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## A Comprehensive Commentary of the Book of Helaman

Author(s): Paul Nolan Hyde

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**Abstract:** No abstract available.

**A Comprehensive Commentary**  
of the  
**Book of Helaman**

*together with references for further study  
from the General Conferences of  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints  
the Encyclopedia of Mormonism  
and other doctrinal texts by General Authorities of the Church*

Written and compiled by  
**Paul Nolan Hyde**

Parrish Press  
Orem, Utah

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## Preface

This project began as an attempt to provide my children and grandchildren something of their ancestor's love and understanding of the scriptures. I began producing volumes many years ago which I was pleased to call Paraphrastic studies. I wrote one of these studies for each of the four Gospels and the letters of Paul. Eventually, however, I began to sense that there was much that I knew about the New Testament that my "translations" could not communicate. I therefore thought to write a comprehensive commentary on the entire New Testament, beginning with Matthew and concluding with the book of Revelation. As I published each of the nine volumes, I included the paraphrastic studies, where I had them, in conjunction with the commentary for each book in the New Testament. I began this project in 2005 and completed the final volume in 2010. The whole effort was a delight to my soul.

A year before I retired from the Church Educational System, in 2003, I thought to produce an 1830 formatting of the Book of Mormon using the present text of the 1981 edition. This was a relatively easy task, given the technology available to me. I distributed these to my colleagues at the Orem Institute of Religion, members of my family, and a few other interested parties for the cost of printing and binding them. Sometime in the early spring of 2007, I was impressed to begin a verse by verse commentary on the Book of Mormon, a task that I had not presumed to attempt, inasmuch as there are no translation difficulties that abound in the Old and New Testaments. Yet, there were instances of nineteenth-century word usage and syntactic issues that I thought a commentary might help to clarify. As I began, however, I discovered that there was much more that I could communicate to my children of my understanding of the ancient record of the Nephites, material that I had gleaned as I taught the scriptures during my thirty-five year career with CES. This labor eventually produced five volumes of moderate size. As I published each segment of the commentary, I enclosed the 1830 formatting of each book in the Book of Mormon that I had devise several years before. The last volume also appeared in late 2010.

By the time that I was fully engaged with writing commentaries on both the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, I had become infatuated with the idea that I might be able to expand the commentaries to include the other volumes of scripture as well. Thus, in the winter of 2010 I began writing commentaries on the Pearl of Great Price, and the Doctrine and Covenants. Once I finished with the Pearl of Great Price, I began to move ahead with the book of Genesis and the rest of the Old Testament. In the late fall of 2014 I finished the last of the commentaries on the Old Testament, for a total of thirty-three printed and bound volumes. With these volumes and the others produced over the past ten years, I have completed commentary on every verse of the Standard Works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

My procedure for writing the Commentary was similar to that used in creating the original paraphrastic studies. The same reference texts were employed. For difficult words in Greek, Hebrew,

and English I resorted to the works of James Strong and other lexicographers for linguistic insight. I consider the contributions made by conservative Protestant scholarship (as recorded in the *New International Version*) and conservative Catholic scholarship (as related in the *New Jerusalem Bible*). I resorted to the considered thought of Adam Clarke, one of the most prominent and prolific commentators on the sacred manuscripts available at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and who, I believe, was a man of great faith. I consulted with the *Joseph Smith Translation* at appropriate times (including in another column an indication that a JST change had been made for any given verse), and frequently to the writings of the General Authorities of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as I contemplated the possible meanings of each word and phrase. From time to time I resorted to *Smith's Bible Dictionary* and *Discovering the World of the Bible* by LaMar Berrett for some of the more arcane information that I thought would illuminate the text.

I have attempted to maintain a steady course throughout my commentaries, treating each verse as unique, and where appropriate, duplicate notes and the text rather than use cross-references within the volume. Some may find this a waste of paper and ink, but I frankly dislike having to rifle through pages or volumes trying to find the first instance of the note or commentary. The duplications are easily ignored; fumbling through pages cannot be. It is in the best interests of the reader, however, to contemplate the reasons why such duplications exist in the biblical text in the first place. They are purposeful and I have attempted to point out their purpose as I have progressed through each volume.

My numbering system for the notes used in the body of the commentary was adapted from historical linguistic texts with which I am familiar and which I had found quite useful. The pattern used is *chapter.verse.word*; thus note “3.4.5” would contain material referring to the fifth word in the book of Hosea 3:4, for example. I make no comprehensive promises regarding the preciseness of my word count in any particular verse, but it will be close enough to eliminate any distressing confusion. Inasmuch as I began this series with the Gospel of Matthew, there will be times when I will make reference to my own work in that first volume. Sometimes there will be no more than a reference, “*MT-C 23.4.5*”; other times I may quote directly from the original text. In either case my sole motivation will be to facilitate the flow of ideas rather than to multiply words. There are enough words already. References to the Commentaries on other books of the New Testament are abbreviated as follows:

Matthew—*MT-C*  
 Mark—*MK-C*  
 Luke—*LK-C*  
 John—*JN-C*  
 Acts—*AC-C*  
 Romans—*RM-C*  
 1 Corinthians—*1 CO-C*  
 2 Corinthians—*2 CO-C*  
 Galatians—*GA-C*

Ephesians—*EP-C*  
 Philippians—*PP-C*  
 Colossians—*CL-C*  
 1 Thessalonians—*1 TH-C*  
 2 Thessalonians—*2 TH-C*  
 1 Timothy—*1 TM-C*  
 2 Timothy—*2 TM-C*  
 Titus—*TT-C*  
 Philemon—*PL-C*

Hebrews—*HB-C*  
 1 Peter—*1 PE-C*  
 2 Peter—*2 PE-C*  
 1 John—*1 JN-C*  
 2 John—*2 JN-C*  
 3 John—*3 JN-C*  
 Revelation—*RV-C*

References to the Commentaries in the books of the Old Testament are as follows:

Genesis— <i>GE-C</i>	2 Chronicles— <i>2 CR-C</i>	Daniel— <i>DA-C</i>
Exodus— <i>EX-C</i>	Ezra— <i>ER-C</i>	Hosiah— <i>HS-C</i>
Leviticus— <i>LV-C</i>	Nehemiah— <i>NE-C</i>	Joel— <i>JL-C</i>
Numbers— <i>NM-C</i>	Esther— <i>ES-C</i>	Amos— <i>AM-C</i>
Deuteronomy— <i>DT-C</i>	Job— <i>JB-C</i>	Obadiah— <i>OB-C</i>
Joshua— <i>JO-C</i>	Psalms— <i>PS-C</i>	Jonah— <i>JH-C</i>
Judges— <i>JD-C</i>	Proverbs— <i>PV-C</i>	Micah— <i>MH-C</i>
Ruth— <i>RU-C</i>	Ecclesiastes— <i>ES-C</i>	Nahum— <i>NA-C</i>
1 Samuel— <i>1 SM-C</i>	Song of Solomon— <i>SS-C</i>	Habakkuk— <i>HB-C</i>
2 Samuel— <i>2 SM-C</i>	Isaiah— <i>IS-C</i>	Zephaniah— <i>ZP-C</i>
1 Kings— <i>1 KG-C</i>	Jeremiah— <i>JR-C</i>	Haggai— <i>HG-C</i>
2 Kings— <i>2 KG-C</i>	Lamentations— <i>LM-C</i>	Zechariah— <i>ZE-C</i>
1 Chronicles— <i>1 CR-C</i>	Ezekiel— <i>EZ-C</i>	Malachi— <i>ML-C</i>

