscript{6}

Amulek's internal feelings for those whom he taught are manifest from his following statement to the poor of the Zoramites:

Therefore may God grant unto you, my brethren, that ye may begin to exercise your faith unto repentance, that ye begin to call upon his holy name, that he would have mercy upon you.

As to the effects of Amulek's ministry, it has been already established that Alma and Amulek were reviled by the people of Ammonihah.\textsuperscript{8} Nevertheless, after Amulek's discourse to Zeezrom and the other corrupt lawyers, the people began to be astonished and

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  \item \textsuperscript{1}Alma 10:7-9.
  \item \textsuperscript{2}Alma 10:16-17.
  \item \textsuperscript{3}Alma 11:22.
  \item \textsuperscript{4}Alma 14.
  \item \textsuperscript{5}Alma 14:10.
  \item \textsuperscript{6}Alma 15:16. (Italics added.)
  \item \textsuperscript{7}Alma 34:17.
  \item \textsuperscript{8}Alma 10:28-31.
\end{itemize}
Zeezrom began to tremble under a consciousness of his guilt. 

Zeezrom was eventually converted and became a teacher in his own right. Generally speaking, after Alma and Amulek had taught the people of a community, there was no inequality left among them and the Lord poured out his Spirit upon them. As for the Zoramites, only those who were poor in riches and poor in spirit accepted the message of Alma and Amulek.

A modern teacher of the word of God has much to glean from Amulek's example. One, he should be willing to anxiously accept a call from God, as did Amulek. Two, he should preach according to the Spirit and power of God that will be given to him. Three, the most impressive example of Amulek to this writer is Amulek's loyalty to Alma and his ability to back up his senior companion and priesthood leader. This following our priesthood leader is certainly a vital principle in Church work today. Not only missionaries, but everyone who labors in the kingdom, must learn it. And four, Amulek had the fortitude to teach the gospel as it really is, not in a watered-down version to those who oppose it. When one has the Spirit to guide him and utilizes courtesy and tact, he should teach the principles of the gospel in an unmistakably plain manner, so that the students will not be left with excuse as to which course of action they should take.

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1 Alma 11:46; 12:1.  
2 Alma 15:12.  
3 Alma 16:13-16.  
4 Alma 35:3-7.  
5 See Alma 8:32.
Sons of Mosiah

Contemporary with Alma, but in the service of the Lord primarily in another part of his vineyard, were the four sons of Mosiah, Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni. These brethren are remembered most for their fourteen-year missional service among the Lamanites. However, three of them, Ammon, Aaron, and Omner later also assisted Alma, Amulek and Alma's sons among the apostate Zoramites. Ammon also served as high priest in the church over the converted Lamanites in the land of Jershon.

The sons of Mosiah received ample preparation for their ministry, mostly in the form of personal dedicated effort. They had received a visitation, together with Alma, albeit to be rebuked for their youthful ungodliness. However, their repentance was swift and sure, as they went around the land making reparations for their evil-doing and bringing to pass much righteousness by publishing peace.

Upon receiving permission from their father to engage in missionary endeavors among the Lamanites, these four brethren began in earnest their spiritual preparation:

... yea, and they had waxed strong in the knowledge of the truth; for they were men of a sound understanding and they had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God. But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God.

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1See Alma chapters 17-28  
3Alma 30:19-20.  
4Mosiah 27:11-18.  
6Mosiah 28:8.  
7Alma 17:2-3. (Italics added.)
When they left the land of Zarahemla, they made sure also that they were physically outfitted to sustain themselves while in the wilderness.¹

Furthermore:

And it came to pass that they journeyed many days in the wilderness, and they fasted much and prayed much that the Lord would grant unto them a portion of His Spirit to go with them, and abide with them, that they might be an instrument in the hands of God to bring, if it were possible, their brethren, the Lamanites, to the knowledge of the truth, to the knowledge of the baseness of the traditions of their fathers, which were not correct.

And it came to pass that the Lord did visit them with His Spirit, and said unto them: Be comforted. And they were comforted.²

The purpose of the four sons of Mosiah in traveling to the Lamanites was made known to them by revelation from the Lord:

And the Lord said unto them also: Go forth among the Lamanites, thy brethren, and establish my word; yet ye shall be patient in long-suffering and afflictions, that ye may show forth good examples unto them in me, and I will make an instrument of thee in my hands unto the salvation of many souls.³

When these brethren first contemplated going to the Lamanites, this was their goal:

That perhaps they might bring them to the knowledge of the Lord their God, and convince them of the iniquity of their fathers; and that perhaps they might cure them of their hatred towards the Nephites, that they might also be brought to rejoice in the Lord their God, that they might become friendly to one another, and that there should be no more contentions in all the land which the Lord their God had given them.⁴

¹Alma 17:7.
²Alma 17:9-10. (Italics added.)
³Alma 17:11. (Italics added.)
⁴Mosiah 28:2.
Mosiah was promised in revelation that his sons would be delivered out of the hands of the Lamanites in fulfilling the purposes of the Lord. One fulfillment of that promise is described by Mormon in the incident of Ammon's defending the flocks of King Lamoni at the waters of Sebus.

Monumental are the character traits exhibited by the sons of Mosiah. After repenting of their previous wrong-doing, they were unalterably willing to serve the Lord with all their might. These brethren showed untiring diligence for serving in the mission field for fourteen years. This is perhaps the longest single missionary stint in history. Following are testimonies to their long-suffering through afflictions:

... for they had many afflictions; they did suffer much, both in body and in mind, such as hunger, thirst and fatigue, and also much labor in the spirit.

... for behold they were naked, and their skins were worn exceedingly because of being bound with strong cords. And they also had suffered hunger, thirst, and all kinds of afflictions; nevertheless they were patient in all their sufferings.

Certainly these brethren needed courage to even begin such an undertaking.

And assuredly it was great, for they had undertaken to preach the word of God to a wild and a hardened and a ferocious people; a people who delighted in murdering the Nephites, and robbing and plundering them; and their hearts were set upon riches, or upon

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1 Mosiah 28:7.  
4 Alma 17:4.  
5 Alma 17:5.  
6 Alma 20:29.
gold and silver, and precious stones; yet they sought to obtain these things by murdering and plundering, that they might not labor for them with their own hands.

These brethren were humble and above all desirous to serve rather than to be served.  

When the Spirit of the Lord did begin falling upon the Lamanites in rich abundance with miraculous results, Ammon very impressively remembered to express his gratitude to the Lord:

Now Ammon seeing the Spirit of the Lord poured out according to his prayers upon the Lamanites, his brethren, who had been the cause of so much mourning among the Nephites, or among all the people of God because of their iniquities and their traditions, he fell upon his knees, and began to pour out his soul in prayer and thanksgiving to God for what he had done for his brethren; and he was also overpowered with joy; and thus they all three had sunk to the earth.

After all the labors had been accomplished and the fruit thereof was large to behold, Ammon refused to boast in his own strength, but in that of God.

Yea, I know that I am nothing; as to my strength I am weak; therefore I will not boast of myself, but I will boast of my God, for in his strength I can do all things; yea, behold, many mighty miracles we have wrought in this land, for which we will praise his name forever.

The sons of Mosiah frequently expressed sometimes pleading, sometimes joyful internal feelings toward the Lamanites to whom they brought the gospel. The following verse expresses the intensity of their desire to do missionary work:

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¹Alma 17:14; see also 17:15-16.


³Alma 19:14.

⁴Alma 26:12; see all of ch. 26.
Now they were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble.¹

When one of Ammon's first converts, King Lamoni, was in danger of his life being taken by his then nonunderstanding father, Ammon sprang quickly to his defense. Great love was felt for the gospel recipient (Lamoni) and by the missionary (Ammon) on that occasion.²

One of the converted Lamanites, a king who came to be known as Anti-Nephi-Lehi, expressed tenderly his gratitude to God for sending these Nephite missionaries to provide them with the benefits of the plan of redemption.³ This time the feelings were being extended from the students to the teachers.

From the Book of Mormon the readers are blessed with the glorious exultation of joy as these brethren contemplate the goodness of God in helping them to succeed.

And now behold, Ammon and Aaron, and Omner, and Himni, and their brethren did rejoice exceedingly, for the success which they had had among the Lamanites, seeing that the Lord had granted them according to their prayers, and that he had also verified his word unto them in every particular.⁴

And we have suffered all manner of afflictions, and all this, that perhaps we might be the means of saving some soul; and we supposed that our joy would be full if perhaps we could be the means of saving some.⁵

¹Mosiah 28:3. (Italics added.)
²Alma 20:16-18, 26.
³Alma 24:7-10.
⁴Alma 25:17; see all of ch. 26.
⁵Alma 26:30. (Italics added.)
When the sons of Mosiah were reunited after fourteen years with their old friend and co-laborer in the ministry, Alma, this experience called for abundant rejoicing.

Now the joy of Ammon was so great even that he was full; yea, he was swallowed up in the joy of his God, even to the exhausting of his strength; and he fell again to the earth.

Now was not this exceeding joy? Behold, this is joy which none receiveth save it be the truly penitent and humble seeker of happiness.

The effects of this extended missionary journey were astounding. The most remarkable fact is that, according to the record, all those Lamanites converted through the instrumentality of the sons of Mosiah (the converts numbered in the thousands) never fell away! When these Lamanites were converted there was much evidence "that their hearts had been changed; they had no more desire to do evil." Many churches with their own priests and teachers were established throughout the land among the Lamanites.

But as successful as the sons of Mosiah were, not everyone heeded their message.

And, as it happened, it was their lot to have fallen into the hands of a more hardened and a more stiffnecked people; therefore they would not hearken unto their words, and they had cast them out, and had smitten them, and had driven them from house to house, and from place to place, even until they had arrived in the land

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1 Alma 27:17-18. (Italics added.)
2 Alma 23:5.
4 Alma 19:33; see also 23:7; 24:19.
5 Alma 23:4; to see which of the Lamanites were converted see Alma 23:8-15.
of Middoni; and there they were taken and cast into prison, and bound with strong cords, and kept in prison for many days, and were delivered by Lamoni and Ammon.

However, those who were converted, became a remarkable people:

And they began to be a very industrious people; yea, they were friendly with the Nephites; therefore, they did open a correspondence with them, and the curse of God did no more follow them.

Those modern teachers who could learn most from the experiences of the sons of Mosiah are the missionaries sent to teach non-members of the Church. However, the spirit of dedication and the preparation of Ammon and his brethren should be emulated by all teachers.

The sons of Mosiah developed a distinct power to teach. This they accomplished by developing a four-point program—personal worthiness, desire to serve, searching the scriptures, and prayer and fasting. All teachers, especially missionaries need to follow this identical route in obtaining power to teach by the Spirit.

Oh, that every teacher might catch the spirit of this promise and claim this offered partnership, available to all who are engaged in the teaching of truth.

There are no better examples of teaching by the Spirit than the Sons of Mosiah . . . . Is there a priesthood or auxiliary leader any place in this Church who wouldn't give all to possess such power, such assurance? Remember this, above all else, that according to Alma, they gave themselves to much fasting and prayer. You see, there are certain blessings that can only be fulfilled as we conform to a particular law.

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1Alma 20:30; see also 21:12; 23:14.

2Alma 23:18. (Italics added.)

3Alma 23:6; 17:3.

4See Chapter 27 of Living Truths from the Book of Mormon. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1970)

A modern missionary must not forget to be physically prepared and outfitted for his mission,1 as well as being spiritually prepared. Most missionaries and occasionally other types of teachers in the Church will perhaps suffer ridicule or even other harsher forms of persecution. Teachers must develop the capacity to suffer these afflictions with patience, as was so nobly done by the brethren of Ammon.2

Missionaries and teachers must realize that they are merely instruments in the hands of God rather than accomplishing the conversions on their own power.3 After experiencing success, a wise teacher will offer up his heart to God in thanks for the blessing of success.4 After one has offered this feeling of gratitude, one may exercise full opportunity to give vent to feelings of tremendous joy.5

Helaman I

Alma's eldest son, Helaman, is our next teacher of renown in the Book of Mormon. He is not to be confused with his son, Helaman. For the purposes of this study, the writer will refer to them as Helaman I and Helaman II.

Helaman I was blessed with superb preparation in the form of personal tutoring from his prophet-father, Alma.6 At the conclusion

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1See Alma 17:7.
2See Alma 20:29.
3See Alma 26:3, 11-12.
4See Alma 19:14.
5See Alma 26, especially verses 12-16.
6Alma 36,37; 45:9-15.
of Helaman's last interview with his father, Alma proferred a special blessing upon him.  

Helaman fulfilled many righteous teaching purposes during his ministry. From his father Helaman received specific instructions on a few items that he should remember to teach. First, he was given a special charge to care for the sacred records. 

And now, it has hitherto been wisdom in God that these things should be preserved; for behold, they have enlarged the memory of this people, yea, and convinced many of the error of their ways. and brought them to the knowledge of their God unto the salvation of their souls. 

Helaman was next told to teach the Nephites to abhor the wickedness of secret plans and combinations. In short he was reminded to "teach them an everlasting hatred against sin and iniquity."

On the other hand, Helaman was also encouraged to use the positive approach in his teaching: 

Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; teach them to humble themselves and to be meek and lowly in heart; teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. 
Teach them to never be weary of good works, but to be meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls. Go unto this people and declare the word, and be sober.

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1 Alma 45:15.  
2 Alma 37:8. (Italics added.)  
3 Alma 37:29-32.  
4 Alma 37:32  
5 Alma 37:33-34, 47. (Italics added.)
Helaman began his ministry as a teacher when there were wars with the Lamanites and many little disturbances and dissensions among the Nephites. Due to these conditions,

... it became expedient that the word of God should be declared among them, yea, and that a regulation should be made throughout all the church.

Therefore, Helaman and his brethren went forth to establish the church again in all the land, yea, in every city throughout all the land which was possessed by the people of Nephi. And it came to pass that they did appoint priests and teachers throughout all the land, over all the churches.

The preaching thrust of Helaman and his priests and teachers fell upon unfruitful ground at first. A dissension arose, largely attributable to many of the people becoming proud because of their great riches. Those who would not hearken to Helaman and his brethren arrayed themselves together in opposition to the extent of even seeking to kill the teachers of the word of God. The leader of the dissenters was a large and strong man, named Amalickiah, who was cunning and flattering in his manner. This wicked man's design was to destroy the church of God and the foundation of liberty which God had granted to the people. Due to these evil designs the righteous Nephites were forced into defending through warfare their religion, freedom, wives, and children off and on for the next thirteen years.

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1Alma 45:20-21.
2Alma 45:21-22.
5Alma 46:3-12.
6See Alma chapters 46-62; especially 46:12; 48:10; 54:10; 58:12.
While preparation for national defense were being carried out by Moroni, a most noble servant of God,\textsuperscript{1} Helaman continued to preach the word of God, this time with gratifying results:

Now behold, Helaman and his brethren were no less serviceable unto the people than was Moroni; for they did preach the word of God, and they did baptize unto repentance all men whosoever would hearken unto their words.

And thus they went forth and the people did humble themselves because of their words, insomuch that they were highly favored of the Lord, and thus they were free from wars and contentions among themselves, yea, even for the space of four years.\textsuperscript{2}

When the warfare with the Lamanites began in earnest, Helaman remained firmly at his post. The Nephites were richly blessed because of the teaching of Helaman and his brethren:

Yea, and there was continual peace among them, and exceeding great prosperity in the church because of their heed and diligence which they gave unto the word of God, which was declared unto them by Helaman, and Shiblon, and Corianton, and Ammon and his brethren, yea, and by all those who had been ordained by the holy order of God, being baptized unto repentance, and sent forth to preach among the people.\textsuperscript{3}

When the warfare became increasingly more intense, the people of Ammon, the Lamanites who had been previously converted to Christ through the labors of the sons of Mosiah, were about to break their oath and take up arms in defense against the wicked Lamanites.\textsuperscript{4} However, they were dissuaded through powerful persuasions by Helaman.\textsuperscript{5}

But there were sons of these people who had not covenanted to take up

\textsuperscript{1} Alma 48:10-18.

\textsuperscript{2} Alma 48:19-20. (Italics added.)

\textsuperscript{3} Alma 49:30. (Italics added.)

\textsuperscript{4} Alma 53:13.

\textsuperscript{5} Alma 53:14-15.
weapons of war. Two thousand of these were assembled to aid in the righteous Nephite cause. Helaman was chosen to lead this valiant group of stripling warriors. For the next two years Helaman served as a military general, leading his small, but courageous band through many harrowing, yet successful campaigns.

When the wars with the Lamanites were successfully brought to a conclusion,

... Pahoran did return to his judgement-seat; and Helaman did take upon him again to preach unto the people the word of God; for because of so many wars and contentions it had become expedient that a regulation should be made again in the church.

Therefore, Helaman and his brethren went forth, and did declare the word of God with much power unto the convincing of many people of their wickedness, which did cause them to repent of their sins and to be baptized unto the Lord their God.

And it came to pass that they did establish again the church of God, throughout all the land.

As a result of this reformation effort of Helaman and his brethren, the Nephites became quickly prosperous again. But notwithstanding their riches, the people remained prayerfully humble and gracious to the Lord for His rich blessings upon them.

One of the beautiful character traits of Helaman was his sincere gratitude to God for His goodness and preserving power. Another is Helaman's tremendous faith and humble dependance on the Lord.

Therefore we did pour out our souls in prayer to God, that he would strengthen us and deliver us out of the hands of our enemies.

Yea, and it came to pass that the Lord our God did visit us with assurances that he would deliver us; yea, insomuch that he

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1Alma 53:16-19.  
2Alma 53:19-21  
3See Alma 56-58.  
4Alma 62:44-56. (Italics added)  
6See Alma 57:26,36.
did speak peace to our souls, and did grant unto us great faith, and did cause us that we should hope for our deliverance in him.

Helaman's tender internal feelings for those whom he led are evident in his expressions about the two thousand stripling warriors, whom he referred to as'his sons.\(^2\)

From Helaman's example a teacher today might learn to have continued devotion to his cause, because perserverance will win out in the end. One must resist the tendency to become discouraged due to wickedness, tribulations, or calamities. "For after much tribulation come the blessings."\(^3\) Certainly a teacher could develop the depend-ance upon the Lord which Helaman maintained throughout his ministry.

**Mother of the Two Thousand Stripling Warriors**

It will be remembered from the previous section concerning Helaman I the success of two thousand stripling warriors, who battled valiantly for the righteous causes of the Nephites against the pur-poses of Amalickiah and the wicked Lamanites. Further it will be re-called that these two thousand were sons of the Lamanites who were converted during the fourteen-year missionary labor of the sons of Mosiah. Helaman, in his epistle to General Moroni, attributes most of the noble character of the "sons of Helaman" to their mothers, who taught them principles of truth and conduct in their youth.

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\(^1\)Alma 58:10-11. (Italics added.)

\(^2\)Alma 56:10, 46.

\(^3\)The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1952), 58:4, hereafter cited as D&C; see also Alma 62:44-51.
Following are the words of tribute to these young warriors and
to their mothers as expressed by Helaman:

Now they never had fought, yet they did not fear death; and
they did think more upon the liberty of their fathers than they
did upon their lives; yea, they had been taught by their mothers.
that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them.
And they rehearsed unto me the words of their mothers, saying:
We do not doubt our mothers knew it.¹

Yea, and they did obey and observe to perform every word of
command with exactness; yea, and even according to their faith it
was done unto them; and I did remember the words which they said
that their mothers had taught them.²

And now, their preservation was astonishing to our whole army,
yea, that they should be spared while there was a thousand of our
brethren who were slain. And we do justly ascribe it to the mir-
caculous power of God, because of their exceeding faith in that which
they had been taught to believe—that there was a just God, and
whosoever did not doubt, that they should be preserved by his mar-
velous power.³

One author has offered another tribute:

As in all ages, mothers were great teachers in Book of Mormon
times. In a time of crisis, over 2,000 young sons of the converted
Lamanites, who were not under their fathers' vow of pacifism, took
arms to defend their new country. They were exceedingly faithful
and fought with great valor, although they had never before fought.
They had great trust in God, having no fears . . . . Though they
were in the thick of heavy fighting, not one of these striplings
was killed in the campaign. Their courage and tenacity turned
the scale in favor of the Nephites in at least two battles and
perhaps in the whole campaign. The lives and characters of these
young men demonstrate that their mothers taught them great truths
by gentle precept and humble example.⁴

¹Alma 56:47-48. (Italics added.)
²Alma 57:21. (Italics added.)
³Alma 57:26. (Italics added.)
⁴H. George Bickerstaff, "Great Teachers in the Book of Mormon,"
Book of Mormon Charts and Explanatory Texts (Salt Lake City: Deseret
Following are verses from the Book of Mormon which describe the noble character of these young men. The writer assumes this strength was developed in their youth, largely from the teaching of their mothers.

And they were all young men, and they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted.

Yea, they were men of truth and soberness, for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him.1

And now I say unto you, my beloved brother Moroni, that never had I seen so great courage, nay, not amongst all the Nephites.

For as I had ever called them my sons (for they were all of them very young) even so they said unto me: Father, behold our God is with us, and he will not suffer that we should fall; then let us go forth; we would not slay our brethren if they would let us alone; therefore let us go, lest they should overpower the army of Antipus.2

But behold, my little band of two thousand and sixty fought most desperately; yea, they were firm before the Lamanites, and did administer death unto all those who opposed them.

And as the remainder of our army were about to give way before the Lamanites, behold, those two thousand and sixty were firm and undaunted.3

And those sons of the people of Ammon, of whom I have so highly spoken, are with me in the city of Manti; and the Lord has supported them, yea, and kept them from falling by the sword, insomuch that even one soul has not been slain.

But behold, they have received many wounds; nevertheless they stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has made them free; and they are strict to remember the Lord their God from day to day; yea, they do observe to keep his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments continually; and their faith is strong in the prophecies concerning that which is to come.4

Mothers today would do well to teach their children this same steadfast faith in the Lord, that He will deliver them from their tribulations, if they but trust in Him.

Helaman II

Upon the death of Helaman I, his brother Shiblon took possession of those sacred things which Alma had delivered to Helaman. Shiblon continued to function in the righteous tradition of Alma and Helaman, as also did, incidentally, the once sinful brother Corianton. After only three years, however, Shiblon died, and Corianton had gone to lands northward on business. "Therefore it became expedient for Shiblon to confer those sacred things, before his death, upon the son of Helaman, who was called Helaman, being called after the name of his father." This is the only recorded form of preparation of Helaman II for his work in the service of the Lord.

Although it is obvious from the Book of Mormon account that Helaman II was a successful leader and teacher, not as much detail about his ministry is provided as is with some of his predecessors. Nevertheless, the writer has determined four separate recorded teaching purposes fulfilled by Helaman.

First, Helaman sent forth among all the people of the Nephites copies of the sacred engravings that had previously been diligently maintained by the prophets. However, some parts, which had been commanded by Alma not to go forth, were withheld from the general con-

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1 Alma 62:52; 63:1.
2 Alma 63:2.
3 Alma 63:10.
4 Alma 63:11; see also v. 12-13.
gregations. This act, then, provided in part the scriptures for the Nephites that they in that day could sincerely study.

Second, Helaman, as had religious leaders before him, kept records of the religious history of his people. These and the subsequent records of his sons provided the source for Mormon's abridgement now called "The Book of Helaman."

Third, Helaman was appointed by the voice of the people to fill the judgment-seat. Pahoran, son of Pahoran, had been slain by one devious Kishkumen. Pacumeni, who succeeded Pahoran, was killed shortly thereafter by Coriantumr, a dissenter from the Nephites, who was at that time leading a Lamanite army to conquer the Nephites. Moromihah, through military astuteness and help from the Lord, restored peace among the Nephites. After peace was restored, Helaman was appointed as chief judge. Following is a brief description of Helaman's term of leadership.

Nevertheless Helaman did fill the judgment-seat with justice and equity; yea, he did observe to keep the statutes, and the judgments, and the commandments of God; and he did do that which was right in the sight of God continually; and he did walk after the ways of his father, insomuch that he did prosper in the land.

Under Helaman's direction there was an unbelievably large amount of prosperity in the church. Tens of thousands joined the church and were baptized unto repentance.

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1Alma 63:12.
2See preface to "The Book of Helaman."
3Helaman 2:2.
4See Helaman 1
5Helaman 3:20. (Italics added.)
Fourth, Helaman performed superbly his role as a father in teaching his sons, Nephi and Lehi. Mormon describes it thus: "And they began to grow up unto the Lord." Much later, when Nephi and Lehi were preparing to dedicate the remainder of their days to the preaching of the word of God, they recalled concepts which their father Helaman had taught them. These teachings are some of the most pertinent doctrines presented in the Book of Mormon.

Helaman was successful in teaching his sons as evidenced in the following verses:

And it came to pass in the fifty and third year of the reign of the judges, Helaman died, and his eldest son Nephi began to reign in his stead. And it came to pass that he did fill the judgment-seat with justice and equity; yea, he did keep the commandments of God, and did walk in the ways of his father.

And they did remember his words; and therefore they went forth, keeping the commandments of God, to teach the word of God among all the people of Nephi . . . .

A modern teacher, in emulating Helaman II, could provide ample opportunity for his students to receive and study the scriptures. Fathers could take individualized opportunity to teach their children in principles of the gospel which provide a firm foundation. Nephi and Lehi, sons of Helaman, were indeed fortunate to have such a strong shield of faith developed for them in their youth. Equally as fortunate may the rising generation be in the Church if fathers perform their role as well as Helaman did.

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1 Helaman 3:21.
2 See Helaman 5:5-13. (Helaman's teaching approach to his sons will be discussed in Chapter 4.)
3 Helaman 3:37.
4 Helaman 5:14.
Nephi and Lehi, Sons of Helaman

Nephi, the eldest, and Lehi, the youngest, were the two sons, who followed in the righteous footsteps of their father, Helaman II. Their lengthy ministry was characterized by miraculous successes on one hand and obstinate rejection by some on the other. But throughout their lives was an unwavering devotion to the work of the Lord.

As mentioned in the foregoing section, Nephi and Lehi received excellent preparation from the instruction of their father. Especially well were they taught about the role of Christ in their lives and the great works of their ancestors.¹

Nephi first served as a chief judge over the Nephite people, serving as such for nine years.² During this time dissenters caused contention among the people. These dissenters, driven out from among the Nephites, went to the Lamanite king. There they succeeded in stirring up the Lamanites to prepare for war with the Nephites. In the ensuing battles, the Lamanites conquered many cities and all the land southward including the land of Zarahemla.³ Mormon commented that this would not have happened, had it not been for the gross wickedness and abominations among the Nephites.⁴ Nephi and Lehi, with further assistance from Moroni, prophesied at this point much concerning the Nephites' iniquities, and what would happen to them if they did not repent.⁵ Their preaching was somewhat successful, in that many repented and much property was recovered.⁶

¹See Helaman 5:5-13.
²Helaman 3:37; see also 5:1.
³Helaman 4:5-10.
⁵Helaman 4:14.
⁶Helaman 4:15-18.
Still there were more among the Nephites that chose evil than that chose good.¹ Nephi had become weary of their iniquity, so chose to abdicate his judgment-seat, and together with his brother, Lehi, to dedicate the remainder of his days to the preaching of the word of God.²

The brethren undertook to teach all the people of Nephi. They began at the city of Bountiful and went from one city to the next until they had been among all the Nephites who were in the land southward.³ They then turned to the land of Zarahemla, which was still in control of the Lamanites.⁴ Following is a vivid description of their fantastic success in the land of Zarahemla:

And it came to pass that they did preach with great power, insomuch that they did confound many of those dissenters who had gone over from the Nephites, insomuch that they came forth and did confess their sins and were baptized unto repentance, and immediately returned to the Nephites to endeavor to repair unto them the wrongs which they had done.