I have also made reference to the other standard works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The references to the Book of Mormon are articulated in bold and italics lettering using the following abbreviations:

1 Nephi— <i>1 NE-C</i>	Omni— <i>OM-C</i>	3 Nephi— <i>3 NE-C</i>
2 Nephi— <i>2 NE-C</i>	Words of Mormon— <i>WM-C</i>	4 Nephi— <i>4 NE-C</i>
Jacob— <i>JA-C</i>	Mosiah— <i>MS-C</i>	Mormon— <i>MM-C</i>
Enos— <i>EN-C</i>	Alma— <i>AL-C</i>	Ether— <i>ET-C</i>
Jarom— <i>JM-C</i>	Helaman— <i>HE-C</i>	Moroni— <i>MR-C</i>

The abbreviation *TPW-C* refers to the material found on the Title Page of the Book of Mormon and in the Testimonies of the Three and Eight Witnesses. The references to Sections that are in the Doctrine and Covenants are indicated as *DC-C* followed by the section number and verse (*OD1-C* and *OD2-C* are self-explanatory); The Pearl of Great Price references contained herein use the following abbreviations: *MO-C*, *AB-C*, *SM-C*, *SH-C*, and *AF-C*.

In some cases I have taken on what some would consider controversial material. I make no apologies for so doing. I have found that my children are best served when an issue is approached head on, the differing points of view presented, and the rationale given as to why one school of thought ought to be preferred over another. Sometimes the decisions are logically founded; others the result of doctrinal points that are unique to theology of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In most cases I have not argued authorities, even though I could have inserted multiple references to the writings of scholars with whom I am familiar. I have chosen to have my sources on any particular issue to remain anonymous in the text of the commentary for several reasons. First and foremost, this work is my commentary, what I believe and hold to be true. In the end, that is what my children wish to know. Secondly, I did not wish to have my children accept or dismiss a particular view merely because of who had been the author of it. Many wonderful insights have been made by scholars both inside and outside of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Wherein I have found one view to be preferable over another has not been a partisan matter, but rather a matter of the mind, heart, and spirit cooperating together in an attempt to understand what must be the truth. Thirdly, I have been quite clear who my “authorities” have been. It is my fondest

desire that my children would become as familiar with their writings as I have. Were I to cite all of my sources with extensive quotes from each, there would be no need for them to open any of the books that I have come to love. That, in part, is why I included the third column containing cross-references to the various doctrinal works in the Commentaries. Exceptions to this practice should be noted as being of extreme importance.

In addition to the text of the Standard Works, together with my own commentary, I inserted a column of references for further study. The citations are taken from three major sources: the *Conference Reports* of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints from April 1980 to November 2002 (abbreviated as CR followed by the year, month and page number); the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (four volumes, abbreviated EM followed by the volume and page number); and *A Scripture Index* (a compilation of scripture references cited in various texts published by General Authorities of the Church). For those not familiar with the abbreviations used in *A Scripture Index*, I include them below:

TPJS—*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*  
GD—*Gospel Doctrine*  
MA—*Mediation and Atonement*  
FWR—*Far West Record*  
DHC—*History of the Church* (7 vols.)  
TSWK—*Teaching of Spencer W. Kimball*  
MF—*Miracle of Forgiveness*  
FPM—*Faith Precedes the Miracle*  
MD—*Mormon Doctrine*

PM—*Promised Messiah*  
MM—*Mortal Messiah* (4 vols.)  
MLM—*Millennial Messiah*  
DNTC—*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* (3 vols.)  
JC—*Jesus the Christ*  
AF—*Articles of Faith*  
DS—*Doctrines of Salvation* (3 vols.)  
AGQ—*Answers to Gospel Questions* (5 vols.)

As with each of the volumes previously published, I include two lists. The first, bound in front of the Commentary, is a listing of all of the words and phrases upon which I have made extensive remarks, a kind of sequential table of contents. I have also arranged this list alphabetically and have placed it at the end of the Commentary as a kind of index. A comprehensive alphabetical index for the entire volume appears as the last section of this book.

Needless to say that all of the errors in the material submitted herein to the reader are the product of my own limitations as a scholar; all of the brilliance which may appear here is the product of minds and hearts filled with the fire of the Spirit of God, from whom all truth and beauty ultimately derive.

### **A Note on the Electronic Edition**

Not only did my children and other family members receive bound copies of commentaries, but there were a number of friends and neighbors who had expressed an interest in them. There were requests from others who desired copies of what I had done, but I was not in a position to provide them with hard copies. Inasmuch as I had all of the volumes in computer files, I thought to compile each of the commentaries in some format that could be read on a smart device. I opted to use the Adobe Acrobat, turning all of the work into PDF files. I have used these on my tablet for many years and have found them useful and far easier to cart about with me. In the early spring of 2015, my neighbor David Dollahite arranged for a meeting with Jack Welch and Marny Parkin regarding the possibility of BYU providing a dedicated web site so that there would be greater public access to my

work. Thus began the present enterprise of editing and standardizing all that had done during the last ten years. My commentary on the Gospel of Mark is the second of these electronic volumes. Within a year or so I hope to have all of the books available in the same format.