And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi did preach unto the Lamanites with such great power and authority, for they had power and authority, given unto them that they might speak, and they also had what they should speak given unto them—

Therefore they did speak unto the great astonishment of the Lamanites, to the convincing them, insomuch that there were eight thousand of the Lamanites who were in the land of Zarahemla and round about baptized unto repentance, and were convinced of the wickedness of the traditions of their fathers.⁵

From Zarahemla, Nephi and Lehi went to the land of Nephi, where the majority of the Lamanites were living.⁶ It was there, having been cast into prison, where these brethren experienced a magnificent

¹Helaman 5:2-3.  ²Helaman 5:1, 4.
³Helaman 5:14-16.  ⁴Helaman 5:16.
miracle. First, they were encircled about by fire and the earth shook causing the prison walls to tremble. A voice from heaven admonished the three hundred onlooking Lamanites who had prepared to kill Nephi and Lehi "to seek no more to destroy my servants whom I have sent unto you to declare good tidings." Witnesses also noted that the faces of the brethren shone brightly as the faces of angels and that they were conversing with angels. These three hundred Lamanites recognized their guilt, repented, and were filled with unspeakable peace and joy.

These three hundred then went out amongst the rest of the Lamanites declaring the marvelous things which they had heard and seen. The majority of the Lamanites were converted, and in the process they laid down their weapons of war, their hatred, and the wicked traditions of their fathers. They also yielded up to the Nephites the lands of their possession.

The righteousness of the newly-converted Lamanites eventually exceeded that of the Nephites. Many of the Lamanites even went to the land of Zarahemla to exhort the Nephites to faith and repentance. Nephi and Lehi, together with many Lamanites, went into the land northward to preach unto the Nephites there.

Nephi spent six disappointing years in the land northward. And they did reject all his words, insomuch that he could not stay among them, but returned again unto the land of his nativity.

1 Helaman 5:29. 
3 Helaman 5:40-48. 
4 Helaman 5:49-52. 
5 Helaman 6:1-5. 
6 Helaman 6:6. 
7 Helaman 7:3; see also verses 1-2.
Back in Zarahemla Nephi beheld the gross wickedness and secret combinations that had developed in only the six years he was away. This sight provoked Nephi to pour out his soul to God in deep sorrow. Nephi did this praying upon a tower in his garden, which was directly adjacent to the main highway which led to the chief market in the city of Zarahemla. Curious onlookers soon gathered around Nephi's tower to see what odd thing he was doing. It was from this tower that Nephi proclaimed his warning voice of repentance. From this experience and other miraculous ones that followed, Nephi was able to "... go forth in the Spirit, from multitude to multitude, declaring the word of God, even until he had declared it unto them all, or sent it forth among all the people."  

Nephi's preaching was not enough. A famine was necessary to humble the people to repentance. Finally,  

... the people did rejoice and glorify God, and the whole face of the land was filled with rejoicing; and they did no more seek to destroy Nephi, but they did esteem him as a great prophet, and a man of God, having great power and authority given him from God. And behold, Lehi, his brother, was not a whit behind him as to things pertaining to righteousness.

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1Helaman 7:4-10.

2See Helaman 7-11 for the complete story. See Chapter 4 of this study for an analysis of the teaching strategies of Nephi on this occasion.

3Helaman 10:17.

4Helaman 10:18.

5Helaman 11:1-17.

6Helaman 11:18-19.
Once again the people prospered and the church spread until it included the majority of both the Nephites and the Lamanites. 1 By and by there arose a few contentions over points of doctrine laid down by the prophets. Nephi and Lehi, who had many revelations daily, were able to preach to the people and successfully curb the strife. 2

During the ministry of Samuel the Lamanite several years later, when the Nephites once again had become ripe in their sins, Nephi kept himself busy,

... baptizing, and prophesying, and preaching, crying repentance unto the people, showing signs and wonders, working miracles among the people, that they might know that the Christ must shortly come--

Telling them of things which must shortly come, that they might know and remember at the time of their coming that they had been made known unto them beforehand, to the intent that they might believe; therefore as many as believed on the words of Samuel went forth unto him to be baptized, for they came repenting and confessing their sins. 3

In the year of our Savior's birth and after 39 hard-fought years in the ministry, Nephi handed over the sacred plates and the leadership of the church to Nephi, his son. 4 The elder Nephi thereupon left the city of Zarahemla and was never seen again in the land. 5 Perhaps he was translated.

Obviously evident are many noble character traits that were possessed by Nephi and Lehi. In a supremely comforting moment to Nephi, the Lord appeared to him and said:

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3 Helaman 16:4-5. 4 3 Nephi 1:2.
5 3 Nephi 1:3; 2:9.
Blessed art thou, Nephi, for those things which thou hast done; for I have beheld how thou hast with unreakening declared the word, which I have given unto thee, unto this people. And thou hast not feared them, and hast not sought thine own life, but hast sought my will, and to keep my commandments.

And now, because thou hast done this with such unreakening, behold, I will bless thee forever; and I will make thee mighty in word and in deed, in faith and in works; yea, even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will.

Behold, I give unto you power, that whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and thus shall ye have power among the people.

Note that Lehi, though younger and subservient to his brother, was just as noble.  

Nephi's true inner feelings were in part expressed on the occasion of his seeing the iniquity in Zarahemla. He exclaimed in the agony of his soul:

Oh, that I could have had my days in the days when my father Nephi first came out of the land of Jerusalem, that I could have joyed with him in the promised land; then were his people easy to be entreated, firm to keep the commandments of God, and slow to be led to do iniquity; and they were quick to hearken unto the words of the Lord--

Yea, if my days could have been in those days, then would my soul have had joy in the righteousness of my brethren.

But behold, I am consigned that these are my days, and that my soul shall be filled with sorrow because of this the wickedness of my brethren.  

From Nephi and Lehi those in the Church today can learn to be unswerving in a long and dedicated service to the Lord. We must seek the will of the Father before we seek after our own life. We must not fear to declare the word of God unto the people. It is not easy to

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1Helaman 10:4-5, 7. (Italics added)
2Helaman 11:19.
3Helaman 7:7-9.
4See Helaman 10:4-5.
maintain enthusiasm throughout discouraging experiences. Obviously Nephi and Lehi were able to do so. Their example should help us. The Lord blessed them when they needed it with wondrous miracles to help them convert the people. If we do all we can and exercise faith, the Lord will also bless us with miracles to accomplish His purposes.

Samuel the Lamanite

The majority of the Nephites "began again to forget the Lord their God." during the latter part of Nephi's administration. 1 After three years of wholesale apostasy they became so wicked, that "they were ripened again for destruction." 2 To this condition, Samuel, a converted righteous Lamanite, was called to preach repentance to the land of Zarahemla. 3 At this point in time, the Lamanites ironically were observing strictly the commandments of God, whereas the Nephites were nearly totally corrupt. 4

Samuel's preparation for his assignment to Zarahemla is not recorded. Quite possibly he obtained personal tutoring from Nephi and Lehi when the Lamanite nation was converted. 5

As stated above, Samuel's teaching purpose was to preach repentance to the Nephites. He was rejected after many days and cast out of the land. 6 Samuel was about to return to his own land when the voice of the Lord came to him. He was instructed to return again and

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1 Helaman 11:36. 2 Helaman 11:37.
"prophesy unto the people whatsoever things should come unto his heart."\(^1\) He was not allowed to enter the city, so he chose the city wall as his platform.\(^2\)

While upon the wall, Samuel was inspired by the Lord in informing the inhabitants "that the sword of justice hangeth over this people."\(^3\) He further warned them that destruction awaited them unless they would repent and exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.\(^4\) Samuel remained upon the wall for a considerable period of time speaking to the people at length. His message was clear. There were to be severe consequences for all the forms of wrong behavior among the people of Zarahemla.\(^5\) During Samuel's address, he was moved to prophesy concerning the birth of the Son of God five years hence and the miraculous signs which would attend that birth.\(^6\) Samuel went on to relate the horrible signs in the western hemisphere which would accompany the Savior's death.\(^7\)

Many listened to the impassioned appeal of Samuel. A considerable number believed his words, and they went and sought out Nephi, confessing to him of their sins and seeking baptism from his hand.\(^8\)

\(^{1}\)Helaman 13:3.
\(^{2}\)Helaman 13:4.
\(^{3}\)Helaman 13:5.
\(^{5}\)See all of Helaman 13-15. A description of his means of instruction will be discussed in Chapter 4.
\(^{7}\)See Helaman 14:14, 20-29.
\(^{8}\)Helaman 16:1, 4-5.
But the majority of the people did not believe Samuel's words and became exceedingly angry with him. They threw stones and shot arrows at him, but to no avail, because Samuel was being protected by the Spirit of God. Since they could not hit him with their stones and arrows, they attempted to capture him and bind him. Before his pursuers could capture him, Samuel had cast himself down from the wall and had successfully fled to his own country.

Samuel was never heard of again among the Nephites, but turned to preaching and prophesying among his own people, the Lamanites.

Wickedness increased among the Nephites during the next five years, but the faithful believers in Samuel's words remained steadfast, waiting for the birth of Christ. Samuel's prophecies were eventually vindicated to the letter.

The character traits that are immediately apparent from the brief description of Samuel's ministry are his willingness to accept the calling of the Lord and his tremendous courage in standing before the hostile Nephites, who sought to kill him in a brutal manner.

Missionaries today could learn more than other types of teachers from Samuel's example. They could exercise perseverance to the task if it is hard, despite the awfulness of the message and the hostility of the people. To the wicked the message is by necessity awful.

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1 Helaman 16:2.  
2 Helaman 16:6-7.  
3 Helaman 16:7-8  
4 Helaman 16:10-3 Nephi 1:8.  
5 See Nephi 1:12-21.  
7 See Helaman 16:2, 6.
Nephi, Son of Nephi

In the year of the birth of Jesus Christ, Nephi, the son of Helaman, departed out of the land of Zarahemla, never to return again. Where he went no one at that time knew.¹ However, Nephi had given his eldest son, also called Nephi, charge concerning all the records which had been kept sacred since the departure of Lehi out of Jerusalem.² To this younger Nephi was to come a set of circumstances which led to an important ministry equal to that of his illustrious father.

The younger Nephi's preparation was probably provided by the tutelage of his father. Sometime in his life Nephi became an eyewitness, (probably of the Lord), having been visited by angels and the voice of the Lord.³

As previously mentioned, Nephi was given the leadership of the righteous Nephites at the time of Jesus' birth. It was Nephi who represented these steadfast followers of the Lord by praying all day to God in behalf of his people who were to be executed the next day if the signs of the birth did not occur. At the end of the day the voice of the Lord came to Nephi, comforting him and assuring him the signs of the holy birth of Christ would begin that night.⁴ The majority of the Nephites were converted, after having seen the sacred signs. Nephi took care of baptising them unto repentance and establishing peace in the land.⁵ Mormon's record also implies that Nephi alleviated

¹ 3 Nephi 1:2-3; 2:9. ² 3 Nephi 1:2.
³ 3 Nephi 7:15. ⁴ See 3 Nephi 1:1-15.
⁵ 3 Nephi 1:22-23.
the minor contentions which arose in the church because of misrepresenting the scriptures concerning the law of Moses.¹

Twenty-five to thirty years passed away before Nephi was mentioned in the record again. During that space of time a robber band, which assumed the name of Gadianton, gradually developed until it became a very strong opposing element to the combined law-abiding Nephites and Lamanites. Through faith in God and expert leadership from the governor, Lachoneus, and the military commander, Gidgiddoni, the robbers were ultimately repulsed and their movement extinguished. Peace was reestablished in the land, but unfortunately not for long, because Satan obtained a stronghold upon the hearts of most of the people. Anarchy eventually resulted, with the only forms of government being tribal units.² Nephi was undoubtedly busy during this period, maintaining the record³ and doing his best to sustain righteous endeavors.

Under the afore-mentioned state of tribal units, Nephi's activities were once again chronicled:

And it came to pass that Nephi—having been visited by angels and also the voice of the Lord, therefore having seen angels, and being eye-witness, and having had power given unto him that he might know concerning the ministry of Christ, and also being eye-witness to their quick return from righteousness unto their wickedness and abominations;

Therefore, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds—went forth among them in that same year [31 A.D.], and began to testify, boldly repentance and remissions of sins through faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ 3 Nephi 1:24-25.

² See 3 Nephi 2-7:14.

³ 3 Nephi 7:15-20. (Italics added.)
... And Nephi did minister with power and with great authority.

And it came to pass that they were angry with him even because he had greater power than they, for it were not possible that they could disbelieve his words, for so great was his faith on the Lord Jesus Christ that angels did minister unto him daily. And in the name of Jesus did he cast out devils and unclean spirits; and even his brother did he raise from the dead, after he had been stoned and suffered death by the people. And the people saw it, and did witness it, and were angry with him because of his power; and he did also do many more miracles, in the sight of the people, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Only a few were converted that first year, but those that were testified that they had visited by the power and Spirit of God. Nephi continued his diligent quest for souls who would turn to Christ right up to the thirty-fourth year after the birth of Christ. Gradually many converts were made. Nephi ordained others to assist him in the ministry. Emphasis was made in the record that "none were brought unto repentance who were not baptized with water.

The righteous in the thirty-third year began to look forward with great anticipation to the signs which were to accompany the death of Christ. In the beginning of the thirty-fourth year the great storm with its accompanying tempest, fires, earthquakes, etc. with far-reaching destruction occurred. Three days of thick darkness followed. During these three days a voice from heaven was heard. Only the more righteous part of the people, undoubtedly those converted through Nephi's labors, were spared.

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1 3 Nephi 7:15-20. (Italics added.)
2 3 Nephi 7:21-22.
3 3 Nephi 7:23-8:5.
4 3 Nephi 7:26.
5 3 Nephi 7:25.
6 3 Nephi 7:24.
7 3 Nephi 8:3-4.
8 See 3 Nephi 8:5-10:9.
9 3 Nephi 10:12, 18-19.
At the end of the thirty-fourth year, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, descended out of heaven, and visited these righteous souls.\footnote{1} Soon after Jesus' arrival, Nephi was called to Jesus and was given power (according to the new covenant) along with eleven others to baptize.\footnote{2} The chosen Twelve of the Lord, including Nephi, were also given power to bestow the Holy Ghost\footnote{3} and to ordain priests and teachers.\footnote{4}

When the Savior left this righteous multitude for a short space of time, the Twelve taught the people precisely those words which the Lord had spoken.\footnote{5} Jesus visited the multitudes again, explaining more precious doctrine and expounding all the scriptures in one.\footnote{6} The Twelve were commanded to teach the things which He had expounded unto them.\footnote{7}

After Jesus ascended into heaven the second time, the Twelve began to baptize and teach as many as would come to them. Unspeakable miracles occurred. All things were had in common among the people with each man dealing justly with one another. The church of Christ was also established.\footnote{8}

\footnote{1}{Nephi 10:18-11:17.}
\footnote{2}{Nephi 11:18-12:1.}
\footnote{3}{Nephi 18:36-37; Moroni 2.}
\footnote{4}{Moroni 3.}
\footnote{5}{Nephi 19:6,8; see 3 Nephi 12-18.}
\footnote{6}{See 3 Nephi 19-26, especially 23:14.}
\footnote{7}{Nephi 23:14.}
\footnote{8}{Nephi 26:15-21; 4 Nephi 1.}
The Lord appeared unto the Twelve to leave with them vital instructions and promises. The disciples were instructed pertaining to the proper name of the church and to the proper elements of the gospel, upon which the church must be built.  

Lastly, the Lord promised nine of the disciples that they would enter into God's rest after seventy-two years of mortality. The other three were blessed with the prospect of becoming translated so that they could bring souls unto Christ while the world would stand until Christ's second coming.  

Whether Nephi was one of the nine or one of the three has not yet been revealed.

The Twelve, including Nephi, continued diligently in their ministry and saw the Lord prosper the people exceedingly in the land. The effects of their ministry is thus beautifully expressed:

And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people.
And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.

Mormon mentioned Nephi's sterling character, referring to him as a "just man," who was "cleansed every whit from his iniquity."  

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1 See 3 Nephi 27.
2 See 3 Nephi 28.
3 See 3 Nephi 28:25.
4 4 Nephi 1-18 and Moroni 6; see especially 4 Nephi 7, 18.
5 4 Nephi 15-16.
6 3 Nephi 8:1; see also 7:19-26.
Nephi's internal feelings are evident from the loving concern that he often felt or expressed for his people.\(^1\)

The writer submits the following four possible suggestions to present-day teachers from Nephi's example:

1. Explain the proper meaning of scriptures to allay contentions.\(^2\)

2. Strive to become clean from the sins of this world so that mighty miracles can be wrought in the name of Jesus for the benefit of the ministry.\(^3\)

3. Be humble and submissive to change, such as was Nephi, when the new covenant of Christ was introduced.

4. Remain loyal to the service of the Lord during both success and failure. By enduring to the end one will receive great rewards.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, our Savior, is included in the list of outstanding teachers, not because He is like the others, who were humble appointed servants of the Lord, but rather because He is the master Teacher, the One whom all teachers and leaders in the Church should emulate.\(^4\)

Jesus accomplished a vast array of purposes in His separate missions upon the eastern and western hemispheres. Indeed everything that has been expounded by the prophets, before and since the coming of Christ, is fulfilled in Him.\(^5\) Following are the more significant recorded purposes accomplished by Jesus during His ministry among the

\(^{1}\)See 3 Nephi 1:10-12; 7:16.  \(^{2}\)See 3 Nephi 1:24-25

\(^{3}\)See 3 Nephi 8:1.  \(^{4}\)See 3 Nephi 27:27.

\(^{5}\)See 3 Nephi 12:17-19.
inhabitants of ancient America:

1. To destroy the hard-hearted from off the land, who were ripened in their iniquity for destruction.¹

2. To announce that all the scriptures concerning His coming had been fulfilled.²

3. To announce that sacrifices and burnt offerings were to be done away and were to be replaced by a sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.³

4. To announce His concern for the House of Israel.⁴

5. To appear unto the people and witness unto them of His divinity and divine mission.⁵

6. To appoint twelve disciples; to give them authority to baptize;⁶ to give them the power to bestow the Holy Ghost;⁷ to give them power to ordain priests and teachers;⁸ to minister unto them;⁹ to teach them;¹⁰ and to grant them their special righteous desires.¹¹

7. To establish His church in the western hemisphere.¹²

8. To establish His new covenant on the western hemisphere, including His code for Celestial conduct (part of the Sermon on the Mount).¹³

⁷Moroni 2; ³Nephi 18:36-37. ⁸Moroni 3.
⁹³Nephi 19:15. ¹⁰See ³Nephi 18, 27.
¹¹See ³Nephi 28. ¹²³Nephi 26:21; 27:3-10; ⁴Nephi 1; Moroni 6.
¹³³Nephi 12-14; especially see 12:1-2.
9. To establish His "gospel" on the western hemisphere.\(^1\)

10. To teach and bless the little children.\(^2\)

11. To teach concerning the events of the future.\(^3\) Jesus expounded all things from the beginning until the time He should come in His glory.\(^4\)

Mormon lamented that "there cannot be written even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach unto the people."\(^5\)

The only audience that Jesus had during His ministry to the western hemisphere were those righteous enough to be spared from the massive destructions which accompanied His death.\(^6\)

As mentioned in the previous section, the effects of Jesus' ministry and that of the twelve disciples were glorious to behold. All the people lived for nearly two hundred years in complete peace and happiness.\(^7\) "... they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift."\(^8\)

\(^1\) Nephi 27; especially see v. 13-21.

\(^2\) Nephi 17:11-12, 21-25; 26:14.

\(^3\) Nephi Chapters 16, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26.

\(^4\) Nephi 26:3.

\(^5\) Nephi 26:6.

\(^6\) Nephi 9:13.

\(^7\) Nephi 1-24.

\(^8\) Nephi 3.
The tender internal feelings that gave way to expression by Jesus and His followers are beautifully expressed by Mormon:

And it came to pass that when Jesus had thus spoken, he cast his eyes round about again on the multitude, and beheld they were in tears, and did look steadfastly upon him as if they would ask him to tarry a little longer with them.

And he said unto them: Behold, my bowels are filled with compassion toward you.

Have ye any that are sick among you? Bring them hither. Have ye any that are lame, or blind, or halt, or maimed, or leprous, or that are withered, or that are deaf, or that are afflicted in any manner? Bring them hither and I will heal them, for I have compassion upon you; by bowels are filled with mercy.

For I perceive that ye desire that I should show unto you what I have done unto your brethren at Jerusalem, for I see that your faith is sufficient that I should heal you.

And it came to pass that when he had thus spoken, all the multitude, with one accord, did go forth with their sick and their afflicted, and their lame, and with their blind, and with their dumb, and with all them that were afflicted in any manner; and he did heal them every one as they were brought forth unto him.

And they did all, both they who had been healed and they who were whole, bow down at his feet, and did worship him; and as many as could come for the multitude did kiss his feet, insomuch that they did bathe his feet with their tears.

And after this manner do they bear record: The eye hath never seen, neither hath the ear heard, before, so great and marvelous things as we saw and heard Jesus speak unto the Father;

And no tongue can speak, neither can there be written by any man, neither can the hearts of men conceive so great and marvelous things as we both saw and heard Jesus speak; and no one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us unto the Father.

And it came to pass that when Jesus had made an end of praying unto the Father, he arose; but so great was the joy of the multitude that they were overcome.1

A teacher in the Church today should strive his entire life to develop and then to maintain faith in and devotion to Jesus Christ. He cannot feast too much upon the words of Christ.2 If he presses forward with a steadfastness in Christ, a teacher will surely find success.

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13 Nephi 17:5-10, 16-18.

The golden era for the descendants of Lehi, which lasted until 200 A.D., was described in the previous two sections. Social and spiritual conditions gradually disintegrated from that time until the day when Mormon was instructed concerning the records about 120 years later. Indeed, by the time of Mormon, the society had become so depraved that only the disciples of Jesus were left that were righteous. It was Ammaron, a descendant of the Nephi who served as one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, who informed Mormon the whereabouts and the importance of the sacred engravings.

Mormon was undoubtedly a man who obtained excellent preparation in his youth. He related that he was named after the land of Mormon and was a pure descendant of Lehi through Nephi. Furthermore he explained, "Behold, I am a disciple of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I have been called of him to declare his word among his people, that they might have everlasting life." 

His noble heritage, coupled with his being called as a disciple, suggest special training. We know at least that Ammaron instructed the "sober child," when the latter was a tender 10 years old.

The culminating event of preparation for Mormon's ministry occurred when he was only 15 years old. "And I, being fifteen years of age and being somewhat of a sober mind, therefore I was visited

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14 Nephi 24-Mormon 1:2.  
24 Nephi 46.  
3Mormon 1:2-4.  
43 Nephi 5:12, 20; Mormon 1:5.  
53 Nephi 5:13.  
6Mormon 1:2-5.
of the Lord, and tasted and knew of the goodness of Jesus.\footnote{1} Evidence of Mormon's leadership training is that he was chosen to be the military commander over all the Nephites at 15 and led them in battle at 16.\footnote{2}

Following are the recorded teaching purposes of the prophet Mormon:

1. To keep a record of the events that he saw happening during his lifetime.\footnote{3}

2. To make an abridged record of the large plates of Nephi, thus providing a smaller, although far from complete record, from Lehi to his (Mormon's) death.\footnote{4}

3. To endeavor to preach unto the people, once he had seen Jesus personally. However, he was forbidden to preach, because the people had wilfully rebelled against their God. Even the beloved disciples were taken out of the land.\footnote{5}

4. To cry repentance unto the people during the period of respite from war (Mormon was the Nephite general and now about 40).

And it came to pass that the Lord did say unto me: Cry unto this people--Repent ye, and come unto me, and be ye baptized, and build up again my church, and ye shall be spared. And I did cry unto this people, but it was in vain; and they did not realize that it was the Lord that had spared them, and granted unto them a chance for repentance. And behold they did harden their hearts against the Lord their God.\footnote{6}

\footnotesize{
\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{1} Mormon 1:15.
\item \footnote{2} Mormon 2:1-3
\item \footnote{3} Mormon 1:1-5
\item \footnote{4} Words of Mormon 1-3, 9-11; 3 Nephi 5:14-19; 26:8-12; Mormon 5:9.
\item \footnote{5} Mormon 1:16.
\item \footnote{6} Mormon 3:2-3.
\end{itemize}
}
5. To stand as an idle witness of what things he had seen and heard according to the manifestations of the Spirit by refusing to lead the Nephites into battle.¹

6. To warn future readers of the Book of Mormon to repent:
   a. Gentiles.²
   b. Twelve tribes of Israel.³
   c. Remnant of the House of Israel in this land (also known as Lamanites).⁴
   d. Jews.⁵

7. To present teachings on faith, hope, and charity.⁶

8. To present teachings on little children, repentance, and baptism.⁷

9. To train his son, Moroni, for the ministry.⁸

Even though Mormon was called to teach the people of his day, his largest student body are all those who read the Book of Mormon in the last days. He was almost totally rejected in his own day, but has

¹Mormon 3:11-16.
²3 Nephi 29-30; Mormon 3:17, 20-22; 5:9-10, 22-24
³Mormon 3:18, 20-22.
⁵Mormon 5:14.
⁶Moroni 7.
⁷Moroni 8.
⁸Moroni 8:1-10; 9.
been tremendously effective through his writings in assisting to convert millions in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

Mormon possessed many admirable character traits. He was large in physical stature and sober in manner. And with his outstanding leadership abilities, he is one whose modesty is plainly evident from his writings. Elder Sterling W. Sill has syllogized:

If you think it an inspiration that a 16 year old boy could win the leadership of a great national army what would you think of a man between the ages of 65 and 74 who was still the best man among his entire people for this top position of leadership, and in those days the general marched at the head and not in the rear of his troops. (Mormon 6:11) It is one thing to shoot a guided missile at an enemy a thousand miles away, but it is quite another thing to meet the enemy face to face, and with a sword or a battle axe, take on all comers, old and young, on any basis they might choose to elect; and still be in there fighting at age 74. No weakling or coward survives a test like that. His leadership and great skill in battle must have been an inspiration to those fortunate companions in arms who were privileged to fight at his side . . . .

Mormon was a greater statesman than Lincoln. Lincoln undoubtedly received inspiration from God during the years that he was trying to hold the Union together, but Mormon talked with God directly over this long period.

Mormon was a greater author than Shakespeare. Shakespeare wrote a great literature, much of which is good and much of which is bad. But Mormon wrote by direct command of God a literature which if followed would save the world.

Mormon was also a man who gave vent often to expression of internal feelings. Concerning the wickedness of his people, he exclaimed:

And wo is me because of their wickedness; for my heart has been filled with sorrow because of their wickedness, all my days; nevertheless, I know that I shall be lifted up at the last day.

\[1\]Mormon 1:2, 15; 2:1.

And it came to pass that I did speak unto my people, and did urge them with great energy, that they would stand boldly before the Lamanites and fight for their wives, and their children, and their houses, and their homes.

Also later:

Behold, I had led them, notwithstanding their wickedness I had led them many times to battle, and had loved them according to the love of God which was in me, with all my heart; and my soul had been poured out in prayer unto my God all the day long for them; nevertheless, it was without faith, because of the hardness of their hearts.

And at the end:

0 ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord! 0 ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you! 0 ye fair sons and daughters, ye fathers, and mothers, ye husbands and wives, ye fair ones, how is it that ye could have fallen!

But behold, ye are gone, and my sorrows cannot bring your return.

Beautiful are the expressions of fond farewell from Mormon to his son, Moroni:

My son, be faithful in Christ; and may not the things which I have written grieve thee, to weigh thee down unto death; but may Christ lift thee up, and may his sufferings and death, and the showing his body unto our fathers, and his mercy and long-suffering and the hope of his glory and of eternal life, rest in your mind forever.

And may the grace of God the Father, whose throne is high in the heavens, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who sitteth on the right hand of his power, until all things shall become subject unto him, be, and abide with you forever. Amen.

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1Mormon 2:19,23. (Italics added.)
2Mormon 3:12. (Italics added.)
3Mormon 6:17, 19-20. (Italics added.)
4Moroni 9:25-26. (Italics added.)
From Mormon's righteous example, a modern teacher can implement three important concepts:

1. One who is called of God and is blessed with outstanding talents should retain an inherent sense of modesty.

2. A teacher must love his students and express that love in spite of their wrong-doing.

3. One must persist in his performance of his stewardship.

Mormon expressed that thought well:

And now, my beloved son, notwithstanding their hardness, let us labor diligently; for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation; for we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God.\(^1\)

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Moroni

Moron's son, Moroni, was the last prophet-teacher to serve from the ancient American inhabitants spoken of in the Book of Mormon. As such, Moroni became the custodian for the sacred engravings that had been preserved by numerous brethren since Lehi.

Moroni's preparation for his work came first from his father, Mormon.\(^2\) Although not stated in the account, Mormon probably named his son Moroni after a famous military leader from a previous era by that same name. Mormon evidently admired the earlier Moroni.\(^3\) If Mormon followed in the righteous teaching tradition of his fathers,

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\(^1\) Moroni 9:6.

\(^2\) See Moroni 8:1-10; 9.

\(^3\) See Alma 48:10-18.
he would have instructed his son Moroni of the special nature of his name.\textsuperscript{1} Sometime in Moroni's life he was visited by the Lord Jesus Christ and instructed in spiritual matters.\textsuperscript{2} Moroni was shown by Christ the events and inhabitants of the future.\textsuperscript{3} Both Mormon and Moroni were privileged to be ministered unto by the three Nephites.\textsuperscript{4}

Although Moroni was an outstanding teacher, we are not aware of many contemporary groups that he taught. In the Book of Mormon we have recorded only once instance, that of a group of Nephites who were having disputations concerning the baptism of little children.\textsuperscript{5} It appears, as was also the case with Mormon, that Moroni's most important students are the future readers of the Book of Mormon. Pertaining to the future, Moroni addressed himself to three main groups: the Gentiles,\textsuperscript{6} the Lamanites,\textsuperscript{7} and the Jews.\textsuperscript{8}

The righteous effects of Moroni's instruction to the future have an on-going quality. Each humble soul who accepts the Book of Mormon as the word of God through personal revelation\textsuperscript{9} has been aided by Moroni.

\textsuperscript{1}See Helaman 5:5-7.
\textsuperscript{2}Ether 12:39.
\textsuperscript{3}Mormon 8:34-35.
\textsuperscript{4}3 Nephi 28:26; Mormon 8:11.
\textsuperscript{5}See Moroni 8, especially v. 5.
\textsuperscript{6}Title Page of the Book of Mormon; Ether 12:35-38.
\textsuperscript{7}Title Page of the Book of Mormon; Moroni 1:4; 10:1.
\textsuperscript{8}Title Page of the Book of Mormon.
\textsuperscript{9}See Moroni 10:3-5.
Moroni accomplished the following recorded teaching purposes:
1. To finish the record of his father (not the abridgment of former records).¹
2. To hide up the records in the earth.²
3. To warn the generations of the last days of wickednesses and calamities and to inform them that he knows of their doing.³
4. To present teachings and warnings to unbelievers in Christ.⁴
5. To provide an abridgment of the records of the Jaredites, called the "Book of Ether."⁵
6. To write concerning the sacred experiences of the brother of Jared. One reason was to help the Gentiles repent and believe in Christ.⁶
7. As custodian of the plates, to address himself to the future translator of the plates (Joseph Smith) with several specific instructions.⁷
8. To instruct future readers of the Book of Mormon concerning the evils of secret combinations.⁸

¹Mormon 8:1.
²Mormon 8:4.
³Mormon 8:26-34; especially v. 35.
⁴Mormon 9; especially v. 1, 35.
⁵Ether 1:1-2.
⁶Ether 4; especially v. 6 & 7.
⁷Ether 5.
⁸Ether 8:22-26
9. To present instruction to future readers about the principle of faith.¹

10. To teach future readers about the New Jerusalem.²

11. To provide instructions of worth to the Lamanites for some future day.³

12. To show the form of worship and form of teaching of the righteous Nephite generations that followed the appearance of Christ.⁴

13. To provide future readers with some of his father's (Mormon's) greatest teachings:

   a. Faith, hope, and charity.⁵
   b. Repentance and infant baptism.⁶
   c. A father's last and affectionate admonition.⁷

14. To provide future readers of the Book of Mormon with a sacred challenge and a promise pertaining to their reading of the Book of Mormon.⁸

¹Ether 12.
³Moroni 1:4; 10:1.
⁴Moroni chapters 1-6.
⁵Moroni 7.
⁶Moroni 8.
⁷Moroni 9.
⁸Moroni 10:3-5.
15. To provide future readers with an understanding of spiritual gifts.¹

16. To provide a title page for the Book of Mormon.²

17. To provide a final challenge to his readers.³

And now, I would commend you to seek this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have written, that the grace of God the Father, and also the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of them, may be and abide in you forever. Amen.

Most evident of Moroni's outstanding character traits is the general spirit of humility and his love for the readers that manifests itself throughout his writings. For instance he is very modest about his writing ability.⁵

Following are two verses portraying Moroni's internal feelings to his students, the future readers of the book:

And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord that he would give unto the Gentiles grace, that they might have charity.⁶

Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness and love God with all your might, mind, and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in no wise deny the power of God.⁷

¹Moroni 10:8-19.
²See Title Page of the Book of Mormon.
³See Ether 12:41 and Moroni 10:27-34.
⁴Ether 12:41.
⁵Ether 12:24, 40.
⁶Ether 12: 36.
⁷Moroni 10:32.
From Moroni's example teachers in the Church today are challenged to retain their standards of excellence and dedication to their purpose despite the loneliness of their task. Very few teachers have been alone as much in their assignment as was Moroni. Teachers, particularly parents, could provide written inspiration for future generations. In so doing they should worry less about their ability to write than using the Holy Spirit to guide them. Also a teacher, even if he is gifted as was Moroni, should remain humble in his service to his fellow men and to the Lord.

The Brother of Jared

Moroni provides us with his abridged account of the Jaredites. First among the prophets from this group of people was the brother of Jared. He is described as "being a large and mighty man, and a man highly favored of the Lord."¹ Throughout the account the brother of Jared shows himself as being very prayerful.² The brother of Jared was also a gracious man, who frequently thanked the Lord for his supreme goodness.

And they did sing praises unto the Lord; yea, the brother of Jared did sing praises unto the Lord, and he did thank and praise the Lord all the day long; and when night came, they did not cease to praise the Lord.

Perhaps the most impressive of his character traits is his overpowering faith. In preparing to lead his people across the great

¹Ether 1:34.
³Ether 6:9. (Italics added.)
waters, the brother of Jared prayed with such great faith that the Son of God appeared unto him in His pre-existent spirit.  

And because of the knowledge of this man he could not be kept from beholding within the veil; and he saw the finger of Jesus, which, when he saw, he fell with fear; for he knew that it was the finger of the Lord; and he had faith no longer, for he knew, nothing doubting.  

Wherefore, having this perfect knowledge of God, he could not be kept from within the veil; therefore he saw Jesus; and he did minister unto him.  

Moroni, in his beautiful discourse on faith eulogized the brother of Jared by describing his faith. His faith was so tremendous that even the mountain Zerin moved at his command.  

The brother of Jared had four recorded teaching purposes. The first was to help guide his people from the Tower of Babel to the promised land. The second was to help instruct his people, once they arrived in the promised land, to walk humbly before the Lord. The righteous effect of that teaching was felt beyond the lifetime of the brother of Jared. The third was to teach his people the grievousness of having a king. The fourth was to treasure up the things which he had seen and heard in his vision where he had seen Christ and all the

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1Ether 3:1-20.  
2Ether 3:19-20. (Italics added.)  
3Ether 12:20-21, 24, 30.  
4Ether 12:30.  
6Ether 6:17.  
7Ether 6:18, 30.  
8Ether 6:22-23.
inhabitants of the earth. The brother of Jared was to write them up in a language that could not be read and then sealed. 1 We do know that the brother of Jared was mighty in writing even to the overpowering of one who would read his writings. 2 The Lord was to determine when these special sealed writings would be shown to the children of men. 3 They were shown to the righteous, who witnessed Christ's coming to the western hemisphere but were hid up and sealed again after the people had dwindled in unbelief. 4 Moroni wrote the glorious things which the brother of Jared saw upon the plates. 5 This the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon which we do not yet have. 6

From the brother of Jared's example, a modern teacher could learn to exercise great faith in Christ in order to obtain great treasures of knowledge. 7 A teacher will always be better, the more personally revealed knowledge he is able to obtain. Also a teacher could remember to be prayerful and rely upon the Lord for direction. He must remember that the Lord will chasten him, who does not call upon His name. 8

Ether

Our final teacher from the Book of Mormon was the last Jaredite prophet, Ether. It was Ether who compiled the Jaredite history. 9 He

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1Ether 3:21-28  
2Ether 12:24.  
3Ether 3:28; 4:6-7, 15.  
4Ether 4:2-3.  
5Ether 4:4.  
6Ether 4:5; 5:1.  
7See Ether 4:15.  
8See Ether 2:14-15.  
witnessed the last battles of extinction of his people, then completed
his record and hid it, that the people of Limhi did later find it.¹

Ether descended from the royal lineage of the Jaredites, some
30 to 35 generations removed from Jared.² Ether was sired by Coriantor,
who spent all his days in captivity.³ No word is mentioned of Ether's
preparation, although possibly he received instruction and inspiration
from other prophets who were sent from God in the days of Coriantor.⁴

Ether served as a prophet-teacher in the days of King
Coriantumr. The entire Jaredite nation was ripe in iniquity, having
only recently rejected the previous prophets because of their secret
society and wicked abominations.⁵ Although Ether was rejected, he
could not be constrained in his teaching because of the Spirit of the
Lord which was in him.⁶

For he did cry from the morning, even until the going down of
the sun, exhorting the people to believe in God unto repentance
lest they should be destroyed, saying unto them that by faith
all things are fulfilled.⁷

Ether went on to teach concerning the importance of the promised
land, that this choice land would be the site of the New Jerusalem.
Ether discussed the relative merits and glorious aspects of both the
Old and the New Jerusalems.⁸

. . . great and marvelous were the prophecies of Ether; but
they esteemed him as naught, and cast him out; and he hid himself
in the cavity of a rock by day, and by night he went forth viewing
the things which should come upon the people.

¹Ether 15:13-33  ²Ether 1:6-32.
³Ether 11:19, 23.  ⁴Ether 11:20-22
⁵Ether 11:22.  ⁶Ether 12:2, 5.
⁷Ether 12:3. (Italics added.)  ⁸Ether 13:2-12.
And as he dwelt in the cavity of a rock he made the remainder of this record, viewing the destructions which came upon the people, by night.¹

In the same year that Ether was cast out, a great war broke out among the people. Mighty men sought to destroy King Coriantumr by their secret plans of wickedness.² In the second year of the fierce fighting, Ether was sent by the Lord to go to Coriantumr and his household and preach repentance. If they were to repent, the Lord would give to Coriantumr his kingdom and spare his people. If they did not repent they all would be destroyed except Coriantumr. He alone of the Jaredites would remain alive and would witness another people receiving the land for their inheritance.³ Neither Coriantumr nor his household nor the people repented. The wars did not cease. Ether's life was sought and he found refuge again in the cavity of a rock.⁴

Ether witnessed the total horrible destruction of the Jaredite people.⁵ When Ether finished his record and hid it up, he recorded these, his last words:

> Whether the Lord will that I be translated, or that I suffer the will of the Lord in the flesh, it mattereth not, if it so be that I am saved in the kingdom of God. Amen.

From Ether a present-day teacher could learn to teach untiringly. One must pray to the Lord for courage to teach that which is unpopular. One's attitude is also of major importance in teaching. Doing the Lord's will is most important. If we do His will, whatever it may be or however difficult it may be, we will be saved in His Kingdom.⁷

Chapter 4

TEACHING CONFRONTATIONS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

Introduction

In Chapter 3 of this study the writer analyzed the prominent teachers of the Book of Mormon. Their preparation, purposes, students, character traits, internal feelings, and teaching effects were discussed. In this chapter the writer desires to analyze the various approaches, strategies, and means of instruction employed by these prominent teachers. Twenty different significant teaching confrontations have been selected. In two instances the confrontations are between the teacher and one listener. In three instances they are between a father and his sons. In most of the cases the confrontations are between the prophet-teacher and the people he is called to teach. The most unusual teaching confrontations of all are between prophet-seers (Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni) and future generations of readers. The Lord's teaching of Nephi upon the mountain (1 Nephi 11-14) and His instruction to the brother of Jared (Ether 2-4) are not analyzed here.

The writer will suggest how these instructional approaches of the teachers in the Book of Mormon might be applied in LDS teaching settings today after each analysis of the specific teaching confrontations.

Lehi to His Sons

Our first teaching confrontation in the Book of Mormon occurred with Lehi teaching his six sons. This teaching effort by a "tender
parent"¹ did not happen on only one occasion, but as is recorded was spread out over a number of years and on many specific occasions.

The first such recorded occasion was after three days travel in the wilderness after Lehi and his family had departed Jerusalem and forsaken their wealth according to God's commandment. Their tents were pitched in a valley by the side of a river. Lehi built an altar and made an offering of thanks unto the Lord.² Lehi decided to use physical elements of his geographical surroundings to teach object lessons to his two stiffnecked sons, Laman and Lemuel:

And it came to pass that he called the name of the river, Laman, and it emptied into the Red Sea; and the valley was in the borders of the mouth thereof.

And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea, he spake unto Laman, saying: O that thou mightest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all righteousness!

And he also spake unto Lemuel: O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, firm and steadfast, and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord!³

Laman and Lemuel frequently murmured against their father, claiming that he was a visionary man and that Lehi had led them from their rich surroundings in Jerusalem according to the foolish imaginations of his heart. They feared lest they had been led by Lehi into the wilderness only to die.⁴ However:

And it came to pass that my father did speak unto them in the valley of Lemuel, with power, being filled with the Spirit, until their frames did shake before him. And he did confound them, that they durst not utter against him; wherefore, they did as he commanded them.⁵

¹Nephi 8:37. ²Nephi 2:6-7
³Nephi 2:8-10 ⁴Nephi 2:11-13
⁵Nephi 2:14. (Italics added.)
The next recorded moment of Lehi's teaching his children is his recital to them of his dream or vision concerning the quest for the tree of life. The dream was fraught with symbolic significance for the eternal welfare of each of his sons. Lehi indicated that because of what he saw he had great reason to rejoice because of Nephi and Sam, but feared exceedingly because of Laman and Lemuel.\(^1\) Throughout his retelling of his dream, Lehi frequently indicated his sincere and tender love for each of his sons, both the obedient and the rebellious.\(^2\)

After Lehi concluded his discussion of his dream and "exhorting them to all diligence"\(^3\), he spoke with his sons about prophecy. He wanted them to know about important future events such as the coming of the Messiah, the role of the Jews, the scattering of the House of Israel, and the House of Israel's eventually receiving the fulness of the gospel from the Gentiles.\(^4\)

Lehi's last recorded set of teachings to his sons happened after his colony had arrived upon the promised land and had settled themselves. Lehi knew he was about to die, so he called all his family together and individually handed out instruction and gave blessings. But before he individually took them aside, he wanted to impress upon all of his sons the importance of recognizing the blessings of the Lord in leading them out from Jerusalem to the promised land, a land choice above all other lands.\(^5\) He spoke to them about the rebellion

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\(^1\) Nephi 8:3-4.  
\(^2\) Nephi 8:12, 15-18, 35-38.  
\(^3\) Nephi 10:2.  
\(^4\) See 1 Nephi 10.  
\(^5\) See 2 Nephi 1.
that had occurred upon the sea and the mercies of the Lord in sparing them that they did not all drown.¹ Lehi indicated that he had seen a vision where Jerusalem was destroyed and that if they had remained they would have likewise perished.² Thus two great blessings were realized because of the true concern of a father: their lives being preserved and their obtaining a land of promise. Lehi reiterated with his sons a conditional promise of the Lord, "Inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land; but inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall be cut off from my presence."³

He then reminded them that they should rebel no more against their brother, Nephi, who had been an instrument in the hands of God in bringing all of them to the promised land.⁴

Lehi first spoke to Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and the sons of Ishmael. To them he gave a conditional promise and blessing:

... if ye will hearken unto the voice of Nephi ye shall not perish. And if ye will hearken unto him I leave unto you a blessing, yea, even my first blessing. But if ye will not hearken unto him I take away my first blessing, yea, even my blessing, and it shall rest upon him.⁵

We can thus see that father's blessings are commensurate with keeping laws.

Lehi next spoke to Zoram, the servant of Laban, who had become a true friend of Nephi. Zoram and his seed were promised that they would dwell in peace and prosperity upon the promised land as long as they were faithful.⁶

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Lehi next had a lengthy conversation with his son, Jacob, his first-born in the wilderness after leaving Jerusalem. Lehi sympathized with Jacob in having to endure the rudeness of his two oldest brothers. However, these afflictions were to be consecrated by the Lord for Jacob's gain.  

Lehi realized that Jacob was favored of the Lord, so therefore provided Jacob with some special instructions so that he could better minister unto his people.  

These instructions were about the redemption of the Messiah, opposition in all things, the Fall of Adam, and the freedom of choice.

Lehi next moved to his son, Joseph, to whom he apologized for the troubled times under which he was reared. Joseph was reminded by his father that he was named after Joseph of Egypt. Lehi explained the sacred nature of his name and the important prophecies concerning a latter-day Joseph.  

Lehi ended by charging Joseph to hearken unto the words of his brother, Nephi.

Next Lehi called to him respectively the sons of Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael's household. In each case they were told that they would be blessed if they kept the commandments and would be cursed if they did not.  

Lehi indicated that if his grandchildren were brought up in the way they should go they would not depart from it. And if they were not so brought up, their curse would be taken from them and would be answered upon the heads of their parents. 

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1 2 Nephi 2:1-2
2 2 Nephi 2:4; See all of Chapter 2
3 See 2 Nephi 3.
4 2 Nephi 4:3-4.
5 2 Nephi 4:5.
6 2 Nephi 4:6-7.
Lehi finally spoke again to Sam. He praised him for his faithfulness and promised him great blessings. Sam's seed was to be numbered with Nephi's seed.\(^1\)

Nephi's record also implies that Lehi also spoke with Nephi and his household, but probably due to modesty Nephi left out these conversations.\(^2\)

A present-day father could possibly use the following suggestions from Lehi's instructional approach to his sons:

1. Use objects in the environment to teach object lessons to your children.

2. Strive to be worthy to obtain revelation for your children's benefit. Pass it on lovingly to them, perhaps in an allegorical way.

3. Show as much love for the rebelliously-inclined children as for the faithful ones.

4. Discuss with your children important events in the future that would certainly affect them.

5. Formally call your children together to give them special blessings and promises. Clarify that all blessings from the Lord are conditioned upon obedience.

**Nephi to His Brothers**

Just as Lehi was true to his trust in teaching his children proper principles, Nephi very early in his life began a strenuous labor of teaching his brothers to keep the commandments. Even though

\(^1\) Nephi 4:11. \(^2\) Nephi 4:12.
the teaching and admonishing of one's older brothers is a difficult undertaking, especially if the brothers are rebellious and vicious, Nephi steadfastly stuck to his task, knowing the Lord would sustain him.

It will be remembered that Laman and Lemuel had murmured against their father for leading them out of Jerusalem. At that same time, Nephi, still quite young, sought out the Lord in earnest prayer to understand the mysteries of God. The Lord visited him, softened his heart, and caused that he should believe the words of his father, Lehi. Nephi tried to make known his understanding to his three older brothers. Sam believed him, but Laman and Lemuel did not listen. Nephi cried again with lowliness of heart for his recalcitrant brothers. The Lord promised Nephi that if he would keep the commandments, he would be made a ruler and a teacher over his brethren.¹

From this point on, Nephi took seriously his God-given call to teach his brethren. His first opportunity came when Nephi accompanied his brothers back to Jerusalem to obtain the brass plates of Laban. The brothers met with difficulty in obtaining the plates, so Nephi counselled them concerning the necessity of keeping God's commandments and the wisdom of obtaining the sacred records of God's dealings with his holy prophets.² Nephi's approach was to remind them of their sacred obligations and that their assignment was vital to the spiritual welfare of their people.

Nephi next instructed his rebellious brethren when they were all again in the land of Jerusalem, this time leading Ishmael and his

family to join Lehi's colony in the wilderness. Laman, Lemuel, and two sons of Ishmael were about ready to return to Jerusalem, which would have thwarted Lehi's righteous design in leading his people to a promised land. Nephi chose this time to ask his brothers, "How is it that ye have forgotten what great things the Lord hath done for us?"\(^1\) Nephi asked this same essential question four times, each time emphasizing a different way the Lord had blessed them and how the Lord would lead and sustain them, if they but exercised faith.\(^2\) Nephi concluded by warning them that if they pursued their wicked design, they would perish. He indicated that thus the Spirit had constrained him to speak.\(^3\)

Nephi was next called upon to teach his brothers after he returned from the high mountain, where he had been tutored by the Spirit of God in spiritual matters and future events. Upon returning, Nephi found his brethren disputing with each other concerning the things Lehi had taught them about the future. Nephi knew that the principles of Lehi's instructions were hard to be understood, unless one should inquire of the Lord. Nephi also knew that his brothers were hard of heart and had not looked unto the Lord as they should have. So he asked them the simple question, "Have ye inquired of the Lord?"\(^4\) Nephi reminded them of a promise of the Lord:

--If ye will not harden your hearts, and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive, with diligence in keeping my commandments, surely these things shall be made know unto you.\(^5\)

\(^1\) Nephi 7:11. 
\(^2\) Nephi 7:8-14. 
\(^3\) Nephi 7:15. 
\(^4\) Nephi 15:8; see all ch. 15. 
\(^5\) Nephi 15:11.
Nephi then proceeded to answer through the Spirit the questions that had perplexed his brothers. In the process he was able to provide an excellent interpretation of Nephi's dream.\(^1\) At the end of Nephi's teachings, his brothers indicated that what he had said was hard for them to bear. Nephi reminded them that the guilty always take the truth to be hard, but if they would hearken to the truth and walk uprightly, they would not feel so uncomfortable. Nephi exhorted his brethren with all diligence to keep the commandments, whereupon they humbled themselves for a short period.\(^2\)

Laman and Lemuel began murmuring again when Nephi began to build a ship to cross the great waters. Nephi's two oldest brothers accused him of being like Lehi, having been led away by the foolish imaginations of his heart.\(^3\) On this occasion Nephi instructed his brothers that the Lord would lead this group of people (Lehi's colony) to safety and prosperity just as he had led the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt anciently. The whole key is hearkening unto the words of the Lord. Nephi rehearsed with them God's leading the Israelites when they were righteous and His straitening them when they were rebellious. The important thing to remember, he told them, was that God "loveth those who will have him to be their God."\(^4\) Nephi concluded by express-

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1 Nephi 15:12-36.  
2 Nephi 16:1-5.  
3 Nephi 17:20; see all of ch. 17.  
4 Nephi 17:40; see v. 23-46.
Behold, my soul is rent with anguish because of you, and my heart is pained; I fear lest ye shall be cast off forever. Behold, I am full of the Spirit of God, insomuch that my frame has no strength.

Laman and Lemuel were so angry with Nephi that they sought to throw him into the sea. But Nephi was so filled with the Spirit of God, that he warned them that they would wither as a dry reed if they touched him. This condition lasted for many days, in which time Nephi was able to instruct his brothers. At the conclusion of this episode, Laman and Lemuel sought even to worship Nephi because of the power in him. Nephi humbly reminded them that rather they should worship their God and honor their father and mother.  

Upon arriving in the promised land, Nephi spent some time making plates of ore to engraven upon them the record of his people. In so doing he became inspired as he reviewed the sacred writings of the prophets that were found upon the brass plates. Nephi proceeded to instruct his brothers (probably all of them and not just the rebellious Laman and Lemuel) concerning the truths that he had found in the scriptures. He explained, "I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning." After Nephi read to his brothers two significant chapters from Isaiah, they asked him what Isaiah had meant. Nephi explained that this material had been revealed to Isaiah by the voice of the Spirit, as are all things made known unto the prophets. Nephi proceeded to teach his brothers the meaning of

\[ ^{1}\text{Nephi 17:47.} \quad ^{2}\text{Nephi 17:48-52.} \quad ^{3}\text{Nephi 17:55.} \quad ^{4}\text{Nephi 19:23; see all ch. 19-21.} \quad ^{5}\text{Nephi 22:1-2.} \]
Isaiah's instructions pertaining to the future of the Israelites and the Gentiles. The main principle that Nephi desired to emphasize to his brethren seems to have been that "all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel if it so be that they repent."¹

Eventually Nephi and his followers were forced to separate themselves from Laman and Lemuel and their followers, because they had become irreconcilably rebellious and sought to slay Nephi.² Nephi then recorded:

And I did teach my people to build buildings, and to work in all manner of wood, and of iron, and of copper, and of brass, and of steel, and of gold, and of silver, and of precious ores, which were in great abundance.³

From this we see that Nephi also took opportunity to instruct his brethren pertaining to temporal needs as well as to their spiritual ones. Nephi labored the rest of his days diligently among his people, persuading them to come unto Christ and to partake of the goodness of God. He was well-loved and respected of his people.⁴

From Nephi's example of teaching his brothers, a teacher in today's Church could learn some profitable approaches:

1. Pray in lowliness of heart for your students.
2. Remind your students often of their sacred obligations as Latter-day Saints in performing the work that must be done now.
3. Remind your students of how the Lord has richly blessed them in times past and that He will sustain them in the future if they place their trust in Him.

¹Nephi 22:28; see all ch. 22. ²Nephi 5:1-6. ³Nephi 5:15. ⁴Jacob 1:7-10.
4. If led by the Spirit, warn your listeners of the dire consequences of their misbehavior.

5. When your students have disputes concerning points of doctrine ask them simply if they have inquired of the Lord for an answer to their problem.

6. Review with your students many times how the Lord has led His chosen people in the past and how He will continue to do so with His chosen people today.

7. Teach from the scriptures constantly, challenging your students to liken the scriptures to themselves. Indicate, as did Nephi, that the scriptures can be likened to yourself as well.

8. Remember that on some occasions temporal teachings are necessary to prepare students to better receive spiritual instructions.

**Nephi to Future Generations**

Paralleling the importance of teaching members of his family is the teaching effort expended by Nephi in instructing the future readers of the Book of Mormon. Unlike most Biblical prophets, whose largest responsibility was to teach and warn contemporary listeners, the prophets such as Nephi who wrote material for the Book of Mormon were also very much interested in future generations. They realized that one of their prime stewardships was to warn and instruct future readers. All of Nephi's writings were written for the benefit of readers in the latter days. Even approximately half of Nephi's writings are addressed directly to future generations, with no reference to historical events contemporary to Nephi.
The Book of Mormon has essentially four authors: Nephi, Jacob, Mormon, and Moroni. Each of these men was blessed with deep prophetic insight. They recognized clearly their purposes for writing, because they saw our day and our needs. This section will deal with Nephi's teaching approach to future generations. A later section will discuss the approach of Mormon and Moroni. Jacob did not write as much directly to people of our day, but his approaches to people of his day will be analyzed.