PNH  
Orem, Utah  
September 2015



## Sequence of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases in Helaman Commentary

0.0.5— <i>Nephites</i>	1.16.19— <i>Coriantumr</i>	2.1.21— <i>established</i>
0.0.7— <i>wars</i>	1.17.1— <i>he</i>	2.1.26— <i>Nephites</i>
0.0.9— <i>contentions</i>	1.17.20— <i>Coriantumr</i>	2.1.29— <i>Lamanites</i>
0.0.12— <i>dissentions</i>	1.17.37— <i>Zarahemla</i>	2.1.33–34— <i>no one</i>
0.0.20— <i>prophets</i>	1.17.42— <i>Nephites</i>	2.1.45— <i>contention</i>
0.0.25— <i>Christ</i>	1.18.30— <i>Zarahemla</i>	2.2.7— <i>Helaman</i>
0.0.29— <i>records</i>	1.18.37— <i>Lamanites</i>	2.2.13— <i>Helaman</i>
0.0.31— <i>Helaman</i>	1.18.52— <i>Zarahemla</i>	2.3.3— <i>Kishkumen</i>
0.0.37— <i>Helaman</i>	1.19.7— <i>Coriantumr</i>	2.3.7— <i>Pahoran</i>
0.0.40— <i>sons</i>	1.19.42— <i>Nephites</i>	2.3.13— <i>Helaman</i>
0.0.45— <i>coming</i>	1.20.2— <i>Coriantumr</i>	2.4.5— <i>Gadianton</i>
0.0.50— <i>Lamanites</i>	1.21.7— <i>Pacumeni</i>	2.4.25— <i>murder</i>
0.0.52— <i>conversion</i>	1.21.16— <i>Coriantumr</i>	2.4.27— <i>robbery</i>
1.1.9— <i>commencement</i>	1.22.4— <i>Coriantumr</i>	2.4.38— <i>Kishkumen</i>
1.1.24— <i>Nephi</i>	1.22.15— <i>Zarahemla</i>	2.5.8— <i>Kishkumen</i>
1.2.3— <i>Pahoran</i>	1.22.20— <i>Nephites</i>	2.5.11— <i>they</i>
1.3.20— <i>Pahoran</i>	1.22.35— <i>prison</i>	2.5.14— <i>him</i>
1.3.21— <i>Paanchi</i>	1.23.11— <i>Zarahemla</i>	2.5.45— <i>Helaman</i>
1.3.23— <i>Pacumeni</i>	1.23.22— <i>towards</i>	2.6.15— <i>Helaman</i>
1.4.9— <i>Pahoran</i>	1.23.26— <i>Bountiful</i>	2.6.32— <i>disguise</i>
1.5.7— <i>Pahoran</i>	1.25.7— <i>Coriantumr</i>	2.7.9— <i>Kishkumen</i>
1.5.27— <i>Nephi</i>	1.25.15— <i>Moronihab</i>	2.7.16— <i>sign</i>
1.6.7— <i>Pacumeni</i>	1.25.28— <i>Nephites</i>	2.7.42— <i>Helaman</i>
1.7.3— <i>Paanchi</i>	1.26.3— <i>Moronihab</i>	2.8.6— <i>Helaman</i>
1.9.32— <i>Kishkumen</i>	1.26.8— <i>Lamanites</i>	2.8.13— <i>Kishkumen</i>
1.9.35— <i>Pahoran</i>	1.27.4— <i>Lamanites</i>	2.9.5— <i>Kishkumen</i>
1.10.9— <i>Pahoran</i>	1.27.7— <i>frightened</i>	2.9.22— <i>Helaman</i>
1.10.18— <i>Kishkumen</i>	1.27.33— <i>Zarahemla</i>	2.10.7— <i>Helaman</i>
1.11.29— <i>Kishkumen</i>	1.27.40–41— <i>capital parts</i>	2.11.4— <i>Gadianton</i>
1.11.32— <i>Pahoran</i>	1.27.61— <i>cities</i>	2.11.8— <i>Kishkumen</i>
1.12.2— <i>Kishkumen</i>	1.28.3— <i>Moronihab</i>	2.11.40–41— <i>secret way</i>
1.12.10— <i>Nephi</i>	1.28.11— <i>Lehi</i>	2.11.44— <i>wilderness</i>
1.12.22— <i>Pahoran</i>	1.28.15–16— <i>round about</i>	2.11.48— <i>Helaman</i>
1.13.4— <i>Pacumeni</i>	1.28.27— <i>Bountiful</i>	2.12.5— <i>Gadianton</i>
1.13.33— <i>Pahoran</i>	1.29.16— <i>Bountiful</i>	2.12.14–16— <i>forty and second</i>
1.13.40— <i>right</i>	1.29.33— <i>Zarahemla</i>	2.12.28— <i>Nephi</i>
1.13.48— <i>fortieth</i>	1.30.7— <i>Moronihab</i>	2.13.8— <i>book</i>
1.14.8–10— <i>forty and first</i>	1.30.39— <i>Coriantumr</i>	2.13.14— <i>Gadianton</i>
1.14.20— <i>Lamanites</i>	1.31.5— <i>Lamanites</i>	2.13.28— <i>Nephi</i>
1.14.36— <i>cimeters</i>	1.31.36— <i>Nephites</i>	2.14.12— <i>Helaman</i>
1.15.13— <i>Nephites</i>	1.32.4— <i>Coriantumr</i>	2.14.22— <i>Nephi</i>
1.15.24— <i>Coriantumr</i>	1.32.7— <i>Lamanites</i>	3.1.9–11— <i>forty and third</i>
1.15.31— <i>Zarahemla</i>	1.32.13— <i>Nephites</i>	3.1.27— <i>Nephi</i>
1.15.36— <i>dissenter</i>	1.33.7— <i>Moronihab</i>	3.1.54— <i>ending</i>
1.15.45–47— <i>large and mighty</i>	1.33.14— <i>Zarahemla</i>	3.2.11–13— <i>forty and fourth</i>
1.16.6— <i>Lamanites</i>	1.33.20— <i>Lamanites</i>	3.2.22–24— <i>forty and fifth</i>
1.16.10— <i>Tubaloth</i>	2.1.8–10— <i>forty and second</i>	3.3.8–10— <i>forty and sixth</i>
1.16.16— <i>Anmmoron</i>	2.1.19— <i>Moronihab</i>	3.3.35— <i>Zarahemla</i>

3.5.25—*timber*  
 3.6.9—*desolate*  
 3.7.26—*cement*  
 3.8.19—*southward*  
 3.8.23—*northward*  
 3.8.37—*whole*  
 3.8.41–42—*sea south*  
 3.8.45–46—*sea north*  
 3.8.49–50—*sea west*  
 3.8.53–54—*sea east*  
 3.9.90—*synagogues*  
 3.12.14—*Ammon*  
 3.12.17—*Lamanites*  
 3.14.17—*Lamanites*  
 3.14.21—*Nephites*  
 3.14.50—*synagogues*  
 3.15.21—*Nephites*  
 3.16.14—*Nephites*  
 3.16.16—*until*  
 3.16.46—*Lamanites*  
 3.17.10—*what*  
 3.17.32—*Nephi*  
 3.19.19–21—*forty and seventh*  
 3.19.27–29—*forty and eighth*  
 3.20.2—*Helaman*  
 3.21.19—*Nephi*  
 3.21.27—*Lehi*  
 3.22.23—*Nephites*  
 3.22.27—*end*  
 3.23.8–10—*forty and ninth*  
 3.23.34—*Gadianton*  
 3.23.36—*robber*  
 3.26.24–25—*many souls*  
 3.28.24–25—*Jesus Christ*  
 3.29.41—*Christ*  
 3.29.44—*strait*  
 3.29.51—*gulf*  
 3.30.24—*Abraham*  
 3.30.26—*Isaac*  
 3.30.29—*Jacob*  
 3.31.4—*year*  
 3.31.13—*Zarahemla*  
 3.31.23—*all*  
 3.31.31—*Nephites*  
 3.33.4–6—*fifty and first*  
 3.35.25—*Christ*  
 3.37.8–10—*fifty and third*  
 3.37.18—*Helaman*  
 3.37.24—*Nephi*  
 4.1.8–10—*fifty and fourth*  
 4.1.15—*dissentions*  
 4.1.24—*contentions*  
 4.2.22—*Lamanites*  
 4.3.14—*Lamanites*  
 4.3.19—*Nephites*  
 4.4.8–10—*fifty and sixth*  
 4.4.26—*Nephites*  
 4.4.29—*Lamanites*  
 4.5.4–6—*fifty and seventh*  
 4.5.11—*down*  
 4.5.14—*Nephites*  
 4.5.30–32—*fifty and eighth*  
 4.5.49—*Zarahemla*  
 4.5.65—*Bountiful*  
 4.6.3—*Nephites*  
 4.6.8—*Moronihah*  
 4.6.16—*Bountiful*  
 4.7.8—*Lamanites*  
 4.7.20–21—*day's journey*  
 4.7.24—*Nephi*  
 4.7.27—*line*  
 4.7.39–40—*north country*  
 4.8.7—*Nephites*  
 4.8.17—*Lamanites*  
 4.8.31—*southward*  
 4.9.8—*sixtieth*  
 4.9.16—*Moronihah*  
 4.9.42—*Lamanites*  
 4.10.8–10—*sixty and first*  
 4.11.7—*Nephites*  
 4.12.22—*oppression*  
 4.12.28—*food*  
 4.12.34—*clothing*  
 4.12.39—*smiting*  
 4.12.53—*sacred*  
 4.12.58—*prophecy*  
 4.12.61—*revelation*  
 4.12.62—*murdering*  
 4.12.63—*plundering*  
 4.12.64—*lying*  
 4.12.65—*stealing*  
 4.12.67—*adultery*  
 4.12.80—*Nephi*  
 4.12.83—*Lamanites*  
 4.13.36—*Lamanites*  
 4.14.3—*Moronihah*  
 4.14.17—*Nephi*  
 4.14.19—*Lehi*  
 4.14.25—*Helaman*  
 4.16.3—*Moronihah*  
 4.18.8–10—*sixty and second*  
 4.18.19—*Moronihah*  
 4.18.27—*Lamanites*  
 4.19.19—*Lamanites*  
 4.19.26—*Nephites*  
 4.19.34—*Moronihah*  
 4.20.15—*Lamanites*  
 4.20.17—*Nephites*  
 4.21.9—*Alma*  
 4.21.15—*Mosiah*  
 4.22.14—*Mosiah*  
 4.22.53—*Lamanites*  
 4.24.14—*Lamanites*  
 4.25.32—*Lamanites*  
 4.26.10—*Lamanites*  
 4.26.45–46—*many years*  
 5.1.9–10—*same year*  
 5.1.12—*Nephi*  
 5.1.23—*Cezoram*  
 5.2.1—*For*  
 5.2.29—*therefore*  
 5.2.35—*for*  
 5.4.7—*Nephi*  
 5.4.41—*Lehi*  
 5.5.9—*Helaman*  
 5.6.26–27—*these words*  
 5.6.47—*Jerusalem*  
 5.8.27—*boast*  
 5.8.41—*treasure*  
 5.9.10—*Benjamin*  
 5.9.36–37—*Jesus Christ*  
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 5.10.10—*Zeezrom*  
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 5.11.2—*he*  
 5.12.12—*rock*  
 5.12.18—*Christ*  
 5.12.41—*shafts*  
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 5.16.18—*Nephi*  
 5.16.32—*Zarahemla*  
 5.16.35—*Lamanites*  
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A Commentary on the Scriptures  
by  
Paul Nolan Hyde, Ph.D.