In 1961 a study was made about the fulfillment of prophecy found in the Book of Mormon.¹ In that study the author reported, "Nephi, in particular, gave a great deal of space to his prophetic words. He saw down through the stream of time in vision and recorded essential portions for our benefit."²

It has been demonstrated also that the four prominent authors of the Book of Mormon (Nephi, Jacob, Mormon, and Moroni) differed in rhetorical and grammatical style from one another.³ Therefore, it seems evident that in addressing themselves to future generations, each of these writers taught according to his own abilities and understanding. Burgon summarized Nephi's distinctiveness in style with the following:


The writings of Nephi and Jacob contained more original and more superior metaphors than those of Mormon and Moroni. The author of Nephi exceeded the other writers in the use of personification both in quantity and in quality. Nephi's writings were distinctive with the use of beautiful synonymous parallelisms, fine climatic parallels, and very few antithetical parallelisms. The author of Nephi also used many phrases and short clauses in parallel. Comparison of dialogue revealed Nephi to contain twice the quantity of compared with Jacob and Moroni. Nephi's writings contained verses of very excellent rhetorical quality, but wordiness and the abundance of misplaced clauses stole some of his brilliance and clarity.

Another scholar has found that Nephi was a master of the ancient Hebraic literary style of Chiasmus. Nephi first informed his readers that his intent was to write the things of God that he could persuade men to come to the one true God and be saved. He further indicated that he was not writing things which were pleasing to the world, but rather things which were pleasing to God and to those who are not of the world.

In 1 Nephi chapters 11-14 is Nephi's account of his vision of the future from the hands of an angel. The writer submits that one reason why Nephi included such a complete description of his experience with the angel is to provide the readers in the last days with authoritative testimony of principle doctrines which have come under attack in our day. Doctrines of the gospel for which Nephi bears solemn witness in relating his vision are the divine Sonship of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth, the divinity of Christ's mission, the mira-

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1 Ibid. pp. 51-53.


3 1 Nephi 6:3-6; see also 1 Nephi 9:4-6.
cles of Jesus, the apostasy, the validity of the Bible, the purpose of the Book of Mormon, and the Revelation of John.

Nephi provided in 2 Nephi 12-24 his future readers with thirteen chapters of Isaiah's writings. These Isaiah chapters deal with the fall of both the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel, with prophecies and events associated with Christ's ministry, and with prophecies and events associated with the last days and the restoration of the gospel. Nephi prefaced his Isaiah chapters with the following:

And now I write some of the words of Isaiah, that whoso of my people shall see these words may lift up their hearts and rejoice for all men. Now these are the words, and ye may liken them unto you and unto all men.

Nephi was not recording any material upon his small plates for people of his day. Therefore, the "people" referred to above are undoubtedly related Israelites to Nephi that he hopes will read the words of Isaiah on some future date and profit thereby.

After Nephi finished recording his Isaiah chapters, he further explained his purpose:

Wherefore, I write unto my people, unto all those that shall receive hereafter these things which I write, that they may know the judgments of God, that they come upon all nations, according to the word which he hath spoken.

In addition to explaining Isaiah's prophecies, Nephi in the rest of his writings in the small plates proceeded to give some of his own prophecies and admonitions. "But behold, I proceed with mine own

prophecy, according to my plainness; in the which I know that no man can err...1 Thus we can see that Nephi was trying to prove to his future readers the truthfulness of his words by more than one witness.

And now I, Nephi, write more of the words of Isaiah, for my soul delighteth in his words. For I will liken his words unto my people, and I will send them forth unto all my children, for he verily saw my Redeemer, even as I have seen him. And my brother, Jacob, also has seen him as I have seen him; wherefore I will send their words forth unto my children to prove unto them that my words are true. Wherefore, by the words of three, God hath said, I will establish my word. Nevertheless, God sendeth more witnesses and he proveth all his words.2

Nephi spent much time in his lengthy treatise to future readers prophecying about the Messiah and his mission. "Wherefore, my soul delighteth to prophesy concerning him for I have seen his day, and my heart doth magnify his holy name."3

Nephi also prophecied considerably about both future wicked and future righteous practices up to and including the second coming and reign of Jesus Christ.

Nephi desired in his writings to make himself clear, so that there would be no misunderstanding of his intentions.

And now behold, my people, ye are a stiffnecked people; wherefore, I have spoken plainly unto you, that ye cannot misunderstand. And the words which I have spoken shall stand as a testimony against you; for they are sufficient to teach any man the right way; for the right way is to believe in Christ and deny him, not; for by denying him ye also deny the prophets and the law.

Nephi concluded his testimony and prophecies by issuing the following challenge to accept Christ:

And now, my beloved brethren, and also Jew, and all ye ends of the earth, hearken unto these words and believe in Christ; and if ye believe not in these words believe in Christ. And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ, and he hath given them unto me; and they teach all men that they should do good.

And if they are not the words of Christ, judge ye—for Christ will show unto you, with power and great glory, that they are his words, at the last day; and you and I shall stand face to face before his bar; and ye shall know that I have been commanded of him to write these things, notwithstanding my weakness.

Because Nephi was a prophet and was gifted with special prophetic insights, an average teacher in the Church cannot emulate the entire approach of Nephi to future readers. However certain general principles are possible to apply to teachers today. As did Nephi, a teacher today should teach according to the abilities and understanding the Lord has given him. He should feel free to utilize his own distinctive style and manner. A teacher should have the same single purpose as Nephi, that of bringing his students to the one true God to be saved. He should delight in the prophecies of the Savior and his mission. He should attempt to make his message crystal-clear so that there will be no misunderstanding on the part of his students. And a teacher should utilize more than one prophetic witness to establish the truthfulness of his message. At the conclusion of using these scriptural and prophetic witnesses, he should bear his own testimony.

Jacob to the People of Nephi

After the followers of Nephi had separated themselves from the followers of Laman and Lemuel, Nephi consecrated his youngest brothers,

12 Nephi 33:10-11. (Italics added.)
Jacob and Joseph, to be priests and teachers\(^1\) over the people.\(^2\) In the Book of Mormon we have two recorded instances of Jacob's acting in his office, by teaching plainly the principles the people needed. The first such instance is soon after Jacob was called to be a teacher.\(^3\) The second instance was after Nephi had died and Jacob had assumed presiding spiritual direction over the people.\(^4\)

In this first recorded discourse of Jacob, he first announced that he was speaking by authority, having been ordained to the holy order by Nephi.\(^5\) He also made clear his sincere desire for the welfare of the souls of the individuals he was teaching.\(^6\) Jacob indicated that he desired to teach things which are and things which are to come, which by scriptural definition, is simply "truth."\(^7\) In order to best do this, Jacob explained that he would read to them the words of Isaiah, which Nephi had desired that he speak unto them.\(^8\)

And now, the words which I shall read are they which Isaiah spake concerning all the house of Israel; wherefore, they may be likened unto you, for ye are of the House of Israel. And there are many things which have been spoken by Isaiah which may be likened unto you, because ye are of the house of Israel.\(^9\)

Jacob then proceeded to teach the people three chapters of Isaiah's prophecies concerning the future.\(^10\) As he concluded this, Jacob indicated that he had cited Isaiah so that the people might

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\(^1\)See Chapter 5 of this study.  
\(^2\)See 2 Nephi 6:11.  
\(^3\)Nephi 6:2.  
\(^4\)See Jacob 1:17-3:12.  
\(^5\)Nephi 6:4; see D&C 93:24.  
\(^6\)Nephi 6:3.  
\(^7\)Nephi 6:4.  
\(^8\)Nephi 6:5. (Italics added.)  
\(^9\)Nephi 6:6-8; 25.
know the covenants of the Lord with the House of Israel, that God has spoken through prophets from the beginning of time, that the Jews will be restored to the true church and the fold of God and gathered once again to the lands of their inheritance, and that these people of Nephi might rejoice forever because of the blessings which the Lord would bestow upon their children.¹

Jacob then taught the people a powerful discourse on the atonement and the plan of salvation.² With magnificent teaching skill Jacob both exulted in the glory of God and strongly admonished his people to avoid wickedness. He said,

But behold, my brethren, is it expedient that I should awake you to an awful reality of these things? Would I harrow up your souls if your minds were pure? Would I be plain unto you according to the plainness of the truth if ye were freed from sin? Behold, if ye were holy I would speak unto you of holiness; but as ye are not holy, and ye look upon me as a teacher, it must needs be expedient that I teach you the consequences of sin. Behold, my soul abhorreth sin, and my heart delighteth in righteousness; and I will praise the holy name of my God.³

Jacob concluded this beautiful address by inviting all those who were thirsty for the word of God to come forth and freely partake, to come to the Holy One of Israel and feast upon that which does not perish, and to remember to pray and thank God in rejoicing by day and night.⁴

Jacob let the people absorb his important teachings to them over night and then spoke to them the next day. This time he reminded


²See the section about Jacob in Chapter 3 of this study.

³² Nephi 9:47-49. (Italics added.)

⁴² Nephi 9:50-54.
his listeners of the great promises of this chosen western hemisphere and the important role the righteous Gentiles would play in establishing Zion. He warned the people that he who fights against Zion would surely perish.\(^1\) Jacob concluded his teachings with this stirring plea:

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not to the will of the devil and the flesh; and remember, after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved.

Wherefore, may God raise you from death by the power of the resurrection, and also from everlasting death by the power of the atonement, that ye may be received into the eternal kingdom of God, that ye may praise him through grace divine. Amen.\(^2\)

Jacob's next recorded teaching of the people of Nephi came several years after the death of Nephi. The people had drifted into sin in two areas: desiring many wives and concubines for the sake of whoredoms, and seeking for gold and silver for the sake of having riches.\(^3\) "Wherefore I, Jacob, gave unto them these words as I taught them in the temple, having first obtained mine errand from the Lord.\(^4\) Jacob also stated that he and Joseph were teaching strongly so that the blood of the sins of the people would not be answered upon their garments.\(^5\)

Jacob lamented having to speak so sharply to the people:

\(^1\) See all of 2 Nephi 10.
\(^2\) Nephi 10:24-25.
\(^3\) Jacob 1:15-16.
\(^4\) Jacob 1:17.
\(^5\) See Jacob 1:19 and the section Jacob in Chapter 3.
Wherefore, it burdeneth my soul that I should be constrained, because of the strict commandment which I have received from God, to admonish you according to your crimes, to enlarge the wounds of those who are already wounded, instead of consoling and healing their wounds; and those who have not been wounded, instead of feasting upon the pleasing word of God have daggers placed to pierce their souls and wound their delicate minds.

But, notwithstanding the greatness of the task, I must do according to the strict commands of God, and tell you concerning your wickedness and abominations, in the presence of the pure in heart, and the broken heart, and under the glance of the piercing eye of the Almighty God.¹

For a part of his teaching, Jacob spoke directly to the men, "Ye have broken the hearts of your tender wives, and lost the confidence of your children, because of your bad examples before them; and sobbings of their hearts ascend up to God against you..."²

But Jacob did not forget to address himself to the pure in heart, those that had not polluted themselves with the sins that had plagued the people. He indicated that they should lift up their heads and receive the pleasing word of God and feast upon His love.³ He further advised them:

Look unto God with firmness of mind, and pray unto him with exceeding faith, and he will console you in your afflictions, and he will plead your cause, and send down justice upon those who seek your destruction.

Jacob informed us, his future readers, that he could not record all of his warning message, but that he did warn his people of every kind of sin, telling them the awful consequences of these sins.⁵

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¹ Jacob 2:9-10. (Italics added.)
² Jacob 2:35. (Italics added.)
³ Jacob 3:2.
⁴ Jacob 3:1.
⁵ Jacob 3:12.
From an analysis of Jacob's example in teaching his people, the writer has observed the following nine categories which may be useful today:

1. Explain that you are teaching by appointment and authority.
2. Indicate your sincere desire for the welfare of the souls you are teaching.
3. Teach plainly the principles your students need.
4. Cite the words of prophets, such as Isaiah, who prophecied words which can be likened to your students.
5. Remind your students of the goodness of the Lord in preserving his people. Indicate to your students that they have reason to rejoice forever because of the blessings which God bestows upon his children.
6. When led by the Spirit, tactfully and plainly teach your students of the consequences of their sins. Explain that their sins must then be answered upon their heads rather than upon yours. Indicate that your heart delights in righteousness.
7. Urge your students to reconcile themselves to the will of God and not to the will of the devil and the flesh. Words similar to those in 2 Nephi 10:24-25 may be used.
8. Remind individuals that when they sin that they are breaking the hearts of righteous members of their families.
9. Remember to congratulate those that are keeping the commandments and are striving to be pure in heart. Remind them that if they pray fervently, the Lord will console them in their afflictions.
Jacob and Sherem

Toward the end of Jacob's life a man whose name was Sherem came among the people of Nephi seeking to overthrow the doctrine of Christ. Sherem claimed that there is no Christ, neither has there been nor ever will be. He insisted that no man can tell of things to come. He was learned and had a perfect knowledge of the language of the people, thus empowering him to use much flattery. In this he was led by the power of the devil. Sherem even attempted to draw Jacob away from Christ.

It became Jacob's responsibility to counter Sherem's devilish designs so that he could see the error of his ways and not pervert some of the followers of Christ. Jacob, of course, could not be shaken, because he understood the scriptures and had had many sacred revelations in his lifetime.

A comparison of Sherem's and Jacob's methods of approach is revealing. Sherem used flattery and sarcasm. Jacob, on the other hand, having the Spirit poured into his soul, used the scriptures for testimony and then bore his own testimony which had been given to him personally by the power of the Holy Ghost. Very significantly Jacob relied upon God and sought sincerely to have His will be done.

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1 Jacob 7:1-2.  
2 Jacob 7:2, 9.  
3 Jacob 7:7.  
4 Jacob 7:4.  
5 Jacob 7:6.  
6 Jacob 7:3, 5, 11.  
7 Jacob 7:4, 6.  
8 Jacob 7:13.  
9 Jacob 7:8.  
10 Jacob 7:10-11.  
11 Jacob 7:12.  
12 Jacob 7:14.
After Jacob finished teaching Sherem, the latter was struck powerless by God for many days. Before Sherem passed away, however, he spoke apologetically to the people. He denied what he had taught them and confessed the Christ, the Holy Ghost, and the ministry of angels. He indicated that he had been deceived by the power of the devil and he spoke plainly about hell, eternity, and the eternal punishment. Sherem admitted that the scriptures do testify of Christ and that he had lied, having said that the scriptures do not testify of Christ when he knew they did.¹

Jacob's approach with Sherem should help teachers in the Church today. Teachers should remember to humbly rely upon God for strength and ideas and seek earnestly to do His will when confronted with anti-Christ philosophies. Particularly when a teacher must stand up to one who is possessed with excellent power of speech and flattery should he be humble and not argumentative. A teacher could ask, as did Jacob, "Do you believe the scriptures?" Whether the answer is in the affirmative or in the negative, the teacher could solemnly declare that the scriptures testify of Christ and that none of the prophets have written or prophesied except they have spoken concerning Christ. Certainly a teacher should bear his own testimony in conclusion, indicating that his knowledge has come through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Benjamin to the People

One of the most dramatic and successful teaching confrontations of scriptural history is the story of King Benjamin instructing his people at the end of his reign. In his famous address Benjamin was

¹Jacob 7:15-20.
teaching a people that were already diligent in keeping the command-
ments of the Lord.\footnote{Words of Mormon 17-18; Mosiah 1:11.} His purpose in dealing with this righteous people was to give them a name (Christ) whereby they might be distinguished from other people that the Lord had brought out of Jerusalem. This name would never be blotted out except through transgression.\footnote{Mosiah 1:11-12; 5:9-12.}

To begin with Benjamin made sure that all his people could either hear his voice or could read his words.\footnote{Mosiah 2:7-8.} He began by saying:

My brethren, all ye that have assembled yourselves together, you that can hear my words which I shall speak unto you this day; for I have not commanded you to come up hither to\footnote{Mosiah 2:9. (Italics added.)} trifle with the words which I shall speak, but that you should hearken unto me, and open your ears that ye may hear, and your hearts that ye may understand, and your minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to your view.

Benjamin reminded his people, however, that they should not fear him, for he was mortal, subject also to all manner of infirmities.\footnote{Mosiah 2:10-11.}

The king made clear to his subjects that he had spent all his days in their service and had not exacted any taxes of any kind from them.\footnote{Mosiah 2:12-15.} He indicated to them that he had mentioned his service not to boast, but that they might learn that when they are in the service of their fellow beings they are only in the service of their God.\footnote{Mosiah 2:16-17.}
Benjamin emphasized service to teach his people that they were always indebted to God, even if they served him with all their souls. But all that God wanted them to do was to keep his commandments. And if they would keep his commandments he would prosper them. Benjamin proceeded to explain the diverse consequences of either obeying or disobeying the commandments, either being in a state of never-ending happiness or in a state of never-ending torment. Benjamin vividly described these two states that his people "should awake to a remembrance of the awful situation of those that have fallen into transgression." Here we see the excellent logic that Benjamin utilized in instructing his people. The king made sure his listeners knew that what he had spoken had come from the God.

The next part of Benjamin's address was his recital of the words that had been given him by an angel to deliver to the people. These included a beautiful prophecy concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth to redeem all mankind. They also concerned the nature of man and that all the people will be judged according to their works.

The effect of King Benjamin's teachings soon became apparent among the people. The king looked about him and noticed that they had all fallen to the earth.

And they viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with one

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1 Mosiah 2:18-21; 23-25.  
3 Mosiah 2:36-41.  
4 Mosiah 2:40.  
5 Mosiah 2:41.  
6 See Mosiah 3.
voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men.\(^1\)

Remember that these people who were thus broken hearted in the carnal state were already members of the church and had already strived to keep the commandments. After they had spoken the words above, the Spirit of the Lord came upon them and they received joy and peace of conscience.\(^2\)

In this current state of penitence, the people were in a unique position to be taught and solidified in their newly-developed faith. King Benjamin followed through superbly. He powerfully pointed out that since they had been blessed with this special knowledge and Spirit, they should see that they now do the will of the Lord.\(^3\) Furthermore:

I would that ye should ... always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long-suffering towards you, unworthy creatures, and humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily, and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel.\(^4\)

Benjamin promised them that if they would do this they would be able to always rejoice, be filled with the love of God, and retain a remission of their sins.\(^5\) He also pointed out that these truths needed to be passed on to their children.\(^6\)

\(^1\)Mosiah 4:2.  \(^2\)Mosiah 4:3.  \(^3\)See Mosiah 4:5-10  \(^4\)Mosiah 4:11.  \(^5\)Mosiah 4:12.  \(^6\)See Mosiah 4:14-15.
Realizing that Benjamin spoke in the role of a prophet and quoted an angel in his teachings, only similarly chosen prophets, seers, and revelators in the Church today could teach in exactly the same fashion as Benjamin did. However, certain strategies could be applied generally by all teachers:

1. Remember that even "good" members of the Church need to be dynamically challenged to keep the commandments to be pure in heart, and to be born again of the Spirit.

2. Remind your students of the importance of serving our fellow beings. Use Benjamin's logic in teaching service as recorded in Mosiah Chapter 2.

3. Recognize the teaching moments when students are most receptive. When the students are all repentant and desire to be fed spiritually, at this time especially should they be challenged to keep the commandments and make a covenant with God. Many of the statements of Benjamin in Mosiah chapter 4 pertaining to humility and extending pure love to others could well be utilized by teachers in especially spiritual teaching moments.

4. Remember to remind your students that when they are born again they are spiritually begotten children of Christ. Only under His head are they made free,\(^2\) and only through transgression can they lose the name of Christ.\(^2\)

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**Abinadi to Noah and His Wicked Priests**

In Chapter 3 under Abinadi mention was made that Abinadi's purpose in instructing wicked King Noah and his court was to cry

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\(^1\)See Mosiah 5:7-8 \(^2\)See Mosiah 5:11.
repentance to them and to underscore the consequences that would befall them if they did not repent. This section deals with Abinadi's strategies of instruction to them.

When Abinadi came among the people the second time, the people became angry with him and had him taken bound before the king. The king counselled with the priests what should be done with him. Finally it was decided to stand Abinadi before the court, so that the king and the priests could question him and cross him in his words, so that they could find some evidence with which to accuse him. But during this lengthy interview, Abinadi succeeded in confounding the priests in all their words.

The priests began by asking about a passage from Isaiah.

Abinadi courageously replied to his hypocritical accusers:

Are you priests, and pretend to teach this people, and to understand the spirit of prophesying, and yet desire to know of me what these things mean?

I say unto you, wo be unto you for perverting the ways of the Lord! For if ye understand these things ye have not taught them; therefore, ye have perverted the ways of the Lord.

Abinadi then told the priests that they had not applied their hearts to understanding; therefore, they were not wise. Then he asked them what they were teaching the people. Their reply was that they were teaching the people the Law of Moses. That, to be sure,

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1See Mosiah 12:1-19.
4Mosiah 12:27.
was what they should have been teaching. But, once again, Abinadi pointed to their hypocrisy:

If ye teach the law of Moses why do ye not keep it? Why do ye set your hearts upon riches? Why do ye commit whoredoms and spend your strength with harlots, yea, and cause this people to commit sin, that the Lord has cause to send me to prophesy against this people, yea, even a great evil against this people?\(^1\)

Abinadi warned the priests that they would be smitten for their iniquities, having claimed to have taught the law of Moses.\(^2\) Abinadi went on to quote the first two of the Ten Commandments relating to not worshipping other gods. He then asked the priests if they had done and taught the people accordingly. Of course they had not.\(^3\)

The king then ordered that Abinadi be slain. But Abinadi warned them not to touch him, for he had not yet completed his message. The people of King Noah dared not lay their hands upon Abinadi, because his face shone with the Spirit of the Lord.\(^4\) Abinadi proceeded then to review for his listeners all the Ten Commandments and also the real purpose of the Law of Moses which they had misunderstood.\(^5\) With this tremendous spirituality and while King Noah and his priests were spell-bound with fear, Abinadi taught some very important concepts. He reviewed the "Suffering Servant" passage from Isaiah, explained the dual role of Jesus as both Father and Son, and explained the redeeming mission of Jesus Christ together with the resurrection and judgment.\(^6\) Following are the concluding words of his teachings:

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\(^1\) Mosiah 12:29. ( Italics added.)  
\(^2\) Mosiah 12:31.  
\(^3\) Mosiah 12:33-37.  
\(^4\) Mosiah 13:1-5.  
\(^5\) Mosiah 13:6-35.  
\(^6\) Mosiah chapters 14-16.
And now, ought ye not to tremble and repent of your sins, and remember that only in and through Christ ye can be saved.

Therefore, if ye teach the law of Moses, also teach that it is a shadow of those things which are to come—Teach them that redemption cometh through Christ the Lord, who is the very Eternal Father. Amen.¹

Note that the priests could have repented and mended their lives if they had desired. Indeed, one Alma among the priests did.²

Three days after Abinadi's stirring speech, he was given one last opportunity to retract his words so that his life could be spared. Abinadi boldly declared:

I say unto you, I will not recall the words which I have spoken unto you concerning this people, for they are true; and that ye may know of their surety I have suffered myself that I have fallen into your hands.

Yea, and I will suffer even until death, and I will not recall my words, and they shall stand as a testimony against you. And if ye slay me ye will shed innocent blood, and this shall also stand as a testimony against you at the last day.³

King Noah was about to release Abinadi, having feared his word and the judgments which would befall him. But the wicked priests prevailed and Abinadi was put to death by fire, thus sealing the truth of his words by his death.⁴

As was the case with Benjamin, much of Abinadi's approach should not be duplicated by all teachers, because Abinadi was fulfilling a divinely appointed prophetic role. However, a teacher might similarly ask his students if they believe in the scriptures and/or teach them, and if they do, why they are not necessarily abiding by

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them. This may be an especially good approach for missionaries. Courage is usually necessary. A teacher should also remain true to teaching his message until it is completed. A teacher might very successfully make use of Abinadi's words on the Law of Moses and the resurrection when teaching these subjects.

Alma, The Elder, To His People in The Land of Helam

As was described in the previous chapter, the Book of Mormon leaves many indications of Alma's being an effective teacher. However, his specific confrontations with his listeners are not as well portrayed as with those of some other prominent Book of Mormon teachers. Still one of his instructional experiences in the land of Helam is worthy of note.

It will be remembered that Alma taught his followers, baptized them, and established a church organization among them near the waters of Mormon.¹ Their numbers totaled 450.² One day when these people had assembled themselves to hear the word of God they were discovered by some of King Noah's men. An army was dispatched to destroy Alma's flock. The Lord warned them in time, thus enabling them to flee safely eight days into the wilderness.³ They came to a very beautiful and pleasant land, which they named Helam and where they established a thriving community.⁴

¹See Mosiah 18.  ²Mosiah 18:35.
The people soon expressed desire that Alma be their king, because he was truly loved and respected by his people. At this point Alma's teaching skill became evident. First he gave the logical reason why there should be no king: one flesh should not be esteemed above another. However, Alma explained that if they could always have just men to be their kings it would be well to have a monarchy. But from personal experience, Alma was able to testify of the sore sufferings, particularly in the spirit, caused by a wicked king such as Noah. Alma solemnly declared that only after his determined repenting and fervent crying unto the Lord was he forgiven and made an instrument in the hands of the Lord. Note Alma's humble acknowledgement: "Nevertheless, in this I do not glory, for I am unworthy to glory of myself."

Alma continued by clearly reminding his people that they had suffered in bondage and iniquity because of Noah and his priests and that they had been delivered by God out of both the physical and spiritual bonds. This being true, he then maintained, "... I desire that ye should stand fast in this liberty whererewith ye have been made free, and that ye trust no man to be a king over you."

Alma concluded his instructions on that occasion by stating that no one should be entrusted to be their teacher either, except he

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1 See Mosiah 23:6.  
2 Mosiah 23:7.  
3 Mosiah 23:8.  
4 Mosiah 23:7.  
5 Mosiah 23:11; see also v. 10  
7 Mosiah 23:13.
be a man of God who keeps his commandments.  

Every man should love his neighbor and there should be no contention among the people.

Some time later in the land of Helam the Lamanites accidently discovered the whereabouts of Alma's people. On this fearful occasion Alma once again displayed his outstanding leadership ability:

But Alma went forth and stood among them, and exhorted them that they should not be frightened, but that they should remember the Lord their God and he would deliver them. Therefore they hushed their fears, and began to cry unto the Lord that he would soften the hearts of the Lamanites . . . . And it came to pass that the Lord did soften the hearts of the Lamanites.  

The faith of Alma and his people was so strong that they were delivered completely out of the hands of the Lamanites. They made their way to the city of Zarahemla and joined themselves with King Mosiah and his people. There Alma received more opportunity to teach the saints in his humble, inspiring manner.

Alma's instructional experience in the land of Helam may provide an example from which other teachers could learn a successful approach. An analysis of this situation shows the following procedure:

1. First explain clearly the logical doctrine pertaining to the principle in question.
2. Relate personal experience relating to that principle.
3. Bear humble testimony as to the truth of what you have said.

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1 Mosiah 23:14.
2 Mosiah 23:15.
3 Mosiah 23:27-29; see also v. 21-26.
4 See Mosiah ch. 24-27.
4. Relate if possible how the listeners themselves may have experienced application of that principle in their own lives.

5. Challenge your students to apply that principle of truth properly in their lives.

6. Give righteous counsel pertaining to related subjects.

Alma, The Younger, to The People of Zarahemla and Gideon

As already mentioned, Alma the Younger succeeded his father as high priest over the church. He also served as the first elected chief judge over the people. But seeing the lack of spiritual strength in the church, Alma delivered the chief-judgeship to Nephiah and "confined himself wholly to the high priesthood of the holy order of God, to the testimony of the word, according to the spirit of revelation and prophecy." ¹ Alma saw no way to reclaim his people except "in bearing down in pure testimony against them." ² Alma's efforts in this regard in both Zarahemla and Gideon are well recorded by Mormon. Chapters 5-7 in Alma certainly show Alma to be an effective teacher of men.

Zarahemla at this time was apparently a large community where many of the people were baptized members of the church. ³ However, Alma had seen wickedness and inequality creep in among the members of the church. ⁴ So his address was to members of the church, who generally needed to be reminded of some iniquitous practices and called to repentance.

Alma began by recounting the history of the establishment of the church. He emphasized the powerful hand of God in delivering the people out of bondage.\(^1\) And then we see Alma's challenging question to the people of Zarahemla:

And now behold, I say unto you, my brethren, you that belong to this church, have you sufficiently retained in remembrance the captivity of your fathers? Yea, and have you sufficiently retained in remembrance his mercy and long suffering toward them? And moreover, have ye sufficiently retained in remembrance that he has delivered their souls from hell?\(^2\)

Alma continued beautifully explaining how the people had been delivered by God. He then asked under what conditions they had been saved. He pointed out the self-evident answer: They had listened to the holy words of a prophet, had a mighty change wrought in their hearts, humbled themselves, and put their trust in the true and living God.\(^3\)

Then came Alma's most important question of his entire discourse:

And now behold, I ask of you, my brethren in the church, have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts?\(^4\)

With a series of well-phrased questions, Alma probed into the hearts of these church members in Zarahemla, asking them essentially how they would feel if they were brought before the tribunal of God, filled remorsefully with a remembrance of all their guilt.\(^5\) In these challenging, yet loving questions, Alma reminded the people that no one can be saved except his garments are purified from all sinful stain by the blood of Jesus Christ.\(^6\)

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\(^1\)Alma 5:3-5.  
\(^2\)Alma 5:6.  
\(^3\)Alma 5:7-13.  
\(^4\)Alma 5:19.  
\(^5\)Alma 5:15-25.  
\(^6\)Alma 5:21-22.
Alma next asked his listeners if they had ever experienced a change of heart, and if so, had they retained that change of heart.\textsuperscript{1} In order to check their spiritual condition he provided them with a test consisting of the following questions:\textsuperscript{2}

1. Have you walked, keeping yourselves blameless before God?
2. Could you say, if you were called to die at this time, that you have been sufficiently humble?
3. Have your garments been cleansed and made white through the blood of Christ?
4. Are you stripped of pride?
5. Are you stripped of envy?
6. Is there any one among you that makes a mock of his brother or heaps upon him persecution?

He warned his listeners that if they were not living according to the above questions, they could not be saved.\textsuperscript{3}

Then, in behalf of the Lord, Alma extended an invitation to the people to repent. The Lord was quoted to have said that he would freely receive them if they would repent, but would cast them out if they did not.\textsuperscript{4}

Alma next discussed the principle of following the good shepherd, who calls them in his own name, the name of Christ.\textsuperscript{5} Note the plaintive appeal of Alma:

\textsuperscript{1}Alma 5:26.
\textsuperscript{2}These questions are paraphrased and found in Alma 5:27-30.
\textsuperscript{3}Alma 5:31-32.
\textsuperscript{4}Alma 5:33-36.
\textsuperscript{5}Alma 5:37-42.
O ye workers of iniquity; ye that are puffed up in the vain things of the world, ye that have professed to have known the ways of righteousness nevertheless have gone astray, as sheep having no shepherd, notwithstanding a shepherd hath called after you and is still calling after you, but ye will not hearken unto his voice.\(^1\)

Alma reminded the people of Zarahemla that if they were doing good works they were hearkening to the voice of the good shepherd, but if they were bringing forth evil works, they were listening to the voice of the devil and following him.\(^2\)

In the last portion of his address Alma referred to his personal role in calling them to repentance. Some of his words are well worth recording here:

And now, my brethren, I would that ye should hear me, for I speak in the energy of my soul; for behold, I have spoken unto you plainly that ye cannot err, or have spoken according to the commandments of God.

For I am called to speak after this manner, according to the holy order of God, which is in Christ Jesus; yea, I am commanded to stand and testify unto this people the things which have been spoken by our fathers concerning the things which are to come.

And this is not all. Do ye not suppose that I know of these things myself? Behold, I testify unto you that I do know that these things whereof I have spoken are true. And how do ye suppose that I know of their surety?

Behold, I say unto you they are made known unto me by the Holy Spirit of God. Behold, I have fasted and prayed many days that I might know of these things of myself. And now I do know of myself that they are true; for the Lord God hath made them manifest unto me by his Holy Spirit; and this is the spirit of revelation which is in me.\(^3\)

Alma continued in superbly-worded statements to challenge the people to lay aside their sins and hearken to the voice of the good shepherd. He concluded with this explanation:

\(^1\)Alma 5:37. \(^2\)Alma 5:41. \(^3\)Alma 5:43-46. (Italics added.)
And now I, Alma, do command you in the language of him who hath commanded me, that ye observe to do the words which I have spoken unto you.

I speak by way of command unto you that belong to the church; and unto those who do not belong to the church I speak by way of invitation, saying: Come and be baptized unto repentance, that ye also may be partakers of the fruit of the tree of life.¹

Alma's teaching in Zarahemla was very effective, and order was restored in the church in that city.²

From Alma's approach in Zarahemla a present day teacher could learn possible strategy.

1. Remind your students of our ancestors in the church and how they were repeatedly led and delivered by God. Link that lesson of the forebears to the students themselves with the same line of logical reasoning as did Alma in Alma 5:6-14.

2. Not with the same prophetic authority of Alma, but rather in quoting or paraphrasing Alma and other prophets, question your students if they have been spiritually born of God, if they have received His image in their countenances, and if they have experienced a mighty change in their hearts.

3. Use Alma's test to see if one is spiritually reborn.

4. Use frequently the lesson concerning the good shepherd in essentially the same format as Alma gave it.

5. Bear testimony to your listeners that what you speak you know to be true of yourself because of the revelations of the Holy Spirit.

¹Alma 5: 61-62. (Italics added.)
²Alma 6:1-6.
6. Remind your students that priesthood authority speaks by way of commandment to the Church and by way of invitation to those who do not belong to the Church.

7. Phrase questions as did Alma in challenging, yet tactful ways. Ask all questions with the spirit of love and caring.

As mentioned previously, Alma proceeded from Zarahemla to Gideon in his reforming mission. In Gideon it appears, Alma was speaking to a people that were not as much lifted up in pride and unbelief as were those in Zarahemla.  

Because Alma spoke so firmly about baptism, the writer infers that there were many receptive nonmembers of the church in Gideon. Alma very graciously complimented the people in Gideon for their faithfulness and the heed which they gave his teaching. 

Alma took occasion to testify of the one thing more important than all other things: the Redeemer lives; He will soon come and dwell among His people; repent and prepare the way of the Lord.  

Alma then succinctly explained the mission of the Savior.

Alma then turned in his address to challenging the people. Within this challenge is some of the strongest spiritual force and logic pertaining to being baptized found anywhere in scripture:

Now I say unto you that ye must repent, and be born again; for the Spirit saith if ye are not born again ye cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore come and be baptized unto repentance, that ye may be washed from your sins, that ye may have faith on the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, who is mighty to save and to cleanse from all unrighteousness.

Yea, I say unto you come and fear not, and lay aside every sin, which doth bind you down to destruction, yea, come and go forth, and show unto your God that ye are willing to repent of

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1Alma 7:3-7.  
2Alma 7:3-7, 17-20, 26.  
3Alma 7:7-9.  
4Alma 7:10-13.
your sins and enter into a covenant with him to keep his commandments, and witness it unto him this day by going into the waters of baptism.1

Alma informed these apt listeners in Gideon that he had spoken so plainly so that he might awaken them to a sense of their duty to God and walk blameless before Him.2 He concluded his teaching with a very touching plea for their good works and that the Lord would bless them.

And now I would that ye should be humble, and be submissive and gentle; easy to be entreated; full of patience and long-suffering; being temperate in all things; being diligent in keeping the commandments of God at all times; asking for whatsoever things ye stand in need, both spiritual and temporal; always returning thanks unto God for whatsoever things ye do receive.

And see that ye have faith, hope, and charity, and then ye will always abound in good works.

And may the Lord bless you, and keep your garments spotless, that ye may at last be brought to sit down . . . in the kingdom of heaven to go no more out.

And now, may the peace of God rest upon you, and upon your houses and lands, and upon your flocks and herds, and all that you possess, your women and your children, according to your faith and good works, from this time forth and forever.3

Alma's teaching in Gideon may provide a pattern from which teachers in the Church today could benefit. Adequately paraphrased or quoted with sincere spirituality, this chapter could serve as an excellent lesson by itself. The following procedure, patterned after Alma's example, might be used.

1. Compliment students sincerely for their receptivity and acceptance of your message.

2. In like manner as Alma prepared his people for the first coming of Jesus Christ, prepare students for the second coming of the Lord. Indicate that the most important message of all is that the Redeemer lives.

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1Alma 7:14-15
2Alma 7:22.
3Alma 7:23-25, 27.
3. Challenge students according to their specific needs. Missionaries especially might benefit from Alma's approach as recorded in Alma 7:14-15 in challenging nonmembers to baptism.

4. In concluding an address or completing an important unit in teaching, offer a humble and loving entreaty for the welfare of your listeners.

Alma and Amulek to the People of Ammonihah

After very successful reforming missions in Zarahemla, Gideon, and Melek, Alma ran into a very stubborn group in the people of Ammonihah. Satan had obtained great hold upon their hearts, so that they would not hearken to the word preached by Alma. But Alma was equally as persistent in his righteous designs:

Nevertheless Alma labored much in the spirit, wrestling with God in mighty prayer, that he would pour out his Spirit upon the people who were in the city; that he would also grant that he might baptize them unto repentance.

But the people in Ammonihah still rejected him, and they even reviled him, spit upon him, and cast him out of their city.

Weighed down with great sorrow, Alma was journeying away from Ammonihah when an angel of the Lord appeared to him. Alma was commanded to return to the city and warn the people that they would be destroyed if they did not repent. Alma accordingly returned and was led this time to the home of Amulek, who independently of Alma was also visited by an angel. Together they spent many days preparing for their

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1Alma 8:9. 
2Alma 8:10. 
3Alma 8:13. 
4Alma 8:14-16. 
5Alma 10:7-9.
ministry of teaching repentance. Finally the word came to them to go forth. As the two did so, they were filled with the Holy Ghost and preserved by the power of God to preach and prophesy unto the people.

Alma spoke to the people first. No sooner had he begun to speak than the people began to contend with him. Paraphrased, here are their words:

Who are you? Do you suppose that we will believe the words of only one man, even if he were to prophesy that the earth would pass away? We won't even believe your words if you should prophesy that this great city should be destroyed in one day. Who is God that sends no more authority than one man to his people to declare the truth of such great and marvelous things?

The people were about to lay hands on Alma, when he boldly testified against them. He began by asking them if they had forgotten how God had led their forefathers such as Lehi out of the wilderness and out of the hands of their enemies. Indeed if it had not been for the matchless power and mercy of God, Alma reminded them, all of them would have been cut off from the earth a long time ago and perhaps would have been consigned to a state of endless misery and woe. Then with authority and boldness, Alma commanded the people in Ammonihah to repent. Unless they did repent, they would not inherit the kingdom of God and they would be utterly destroyed from off the face of the earth. With this command, Alma also referred to the Lord's words to Lehi about keeping commandments and prospering or not keeping commandments and being cut off from the presence of the Lord.

3See all of Alma ch. 9. 4Alma 9:1.
5See Alma 9:2-6. 6Alma 9:7-11.
7Alma 9:12. 8Alma 9:13; see 2 Nephi 1:9.
Alma then pointed to the Lamanites, showing that the Lord's word to Lehi had been verified in regard to them. Yet, Alma said, it would be more tolerable for the Lamanites in the day of judgment than for the people in Ammonihah, unless they would repent. The reason for this was that false traditions of their fathers had kept the Lamanites bound, but in the case of the Nephites, they had been favored with so much light and knowledge and knew better that they should not be sinning. The Lord would rather allow the Lamanites to destroy the wicked Nephites such as the wicked in Ammonihah rather than allow them to remain in such wickedness after having received so much light. But, Alma pointed out, so that they would not have to be destroyed, they were being called boldly unto repentance.

Alma next indicated that the Son of God would soon be coming to redeem those who would be baptized unto repentance through faith on His name. "Therefore, prepare ye the way of the Lord, for the time is at hand that all men shall reap a reward of their words according to that which they have been . . . ." Alma testified that his words were the voice of the angel crying unto the people.

In spite of the hatred of the people towards him, Alma pleadingly and with love invited his listeners to repent:

And now, my beloved brethren, for ye are my brethren, and ye ought to be beloved, and ye ought to bring forth works which are meet for repentance, seeing that your hearts have been grossly hardened against the word of God, and seeing that ye are a lost and a fallen people.

1 Alma 9:15-24. 
2 Ibid. 
3 Alma 9:25. 
4 Alma 9:26-27. 
5 Alma 9:28. 
6 Alma 9:29. 
7 Alma 9:30. (Italics added.)
Alma's new companion, Amulek, then took the floor to speak to the people. He began by explaining his noble lineage and that he was a man of important reputation in the community. He then bore witness to his conversion of the Spirit, his angelic call to the ministry, and his training from Alma. Then note the following:

And now, when Amulek had spoken these words the people began to be astonished, seeing there was more than one witness who testified of the things whereof they were accused, and also of the things which were to come, according to the spirit of prophecy which was in them.

But among the people of Ammonihah were some skilled lawyers, who sought to question these two servants of God, that through their cunning devices they might be able to find witness against Alma and Amulek that the two might be judged according to the law. Amulek recognized their evil designs and when they began to question him, he scathingly rebuked them, saying, "O ye wicked and perverse generation, ye lawyers and hypocrites, for ye are laying the foundation of the devil; for ye are laying traps and snare to catch the holy ones of God." Amulek pointed out that were it not for the prayers of the righteous who were in the land, the people would already have been visited with utter destruction. The people became angry with Amulek, but undauntingly he cried even mightier against their sins. Most importantly he said:

For behold, have I testified against your law? Ye do not understand; ye say that I have spoken against your law; but I have not, but I have spoken in favor of your law, to your condemnation.

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1 See all of Alma 10-11.  
2 Alma 10:2-4.  
3 Alma 10:5-11.  
4 Alma 10:12. (Italics added.)  
5 Alma 10:13-16.  
6 Alma 10:17.  
7 Alma 10:22-23.  
8 Alma 10:26. (Italics added.)
At this point the foremost of the lawyers, Zeezrom, countered Amulek in a one-on-one confrontation. Mormon pointed out that the motive of the lawyers was to get gain.¹ Here, paraphrased, is their dialogue:

Zeezrom: Will you answer me a few questions that I will put to you?

Amulek: Yes, if it is according to the Spirit of the Lord which is in me, because I will say nothing which is contrary to the Spirit of the Lord.

Zeezrom: Here are six onties of silver (money pieces that were of very high value). I will give all these to you if you deny the existence of a Supreme Being.

Amulek: You child of hell, why do you tempt me. Don't you know that the righteous do not yield to such temptations? Do you believe there is no God? I say to you, no, you know that there is a God, but you love that lucre more than Him. And you lied before God to me. You said you would give this great sum of money to me, when you intended to keep it yourself. Your only purpose was to have me deny the true and living God, so that you would have cause to destroy me. For this great evil you will have your reward.

Zeezrom: You say there is a true and living God?

Amulek: Yes, there is a true and living God.

Zeezrom: Is there more than one God?

Amulek: No.

Zeezrom: How do you know these things?

¹Alma 10:32.
Amulek: An angel has made them known to me.

Zeezrom: Who is He that will come? Is it the Son of God?

Amulek: Yes.

Zeezrom: Will He save His people in their sins?

Amulek: I say to you He will not, because it is impossible for Him to deny His word.

Zeezrom: (turning to the people) Remember what he has just said. He said there is but one God. Yet he says that the Son of God will come, but He will not save His people--as though he had authority to command God.

Amulek: You have lied. You said that I spoke as though I had authority to command God because I said He shall not save His people in their sins. I say to you again that He cannot save them in their sins, because I cannot deny His word. He has said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, how can you be saved unless you inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore you cannot be saved in your sins.

Zeezrom: Is the Son of God the very Eternal Father?

Amulek: Yes, He is the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth, and of all things which in them are. He is the beginning and the end, the first and the last. (Amulek then went on to declare the redemptive mission of the Savior and the conditions of the resurrection. When Amulek finished speaking, the people began to be astonished and Zeezrom began to tremble for fear.)

Alma 10:21-46
Alma, noting that the words of Amulek had silenced Zeezrom and had caught him in his deception, began himself to speak to Zeezrom to establish through his own testimony the words of Amulek. He unfolded the scriptures beyond that which Amulek had done.\(^1\) Alma pointed out to him that Zeezrom had lied to God, who knew all his thoughts. These thoughts were made known to Alma and Amulek by the Spirit. Zeezrom's plan was a plan of the Adversary. What Alma would say to him he desired to say to all those listening.\(^2\) Alma then indicated how all men will be judged, how their motives will be revealed as they stand before God.\(^3\) Alma, after his superlative explanation, once again with concern challenged all the people:

And now, my brethren, seeing we know these things, and they are true, let us repent, and harden not our hearts, that we provoke not the Lord our God to put down his wrath upon us in these his second commandments which he has given unto us; but let us enter into the rest of God, which is prepared according to his word.\(^4\)

Alma went on to clarify to his listeners the foreknowledge of God and the pre-existent priesthood calling of certain men.\(^5\) He then explained the ministry of angels in making known these glad tiding of great joy "in plain terms, that we may understand, that we cannot err."\(^6\)

Alma concluded his statements to the people of Ammonihah with an impassioned plea that only a humble servant of the Lord clothed with the Spirit could make:

\(^1\)Alma 12:1.  
\(^2\)Alma 12:3-5.  
\(^3\)Alma 12:6-37.  
\(^4\)Alma 12:37. (Italics added.)  
And now, my brethren, I wish from the inmost part of my heart, yea, with great anxiety even unto pain, that ye would hearken unto my words, and cast off your sins, and not procrastinate the day of your repentance;

But that ye would humble yourselves before the Lord, and call on his holy name, and watch and pray continually, that ye may not be tempted above that which ye can bear, and thus be led by the Holy Spirit, becoming humble, meek, submissive, patient, full of love and all long-suffering.

Having faith on the Lord; having a hope that ye may be lifted up at the last day and enter into his rest.¹

Many of the people believed in Alma's words, repented, and began to search the scriptures.² But the majority were angered because of the plainness of the words of the two servants and sought to destroy them.³ During the next several days Alma and Amulek were forced to endure severe privations. These included being bound, witnessing the burning of the scriptures and the true believers themselves, being spit upon and slapped, and being ridiculed by the evil judges and lawyers who were of the profession of Nehor. This these two servants endured with Christ-like dignity and courage.⁴ Eventually the walls of the prison fell, killing their accusers and causing the other wicked inhabitants of Ammonihah to fear exceedingly.⁵ In nearby Sidom, a penitent Zeezrom was healed and baptized by Alma and then began from that time on to preach to the people.⁶ Alma and Amulek also related the manner of their deliverance to the righteous converts from Ammonihah.⁷ A short time later the city of Ammonihah was destroyed by the Lamanites.⁸

The wicked, who could have many times repented, were now dead. The solemn words of Alma and Amulek were vindicated.

Few teachers today would be called upon to declare repentance unto a group of people and prophesy utter destruction upon them if they did not repent. Prophets and apostles have that responsibility. Therefore, the approach of Alma and Amulek to the citizens of Ammonihah cannot be generally duplicated. However, certain methods of these two outstanding teachers from the Book of Mormon serve as good models for teachers today.

Most teachers in the Church have authority to command people to repent. Without the use of unrighteous dominion, but with love and dignity, leaders and teachers should boldly call their listeners to repentance if need be. Alma successfully referred to Lehi's statement about keeping the commandments and subsequently prospering.¹ Teachers today should also make good use that law of God in their teaching. Alma's line of reasoning concerning the more severe condemnation for sinning after once having received the greater light² should be used frequently by teachers to Latter-day Saints today. Instructors today should challenge students to prepare the way of the Lord in the same manner as did Alma.

Amulek's contribution to this teaching confrontation is very intriguing. He provided a second witness of the sins of the people and of the doctrines about which Alma spoke. It is usually very profitable to have more than one witness to such grave declarations.

¹Alma 9:13; see also 2 Nephi 1:9. ²Alma 9:15-24.
This is given as one reason why missionaries go forth in pairs.¹ Amulek said that he was not speaking against the law of the people, but was speaking in favor of their law, to their condemnation.² It might be advantageous if teachers today would use that same approach. Judging from the account of Amulek's dialogue with Zeezrom, missionaries and other teachers faced with antagonists should not allow themselves to be intimidated with tempting financial offers or cunningly-worded doctrinal threats. Rather one should with dignity, humility, and yet powerful authority bear witness to what he knows is true. Amulek's presence of mind in this circumstance is an excellent example.

The example of Alma and Amulek suggests three other categories which might be profitable to teachers:

1. Teach doctrines by continuing to unfold the scriptures.
2. Seek for the power of the Spirit to comprehend the designs of those who would try to thwart the work of God.
3. Show an increase of love to those whom you teach, even if they have been certain enemies to you and the work.

Sons of Mosiah to the Lamanites

In the previous chapter the most successful mission of Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni to the Lamanites was described. We determined that for teachers to successfully present the Gospel message to others they must develop the power of God within them first through diligent spiritual preparation.³ One author, speaking about the missionary efforts of the sons of Mosiah, pointed out:

¹D&C 61:35
³See Sons of Mosiah in Chapter 3.
There appears to be a relationship between the power of God that a missionary or teacher has, and the conversion of the investigator to Jesus Christ. There also appears to be a relationship between conversion to Jesus Christ and remaining strong in the faith.  

Therefore, the writer presupposes that the strategies of the sons of Mosiah would have been to no avail if there had not been ample spiritual preparation beforehand.

Even though these missionaries taught many people on many different occasions, actually only three different teaching confrontations are described in the record concerning the Lamanite missionary effort. They are Ammon to King Lamoni and his people in the land of Ishmael, Aaron to the Amalekites, and Aaron to Lamoni's father.

The first thing Ammon did in the land of Ishmael was to offer to be a servant of the people and of the king.  

Next, at the water of Sebus where the Lamanite flocks were being scattered by intruders, Ammon recognized his opportunity to use the power of God to win the hearts of his fellow-servants, that he would lead them to believe in His words.  

Through Ammon's humble use of the power of God, the groundwork was laid for King Lamoni and his court to receive the gospel.  

Lamoni's heart was totally prepared to receive everything that Ammon would teach him.  

Ammon then calmly and logically through simple questions explained to Lamoni the existence of a God. It was necessary for Ammon

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3. Alma 17:26-39; especially v. 29.
4. See Alma 18:1-16.  
5. See Alma 18:17-23.
to at first speak in the terms that Lamoni could understand. Having established this important basis, Ammon began in earnest to teach all the necessary principles of the gospel to his most receptive student. He began with the creation of Adam and the fall of man and rehearsed all the holy scriptures and prophets down to the time Lehi left Jerusalem. Ammon then explained the rebellion of Laman and Lemuel and expounded the scriptures from the time Lehi left Jerusalem up to that point in time. Most importantly Ammon expounded unto the king the plan of redemption and the coming of Christ. Lamoni believed all his words. And because of Lamoni's conversion, many were also brought to a testimony of Jesus in the land of Ishmael. Ammon continued teaching the people of King Lamoni, exhorting them daily in things pertaining to righteousness.

Aaron's encounter with the Amalekites in the city of Jerusalem was totally unsuccessful. They were worshipping after the false order of the Nehors. They had become hardened in sin and transgression, after once having been enlightened by the Spirit of God. Aaron attempted to preach in their synagogues, but received contention on every side. Following are the questions put to Aaron by the Amalekites: Have you seen an angel? Why don't angels appear unto us? Are not this people as good as your people? Plus the Amalekites made several presumptuous claims: We have built sanctuaries to worship

1 Alma 18:24-25.
2 Alma 18:36-40.
3 See Alma 19.
4 Alma 21:23.
6 Alma 24:30.
7 Alma 21:5-6.
God. We believe that God will save all men. We do not believe in the foolish tradition that the Son of God will come to redeem mankind from their sins. We don't believe that anyone can know of things to come. As a response to these apostate contentions Aaron did what he could to give these people a chance to believe:

Now Aaron began to open the scriptures unto them concerning the coming of Christ, and also concerning the resurrection of the dead, and that there could be no redemption for mankind save it were through the death and sufferings of Christ, and the atonement of his blood. When Aaron saw that the people would not listen to his words, he departed from them. The third teaching confrontation described in the record was Aaron to the head Lamanite king in the land of Nephi. Ammon had previously prepared the spiritual soil for this king when he had graciously spared his life and showed him the power of God briefly on a previous occasion. This elder king, the father of Lamoni, was anxious to be taught. Between seeing Ammon and receiving Aaron's instruction, the king had been troubled concerning what the Spirit of the Lord was and other matters Ammon had referred to.

Here, even as Ammon had done with Lamoni, Aaron began by establishing the existence of an Almighty God. The king assented to his belief in this God and then said, "I desire that ye should tell me

1Alma 21:6-8  2Alma 21:9. (Italics added.)
3Alma 21:10-11.  4See Alma 20.
concerning all these things, and I will believe thy words."¹ The groundwork having been laid, Aaron could now really begin teaching:

And it came to pass that when Aaron saw that the king would believe his words, he began from the creation of Adam, reading the scriptures unto the king—how God created man after his own image and that God gave him commandments and that because of transgression, man had fallen.

And Aaron did expound unto him the scriptures from the creation of Adam, laying the fall of man before him, and their carnal state and also the plan of redemption, which was prepared from the foundation of the world, through Christ, for all whosoever would believe on his name.²

Aaron continued until he had outlined the entire plan of redemption.³

After Aaron's instruction, the king humbly asked, "What shall I do that I may have this eternal life of which thou hast spoken? . . . I will give up all that I possess, yea, I will forsake my kingdom, that I may receive this great joy."⁴ Aaron promised the king that if he would repent of his sins, and bow down and call upon God in faith, he would be granted this hope which he desired.⁵ The king's prayer is a classic example of a penitent person pleading for light:

O God, Aaron hath told me that there is a God; and if there is a God, and if thou art God, wilt thou make thyself known unto me, and I will give away my sins to know thee, and that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day.⁶

Having expressed this much faith, the king was naturally converted. Through his conversion and his subsequent ministering to the people, the king's household, his immediate subjects, and thousands in the entire Lamanite kingdom were also converted to the truth.⁷

⁷See Alma 22:19-23; 23.
From these three teaching confrontations of the sons of Mosiah with the Lamanites we observe the following procedure, which might also be useful for missionaries and teachers today:

1. Develop the power of God within yourself first through diligent spiritual preparation before you begin to teach.

2. Humbly seek to serve those whom you desire to teach.

3. Indicate to your listeners that you are true servants of God so that they will trust your teachings.

4. Prepare the spiritual receptivity of your students first so that they will desire to listen to you.

5. Begin with common terms so that your students will understand you.

6. Make certain your students understand the Being of God before you teach them the weightier principles.

7. Use the scriptures abundantly when outlining God's dealings with man from the beginning.

8. Clarify the mission of the Son of God, the plan of redemption, and the necessity of being born again.

9. Teach that when one prays in faith to God, he must be willing to give up his sins in order to obtain the knowledge sought in prayer.

10. Recognize the arguments of the Amalekites as ones used many times today by apostate people.

11. When teaching stiffnecked and contentious people, leave simple testimony and pure truth from the scriptures as your statement to them.
12. When a group of people reject totally your message (this would apply to missionaries, but not to all teachers), leave them and go to a group who might be more receptive.