**The Book of Helaman**

0.0 The first year of the rule of the judges included portions of the years 91 and 90 BC. We are not privy as to exactly when the new calendar year of the Nephites began nor can we be certain as to exactly how the judicial year corresponded to that calendar year. We are tempted to suggest that the Nephites followed a calendar similar to that of the Jews only because the rituals of the Law of Moses were organized after something of that fashion. The secular year, that which marked the beginning of a judicial year, may or may not have been coordinated with the ecclesiastical year. To complicate our perception of the chronological system somewhat further, it must be remembered that the development of our current calendar transpired completely independent of that which developed in ancient America. We cannot assume that because our northern hemisphere calendar year begins in the middle of winter that the Nephites reckoned their annual cycles in the same way. There are sufficient temporal markers in the narrative of the Book of Mormon, however, that we may approximate the period of time covered by any Nephite year, probably within a few months of the actual timeframe. Thus, we are somewhat assured that the book of Alma relates events that transpired between the years 91 and 52 BC. The book of Helaman may be perceived as covering the history of the children of Lehi from the latter part of 52 BC to approximately 1 BC, or about the time of the birth of Jesus Christ. Of the actual date of this event we have the authority of divine revelation to aid us. Jesus was born on the 6th day of April 1 BC, notwithstanding all arguments to the contrary.

- 0.0.5—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.
- 0.0.7—*wars*—Some of these were precipitated by existing Lamanite forces from the land of Nephi, the acts of Coriantumr and Tubaloth constituting the first of the wars narrated in the book of Helaman (see 1.14–32). Later apostasies and dissensions would precipitate others (see 4.1–3 and 11.1–2). The Gadianton robbers would eventually instigate conflict on every hand.
- 0.0.9—*contentions*—As manifested in the various intrigues involving the various political and religious parties that arose among the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla.
- 0.0.12—*dissensions*—Primarily manifested in the creation of the secret combinations, although there were other political and religious causes as well. Whereas previous dissidents had sought to enlist the aid of the Lamanites to further their ends, the later apostates sought to actively destroy the government through internal subterfuge and political sabotage.
- 0.0.20—*prophets*—Nephi, Lehi, and Samuel certainly qualify as witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ. There were many of the converted Lamanites who prophesied as well (see 6.3–6). Toward the end of the narrative of the book of Helaman, other wise men were raised up to testify of the coming Messiah (see 16.13–14).
- 0.0.25—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been

**\*THE BOOK OF HELAMAN**

*An account of the Nephites. Their wars and contentions, and their dissensions. And also the prophecies of many holy prophets, before the coming of Christ, according to the records of Helaman, who was the son of Helaman, and also according to the records of his sons, even down to the coming of Christ. And also many of the Lamanites are converted. An account of their conversion. An account of the righteousness of the Lamanites, and the wickedness and abominations of the Nephites, according to the record of Helaman and his sons, even down to the coming of Christ, which is called the book of Helaman.*

\* p. 407  
Hel.  
EM 1:152, 196,  
198, 350  
EM 2:585  
EM 3:1291  
EM 4:1782,  
1801

anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

- 0.0.29—*records*—The records of Helaman the son of Helaman are summarized by Mormon in the first three chapters of the present volume.
- 0.0.31—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.
- 0.0.37—*Helaman*—Helaman’s exploits as a religious leader and military commander are recounted in the pages of the book of Alma. The son of Alma served as the high priest of the Church of Christ in his day and as the shepherd of the 2,000 stripling warriors taken from among the people of Ammon during the war against Amalickiah and Ammaron.
- 0.0.40—*sons*—The records of Nephi and Lehi are summarized by Mormon in chapters 4 through 16 of the book of Helaman, including the prophecies of Samuel which were undoubtedly recorded by the sons of Helaman, although most probably by Lehi.
- 0.0.45—*coming*—That is to say, the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 0.0.50—*Lamanites*—The body of converts brought into the Church through the ministry of Nephi and Lehi was composed of large numbers of dissident Nephites together with those who were genetic Lamanites.
- 0.0.52—*conversion*—This was accomplished primarily through the missionary efforts of Nephi and Lehi.

*{Chapter I}*  
**(Chapter 1)**

*{1—1830}*

1.1 One wonders if the contention that arose among the sons of Pahoran was a matter of philosophy or of pride. Earlier in the reign of the judges certain men aspired to influence the judgment seat in order to change the constituted government, in order to reestablish a monarchy among the people of Nephi. In every case, the voice of the people sided with the freemen, those who were in favor of maintaining a judiciary. In their electoral defeat, the kingmen generally rose up in rebellion against the government, an act of treason that was soon quelled. One conflict after another followed in the wake of these men bringing about the loss of tens of thousands of lives. The leaders of the kingmen, however, were not so much tied to the notion of a kingdom over a

1 AND now behold, it came to pass in the commencement of the fortieth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi, there began to be a serious difficulty among the people of the Nephites.

Hel. 1  
EM 1:152, 165  
Hel. 1:1  
EM 1:152, 191

judiciary as they were in assuming dictatorial dominion over the rest of their fellow citizens, that they might exploit and abuse their brethren. If the voice of the people in the present instance is any indication, it would appear that Pahoran, the son of Pahoran, was cut from the same bolt of cloth as his father, a freeman to the bones. Following the same pattern of reasoning, it would appear that Paanchi was more in line with men like Amlici and Amalickiah, favoring more of a monarchy, or at least favoring more personal power for himself rather than acting as a servant of the people.