Alma to Korihor

About eight years after Alma's mission to reclaim his people from their erroneous ways was completed, a man came into the land of Zarahemla who was an anti-Christ.¹ His name was Korihor. His intended purpose was "to preach unto the people against the prophecies which had been spoken by the prophets, concerning the coming of Christ."² Since there rightfully was no law against a man's beliefs, Korihor was allowed to preach as he pleased.³

Korihor went about preaching his perverted doctrines. Among them were the following: No man can know the things to come. Prophecy and religious belief are foolish traditions. You cannot know of things you cannot see. There is no atonement, because every man fares according to his genius and his strength. When a man is dead, that is the end of him. The priests yoke the people according to their traditions, dreams, whims, visions, and pretended mysteries. God has not been seen or known nor ever will be. You cannot know that there will be a Christ.⁴

Many people were led astray into immoralities by the teachings of Korihor.⁵ When Korihor went to the land of Jershon where the converted people of Ammon were residing, he was cast out, their being more

wise than many of the Nephites. Likewise in Gideon Korihor met with little success. Eventually, after having been brought before the leaders in Jershon and Gideon, Korihor was brought to confront Alma and the chief judge over the land. It was with Alma that Korihor ran into his hardest and last confrontation.

Korihor began immediately babbling his blasphemy. He reviled with great swelling words against the priests and teachers, accusing them of leading the people after the silly traditions of their fathers and glutting on the labors of the people. Alma countered by successfully defending the role of the priests and teachers. He even pointed out that Korihor himself knew that they received no gain and had been lying all along.

Alma then asked Korihor if he believed there was a God. Korihor answered no. Then said Alma:

Will ye deny again that there is a God, and also deny the Christ? For behold I say unto you, I know there is a God and also that Christ shall come.

And now what evidence have ye that there is no God, or that Christ cometh not? I say unto you that ye have none, save it be your word only.

Alma went on to say that he had all things as a testimony that God existed as well as did Korihor. Would he deny them? Alma said he knew that Korihor believed, but that he had a lying spirit, because he had put off the Spirit of God and had allowed the devil to have all power over him. Korihor was simply going about doing the devil's work.

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Satan-inspired as he now was, Korihor said to Alma that if the latter would show him a sign of God's power, he would believe Alma's words.¹ To which Alma replied:

Thou hast had signs enough; will ye tempt your God? Will ye say, Show unto me a sign, when ye have the testimony of all these thy brethren, and also all the holy prophets? The scriptures are laid before thee, yea, and all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator.²

Yet Korihor maintained that he would deny God, except he be shown a sign.³ Korihor had gone too far. His soul had to be destroyed rather than his being the means of bringing many souls to destruction. Alma with authority declared that Korihor would be struck dumb, if he denied again.⁴ Korihor backed down only slightly, taking an agnostic stance this time, but once again asked for a sign.⁵ Korihor was consequently struck dumb.⁶ He subsequently admitted that he had lied and had been led astray by the devil.⁷ But when he sought to have the curse taken away, Alma would not, knowing that Korihor would once again seek to lead away the hearts of the people.⁸ With the knowledge of what had happened to Korihor, those who had previously been led astray, repented, and once again were converted unto the Lord.⁹ Korihor, as a beggar, was run down and beaten until he was dead.¹⁰

¹Alma 30:43.
²Alma 30:44. (Italics added.)
³Alma 30:45.
⁴Alma 30:46-47.
⁵Alma 30:48.
⁶Alma 30:49-50.
⁷Alma 30:52-53.
⁸Alma 30:54-55.
⁹Alma 30:57.
Mormon added this commentary, "And thus we see the end of him who perverteth the ways of the Lord; and thus we see that the devil will not support his children at the last day, but doth speedily drag them down to hell."¹

The writer feels that possibly the story of Alma and Korihor was included in the sacred record to warn future readers of the perverted, yet subtle arguments of anti-Christ's, atheists, and agnostics. Furthermore teachers in the Church today might find from this confrontation certain methods that could be used in countering such false doctrines. Following are some suggestions from Alma's experience:

1. Defend with dignity the role of God's true chosen servants as opposed to false teachers.

2. If led by the Spirit, point out to the anti-Christ that he knows he is lying.

3. Bear your own testimony that you know that God lives and Christ will come.

4. Instead of trying to prove there is a God, ask the atheist what evidence he has that there is no God. That is, take the offensive rather than the defensive.

5. Point out that the anti-Christ is doing the devil's work.

6. If the accuser asks for a sign, tell him in essentially the same language as Alma 30:44 that he has had signs enough.

Alma and Amulek to the Zoramites

After the end of Korihor, Alma received tidings that the Zoramites were perverting the ways of the Lord and were bowing down to

¹Alma 30:60.
dumb idols. The Zoramites had separated themselves under Zoram, their leader, from the rest of the Nephites. It appeared as if they might enter into a league with the Lamanites. Alma was thus grieved because of their iniquity and also for the safety of the Nephites.\(^1\) Alma reasoned that the preaching of the word of God had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which is just and had a more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword. Therefore, he decided as high priest over the church to try teaching the word of God to reclaim the Zoramites.\(^2\) Alma took with him as teaching companions Ammon, Aaron, Himni (sons of Mosiah), Amulek, Zeezrom (converted lawyer from Ammonihah), and two of his sons, Shiblon and Corianton.\(^3\)

Alma and his brethren found the Zoramites in an amazingly distorted apostate condition. They were not observing the commandments and statutes of God according to the Law of Moses. They were not observing the performances in the church nor praying daily that they might not enter into temptation. They worshipped on a designated day of the week in their synagogues, but had no forms of worship on other days. They had a prayer tower, called the Rameumptom, in the center of the synagogue where one at a time they thanked God that they were elected to be better than all other peoples. They taught that God was a spirit and that there would be no Christ. They also spoke the same set prayers. Their hearts were set upon this world's goods and in their pride they lifted themselves up to great boasting.\(^4\) This gross wickedness caused Alma and his brethren to grieve even more.

\(^1\)Alma 31:1-4. \(^2\)Alma 31:5. 
\(^3\)Alma 31:6-7 \(^4\)Alma 31:9-25.
Even though Alma had many assistants in the ministry to the Zoramites, only the teaching confrontations of Alma and Amulek to these people are recorded. The teachings of these two brethren in Alma 32-34 are some of the most important doctrinal contributions in the Book of Mormon.

Before Alma attempted to teach the Zoramites, he was moved to cry unto the Lord in mighty prayer for their sakes. In this prayer he also prayed for his success and that of those assisting him in the ministry:

O Lord, wilt thou comfort my soul, and give unto me success, and also my fellow laborers who are with me—yea, Ammon, and Aaron, and Omner, and also Amulek and Zeezrom and also my two sons—yea, even all these wilt thou comfort, O Lord. Yea, wilt thou comfort their souls in Christ.

Wilt thou grant unto them that they may have strength, that they may bear their afflictions which shall come upon them because of the iniquities of this people.

O Lord, wilt thou grant unto us that we may have success in bringing them again unto thee in Christ.

After Alma's stirring prayer, he placed his hands upon his fellow laborers, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. When they separated themselves they took no thought of food, clothing, or shelter, placing their trust completely in God. Because Alma had prayed with such fervent faith, the Lord provided for them.

The brethren then began teaching the people in their synagogues, their houses, and even in their streets. It became apparent after much labor among the Zoramites that the only ones that would

1Alma 31:26-35.  
2Alma 31:32-34. (Italics added.)  
3Alma 31:36.  
4Alma 31:37-38.  
5Alma 32:1.
heed their words were the poor. The poor had been cast out of the synagogues and were despised by the rich because of their poverty. Their afflictions had truly humbled them in a preparation to receive the word. Alma turned his attention to teaching these. He told them how grateful he was that they had been cast out of the synagogues and were humble and seeking repentance.

Seeing his listeners were teachable, Alma decided to instruct them about developing faith. He pointed out that true faith does not consist of obtaining a miraculous sign from heaven, but rather developing a hope for things which are not seen, but which are true. He told them that they would not know of the surety of his words at first, but must progressively develop faith.

Alma, with superb teaching skill, then compared faith and its development to a seed. He explained five steps, as with a seed, in the developing of faith:

1. Let the seed be planted in your heart.
2. Experiment with the seed. Desire to believe and do what the word requires.
3. Do not cast the seed out by your disbelief.
4. Feel the swelling motions. Recognize you are receiving a witness that the seed is good.

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1Alma 32:2-7
2Alma 32:8-16.
3Alma 32:17-21.
4Alma 32:26 ff.
5Alma 32:28.
6Alma 32:27.
7Alma 32:28.
8Abid.
5. Nourish the seed with great care until it brings forth fruit. Endure in faith to the end that you may receive eternal life.¹

After delivering his powerful discourse, the people inquired of Alma how they might apply these principles, particularly how they might plant the seed of the word of God in their hearts.² Alma answered by explaining that they did not have to be in the synagogues to worship. He suggested that they ought to search the scriptures, particularly the words of Zenos where he spoke about the prayer of worship.³ Zenos' prayer is most beautiful and in essence expressed that one must pray with all his heart wherever he is and express supreme gratitude for the mercy of the Son of God.⁴ Alma claimed that if they had read the scriptures, they could not disbelieve on the Son of God.⁵ Alma cited also Zenock as a second prophet of old that has testified of the Son of God.⁶ He also referred to Moses and the type of Christ that was raised up in the wilderness.⁷ Alma ended with this loving plea:

And now, my brethren, I desire that ye shall plant this word in your hearts, and as it beginneth to swell even so nourish it by your faith. And behold, it will become a tree, springing up in you unto everlasting life. And then may God grant unto you that your burdens may be light, through the joy of his Son. And even all this can ye do if ye will. Amen.⁸

Amulek next took the stand to complement what Alma had said. He expressed amazement at the ignorance that the people exhibited pertaining to the coming of Christ. They had been taught bountifully

about Jesus before their dissension from the other Nephites.\(^1\) Amulek indicated that he and Alma had perceived that the greatest question in their minds was "whether the word be the Son of God, or whether there be no Christ."\(^2\) Amulek reminded his listeners that Alma had cited Zenos, Zenock, and Moses to prove that the word is in Christ unto salvation.\(^3\) Amulek then bore his own humble testimony:

And now, behold, I will testify unto you of myself that these things are true. Behold, I say unto you, that I do know that Christ shall come among the children of men, to take upon him the transgressions of his people, and that he shall atone for the sins of the world; for the Lord God hath spoken it.\(^4\)

Amulek went on to beautifully explain the atonement of Christ.\(^5\) This has become one of the best scriptural explanations anywhere. Most importantly Amulek taught them that they must have faith unto repentance and that they must not procrastinate the day of their repentance.\(^6\) He finished with the challenge to the poor of the Zoramites to be watchful unto prayer continually and to bear their many afflictions with patience and hope.\(^7\)

Alma and Amulek left after their teaching into the land of Jershon and were followed shortly later by their other brethren.\(^8\) Soon those that believed in the words of the missionaries were cast out of the land by the wicked and affluent Zoramites. They were warmly welcomed by the people of Ammon in Jershon and were ministered unto by Alma and his brethren.\(^9\)

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\(^1\)Alma 34:2-3.  \(^2\)Alma 34:5.  
\(^3\)Alma 34:6-7  \(^4\)Alma 34:8. (Italics added.)  
\(^5\)Alma 34:7-15.  \(^6\)Alma 34:15-38.  
\(^7\)Alma 34:39-41.  \(^8\)Alma 35:1-2  
\(^9\)Alma 35:3-9.
Following are suggestions to teachers today from the teaching mission to the Zoramites:

1. In a particularly hard assignment, make sure to have several witnesses to the truth.

2. Observe exactly what the false doctrines and practices of the people are before beginning to teach them.

3. Before beginning a teaching assignment, cry to the Lord in fervent prayer for the sake of the students and for the success of the teachers.

4. Special priesthood blessings are sometimes appropriate to obtain the needed Holy Spirit.

5. Place your trust in God rather than in the arm of the flesh.

6. Be willing to teach the people anywhere you can, in their places of worship, in their houses, and even in their streets.

7. Determine which group is best prepared to receive the word and focus your teaching upon them.

8. Explain the difference between false faith obtained through signs and true faith obtained through a spiritual process.

9. When teaching faith, use Alma's superbly expressed steps in showing the process for obtaining faith. Missionaries especially should master this teaching approach.

10. Use Zenos' words in explaining the proper prayer of worship.

11. Cite more than one prophetic witness to substantiate your claims about the divine role of Jesus Christ.

12. Perceive through the Spirit the major question in the minds of your students and speak specifically to that point.
13. Use Amulek's logical explanation in teaching about the atonement.

14. Emphasize the necessity of obtaining faith *unto repentance*.

15. Use Amulek's outstanding challenge to not procrastinate the day of repentance.

**Alma to His Three Sons**

Toward the end of his life, Alma was weighed down with sorrow concerning the wars, contentions, and iniquity of his people. For this reason he caused that his sons should be gathered together that he might give to each one his charge separately concerning their path in righteousness.\(^1\) Fortunately Alma was perceptive enough to recognize the necessity of counseling each one separately according to each's needs and propensities for good and evil.

Alma spoke first to his eldest son, Helaman. Alma's counsel to Helaman was divided into two portions. First was his personal direction to him and second was the charge concerning the sacred records and leading the affairs of the church as high priest.\(^2\)

Alma's personal counsel to Helaman is a literary masterpiece. Welch concluded that Alma utilized chiasmus in providing this spiritual direction to Helaman.\(^3\) Alma chapter 36 is composed in its entirety

\(^1\)Alma 35:15-16.

\(^2\)See Alma ch. 36 for the first and ch. 37 for the second.

\(^3\)Welch, op. cit., pp. 83-84.
in this genre. Welch's one-word description of Alma's presentation is "amazing." Furthermore, said Welch:

Two more points deserve comment: first that the contrast between agony and joy, which Alma would like to make as vivid as possible, is made explicit in verse 20, "my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain." Second, Alma places the turning point of his life at the turning point of the chapter, i.e., Christ belongs at the center of both.¹

Skillfully Alma implored his son to keep the commandments, to remember the captivity of the fathers and their deliverance, and to trust in God. Most significantly Alma poignantly recounted first the agony of his own conversion experience and then the joy of his conversion.²

After this personal touch Alma moved to forcefully instructing Helaman concerning the sacred nature of the records that he was to continue to preserve. His counsel is summarized with these words:

And now remember, my son, that God has entrusted you with these things, which are sacred, which he has kept sacred, and also which he will keep and preserve for a wise purpose in him, that he may show forth his power unto future generations.³

Alma warned Helaman also about the secret oaths, covenants, and agreements that perverted the Jaredite nation and that were found in the Jaredites' twenty-four plate record.⁴ Alma said:

Therefore ye shall keep these secret plans of their oaths and covenants from this people, and only their wickedness and their murders and their abominations shall ye make known unto them; and ye shall teach them to abhor such wickedness and abominations and

murders; and ye shall also teach them that these people were destroyed on account of their wickedness and abominations and their murders.

Turning to a more positive vein, Alma instructed Helaman as to what he should teach the people:

Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; teach them to humble themselves and to be meek and lowly in heart; teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Teach them to never be weary of good works, but to be meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls.¹

Alma next gave Helaman outstanding counsel about his personal relationship with the Lord;

O, remember, my son, and learn wisdom in thy youth; yea learn in thy youth to keep the commandments of God.

Yea, and cry unto God for all thy support; yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever.

Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let they heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day.²

Alma finished his instructions with Helaman by describing the beautiful symbolic significance of the Liahona, or the director which the Lord had prepared for Lehi.³ Touching are these tender words from a father to a son:

O my son, do not let us be slothful because of the easiness of the way; for so was it with our fathers; for so was it prepared for them, that if they would look they might live; even so it is with us. The way is prepared, and if we will look we may live forever.

And now, my son, see that ye take care of these sacred things,

¹Alma 37:29. (Italics added.) ²Alma 37:33-34.
yep, see that ye look to God and live. Go unto this people and declare the word, and be sober. My son, farewell.  

Alma turned next to counseling his second faithful son, Shiblon. As with Helaman, Alma instructed Shiblon to keep the commandments and to trust in the Lord in order to be delivered from afflictions. Alma commended his second son for his diligence, patience, and long-suffering which were exhibited among the Zoramites. Alma briefly bore testimony of his conversion and then said:

And now, my son, I have told you this that ye may learn wisdom, that ye may learn of me that there is no other way or means whereby man can be saved, only in and through Christ. Behold, he is the life and the light of the world. Behold, he is the word of truth and righteousness.  

Since Shiblon's role was to continue his teaching of the word of God, Alma offered these suggestions to him pertaining to that calling:

See that ye are not lifted up unto pride; yea, see that ye do not boast in your own wisdom, nor of your much strength. Use boldness, but not overbearance; and also see ye bridle all your passions, that ye may be filled with love; see that ye refrain from idleness. Do not pray as the Zoramites do, for ye have seen that they pray to be heard of men, and to be praised for their wisdom. Do not say: O God, I thank thee that we are better than our brethren; but rather say: O Lord, forgive my unworthiness, and remember my brethren in mercy—yea, acknowledge your unworthiness before God at all times. And may the Lord bless your soul, and receive you at the last day into his kingdom, to sit down in peace. Now go, my son, and teach the word unto this people. Be sober. My son, farewell.  

Finally Alma spoke to his son, Corianton. Alma was aware of Corianton's encounter with the sin of immorality in the land of the

1Alma 37:46-47. (Italics added.)  
2See Alma 38.  
3Alma 38:9.  
4Alma 38:11-15.
Zoramites. Consequently Alma spent more time with Corianton than with his other sons to carefully reprimand him to answer his questions, and to set him on the path to repentance and forgiveness.¹

Not only did Alma reprove Corianton for his immorality, but he also indicated the initial problem of Corianton in his ministry, that of boasting in his strength and wisdom. Alma very plainly explained to his son that his sexual sin was third in the category of crime in the eyes of God and that they could not be hidden from the Almighty.² Corianton was painfully reminded that when the Zoramites saw his straying conduct, they would not believe the words of Alma.³ Following is Alma's challenge to him to repent:

Now my son, I would that ye should repent and forsake your sins, and go no more after the lusts of your eyes, but cross yourself in all these things; for except ye do this ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God. Oh, remember, and take it upon you, and cross yourself in these things.

And I command you to take it upon you to counsel with your elder brothers in your undertakings; for behold, thou art in thy youth, and ye stand in need to be nourished by your brothers. And give heed to their counsel.

That ye turn to the Lord with all your mind, might, and strength; that ye lead away the hearts of no more to do wickedly; but rather return unto them, and acknowledge your faults and the wrong which ye have done.

Seek not after riches nor the vain things of this world; for behold, you cannot carry them with you.⁴

Alma reassured Corianton that Christ was just as interested in His children before His coming as He would be at His coming.⁵

¹See Alma 39-42.
²Alma 39:5-8.
³Alma 39:11-12.
⁴Alma 39:9-10, 13-14. (Italics added.)
⁵Alma 39:15-19.
For the next three chapters Alma gave superbly-worded instruction to his wayward son about the state of the soul between death and resurrection, the resurrection itself, the doctrine of restoration of good and evil, and the purposes of this probationary mortal existence. With each of these doctrines that Alma so ably clarified, he was responding to a specific question that Corianton had had in his mind concerning these doctrines.\(^1\) Mormon unquestionably retained these doctrinal expositions in the record so that readers in the last days could likewise understand these doctrines and have their questions answered.

That Alma still had considerable hope for his once-faltering son is plainly evident from his concluding positive challenge to Corianton:

> And now, my son, I desire that ye should let these things trouble you no more, and only let your sins trouble you, with that trouble which shall bring you down unto repentance.
> 0 my son, I desire that ye should deny the justice of God no more. Do not endeavor to excuse yourself in the least point because of your sins, by denying the justice of God; but do you let the justice of God, and his mercy, and his long-suffering have full sway in your heart; and let it bring you down to the dust of humility.
>
> And now, 0 my son, ye are called of God to preach the word unto this people. And now, my son, go thy way, declare the word with truth and soberness, that thou mayest bring souls unto repentance, that the great plan of mercy may have claim upon them. And may God grant unto you even according to my words. Amen.\(^2\)

From later evidence in the Book of Mormon we can see that Corianton heeded Alma's command to repent and then to preach the word of God unto the people.\(^3\)

\(^1\)Alma 40:1; 41:1; 42:1.  
\(^3\)Alma 49:30; 63:2, 10-11.
From Alma's example of teaching his sons, the writer has observed the following items which might be useful to fathers today in counseling their sons and daughters:

1. Cause each of your children to be individually brought to you for specific counsel and father's blessing.

One of the cardinal principles in the rearing of children is the recognition of their own individuality and the use of counsel appropriate to each child's needs. A parent must have the right relationship with each child if he is to help the child in establishing his goals.¹

2. As skillfully as possible, plead with each child to keep the commandments, to remember the sacrifices and deliverance of righteous fathers and to trust in the Lord.

3. With humble testimony recount your own conversion to your children, applying specific parts of that example to them.

4. Commend your children for fulfilling righteously the assignments given to them.

5. Instruct your children pertaining to specific assignments in the kingdom that they may have or may yet receive.

6. Do not emphasize the methods of sin, but rather the consequences of sin. Teach to abhor all wickedness and abominations.

7. When instructing your children on how to be good teachers in the Church, use essentially the same words as Alma did with Helaman and Shiblon in Alma 37:33-34 and 38:10-15.

8. Teach your children to learn wisdom in their youth and to learn in their youth to keep the commandments.

¹"A Father Counsels His Sons," Living Truths from the Book of Mormon, p. 226.
9. Teach your children to counsel with the Lord in all their doings in essentially the same words of Alma in Alma 37:36-37.

10. Challenge your children with love to look to God and live.

11. Reprove your children with sharpness when they have sinned and when moved upon by the Holy Ghost. Afterwards show to them an increase of love.\(^1\)

12. Explain carefully to your children the severity of the sexual sin.

13. Point out to your children that boasting in their wisdom or seeking after the vain things of this world are evil.

14. When so moved, instruct a wayward child to counsel with his older brothers who would be able to help him.

15. Assure your children that Christ is just as interested in His children now as He was at His first coming or as He will be at His second coming.

16. Explain with as much skill as possible the principles of the plan of salvation, making sure that your children understand that wickedness never was happiness.

17. Answer questions which your children have specifically in their minds.

18. Express positive hope for your children who have once strayed that they will yet repent and be useful in the Church.

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\(^1\)See D&C 121:43.
General Moroni to the Nephites

General Moroni, the great Nephite military leader, is not generally remembered for his teaching experiences. However, on one occasion when war was imminent and apathy among his countrymen would have been disastrous, Moroni exhibited superior skill as a teacher and as an inspirer of men.

Moroni was faced with unfortunate circumstances as the chief commander of the armies of the Nephites. Amalickiah was the leader of those who had rebelled against the preaching of Helaman and his brethren. Eventually with his cunning and his flattering words, Amalickiah had led away the hearts of many to want to destroy the church of God and the foundation of liberty of the Nephites which God had granted them.\(^1\) Of course, Moroni, who was a firm Christian, became angry with Amalickiah because of these serious contentions.\(^2\)

And it came to pass that he rent his coat; and he took a piece thereof, and wrote upon it—In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children—and he fastened it upon the end of a pole.\(^3\)

Moroni bowed himself to the earth with this "title of liberty" that he had made and prayed mightily to God that he would preserve the blessings of liberty upon the Nephites as long as there was a band of Christians remaining to possess the land.\(^4\) When he finished praying, Moroni designated the dwelling places of the Nephites "A chosen land, and the land of liberty."\(^5\)

\(^1\)Alma 46:1-10.  \(^2\)Alma 46:11.  \\
\(^3\)Alma 46:12.  \(^4\)Alma 46:13-17.  \\
\(^5\)Alma 46:17.
Moroni then went among the people waving his newly-made flag and cried with a loud voice:

Behold, whosoever will maintain this title upon the land, let them come forth in the strength of the Lord, and enter into a covenant that they will maintain their rights, and their religion, that the Lord God may bless them.\(^1\)

The people came together in answer to this challenge and rent their garments in token or in a covenant that if they transgressed the commandments of God or became ashamed to be Christians that the Lord would rend them as they had rent their garments.\(^2\)

This action by the people afforded Moroni a splendid opportunity to remind them of a significant symbolic reference to the coat that Father Jacob had made for his son Joseph:

Behold, we are a remnant of the seed of Joseph, whose coat was rent by his brethren into many pieces; yea, and now behold, let us remember to keep the commandments of God, or our garments shall be rent by our brethren, and we be cast into prison, or be sold, or be slain.

Yea, let us preserve our liberty as a remnant of Joseph; yea, let us remember the words of Jacob, before his death, for behold, he saw that a part of the remnant of the coat of Joseph was preserved and had not decayed. And he said—Even as this remnant of garment of my son hath been preserved, so shall a remnant of the seed of my son be preserved by the hand of God, and be taken unto himself, while the remainder of the seed of Joseph shall perish, even as the remnant of his garment.\(^3\)

Moroni subsequently determined which of the Nephites were willing to maintain their liberty against the Amalickiahites, and he caused that the "title of liberty" be hoisted upon every tower in the land of the Nephites.\(^4\)

Moroni's example should help teachers in the Church today to teach courageously the importance of maintaining the standard of liberty in this chosen land against wicked oppressors. The words which Moroni attached to his "title of liberty" should well be quoted as standards for all Latter-day Saints to honor. As was the case with Moroni, teachers in the Church should become solid Christians before undertaking to so firmly challenge and instruct students. The important reference to the remnant of the coat of Joseph should be understood and taught by teachers today.

Helaman II to his Two Sons

The outstanding contributions of Helaman to the work of the Lord were described in the previous chapter. None can be considered greater than the righteous influence he had through his special teachings upon his two sons, Nephi and Lehi. The subsequent work of Nephi and Lehi attest to the shield of faith that was built up for them in their youth by their father, Helaman.

All that Mormon tells us about Nephi and Lehi in their youth was that "they began to grow up unto the Lord." However, when Nephi and Lehi were preparing to spend the rest of their days preaching the word of God (which included the remarkable ministry to the Lamanites), these two remembered the words which their father, Helaman, had taught them. Many of the teachings of Helaman, but not all, were recorded by Mormon. All of his words were remembered to their benefit by his sons.

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1 Helaman 3:21.  
2 Helaman 5:5-14.  
3 Helaman 5:14.
Helaman began with his sons by simply urging them to keep the commandments of God. He then explained why he had given them the names of Nephi and Lehi:

Behold, I have given unto you the names of our first parents who came out of the land of Jerusalem; and this I have done that when you remember your names ye may remember them; and when ye remember them ye may remember their works; and when ye remember their works ye may know that it is said, and also written, that they were good.

Therefore, my sons, I would that ye should do that which is good, that it may be said of you, and also written, even as it has been said and written of them.1

Helaman's next desire was to implore his sons to not labor that they may boast, but rather to lay up for themselves a treasure in heaven and the precious gift of eternal life.2 He then told them to remember the words of King Benjamin that there is no other way or means to be saved than through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.3 Helaman recalled also with his sons the words of Amulek to Zezrom that the Lord would not come to redeem his people in their sins, but to redeem them from their sins because of repentance.4

Helaman's last recorded statement to his sons is this beautiful challenge and promise:

And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all of his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation whereon if men build they cannot fail.5

1Helaman 5:7-7. (Italics added.) 2Helaman 5:8.
3Helaman 5:9. 4Helaman 5:10-11.
5Helaman 5:12.
Fathers today might benefit if they heeded Helaman's example in teaching their sons.

1. Remind your sons of the importance of their name, in some cases their given names and certainly their surname. Tell them that when they think of their names to remember the works of their righteous ancestors and to strive to be eventually honored as they are.

2. Direct your sons to work hard, not for the glory of the world, but rather to lay up precious treasures in heaven through their labor.

3. Take your sons frequently aside and lovingly describe for them the mission of the Savior. Teach them to build their foundation upon Him to ward off the wiles of the devil. Conditions in the world today are so challenging that young sons need this counsel often.

4. Remind your sons that Christ will only redeem them from their sins through repentance and not in their sins.

Nephi, Son of Helaman II, To The Wicked in Zarahemla

Nephi's preaching to the people in Zarahemla is an unusual teaching confrontation. His listeners remained hard-hearted in spite of the power of God within him and the amazing prophecies uttered by his mouth. It took a famine to humble these inhabitants in Zarahemla, but after a few short years they unbelievably reverted back to their previous wickedness. Nephi's purpose on this occasion was the same unfortunate one that many other prophets have had to fulfill, that of declaring that the people must repent or great destructions would come upon them.¹

¹See Helaman 7:22.
As described in the previous chapter, Nephi and Lehi had experienced tremendous success among the Lamanites, but were rejected, even after much hard labor, by the Nephites. Seeing this iniquity that had come upon his fellow Nephites in not many years, Nephi was swollen in sorrow. Nephi had bowed himself upon his garden tower next to the main highway in Zarahemla where he had exclaimed in the agony of his soul his lamentation about the decadent condition of his people.  

Certain men passed by and seeing Nephi pouring out his soul to God, ran and informed others of this spectacle. Multitudes gathered, wondering what Nephi was doing. Recognizing a perfect opportunity to admonish the people, Nephi began speaking.

Nephi informed his listeners that unless they repented they would perish. In graphic language he described the consequences of their iniquities. While addressing the people Nephi asked them the following soul-searching question: "How could you have given away to the enticing of him who is seeking to hurl away your souls down to everlasting misery and endless wo?" "Why has he forsaken you?" "Why will ye die?" "O, how could you have forgotten your God in the very day that he has delivered you?" Nephi declared in this portion of his admonitions that he was not saying these things of himself, but that God had made them known unto him.

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1 Helaman 7:6-10.  
3 Helaman 7:22, 28.  
4 Helaman 7:16.  
5 Helaman 7:17.  
6 Ibid.  
7 Helaman 7:20.  
8 Helaman 7:29.
Many of the wicked judges of the community, who also belonged to the secret Gadianton band, began stirring up the populace to disbelieve Nephi and to have him taken captive.\(^1\) However, there were some in the audience that believed Nephi, realizing that he was a good man and probably a prophet. They demanded that Nephi be left alone.\(^2\) Nephi, seeing that he had gained the favor of some and that the others feared to lay hands on him, began once again to speak to the multitudes around his tower.

Nephi undertook at this time, as many outstanding teachers do, to give his listeners a review of God's influence in the affairs of his chosen people. He, as many other prophets before him had done, referred to Moses' parting of the Red Sea and the Israelites walking through upon dry ground as evidence of the power of God. And if God had given a man (Moses) such power, Nephi said, why would he not give to him (Nephi) power to know the judgments that would come upon them unless they repent?\(^4\) Nephi pointed out that the people were not only denying his words by reviling him, but also denying the words of the fathers, including Moses, who spoke so much concerning the coming of the Messiah. Nephi mentioned the brazen serpent experience of Moses as evidence that Moses taught faith in the Son of God.\(^5\) Nephi mentioned that all the prophets had testified of Jesus Christ and cited as examples to his listeners the names of Abraham, Zenos, Zenock, Ezias, "

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\(^1\) Helaman 8:1-7.  
\(^2\) Helaman 8:7-9.  
\(^3\) See Helaman 8:11-22.  
\(^4\) Helaman 8:11-12.  
Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lehi, and Nephi. Here is Nephi's explanation of the importance of these many prophetic witnesses of Christ:

And now, seeing ye know these things and cannot deny them except ye shall lie, therefore in this ye have sinned, for ye have rejected all these things, notwithstanding so many evidences which ye have received; yea, even ye have received all things, both things in heaven, and all things which are in the earth, as a witness that they are true.

But instead of laying up for themselves treasures in heaven, Nephi indicated that the people were ripened in their gross wickedness, and everlasting destruction was at their doors. Indeed, Nephi surprisingly revealed through the Spirit, that the chief judge had just been murdered by his brother, who sought the judgment-seat.

Through a series of events, the people in Zarahemla discovered that Nephi's prophecies concerning the murder and murderer of the chief judge were true in ever particular. But at first Nephi's spiritual authenticity was in question. While bound, he chastized his accusers thusly:

O ye fools, ye uncircumcised of heart, ye blind, and ye stiff-necked people, do ye not know how long the Lord your God will suffer you that ye shall go on in this your way of sin?

O ye ought to begin to howl and mourn, because of the great destruction which at this time doth await you, except ye shall repent.

As it became clear that Nephi had spoken the truth as it had been revealed to him from God, there arose division among the people, some believing him and others not.

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1Helaman 8:16-20, 22.  
2Helaman 8:24. (Italics added.)  
3Helaman 8:25-28.  
4See Helaman 9.  
5Helaman 9:21-22.  
While pondering upon the things which the Lord had shown unto him and also upon the wickedness of the Nephites, the voice of the Lord came unto him. Nephi was commended for his unwearyingness in declaring the word. He was promised that he would be made mighty in word, deed, faith, and works and that he could call upon the Lord for anything in righteousness.¹ So Nephi did not rest in his labors, but went from multitude to multitude declaring the word of God.² Once again he warned that if they did not repent, they would be smitten unto destruction.³ Despite the power of God which was in Nephi which also preserved him, the people did not hearken to his words. Contentions arose where people began slaying each other with the sword.⁴ Thus we can see that one of the greatest teachers in the Book of Mormon, Nephi, son of Helaman, was not successful through his teaching in converting the people, but fulfilled courageously his role to preach repentance.

To the prophets and apostles fall the responsibility of declaring repentance to a wicked people, warning them that if they do not repent they will reap destruction. Never has the Lord destroyed a people without first sending his servants to warn them of their evil doing. Occasionally under the direction of prophets and apostles, missionaries and other representatives in the Church will have the grave assignment to warn a wicked people to repent. It is the responsibility of all teachers to teach primarily repentance.⁵ Nephi's righteous example should help teachers today in this regard. Such questions

as Nephi asked could be used in the more difficult situations. Always teachers who are reviled could state that their listeners are also denying the testimonies of all the holy prophets. With all teachers it is usually a good idea to remind students of God's dealing with his people in history, citing the testimonies of prophets in scripture.

Samuel the Lamanite to the Nephites

About 15 years after Nephi had spoken to the multitudes in Zarahemla, the Lord sent in another prophet with a similar mission to likewise warn the people. The Nephites had temporarily repented, having been motivated for a famine, but had quickly returned in a few years into even deeper degradation. The Lord's messenger to Zarahemla this time was Samuel, a converted Lamanite. Incidentally, Nephi was still living, and he baptized those who favorably responded to Samuel's teachings.¹

The people had not interest in listening to Samuel, but he was not to be denied. He climbed upon a wall to teach them.² Samuel carefully outlined the need to repent for the Nephites and the many short-term and long-term consequences if they did not.³ The gist of his message is included in these two verses:

Therefore, thus saith the Lord: Because of the hardness of the hearts of the people of the Nephites, except they repent I will take away my word from them, and I will withdraw my Spirit from them, and I will suffer them no longer, and I will turn the hearts of their brethren against them.

And four hundred years shall not pass away before I will cause that they shall be smitten; yea, I will visit them with the sword and with famine and with pestilence.⁴

¹Helaman 16:1, 4-5. ²Helaman 13: 2-4.
Significantly, Samuel lectured the people about accepting the words of prophets:

Yea, wo unto this people, because of this time which has arrived, that ye do cast out the prophets, and do mock them, and cast stones at them, and do slay them, and do all manner of iniquity unto them, even as they did of old time.

And now when ye talk, ye say: If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets; we would not have stoned them, and cast them out.

Behold ye are worse than they; for as the Lord liveth, if a prophet come among you and declareth unto you the word of the Lord, which testifieth of your sins and iniquities, ye are angry with him; and cast him out and seek all manner of ways to destroy him; yea, you will say that he is a false prophet, and that he is a sinner, and of the devil, because he testifieth that your deeds are evil.¹

Samuel then explained that they would accept as a prophet anyone who told them they could do as they pleased.² Then came Samuel's most important question: "How long will ye choose darkness rather than light?"³

Samuel explained that after the prophesied destructions would come upon them, they would lament and would cry to the Lord to take His anger from them.⁴ But by then, Samuel solemnly exclaimed:

... your days of probation are past; ye have procrastinated the day of your salvation until it is everlastingly too late, and your destruction is made sure; yea, for ye have sought all the days of your lives for that which ye could not obtain; and ye have sought for happiness in doing iniquity, which thing is contrary to the nature of that righteousness which is in our great and Eternal Head.⁵

Samuel turned in the next phase of his address to prophesying about the birth of Christ which would be five years hence, and the death of Christ, and the signs which would attend both His birth and death


⁵Helaman 13:38. (Italics added.)
in that land. Samuel also spoke about the difference between physical and spiritual deaths and the resurrection. After explaining the significance of the signs attending the Lord's crucifixion, Samuel made clear that the individual would bring upon himself his own condemnation by exercising his free will to choose good or evil.

In the last phase of Samuel's message, the prophet compared the contemporary situation between the then righteous Lamanites and the then wicked Nephites. The Lamanites were being blessed because they had believed the words of the prophets and had exercised faith unto repentance, which had brought about a change of heart in them. But Samuel reminded the people of Nephi that the Lord loved them as well, saying that "in the days of their iniquities hath he chastened them because he loveth them." Samuel finished by quoting the Lord:

And now behold, saith the Lord, concerning the people of the Nephites. If they will not repent, and observe to do my will, I will utterly destroy them, saith the Lord, because of their unbelief notwithstanding the many mighty works which I have done among them; and as surely as the Lord liveth shall these things be, saith the Lord.

Samuel was forced to flee for his life, because most of the Nephites did not believe his words and sought to kill him. Samuel did not return to the Nephites again. Fortunately there was a group of believers converted whom Nephi led until the birth of Jesus Christ five years later. Those who rejected Samuel's words used interesting
tactics to persuade people not to believe Samuel. They ascribed Samuel's power to the devil; they enlisted followers to spread the opposition effort; they explained away miracles; they made faith appear to be a product of tradition and ignorance; they questioned the motives of the righteous servants; and they taught the people to rationalize in matters of faith.

As with the previous case of Nephi teaching in Zarahemla, teachers today can learn from Samuel the fortitude necessary to teach repentance. Teachers should use Samuel's statement about accepting the words of prophets now as well as in the past. They should also point out that if individuals continue to persist in their wicked ways, especially after they have been warned to repent, that a time could come when it would be everlastingly too late to repent and their destruction would be made sure. A very good question to ask is the one Samuel used: "How long will you choose darkness rather than light?" Sometimes carefully pointing to a group of people whom the Lord has blessed and explaining the reasons why they have been blessed will help students understand the benefits of repenting themselves. Finally, a teacher should be aware of Satan-inspired tactics to discredit the words of a true messenger.

Jesus to the Multitudes and His Disciples

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is the grand Exemplar and the Master Teacher, to Whom all servants in His Kingdom look for in-

1Helaman 16:6.  
2Helaman 16:15-16.  
3Helaman 16:17-19.  
4Helaman 16:20.  
5Helaman 16:20-21.  
piration and guidance. But because He is divine and because we mortals have merely limited perspective we cannot comprehend nor totally appreciate His capacities. His teaching approach cannot possibly be fully understood. Jesus, however, did give this direction to his disciples, "Therefore, what manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am."¹

Jesus was not confronted with enemies in the Book of Mormon setting who would attempt to discredit Him as He was in Jerusalem and Galilee on the eastern hemisphere. Those Nephites and Lamanites who were able to abide His coming to the land of America had been righteous enough to be spared from the devasting destructions which accompanied Christ's crucifixion. Therefore, from the Book of Mormon frame of reference, the Savior was teaching only those who were poor in spirit who came to Him and who were hungering and thirsting after righteousness. As a result, some of the superlative teaching methods used by Jesus in confounding the Pharisees and Scribes in the Bible were not needed nor used on the western hemisphere. We can mostly learn from His compassion and the emphasis He placed upon His various teachings from Jesus' teaching confrontation with His followers in America.

Jesus' teachings in the Book of Mormon gave to His listeners and to mankind who would later read these words the pattern to the highest level of living to which they may attain. This level was celestial and deeply spiritual. It involved becoming master of oneself, even as Christ had achieved complete self-mastery. Jesus said,

¹3 Nephi 27:27.
"Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine unto the world. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do."¹

Jesus clarified to His listeners that the Law of Moses had been done away and that all things had become new. The law had indeed in Him been given and also fulfilled.² For this reason a new baptism according to the new order had to be instigated.³ Jesus said, "Behold, I am the law, and the light. Look unto me, and endure to the end, and ye shall live; for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life."⁴

In order to establish the pattern for celestial living, Jesus retaught the Sermon on the Mount in essentially the same format as He had done previously in Galilee.⁵ The "beatitudes" are the beginning of this most famous of all sermons. In the Book of Mormon account two verses precede the first beatitude of the biblical account. Therein the Lord explained the necessity of accepting the gospel, being baptized, and receiving the Holy Ghost prior to attempting to live according to the more spiritual demands of the Sermon on the Mount.⁶ Each of the succeeding eight beatitudes provides, then, a successive step in man's spiritual growth. Jesus went on to teach the necessity of

¹3 Nephi 18:24. (Italics added.)
⁴3 Nephi 15:9. (Italics added.)
⁵See 3 Nephi 12:14.
mastering oneself in matters of anger, lust divorce, oath-making, and response to evil-doers. Purity of purpose was taught by the Lord in the areas of alms-giving, praying, fasting, forgiving, and serving. Jesus' concluding statements in the Sermon on the Mount were about righteous judgment and doing according to the teachings of the Lord after having received them.

Jesus healed the sick, blessed the little children, and prayed before the multitudes in subsequent marvelous and touching scenes. The Lord also taught His followers His provision for their continual self-renewal through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He also emphasized the necessity of constant prayer, individually, in families, and in meetings, lest they fall captive to the devil. One method of the Savior which stands out in His teaching these loyal followers is His requesting them to ponder that which they have received.

Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand, and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again.

The children of God are a covenant people, having entered into a covenant relationship with Jesus Christ. During the Savior's visit among the Nephites, He spoke to them at length about the Abrahamic covenant. Four areas of emphasis were taught by Jesus about this

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13 Nephi 17, 19.
23 Nephi 18: 1-12.
33 Nephi 18:15-23.
43 Nephi 17:3. (Italics added.)
covenant: the importance of the scriptures in revealing the covenant, the Savior's prayer for His covenant people, the nature of the covenant, and the fact that God fulfills His promises. Jesus also saw fit to speak concerning the Gentiles, describing their destiny—their rewards if they are faithful and punishments if they are not. After recording Jesus' words Mormon was likewise moved to give some supplementary warnings to the Gentiles, to whom Jesus' words would also come.

Finally, Jesus Christ, in His ministry in America, taught His chosen Twelve apart from the multitudes about the establishment of the Church and its functions, the fulness of His "gospel," and the granting to them of their righteous desires.

Thus from all of the teachings of the Savior on the western hemisphere and from all that the prophets recorded by inspiration on the sacred plates it can be said that the Book of Mormon contains "the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

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1 See Chapter 36 in Living Truths from the Book of Mormon.
2 3 Nephi 20:11-12; 23:1-2, 5, 11-14; 24; 25; 26:2, 9-12.
4 3 Nephi 20:21-27.
7 3 Nephi 29-30.
8 3 Nephi 11:18-41; 12:1; 18:36-37; 27:1-12; Moroni 1-6.
10 3 Nephi 28.
From Jesus' teaching confrontation with His people in the Book of Mormon a modern instructor might learn to emphasize the following aspects in His teaching in the Church:

1. One should love unreservedly those whom he is called to teach.

2. Use Jesus Christ as the Light, after Whom all should pattern their lives.

3. Teach that all must become masters of themselves and their natural evil tendencies to enter back into God's presence.

4. Teach the difference between the old and the new covenants and their respective importance.

5. Teach that spirituality comes in successive steps as described in the beatitudes.

6. Teach the purity of purpose in performing all functions in Church activity.

7. Teach the difference between righteous and unrighteous judgment.

8. Teach the importance of doing according to what the Savior teaches to build a firm foundation.

9. Teach the Savior's provision for weekly self-renewal through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

10. Teach the necessity of praying always to avoid Satan's traps.

11. Teach students to go to their homes and ponder that which they have been taught to properly understand it. Further instruct them to prepare their minds to receive more the next day (or next week, etc).
12. Teach the necessity of studying the scriptures to understand God's covenant with the House of Israel.

13. Teach that God will assuredly fulfill all His covenants with the House of Israel in glorious ways.

14. Teach the proper destiny of the Gentiles.

15. Teach the proper government and function of the Church of Jesus Christ.

16. Teach what Christ's "gospel" actually is and that the fulness of the gospel is contained in the Book of Mormon.

Mormon and Moroni to Future Generations

As was mentioned in the previous chapter Mormon and his son, Moroni, did have contemporary teaching experiences, but that their primary stewardship was to provide scriptural evidence of the divinity of Jesus for readers in the last days. These readers are from primarily three groups: the Lamanites, the Gentiles, and the Jews. In this assignment they succeeded magnificently, probably having been foreordained to that role before they were born. This section will not rehash everything these two prophets taught, but rather it will study the approaches or methods used.

Having seen our day, Mormon and Moroni could properly relate to the needs and conditions of our modern society. One author expresses the ability of these seers in this manner:

Through the power of vision and prophecy, these writers were shown the people of our day, for whom they were writing their records. Thus, from the voluminous records at their disposal,

1Mormon 8:34-35.
they were able to select those principles and experience which would be most useful in helping us to meet our challenges and solve our problems.\(^1\)

With so many people today seeking what they consider to be the revelant answers to life's perplexing problems, Mormon and Moroni through inspiration were able to take a history spanning more than two thousand years and produce doctrinally-consistent messages that are revelant in this nuclear age.

Mormon's spiritual greatness amidst his decadant fellow-Nephites was described in Chapter 3. Part of Mormon's success in reaching out to future readers was his portrayal of the downfall of his people and his shining example throughout in maintaining his solid relationship with the Lord.

It is apparent from his writings that Mormon was instructed by the Lord to warn us. His gruesome story of blood and carnage was not intended just to entertain us. The account is a warning. Mercy cannot rob justice; there will be an accounting. Mormon was to use the collective accounting rendered by the Nephite nation as a whole to emphasize the individual accounting we will each be called upon to make.\(^2\)

Mormon had a sense of urgency in his words as he informed the world's inhabitants that they themselves are responsible for their actions:\(^3\)

And these things doth the Spirit manifest unto me; therefore I write unto you all. And for this cause I write unto you, that ye may know that ye must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, yea, every soul who belongs to the whole human family of Adam;

\(^1\)Living Truths from the Book of Mormon, p. 319.

\(^2\)Ibid. p. 297.

\(^3\)See Mormon 3:16-22.

\(^4\)Mormon 3:20.
and ye must stand to be judged of your works, whether they be good or evil.¹

Mormon took opportunity to comment in his history of the people of the sad consequences which attended their corruption. Wickedness produces its own punishment:

But, behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished; for it is the wicked that stir up the hearts of the children of men unto bloodshed.²

Mormon was deeply concerned about the Lamanites of our day and took opportunity to admonish them in the path of salvation.³ He predicted that they would be cared for by some Gentiles and driven by some others, but also if the Gentiles did not repent, the Lamanites would be a source of chastisement to them.⁴

Mormon used several approaches in his responsibility to abridge the entire Nephite record to insure that the abridgment would be a witness of Christ and would contain the fulness of His gospel. One method is his quoting directly from some of the outstanding doctrinal sermons which were delivered by the prophets who came before him. Benjamin's sermon to his people,⁵ Alma's address to the people in Zarahemla,⁶

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¹Mormon 3:20
²Mormon 4:5.
⁴Mormon 5:8-24.
⁵Mosiah ch. 2-5.
⁶Alma ch. 5.
and Amulek's doctrinal explanation to the Zoramites are readily-
recognizable examples of this method.

Another approach used by Mormon is his abridgment was to use
the words, "thus we see," to explain what principle(s) could be
learned from the events he had just described. From the writer's
observation these occurred only in the books of Alma and Helaman, where
most of Mormon's historical narrative occurs. Following are some ex-
amples:

After telling of Amalickiah's insurrection, Mormon stated:

Thus we see how quick the children of men do forget the Lord
their God, yea, how quick to do iniquity, and to be led away by the
evil one.
Yea, and we also see the great wickedness one very wicked man
can cause to take place among the children of men.

After describing the missionary success of Helaman, son of
Helaman, and his helpers, Mormon tells his readers;

Thus we may see that the Lord is merciful unto all who will,
in the sincerity of their hearts, call upon his holy name.
Yea, thus we see that the gate of heaven if open unto all,
even to those who will believe on the name of Jesus Christ, who
is the Son of God.

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1Alma ch. 34.

2For other directly quoted sermons or messages see Mosiah 12-16,
Mosiah 18, Mosiah 23, Mosiah 29, Alma 7, Alma 9, Alma 10-11, Alma 12-13,
Alma 26, Alma 29, Alma 32-33, Alma 36-37, Alma 38, Alma 39-42, Alma 60,

3See Alma 19:36; 24:19, 27, 30; 28:13-14; 30:60; 46:8-10;

4Alma 46:8-9

5Helaman 3:27-38.
Concerning the Nephite cycle of constantly returning to their wicked ways, Mormon lamented:

And thus we can behold how false, and also the unsteadiness of the hearts of the children of men; yea, we can see that the Lord in his great infinite goodness doth bless and prosper those who put their trust in him.

And thus we see that except the Lord doth chasten his people with many afflictions, yea, except he doth visit them with death and with terror, and with famine and with all manner of pestilence, they will not remember him.\(^1\)

Similar to the above method, but not using the same words, Mormon very often in his abridged account provided editorial comments or annotations pertaining to the events he was describing.\(^2\) He sometimes explained causes and effects in these comments, especially as the situation pertaining to either obeying or disobeying the commandments.

Following are two examples from both ends of the obedience spectrum:

Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this--Satan had great power, unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world.\(^3\)

And there were no envyings, nor strife, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.\(^4\)

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\(^1\) Helaman 12:1,3.


\(^3\) 3 Nephi 6:15.

\(^4\) 4 Nephi 16.
Finally, Mormon used explanatory comments to help his readers understand the background or the environment to the historical situation he wanted to retell.\(^1\) Sometimes these explanations were lengthy; often they were only one verse. Most notable of these explanations were the reckoning of the Nephite coin system,\(^2\) some geographical designations of the living places for the Nephites and Lamanites,\(^3\) the expansion of the Nephites through all the land and their methods of building,\(^4\) the reasons why Mormon did not write more of what Jesus had spoken,\(^5\) and the experiences and background to the three Nephites who were translated.\(^6\)

Turning to Moroni, we note that he originally did not intend to add to the admonitions to future generations that his father, Mormon, had already engraved on the plates. Moroni at first only briefly finished the record of his father, explaining that he was the only survivor of the Nephite nation which was destroyed. He then was hiding the record up to the Lord.\(^7\) But it appears, that after a few years of wandering Moroni was moved to once again write more on the sacred

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1 Some of these are Alma 11:1-20; 14:16; 22:1, 27-35; 51:10; 59:12; Helaman 2:14; 3:3-16; 4:22-26; 6:10-13; 3 Nephi 3:19; 5:8-11; 26:11-12; 28:24-40; 4 Nephi 23.


4 Helaman 3:3-16.

5 3 Nephi 26:11-12

6 3 Nephi 28:24-40.

plates, this time leaving many instructions to the people of the last
days. Moroni decided also that he should include an abridged account
of the Jaredite nation who were destroyed anciently in the north
country. Finally, Moroni, seeing after thirty-six years of wandering
that he had not yet perished, decided to write more that perhaps would
be of worth to the Lamanites in some future day.

Some time during Moroni's wanderings, the Lord showed him in
vision the events of the last days, especially those which would sur-
round the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Behold, the Lord hath shown unto me great and marvelous things
concerning that which must shortly come, at that day when these
things shall come forth among you.

Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet are not.
But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your
doing.

To prove his point, Moroni in the last part of Mormon chapter 8 very
vividly and accurately describes the wicked practices of the people in
the last days.

In Mormon chapter 9 is Moroni's address to the unbelievers in
the last days and his sure testimony to them of Christ. One signifi-
cant statement from that stirring discourse is the following:

And then cometh the judgment of the Holy One upon them; and
then cometh the time that he that is filthy shall be filthy still;
and he that is righteous shall be righteous still; and he that is
unhappy shall be unhappy still.

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1 See Mormon 8:14-9:37.
2 See the Book of Ether, especially 1:1.
3 See Book of Moroni, especially 1:4.
4 Mormon 8:34-35. (Italics added.)
5 See Mormon 8:26-41.
6 Mormon 9:14.
As was mentioned in Chapter 3 of this study, Moroni took many opportunities in the Book of Ether to editorially comment on crucial issues that pertained to his readers in the last days. Thus Moroni's approach in abridging records is the same as that of his father, Mormon.

While writing his own book, Moroni apparently senses that the discipline and procedures of the Nephite church were omitted and felt that they would be helpful to future generations, especially to the Lamanites.

After Moroni discussed ordinances and procedures in the Church he introduced a sermon on faith, hope and charity which had been given by his father many years ago. It is no coincidence that this sermon should follow a discussion of the Church procedures. Mormon addressed his sermon to members of the Church.

In this same sermon, Moroni quoted Mormon as saying that ordinances should be performed with "real intent." Also pertaining to ordinances, Moroni quoted an epistle from Mormon concerning repentance and infant baptism.

In Moroni's concluding chapter addressed to future generations, he urged all readers to gain a testimony of the entire sacred record, to take advantage of spiritual gifts, and to become perfected in Christ. His last words in love to his readers are:

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1 See Ether 4:5-19; 5; 12:6-41; 13.
2 See Chapter 3 under Moroni and Moroni 1-6.
3 Living Truths from the Book of Mormon, p. 305.
4 Moroni 7:6-11.
5 See Moroni 8.
6 See Moroni 10.
And now I bid unto all, farewell. I soon go to rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead. Amen.¹

Teachers in the Church today will obviously not be writing scriptural material for future consumption, except for a Book of Remembrance for use primarily in the family. But a few principles of instruction can be gleaned from the teaching confrontation of Mormon and Moroni to future generations. Teachers should pick and choose those stories, experiences, quotations, and maxims that would best fit the needs of their students. As did Mormon, teachers could by their example show students how to successfully live in the wicked world but not be a partaker of the vain things thereof. With a Mormon and Moroni-like sense of urgency, teachers should inform their children and listeners that they are responsible for their own actions. Teachers could profitably teach as in Mormon 4:5 that wickedness produces its own punishment. The inter-relationship in the last days of the Gentiles, Lamanites, and Jews should be as clearly taught as did Mormon and Moroni. The "thus we see" method and other annotative approaches of Mormon and Moroni could successfully be utilized as a rule by speakers. The "thus we see" conclusions could be drawn from the students themselves in a classroom situation. The Church today, wherever it is found, is usually in need of counsel concerning proper Church discipline and procedures. The fundamentals recorded by Moroni

¹Moroni 10:34.
and particularly the life-giving elements to Church procedures of faith, hope, and charity could be simply taught again and again. Finally, the sincere and loving reminder that we unitedly can meet at the pleasing bar of the Lord can be a successful spiritual conclusion to many a lesson.
Chapter 5

THE ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF UN-NAMED TEACHERS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

Introduction

The writer analyzed in Chapter 3 of this study the prominent teachers from the Book of Mormon. Chapter 4 reviewed the teaching strategies of these same teachers. In virtually every instance these prominent teachers were also prophets or priesthood leaders, to whom the saints in their day looked for guidance in all spiritual matters. These prophets were "name" teachers, with whom the average Book of Mormon reader soon becomes familiar. In the Church today and in our Church's relatively short history are also many well-known prophets and priesthood leaders, whose teaching skills are meritorious and worthy of being emulated. However, the writer wishes to emphasize that one need not be a prophet or priesthood leader in order to serve the Lord well as a teacher. Indeed the purpose of this study is more to inspire the humble followers of Christ who do the grass-roots teaching than to instruct the well-know prophets, priesthood leaders, and teachers who have already incorporated these principles. It is in the homes, priesthood quorums, small classrooms, and in one-on-one teaching circumstances where the grass-roots teaching occurs.