1.1.9—*commencement*—The beginning of the 40th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to sometime during the latter part of the year 52 BC.

1.1.24—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

1.2 This unseemly contention was unworthy of the memory of Pahoran the son of Nephihah. Throughout his long years of service, Pahoran had maintained the cause of freedom, even in the face of intimidation, belligerence, and persecution. He had been the political equivalent to Moroni, the captain of the Nephite armies.

1.2.3—*Pahoran*—Pahoran, the son of Nephihah, had begun his tenure as chief judge of the land of Zarahemla at the end of the 24th year of the reign of the judges, or sometime during the first part of the year 67 BC (see *AL-C 50.40*). His death apparently transpired at the very end of the 39th year or at the very beginning of the 40th year, making his service to the people approximately fifteen years long.

1.3 These three are ill-fated brothers.

1.3.20—*Pahoran*—Pahoran will die at the hand of the assassin Kishkumen (see 1.9).

1.3.21—*Paanchi*—Paanchi will be executed for his rebellion and treason (see 1.6–8).

1.3.23—*Pacumeni*—Pacumeni will die by the hand of invading Lamanite chieftain Coriantumr (see 1.21).

There are some obvious sorts of chronological problems associated with the relationship between the various characters in the narrative of the Book of Mormon, in part because Mormon does not always provide us with detailed information regarding the ages of individuals when they died, and seldom gives us an accounting as to when a particular individual was born. Therefore, we have been forced to make suppositions which are not always felicitous if we wish to have some sort of generational framework. What follows is a combination of estimations made in previous material together with additional estimations based on the narrative of Helaman (see *MS-C 28.0*, *AL-C 16.5*, *AL-C 37.25*, and *AL-C 49.0*). The primary assumption used previously was that a man would give birth to the succeeding generation beginning at age 22, children being born every two years. That assumption has continued here. The only new statistical “guestimate” in this chart is that Pahoran 1 is assumed to have died at age 60, a generous age given the ages at which the other major characters in the narrative died or were translated. This assumption has thus provided the births of Pahoran’s three sons. What is stunning about the results of the chart is to consider how young most of these men were when they were required to take upon them tremendous responsibilities, both secular and

2 For behold, Pahoran had died, and gone the way of all the earth; therefore there began to be a serious contention concerning who should have the judgment-seat among the brethren, who were the sons of Pahoran.

3 Now these are their names who did contend for the judgment-seat, who did also cause the people to contend: Pahoran, Paanchi, and Pacumeni.



ecclesiastical. We suppose Helaman to have been no more than 33 years old when he received the assignment to preserve the Nephite records (see *AL-C 63.11*) and no more than 36 years of age when he ascended to the judgment seat (see 2.1–1). It would appear as well that his son Nephi was raised up to be the chief judge when he was hardly 25 years of age (see 3.37). Interestingly enough, both Nephi, the son of Helaman, and his son Nephi, the disciple of Jesus, both live in excess of 72 years upon the earth.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Citation</u>	<u>FN Year</u>
173 BC	Alma the elder born		Mosiah 29:45	
154 BC	Mosiah 2 born		Mosiah 29:46	
137 BC	Nephihah born (?)			
131 BC	Eldest son of Mosiah born (Aaron?)		Mosiah 6:2; 29:2	
130 BC	Alma the younger born (?)		Alma 5:5	
129 BC	Ammon born (?)			
127 BC	Omner born (?)			
125 BC	Himni born (?)			
115 BC	Pahoran 1 born			
108 BC	Helaman 1 born (?)			
106 BC	Shiblon born (?)			
104 BC	Corianton born (?)			
104 BC	Moroni born (?)			
93 BC	Pahoran 2 Born (?)			
91 BC	Paanchi born (?)			
91 BC	1st year of the reign of the Judges	1	Mosiah 29:44	91 BC
91 BC	Alma the elder dies at age 82	1	Mosiah 29:45	91 BC
91 BC	Mosiah 2 dies at age 63	1	Mosiah 29:46	91 BC
89 BC	Pacumeni born (?)	2		
86 BC	Helaman 2 born (?)	6		
79 BC	Moroni appointed Captain (?)	12	Alma 16:5	
74 BC	Mission to the Zoramites	17	Alma 35:12	74 BC
74 BC	Corianton 30 (?)	17		
74 BC	Shiblon 32 (?)	17		
74 BC	Helaman 34 (?)	17		
73 BC	Helaman given charge of the records	18	Alma 37:1	73 BC
73 BC	Alma translated at 58 (?)	18	Alma 45:17–20	73 BC
68 BC	Nephihah dies (60?)	24	Alma 50:27	67 BC
67 BC	Kingmen against Pahoran	25	Alma 51:1	67 BC
64 BC	Nephi born (?)	28		
62 BC	Lehi born (?)	30		
56 BC	Helaman 1 dies at 52 (?)	35	Alma 62:52	57 BC
56 BC	Shiblon take charge of the records	35	Alma 63:1	56 BC
55 BC	Moroni dies (49?)	36	Alma 63:3	56 BC
53 BC	Corianton boards ship at 51 (?)	39	Alma 63:7,10	53 BC
52 BC	Helaman 2 takes records (33?)	39	Alma 63:11	53 BC
52 BC	Shiblon dies at 54 (?)	39	Alma 63:10	53 BC
52 BC	Pahoran 1 dies (60?)	39	Hel. 1:1	52 BC
52 BC	Conflict for the judgment seat	40	Hel. 1:1–4	52 BC
52 BC	Pahoran 2 assassinated (41?)	40	Hel. 1:9	52 BC
51 BC	Paanchi executed (40?)	40	Hel. 1:8	52 BC
50 BC	Pacumeni (39?) slain by Coriantumr	41	Hel. 1:21	51 BC
50 BC	Helaman 2 becomes chief judge	42	Hel. 2:1–2	50 BC
42 BC	Nephi the disciple born (?)	50		
40 BC	Timothy the disciple born (?)	52		
39 BC	Helaman dies (47?)	53	Hel. 3:37	39 BC

39 BC	Nephi becomes chief judge (25?)	53	Hel. 3:37	39 BC
1 BC	Nephi promised the sign	91	3 Ne. 1:13	AD 1
AD 8	Nephi translated (72?)	100	3 Ne. 2:5-9	AD 9
AD 33	Appearance of Jesus		3 Ne. 8:1-5	AD 34

1.4 If nothing else, we may conclude that these three sons of the former chief judge were charismatic, physically well-built, and intelligent. That one of them suffered from a tragic flaw typical of some of the greatest apostates in Nephite history is saddening.

1.4.9—*Pahoran*—The son of Nephiah who ascended to the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla at the end of the 24th year of the reign of the judges (see 50.40). Pahoran was an honorable man who was unflinching in his commitment to honor the commandments and statutes that had been established by Mosiah 2 and maintained by those of the judgment seat who had preceded him. The kingmen were a particular annoyance during his administration, Amalickiah and Ammoron being the most preeminent among them.

1.5 One wonders if Pahoran enjoyed a clear majority. Three popular candidates of the stature of the sons of Pahoran 1 probably did not allow for Pahoran 2 to garner more than fifty percent of the vote. No doubt it was the closeness of the tally between Pahoran and Paanchi that exacerbated the sentiments of the latter's followers.