Because not even a hundreth part of the history of the ancient inhabitants of the western hemisphere is recorded in the Book of
Mormon, many heroes in the work of the Lord remain un-named. Many of these stalwart souls served as teachers. The writer sincerely submits that the role, the activities, and the outstanding example of the un-named teachers will inspire equally un-heralded, yet potentially very effective, teachers in the Church today.

Un-Named Teachers in the Book of Mormon

Jacob and Joseph, sons of Lehi and brothers of Nephi, were the first "priests and teachers" ordained in the Book of Mormon. Although they are mentioned by name and are famous in their own right, the righteous tradition that Jacob and Joseph established for priests and teachers continued throughout the entire history of the Book of Mormon.

The question is frequently posed: Are the priests and teachers in the Book of Mormon, such as Jacob and Joseph were ordained unto, offices in the priesthood? There are two schools of thought on the subject. The seven volume work, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, includes the following comment:

Nephi had built a temple (v. 16). In it the Mosaic law was observed. Under that law, the priests were appointed to offer up sacrifices for the people as well as for themselves. (Lev. 4:5,6) Under that law, priests were also the teachers of the people, as appears from the following:

"Do not drink wine or strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: and that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken to them by

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1 Words of Mormon 5; 3 Nephi 26:6; Ether 15:33.

2 Nephi 5:26; 6:2; Jacob 1:18.
the hand of Moses." (Lev. 10:9-11)\(^3\)

On the other hand, Joseph Fielding Smith has written the following:

The Nephites were descendants of Joseph. Lehi discovered this when reading the brass plates. He was a descendant of Manasseh, and Ishmael, who accompanied him with his family, was of the tribe of Ephraim. Therefore there were no Levites who accompanied Lehi to the Western Hemisphere. Under these conditions the Nephites officiated by virtue of the Melchizedek Priesthood from the days of Lehi to the days of the appearance of our Savior among them. It is true that Nephi "consecrated Jacob and Joseph" that they should be priests and teachers over the land of the Nephites, but the fact that plural terms priests and teachers were used indicates that this was not a reference to the definite office in the priesthood in either case, but it was a general assignment to teach, direct, and admonish the people. Otherwise the terms priest and teacher would have been given, in the singular. Additional light is thrown on this appointment showing that these two brothers of Nephi held the Melchizedek Priesthood, in the sixth chapter, second verse of II Nephi, where Jacob makes this explanation regarding the priesthood which he and Joseph held:

Behold, my beloved brethren, I, Jacob, having been called of God, and ordained after the manner of his holy order, and having been consecrated by my brother Nephi, unto whom ye look as a king or a protector, and on whom ye depend for safety, behold ye know that I have spoken unto you exceeding many things.

This seems to be a confirmation of the ordinations that he and his brother Joseph received in the Melchizedek Priesthood. All through the Book of Mormon we find references to the Nephites officiating by virtue of the Higher Priesthood after the holy order.\(^2\)

Considering the role and activities of subsequent priests and teachers in the Book of Mormon, the writer suggests that they served

\(^1\)George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Commentary on the Book of Mormon, ed. Philip C. Reynolds (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1955), I, 279.

\(^2\)Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions, I, 124-125. (Italics not mine.)
essentially in the role of a pastor. A pastor is one who guides the spiritual direction of a specific flock or group of believers. Included in his duties would be teaching his group the doctrines as handed down by the prophets. The writer agrees that the priests and teachers functioned by virtue of the Melchizedek Priesthood. The prophet Joseph Smith in his official history explained:

This book also tells us that our Savior made His appearance upon this continent after His resurrection: that he planted the Gospel here in all its fulness, and richness, and power, and blessing; that they had Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, and Evangelists; the same order, the same priesthood, the same ordinances, gifts, powers, and blessings, as were enjoyed on the eastern continent . . . .

Jacob, acting in his calling of priest and teacher, warned the people of their pride and iniquity. In the days of Jarom, grandson of Jacob, and over 200 years since Lehi left Jerusalem, un-named prophets came in among the Nephites, warning them that if they fell into transgression that they would be destroyed from off the face of the land. From the following can be seen the important role of the priests and teachers:

Wherefore, the prophets, and the priests, and the teachers, did labor diligently, exhorting with all long-suffering the people to diligence; teaching the law of Moses, and the intent for which it was given; persuading them to look forward unto the Messiah, and believe in him to come as though he already was. And after this manner did they teach them.

And it came to pass that by so doing they kept them from being destroyed upon the face of the land; for they did prick their hearts with the word, continually stirring them up unto repentance.

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1 Joseph Smith, Jr., History of the Church, ed. B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1949), IV, 538.

2 Jacob 1:17-19; see Chapters 3 and 4 of this study for a more complete discussion of his teaching.

3 Jarom 10.

4 Jarom 11-12. (Italics added.)
Many years later, during the reign of the first King Mosiah, after a period of very little recorded Nephite history, the people were led by many preachings and prophesyings. They were continually admonished by the word of God. The writer suggests that the priests and teachers did some of this teaching.

During the beginning of King Benjamin's reign many contentions existed among his own people. To make matters worse Benjamin was forced to contend against attacking Lamanites, which he eventually succeeded in driving out of the land. From the following we see that Benjamin needed the able assistance of un-named teachers to establish peace:

And after there had been false prophets, and false preachers and teachers among the people, and all these having been punished according to their crimes; and after there having been much contention and many dissensions away unto the Lamanites, behold, it came to pass that king Benjamin, with the assistance of the holy prophets who were among his people--

For behold, king Benjamin was a holy man, and he did reign over his people in righteousness; and there were many holy men in the land, and they did speak the word of God with power and with authority; and they did use much sharpness because of the stiff-neckedness of the people--

Wherefore, with the help of these, king Benjamin, by laboring with all the might of his body and the faculty of his whole soul, and also the prophets, did once more establish peace in the land.

The reader will recall that Benjamin, at the conclusion of his reign, caused all the people to be gathered together. The people offered up burnt offerings to the Lord to give thanks for many blessings including the fact that just men had been appointed to be their "teachers." Before Benjamin dismissed the multitude after speaking

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1Omni 13.  
2Words of Mormon 12-14.  
3Words of Mormon 16-18. (Italics added.)  
4Mosiah 2:3-4.
to them, he "appointed priests to teach the people, that thereby they might hear and know the commandments of God, and to stir them up in remembrance of the oath which they had made . . . ."\(^1\)

From the wicked priests of Noah came a single convert of Abinadi, namely Alma. When Alma by authority established his church, he ordained priests to teach members in the church. The writer suggests that Alma was following an organizational pattern already established among the Nephites. In any event, Mormon described excellently the important role of these priests:

And it came to pass that Alma, having authority from God, ordained priests; even one priest to every fifty of their number did he ordain to preach unto them, and to teach them concerning the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

And he commanded them that they should teach nothing save it were the things which he had taught, and which had been spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets.

Yea, even he commanded them that they should preach nothing save it were repentance and faith on the Lord, who had redeemed his people.

And he commanded them that there should be no contention with one another, but that they should look forward with one eye, having one faith and one baptism, having their hearts knit together in unity and in love one towards another.

And thus he commanded them to preach. And thus they became the children of God.\(^2\)

Alma further commanded that the priests labor with their own hands for their support, rather than depending upon the people.\(^3\)

However, the members of the congregations were to give of their substance freely to the needy including those priests who stood in need.\(^4\)

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1 Mosiah 6:3.

2 Mosiah 18:18-22. (Italics added.)

3 Mosiah 18:24, 26.

Years later and before Alma's flock joined with the people of King Mosiah, Mormon recorded the condition of teaching in their church:

And now, Alma was their high priest, he being the founder of their church.

And it came to pass that none received authority to preach of to teach except it were by him from God. Therefore he consecrated all their priests and all their teachers; and none were consecrated except they were just men. Therefore they did watch over their people, and did nourish them with things pertaining to righteousness.\(^1\)

When Alma's group joined the people of Zarahemla under King Mosiah, Mosiah charged Alma to establish churches throughout all the land and to ordain priests and teachers over every church.\(^2\) Mormon described this operation thusly:

Now this was done because there were so many people that they could not all be governed by one teacher; neither could they all hear the word of God in one assembly;

Therefore they did assemble themselves together in different bodies; being called churches; every church having their priests and their teachers, and every priest preaching the word according as it was delivered to him by the mouth of Alma.

And thus, notwithstanding there being many churches they were all one church, yea, even the church of God; for there was nothing preached in all the churches except it were repentance and faith in God.\(^3\)

Sinners began causing dissension in the church during the administration of Alma. The record states that those who committed sin had to be admonished by the church. Note that the sinners were brought before the priests and teachers before they were brought before Alma.\(^4\)

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\(^1\) Mosiah 23:16-18. (Italicics added.)

\(^2\) Mosiah 25:19.

\(^3\) Mosiah 25:20-22. (Italicics added.)

\(^4\) Mosiah 26:6-7.
When persecutions upon church members by unbelievers became intense, the people complained to their leaders before going to Alma.\(^1\)

To emphasize the importance of maintaining equality among all the people, Alma reiterated that the "priests and teachers should labor with their own hands for their support."\(^2\)

When Alma, the Younger, was stricken dumb through his encounter with the angel, Alma, the Elder, asked the priests to join with him to pray and fast for his son.\(^3\)

Alma, the Younger, was later chosen to replace his father as high priest over the church.\(^4\) Early in his administration, one imposter of a teacher, Nehor, taught what he termed to be the word of God. He declared that "every priest and teacher ought to become popular; and they ought not to labor with their hands, but that they ought to be supported by the people.\(^5\) Nehor was plainly guilty of priestcraft, for he accepted large financial support for his teaching, began to be lifted up in the pride of his heart, and even established a church according to his preaching.\(^6\)

Nehor eventually was executed for a capital crime,\(^7\) but priestcraft continued to spread in the land, "for there were many who loved the vain things of the world, and they went forth preaching false doctrines; and this they did for the sake of riches and honor.\(^8\) Due to

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\(^1\) Mosiah 27:1.  \(^2\) Mosiah 27:5.  
\(^3\) Mosiah 27:22.  \(^4\) Mosiah 29:42.  
\(^5\) Alma 1:3.  \(^6\) Alma 1:4-6.  
\(^7\) Alma 1:13-14.  \(^8\) Alma 1:16.
these false preachers persecution of the righteous increased. This proved to be a great burden to the faithful, but they were able to bear with patience their persecution. This patience was largely attributable to the teaching and example of the priests:

And when the priests left their labor to impart the word of God unto the people, the people also left their labors to hear the word of God. And when the priest had imparted unto them the word of God they all returned again diligently unto their labors; and the priest, not esteeming himself above his hearers, for the preacher was no better than the hearer, neither was the teacher any better than the learner; and thus they were all equal, and they did all labor, every man according to his strength.

And they did impart of their substance, every man according to that which he had, to the poor, and the needy, and the sick, and the afflicted; and they did wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely.

And thus they did establish the affairs of the church; and thus they began to have continual peace again, notwithstanding all their persecutions.¹

A few years later the members of the church began to be proud because of their many precious things.

Now this was the cause of much affliction to Alma, yea, and to many of the people whom Alma had consecrated to be teachers, and priests, and elders over the church; yea, many of them were sorely grieved for the wickedness which they saw had begun to be among their people.²

Conditions became so bad, that Alma decided to select another man for the chief-judgeship and attempt to reclaim the people by dedicating full time to the ministry by bearing down in pure testimony against the people.³

¹Alma 1:26-28. (Italics added.)
²Alma 4:7. (Italics added.)
³Alma 4:15-20.
After Alma completed his first missionary reclaiming endeavor at Zarahemla, "he ordained priests and elders, by the laying on of hands according to the order of God to preside and watch over the church."¹

Alma included a discourse about the priesthood and the pre-existence in teaching the wicked of Ammonihah.²

And again, my brethren, I would cite your minds forward to the time when the Lord God gave these commandments unto his children; and I would that ye should remember that the Lord God ordained priests after his holy order, which was after the order of his Son, to teach these things unto the people.

And those priests were ordained after the order of his Son, in a manner that thereby the people might know in what manner to look forward to his Son for redemption.

And this is the manner after which they were ordained--being called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works.

Whether the priests mentioned in these passages are the variety of priests that, for instance, Alma had ordained to teach the people of Zarahemla, Alma does not explain. It is the writer's opinion that the priests, those who were primarily called to teach, would be included, but would not be the entire basis for the foregoing definition.

The people of Ammonihah rejected the words of Alma and Amulek, but in nearby Sidom a church was established. Alma consecrated priests and teachers to lead them.⁴

Alma and Amulek continued their work among all the Nephites with the help of "many more who had been chosen for the work."⁵

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⁵Alma 16:15.
Following is Mormon's description of the activities of the priests, this time with an emphasis on what they preached against:

Now those priests who did go forth among the people did preach against all lyings, and deceivings, and envyings, and strifes, and malice, and revilings, and stealing, robbing, plundering, murdering, committing adultery, and all manner of lasciviousness, crying that these things ought not so to be—

Holding forth things which must shortly come; yea, holding forth the coming of the Son of God, his sufferings and death, and also the resurrection of the dead.

And many of the people did inquire concerning the place where the Son of God should come; and they were taught that he would appear unto them after his resurrection; and this the people did hear with great joy and gladness.

And now after the church had been established throughout all the land—having got the victory over the devil, and the word of God being preached in its purity in all the land, and the Lord pouring out his blessings upon the people . . . .1

Priests and teachers also played a role in the missionary endeavors of the sons of Mosiah.

And now it came to pass that when the king had sent forth this proclamation, that Aaron and his brethren went forth from city to city, and from one house of worship to another, establishing churches, and consecrating priests and teachers throughout the land among the Lamanites, to preach and to teach the word of God among them; and thus they began to have great success.2

The king of the converted Lamanites thought it would be wise to be known by a different name. He consulted with Aaron and the priests to determine that name.3

When Korihor came with his atheistic babblings to Alma, he "did revile against the priests and teachers, accusing them of leading away the people after the silly traditions of their fathers, for the

1Alma 16:18-21. (Italics added.)

2Alma 23:4. (Italics added.)

3Alma 23:16.
sake of glutting on the labor of the people.  

1 Alma quickly defended himself and the un-named teachers, stating that they had not received as much as a senine for their labors in the ministry, but worked rather to rejoice in the joy of their brethren. Alma even told Korihor that Korihor knew he was lying.  

2 The apostate Zoramites also had priests and teachers, who were, however, after their own perverted thinking.  

3 Thus we see that the role of priests and teachers existed, even if it was in an apostate environment.  

After Alma left his people for the last time, his role as high priest was assumed by his son, Helaman. Because of wars and little contentions and disturbances, Helaman set out to regulate the affairs of the entire church. In so doing he appointed priests and teachers throughout all the land to direct all the churches.  

4 Notwithstanding the teaching of these brethren, Amalickiah led a large portion of the Nephites astray.  

5 Amalickiah stirred up his followers and the Lamanites to warfare, causing the Nephites to staunchly defend themselves under Moroni's able direction. The record states that Helaman and the host of un-named teachers were no less serviceable than Moroni, because they preached the word of God. They baptized many unto repentance.  

6 Thus we see that both the righteous defense of liberty and the teaching of the word of God go hand in hand among humble followers of Christ.

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1 Alma 30:31. ( Italics added.)  
2 Alma 30:32-35.  
3 Alma 35:3-6.  
4 Alma 45:21-22.  
Under the administration of Helaman's son, Helaman II, and exceeding great prosperity occurred in the church where thousands were baptized unto repentance. So great was the rich outpouring of the Lord's blessings, "that even the high priests and the teachers were themselves astonished beyond measure."¹

About 29-30 B.C. when Lachoneus II was the chief judge and wickedness was on the increase again among the Nephites, un-named men were sent with a specific message:

And there began to be men inspired from heaven and sent forth, standing among the people in all the land, preaching and testifying boldly of the sins and iniquities of the people, and testifying unto them concerning the redemption which the Lord would make for his people, or in other words, the resurrection of Christ; and they did testify boldly of his death and sufferings. Their testimony angered most of the judges and lawyers, who sought after the vain things of this world. Many of the un-named teachers who testified boldly, were taken and secretly put to death by their antagonists.³

When Jesus Christ visited the righteous Nephites who were spared from destruction, he chose twelve disciples to head his church.⁴ These disciples, who were called the elders of the church, ordained priests and teachers to assist them in the work.⁵ While laying their hands upon the priests and teachers, the disciples said:

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¹Helaman 3:25; see v. 24-30.
²3 Nephi 6:20.
³3 Nephi 6:23; see all of 3 Nephi 6.
⁴3 Nephi 12:1.
⁵Moroni 3:1.
In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you to be a priest, (or, if he be a teacher) I ordain you to be a teacher, to preach repentance and remission of sins through Jesus Christ, by the endurance of faith on his name to the end. Amen.¹

The elders and priests of the church were to administer the emblems of the flesh and blood of Christ to the church. The manner in which they did this was described by Moroni.² The manner in which the church was administered was also described by Moroni.³

And their meetings were conducted by the church after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach, or to exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done.

When nine of the original disciples of Jesus passed away, new un-named disciples were ordained in their stead to carry on, among other things, the teachings of the word.⁵

The Book of Ether, which is our source for the history of the Jaredites, also speaks about un-named teachers of the word of God. Four separate times from Jared to Ether, during the lengthy history of the Jaredite people, "prophets" were sent among the people. On each occasion these prophets prophesied that the excessive wickedness which was existent each time would bring a curse or destruction upon the people if they did not repent.⁶ The principle of warning a

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¹Moroni 3:3; see all of Moroni 3.
²Moroni 4 and 5.
³Moroni 6.
⁴Moroni 6:9. (Italics added.)
⁵⁴Nephi 14.
a wicked people before they are to be divinely punished by more than one witness, was in effect in these examples from the Book of Ether.

Conclusions

In addition to the better known prophets in the Book of Mormon are many who assisted them in the work of the ministry. Their names are not recorded in the Book of Mormon. Without these supplementary unnamed teachers, the prophets' work would not have succeeded as well. There was always a need for more witnesses, for more pastors, for more who had the priesthood authority, and for more who could plainly teach the peaceable things of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The same general situation exists in the Church today. The prophets and apostles witness to us of the divinity of Jesus Christ and explain by authority the true doctrines of the Kingdom. But the prophets and apostles cannot be everywhere at once and perform the vast majority of teaching and training that must be done. Granted, the Church today has a much more complete and sophisticated organization for the dissemination of the truths of the gospel than the "priests and teachers" set-up from Book of Mormon times. But the principles remain the same. The grass-roots work must be done by competent teachers.

Parents and teachers in each of the organizations of the Church should heed carefully the example of the Book of Mormon "priests and teachers." Particularly should they pay attention to what Alma, the Elder, suggested they should emphasize when they teach,¹ to what Alma,

¹Mosiah 18:18-22.
the Younger, suggested they should teach against,\(^1\) and to what is recorded by Moroni that every function performed in the meetings of the church be done according to the workings of the Spirit.\(^2\)

The reader will recall that the priests and the teachers in the Book of Mormon were charged to labor with their own hands for their support and not to depend upon the people.\(^3\) Those, such as Nehor, who taught that teachers should be supported by the people with money, were severely rebuked in the Book of Mormon.\(^4\) This situation exists essentially the same in the Church today. There is no paid ministry. Those who function by virtue of the priesthood should labor with their own hands for their support.

However, today some general authorities and mission presidents who consecrate their entire time to the work in the Church are provided a cost of living compensation. Priestcraft would not apply to them, because they themselves did not choose their position, but were called of God. In addition, neither their available extra time nor the amount of living expense compensation would allow them to seek after the vain things of this world.

Then also in the Church today are many paid full-time hired teachers. A good share of these paid teachers are employed to teach the pure word of God to the youth of the Church on a week-day basis. These teachers function in the departments of religion in the LDS

\(^1\)Alma 16:18.  
\(^2\)Moroni 6:9.  
\(^3\)Mosiah 18:24, 26; 27:5; Alma 1:26; 30:32-35.  
\(^4\)2 Nephi 26:29; Alma 1:12, 16.
Church School System and in the Department of Seminaries and Institutes. These paid teachers would not be guilty of priestcraft, because they are not functioning in their teaching capacity by virtue of their priesthood authority, because no saving ordinance is provided in their educational efforts, and because the religious week-day education in the Church was originated through prophetic inspiration and has been directed continuously by priesthood leadership. All these paid teachers in the Church are expected to serve in ecclesiastical positions in the Church with as much dedication as their other brothers and sisters.

The writer feels that the example of the Book of Mormon priests and teachers can be emulated by both the paid and the non-paid portions of the Church's religious education.¹

¹See McConkie's definition of "religious education" in Chapter 1.
Chapter 6

SUMMARY

The writer in this thesis has attempted to examine the prophets and teachers in the Book of Mormon for their example and their teaching approach with the desire that their examples could be applied to LDS instructional settings today. The Book of Mormon records a rich supply of outstanding teachers and examples of teaching. Therefore, the innumerable teachers in the multi-varied Church instructional settings today could improve their effectiveness considerably by applying the principles of religious education discovered through this study.

Chapter 1 of this thesis pointed out that almost everybody in the Church has many opportunities to be a teacher. Teaching is not restricted to a classroom situation. There is even a greater need, with the Church growing at a tremendous rate, for teachers who can motivate students to be born again of the Spirit and to be trained for leadership in the Church. Therefore, in all probability teachers at every level in the Church can learn from these principles.

In seeking a common thread of instructional principles that come directly or indirectly from the Book of Mormon examples, the writer submits the following twenty-three as some of the most important. Their position in the list does not indicate their respective importance. Each would best be applied today when directed by the Spirit.

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1. Teachers should be steadfast and immovable in good works themselves to provide the righteous example.

2. Teachers should love their students and express inner feelings of love and caring to them.

3. Teachers are on the Lord's errand and are to be instruments in His hand. All the glory goes to Him.

4. Teachers should teach their students to keep the commandments.

5. Teachers should always teach free agency, but that everybody will be judged according to his works.

6. Teachers have the responsibility of teaching their students simply the fulness of the gospel. Also if the teachers do not warn clearly enough of the consequences of sin, they must bear part of the burden of the students' sins.

7. Teachers should consistently teach from the scriptures which can be likened to the students, utilizing the testimonies of prophets ancient and modern.

8. Teachers can be more effective by using more than one witness for certain doctrine and for the word of God in general.

9. Teachers should bear firm testimony by the power of the Holy Ghost of themselves of every doctrinal principle they teach.

10. To be successful in motivating students to change their lives, teachers must prepare themselves spiritually. This comes from repentance, prayer, fasting, humility, and study.

11. Teachers should emphasize Christ and His mission in every teaching setting with every confrontation.
12. By exercising faith in God, teachers will have success commensurate with their faith and diligence. However, some individuals, of their own free will and choice, will not accept the message of the teachers.

13. Parent's teaching their children and praying for their welfare cannot be over-estimated in the spiritual development of their offspring.

14. Only prophets and individuals specifically directed by prophets can make certain statements in the name of the Lord. Teachers should be very careful not to arrogate to themselves the role of a prophet.

15. Teachers should study the Book of Mormon continuously for the flood of inspiration, examples of the believers, warnings against sin, and examples of teaching strategy which can be given them.

16. Teachers should often paraphrase teaching approaches and statements of prophets in the Book of Mormon. Credit can be given to these prophets, thus adding prophetic authority to substantiate the teacher.

17. Teachers should prayerfully study the life, ministry, and mission of Jesus Christ and attempt to emulate His attributes and approaches with people.

18. All teachers are important in the Church. Those who work on the grass-roots level are needed as much as the General Authorities. In all cases teachers should teach the basic principles of the gospel and what the prophets instruct them to teach.

19. Teachers must exercise courage in teaching truths which are hard to bear by some students.
20. Teachers should seek to know the Lord's will in their teaching and then follow it.

21. Teachers should seek to serve their students more than themselves.

22. Teachers should not be afraid to call upon God in faith for miracles to occur in the lives of their students.

23. False teachers and teachers who do not lead exemplary lives can do as much harm as righteous teachers can do good.

It was found that all teachers in the Book of Mormon were prepared spiritually before embarking on the Lord's errand. They all taught the basic principles of the gospel. Each emphasized Christ and His mission in every instructional setting. They all taught from the scriptures. Each teacher bore testimony of what he taught. Most teachers are recorded as having expressed inner feelings of love and caring to their students.

The following statements by Elder Bruce R. McConkie and President Spencer W. Kimball epitomize the principles of instruction as found in the Book of Mormon:

Teachers in the Church represent the Lord in their teaching. The Church is the Lord's; the doctrine is the Lord's. Teachers speak at the invitation of the Lord and are appointed to say what he wants said, nothing more and nothing less. There is no freedom to teach or speculate contrary to the revealed will. Those who desire to express views contrary to gospel truth are at liberty to find other forums or to organize churches of their own. But in God's Church, the only approved doctrine is God's doctrine.

The Church is not a debating society; it is not searching for a system of salvation; it is not a forum for social or political philosophies. It is, rather, the Lord's kingdom with a commission to teach his truths for the salvation of men. Anything contrary to or short of this standard is not of God. "I give unto you a commandment," he says, "that you shall teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom. Teach ye diligently and my grace shall
attend you, that you may be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand. . . ." (D&C 88:77-78.)

If you and I would be good leaders, we should reflect periodically on the qualities of those who have served, led and taught us. If you were to select just two or three individuals in your life who have been most influential, what specifically did they do that was most helpful to you at critical, or important points in your life: On reflecting for a few moments, you are apt to conclude that such a person really cared for you, that he or she took time for you, that he or she taught you something you needed to know, etc., etc. Reflect now upon your performance, as I do on my own, as to whether or not we now embody in our own ministry those same basic attributes. It is less likely in stirring through one's memory that someone will be remembered because that individual was particularly influential because of technique. Most often someone has served and helped up by giving us love and understanding, by taking time to assist us, and by showing us the way through the light of their own example. I cannot stress enough, therefore, the importance of our doing these same things for those who now depend upon us, just as we have depended upon others to serve us in the past by special leadership and special teaching.

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE STRATEGIES OF INSTRUCTION EMPLOYED BY PROPHETS
AND TEACHERS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON AND THEIR POTENTIAL
APPLICATION TO CURRENT LDS INSTRUCTIONAL SETTINGS

Bruce A. Van Orden
Department of Ancient Scripture
Master of Arts Degree, April 1975

ABSTRACT

Teaching in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is of great importance. Its value cannot be estimated if it is properly done. The Book of Mormon has a record of many outstanding teachers and examples of teaching. Teachers at every level in the Church today can improve their effectiveness by emulating the character of these teachers from the Book of Mormon and by applying certain of their instructional approaches.

It was found that all the teachers in the Book of Mormon were prepared spiritually before embarking on the Lord's errand. They all taught with singleness of purpose the basic principles of the gospel. Each emphasized Christ and His mission in every instructional setting. They all taught from the scriptures. Each teacher bore testimony of what he taught. Most teachers expressed inner feelings of love and caring to their students.

The Book of Mormon shows that all parents and teachers in the Church can play a significant role. Those working on the grass-roots level should teach what the prophets instruct them to teach.

COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

Paul R. Cheesman, Committee Chairman

Robert J. Matthews, Committee Member

Monte S. Nyman, Department Chairman