1.5.7—*Pahoran*—The son of Pahoran and the grandson of Nephiah, all chief judges of the people of Nephi located in the land of Zarahemla. He was murdered by the hand of Kishkumen.

1.5.27—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

1.6 One wonders how Pacumeni would have fulfilled his tenure as the chief judge of the land. It is clear from his reaction to the election that he was a man of law, perceiving the value of a democratic system, and willing to hearken to the voice of the people. His murder by the hand of Coriantumr deprived the people of Zarahemla of a gifted and worthy man.

1.6.7—*Pacumeni*—One of the three sons of Pahoran, the chief judge, who vied for preeminence among the people of Nephi in the land of Zarahemla. He became chief judge after the murder of his brother Pahoran and the execution of the third brother Paanchi.

1.7 Any semblance of an organized body of kingmen had come to an end with the death of Pachus and the trials held for his followers (see *AL-C 62.7-11*). Yet it seems clear that the supporters of Paanchi were of that ilk; these were kingmen in spirit if not in open philosophy. Had Paanchi's party been successful in their rebellion against the voice of the people, what sort of government would they have proposed? What sort of state would they have enforced? We cannot help but wonder if Paanchi's followers had sought aid from the kings of the Lamanites as had so many other disappointed dissidents.

1.7.3—*Paanchi*—One of the three brothers who vied for the judgment seat after the death of their father Pahoran. He was executed for inciting a rebellion against the judicial government of the land of Zarahemla.

4 Now these are not all the sons of Pahoran (for he had many) but these are they who did contend for the judgment-seat; therefore, they did cause three divisions among the people.

5 Nevertheless, it came to pass that Pahoran was appointed by the voice of the people to be chief judge and a governor over the people of Nephi.

{*¶*—1830}

6 And it came to pass that Pacumeni, when he saw that he could not obtain the judgment-seat, he did unite with the voice of the people.

7 But behold, Paanchi, and that part of the people that were desirous that he should be their governor, was exceedingly wroth; therefore, he was about to flatter away those people to rise up in rebellion against their brethren.

{*¶*—1830}

1.8 The voice of the people in this instance was manifested in the law of the land, a law that had been established in the days of Pahoran and Moroni in direct opposition to the efforts of the kingmen to destroy the liberties of the people of God. The chief judge and the chief captain had not arbitrarily instituted statutes to preserve their own power, but the Nephites had authorized their leaders to take whatever measures were necessary in order to preserve their society. Paanchi and his men could not feign innocence or ignorance. Their acts were deliberately treasonous. It is also clear that Paanchi was instrumental in stirring up his followers, that he encouraged the rebellion wholeheartedly.

1.9 Paanchi's followers were perverted from the beginning, and we should not doubt that these were men who favored the same sort of despotism that King Noah and his priests fostered among the people of Zeniff in the land of Lehi-Nephi. We should not ignore what appears to be a direct association between the disenfranchised kingmen and the rise of the secret combinations among the Nephites. It is astonishing that Kishkumen was able to approach the chief judge as he did, take Pahoran's life, and then escape without injury to himself. Either the Nephites surrounding Pahoran were really quite naïve, or Kishkumen's disguise was far more sophisticated than might appear at first blush. We should probably suppose that the murderer was disguised as someone who would not have been suspect in the presence of the chief judge.

1.9.32—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen's successor, Gadianton, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah (see 6.21–26).

1.9.35—*Pahoran*—The son of Pahoran and the grandson of Nephihah, all chief judges of the people of Nephi located in the land of Zarahemla. He was murdered by the hand of Kishkumen.

1.10 Kishkumen appears to have planned his escape route carefully. The assassin was more than just fleet of foot; he was also clever beyond measure.

1.10.9—*Pahoran*—The son of Pahoran and the grandson of Nephihah, all chief judges of the people of Nephi located in the land of Zarahemla. He was murdered by the hand of Kishkumen.

1.10.18—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen's successor, Gadianton, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah (see 6.21–26).

1.11 It is worthy of note to consider that the oaths of the wicked are almost always blasphemous. These wicked men did not swear by the name of their revelator, their kindred spirit, the enemy of all righteousness. Their oaths were covenants of theological rebellion, deliberately in defiance of all that the Lord God of Israel had taught His people. It is interesting that even in the midst of

\*8 And it came to pass as he was about to do this, behold, he was taken, and was tried according to the voice of the people, and condemned unto death; for he had raised up in rebellion and sought to destroy the liberty of the people.

9 Now when those people who were desirous that he should be their governor saw that he was condemned unto death, therefore they were angry, and behold, they sent forth one Kishkumen, even to the judgment-seat of Pahoran, and murdered Pahoran as he sat upon the judgment-seat.

10 And he was pursued by the servants of Pahoran; but behold, so speedy was the flight of Kishkumen that no man could overtake him.

11 And he went unto those that sent him, and they all entered into a covenant, yea, swearing by their everlasting Maker, that they would tell no man that Kishkumen had

\* p. 408

Hel. 1:9–12  
EM 1:153

their wickedness, the secret combination trusted in an oath made in the name of God more than in any other name.

1.11.29—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen’s successor, Gadianon, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah (see 6.21–26).

1.11.32—*Pahoran*—The son of Pahoran and the grandson of Nephiah, all chief judges of the people of Nephi located in the land of Zarahemla. He was murdered by the hand of Kishkumen.

1.12 At what point did the Nephites perceive that the assassination of Pahoran was directly connected with the followers of Paanchi? When did they know that the murderer of the chief judge had been hired by that particular segment of their own society? Certainly by the time Kishkumen attempted to take the life of Helaman, the leadership of the Nephites was already receiving intelligence as to the nature of the secret combinations among the people (see 2.6–9). The erstwhile followers of Paanchi went to ground, for the most part keeping their views to themselves. Clearly, however, there were those of the conspiracy who were not disciplined sufficiently to remain hidden for long. One wonders at the nature of the evidence that was arrayed against these wicked men.

1.12.2—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen’s successor, Gadianon, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah (see 6.21–26).

1.12.10—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

1.12.22—*Pahoran*—The son of Pahoran and the grandson of Nephiah, all chief judges of the people of Nephi located in the land of Zarahemla. He was murdered by the hand of Kishkumen.

1.13 We do not know specifically how Pacumeni’s appointment came about. Did he ascend to the judgment seat merely because he was the only surviving candidate or was there another election held?

1.13.4—*Pacumeni*—One of the three sons of Pahoran, the chief judge, who vied for preeminence among the people of Nephi in the land of Zarahemla. He became chief judge after the murder of his brother Pahoran and the execution of the third brother Paanchi.

1.13.33—*Pahoran*—The son of Pahoran and the grandson of Nephiah, all chief judges of the people of Nephi located in the land of Zarahemla. He was murdered by the hand of Kishkumen.

1.13.40—*right*—What constituted Pacumeni’s right to reign in the place of his brother? The fact that he had been a runner-up in the original

murdered Pahoran.

12 Therefore, Kishkumen was not known among the people of Nephi, for he was in disguise at the time that he murdered Pahoran. And Kishkumen and his band, who had covenanted with him, did mingle themselves among the people, in a manner that they all could not be found; but as many as were found were condemned unto death.

13 And now behold, Pacumeni was appointed, according to the voice of the people, to be a chief judge and a governor over the people, to reign in the stead of his brother Pahoran; and it was according to his right. And all this was done in the fortieth year of the reign of the judges; and it had an end.

election? Was it a right gained because of a subsequent expression of the voice of the people?

1.13.48—*fortieth*—The 40th year of the reign of the judges included portions of the years 52 and 51 BC.

1.14 Tubaloth, the son of Ammoron and the nephew of Amalickiah, had come to the throne of the Lamanites dwelling in the land of Nephi. Ten years had passed since the death of Ammoron (see *AL-C 62.36–39*) and three years since the last incursion by the Lamanites into the land of Zarahemla (see *AL-C 63.14–16*). We do not know exactly why the Lamanites decided to attack the Nephites at this particular time, but we should not be surprised to learn that the followers of Paanchi were involved. It is interesting to note that the armor of the Lamanites now apparently mimicked Moroni’s armor in ever detail.

1.14.8–10—*forty and first*—The 41st year of the reign of the judges included portions of the years 51 and 50 BC.

1.14.20—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.14.36—*cimeters*—The English word “cimeter” describes a short sword with a convex edge or a recurved point. We ought not to be surprised or dismayed at the variant spellings of this word, all of which may be found in reputable dictionaries as alternates of the standard form “scimitar”. We do not know how or when the Lamanites learned to make this kind of weapon (see *EN-C 1.20.91*). The Nephites initially patterned their swords after the sword of Laban, for the which we have no detailed description. The curved Egyptian “scimitar” would have been available as early as 1600 BC according to some scholars.

1.15 Had Coriantumr been part of the kingmen party? Had he supported the candidacy of Paanchi in any fashion? Had he been involved in the conspiracy formed to take the life of Pahoran? At what point had he inveigled himself into Lamanite society?

1.15.13—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.15.24—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.15.31—*Zarahemla*—Zarahemla was the last Jewish king to rule in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.13–19*). Thereafter, the land was graced with the rule of Mosiah, his son Benjamin, and his grandson Mosiah.

1.15.36—*dissenter*—One wonders as to the nature of Coriantumr’s dissent. Was he an unbeliever in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? Was he one of the kingman disappointed and dissatisfied in the democracy established by King Mosiah forty years before?

1.15.45–47—*large and mighty*—This description almost always fits the

{*9–1830*}

14 And it came to pass in the forty and first year of the reign of the judges, that the Lamanites had gathered together an innumerable army of men, and armed them with swords, and with cimeters and with bows, and with arrows, and with head-plates, and with breastplates, and with all manner of shields of every kind.

15 And they came down again that they might pitch battle against the Nephites. And they were led by a man whose name was Coriantumr; and he was a descendant of Zarahemla; and he was a dissenter from among the Nephites; and he was a large and a mighty man.

Hel. 1:15

EM 1:191

Hel. 1:15–16

EM 1:211

Hel. 1:15–34

EM 1:192

greatest of the apostates and rebels among the Nephites.

1.16 It is astonishing that the Lamanites would be willing to go into battle again after the many stunning defeats they had suffered at the hands of the Nephites. It may have been the death of Moroni and the civil disturbances associated with the election of the chief judge that gave them sufficient hope that they could be successful.

1.16.6—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.16.10—*Tubaloth*—How and when did Tubaloth come to power? Had he been part of the original band that had accompanied Amalickiah in their flight from the land of Zarahemla into the land of Nephi? Had he been at the side of his uncle and father as all of the machinations against the Lamanite king had been hatched? Or was he the very young son of Ammoron and the queen of the Lamanites? A compelling argument could be made for either scenario.

1.16.16—*Ammoron*—The brother of Amalickiah who was party to all of the adventures that eventually brought him to power among the Lamanites. After the death of his brother by the hand of Teancum, Ammoron assumed control of the armies of the Lamanites and pursued the war that Amalickiah had initiated against the Nephites dwelling in the land of Zarahemla. Ammoron was eventually dispatched by Teancum while the former was sleeping within the walls of the city of Moroni.

1.16.19—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.16.28—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.17 No matter what else we may conclude about Tubaloth, it is clear that he was a personage that could easily motivate his people to anger and action.

1.17.2—*he*—That is to say, Tubaloth, the king of the Lamanites.

1.17.20—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.17.37—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and

16 Therefore, the king of the Lamanites, whose name was Tubaloth, who was the son of Ammoron, supposing that Coriantumr, being a mighty man, could stand against the Nephites, with his strength and also with his great wisdom, insomuch that by sending him forth he should gain power over the Nephites—

Hel. 1:16–17  
EM 1:181

17 Therefore he did stir them up to anger, and he did gather together his armies, and he did appoint Coriantumr to \*be their leader, and did cause that they should march down to the land of Zarahemla to battle against the Nephites.

\* p. 409

Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.17.42—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.18 The implication of the narrative is that the Nephites did have sufficient guards in those fortresses which bordered on the wilderness, but there was no longer a standing army near or in the capital city of Zarahemla. The last incursion by the Lamanites had taken place about three years before (see *AL-C 63.14–16*) and it would seem almost impossible to imagine that their vigilance along the narrow strip of wilderness had waned in any fashion. The question that remains, however, is how did Coriantumr arrive at the gates of the city of Zarahemla without alerting any of the garrisons ensconced in the bastions located on the southern border of the land of Zarahemla? The original defensive network had been established to guard the passes that led through the wilderness. Hence, the cities of Moroni, Nephihah, Aaron, Manti, Cumeni, Zeezrom, Antiparah, and others were strategically placed to maximize the protection afforded by the terrain. How did Coriantumr bypass these fortresses? It appears that Coriantumr had discovered another approach into the land of Zarahemla that had not been considered important enough to fortify. It is possible that some hitherto unknown aspect of the west wilderness was involved in the stealthy movement of Coriantumr's army.

1.18.30—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.18.37—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.18.52—*Zarahemla*—The capital city of the land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.19 Without a garrison within the walls of the city of Zarahemla, the defense of the city of Zarahemla was virtually impossible. All resistance was quickly swept away. As it turned out, however, there were sufficient men at arms to defeat the Lamanite army, but they were located in what had been considered the strategically vulnerable locations.

1.19.7—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given

{*9*—1830}

18 And it came to pass that because of so much contention and so much difficulty in the government, that they had not kept sufficient guards in the land of Zarahemla; for they had supposed that the Lamanites durst not come into the heart of their lands to attack that great city Zarahemla.

Hel. 1:18  
EM 1:177

19 But it came to pass that Coriantumr did march forth at the head of his numerous host, and came upon the inhabitants of the city, and their march was with such exceedingly great speed that there was no time for the Nephites to gather together their armies.

the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.19.42—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.20 One wonders at what sort of a reception the members of the secret combination gave Coriantumr.

1.20.2—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.21 If the fortifications of the city of Zarahemla were similar to that which had been established in other locations throughout the land, there would have been only one gate to the city. Once that was taken by Coriantumr's men, there would have been no easy escape for the inhabitants of the city. Pacumeni's flight from the judgment seat no doubt involved a plan to scale the timbers on the top of the earthen walls in order that he might let himself out of the city by rope. He apparently was caught in the very act.

1.21.7—*Pacumeni*—One of the three sons of Pahoran, the chief judge, who vied for preeminence among the people of Nephi in the land of Zarahemla. He became chief judge after the murder of his brother Pahoran and the execution of the third brother Paanchi.

1.21.16—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.22 It is hard to imagine that any of the inhabitants of the city of Zarahemla escaped from the onslaught. Once the entrance to the city was taken, those who were within the walls were as trapped as Pacumeni had been. Thus, the Nephites were either slain or imprisoned. We cannot be certain, therefore, just how Moronihah learned of the attack on the capital.

1.22.4—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.22.15—*Zarahemla*—The capital city of the land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the

20 Therefore Coriantumr did cut down the watch by the entrance of the city, and did march forth with his whole army into the city, and they did slay every one who did oppose them, insomuch that they did take possession of the whole city.

21 And it came to pass that Pacumeni, who was the chief judge, did flee before Coriantumr, even to the walls of the city. And it came to pass that Coriantumr did smite him against the wall, insomuch that he died. And thus ended the days of Pacumeni.

22 And now when Coriantumr saw that he was in possession of the city of Zarahemla, and saw that the Nephites had fled before them, and were slain, and were taken, and were cast into prison, and that he had obtained the possession of the strongest hold in all the land, his heart took courage insomuch that he was about to go forth against all the land.



lands of Nephi and Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.22.20—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.22.35—*prison*—One wonders at the size of any prison that might have existed within the walls of the city of Zarahemla. With regard to the eastern front of the war with the Lamanites under Amalickiah and Ammoron, the prisoners of war had been taken to the city of Bountiful, a city that had been made into a prison by the captive soldiers themselves (see *AL-C 53.3–5*). The prisoners of war that were taken in the western front, where Helaman eventually commanded the Nephite forces, were all sent to the city of Zarahemla (see *AL-C 57.11*). Whether they were housed there or were sent on to Bountiful, we do not know, but given Coriantumr’s ability to imprison so many people on such short notice would imply that prison facilities were still in place within the capital.

1.23 There is one issue deriving from the narrative contained in the book of Alma that was not fully resolved by Mormon. What happened to those Lamanites who were taken prisoner during the six years of the war perpetrated by Amalickiah and Ammoron. Once Moroni and Pahoran had wrested the city of Zarahemla from the hands of Paachus and the kingmen, they made their way to the mountain fortress of Nephiah that had recently fallen into the hands of the Lamanites. On their way, they met and defeated a large contingent of Lamanites who had presumably been sent by Ammoron to support Paachus in his control of the capital. Once the Lamanites were taken as prisoners, they entered into a covenant with the Nephites to never raise up arms. They then went into the land of Melek and dwelt with the people of Ammon (see *AL-C 62.14–17*). When the city of Nephiah was recaptured, the erstwhile defenders expressed a desire to join the people of Ammon as well (see *AL-C 62.26–29*). Once the war was over, did the remaining prisoners of war at Zarahemla and Bountiful enter into the same covenant as had their brethren? We do not know, but clearly some accommodation was made, otherwise both cities would have been bristling with belligerents ten year after the close of the war. One wonders as to how many of the converted Lamanites were among the vast numbers of the inhabitants of Zarahemla who had made new homes in the land northward, in the land of Desolation and beyond? How many of them entered into Hagoth’s ships of exploration and immigration? This question is raised simply to explore what defensive measures were still in place at Bountiful and whether the Nephites were still as intent upon not allowing groups to pass through the narrow neck of land.

1.23.11—*Zarahemla*—The capital city of the land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.23.22—*towards*—Coriantumr’s design, once he had taken the city of Zarahemla, was to press forward to the north until he had captured the city of Bountiful. He no doubt was fully confident that he could do so inasmuch as he had already captured the strongest hold of the Nephites (see 1.22). We have to wonder, however, how many cities lay between Zarahemla and Bountiful. They must have been numerous (1.27), even

23 And now he did not tarry in the land of Zarahemla, but he did march forth with a large army, even towards the city of Bountiful; for it was his determination to go forth and cut his way through with the sword, that he might obtain the north parts of the land.

though none of them are ever named.

1.23.26—*Bountiful*—In reference to the city and surrounding region that was located near to the narrow neck of land that separated the land northward from the land southward.

1.24 As it will be seen, there were two suppositions that were in play that allowed for the debacle which was about to transpire. Moronihah had assumed that no one among the Lamanites would be foolish enough to expose the flank of their army to the Nephite armies by penetrating deep into the land of Zarahemla (see 1.26). The Nephite captain considered that the Lamanites had been caught in too many pincer movements in the past to have ignored the possibilities for disaster. Coriantumr, however, was such a fool, and in his foolishness he thought that he had defeated the best that the Nephites could muster at the city of Zarahemla. This assumption on his part would be his undoing.

1.25 A goodly number of civilians had perished in Coriantumr's initial thrust into the land of Zarahemla, but the Lamanite commander had as yet to face any of the hardened troops that were placed to defend the inheritance of the Nephites. When they were caught in the open by Lehi and Moronihah, they would die by the hundreds and thousands.

1.25.7—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.25.15—*Moronihah*—This great general of the Nephite armies would serve his country a minimum of 29 years. He is last mentioned by name in conjunction with the Nephi attempts to wrest the land of Zarahemla from the control of the Lamanites (see 4.14–19). This was in the 62nd year of the reign of the judges.

1.25.28—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.26 The main defenses of the land of Zarahemla had been established by Moronihah's father. The boundary with the narrow strip of wilderness to the south was heavily fortified, as were the eastern and western spurs of wilderness that bordered the land near the shores of the east and west seas. Moronihah continued Moroni's policy of ensconcing the flower of the Nephite army in those bastions, a policy that either was unknown to Coriantumr or was ignored.

1.26.3—*Moronihah*—This great general of the Nephite armies would serve his country a minimum of 29 years. He is last mentioned by name in conjunction with the Nephi attempts to wrest the land of Zarahemla from the control of the Lamanites (see 4.14–19). This was in the 62nd year of the reign of the judges.

1.26.8—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the

24 And, supposing that their greatest strength was in the center of the land, therefore he did march forth, giving them no time to assemble themselves together save it were in small bodies; and in this manner they did fall upon them and cut them down to the earth.

25 But behold, this march of Coriantumr through the center of the land gave Moronihah great advantage over them, notwithstanding the greatness of the number of the Nephites who were slain.

26 For behold, Moronihah had supposed that the Lamanites durst not come into the center of the land, but that they would attack the cities round about in the borders as they had hitherto done; therefore Moronihah had caused that their strong armies should maintain those parts round about by the borders.

prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.27 Coriantumr's approach was accompanied by general mayhem and the slaughter of innocents. For whatever reason, he had no compassion on the Nephites. Some of his antipathy may have derived from his own sentiments as a Mulekite, a descendant of the last king of the Jewish settlers who had escaped the devastation of the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and environs. His viciousness, however, came as a direct result of his personal wickedness as a rampant apostate from the truths of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1.27.4—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.27.7—*frightened*—Any potential fear of the border fortresses was apparently ameliorated because of the new trail into the land of Zarahemla that Coriantumr had found which was not protected by the bastions and garrisons of the Nephites.

1.27.33—*Zarahemla*—The capital city of the land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.27.40–41—*capital parts*—We may only surmise what Mormon had in mind when he described this part of the land of Zarahemla. The English word “capital” has several definitions, any of which may have application here. “Capital” literally refers to the “head”. Thus, Zarahemla was the “capital” city of the land of Zarahemla, or the seat of government. It also can mean “great, important, large, of great size”. The central part of the land of Zarahemla contained highly developed urban areas in addition to the city of Zarahemla.

1.27.61—*cities*—These are, for the most part, not named in the narrative of the Book of Mormon. These particular cities lay between the cities of Zarahemla and Bountiful. The land of Zarahemla was a far greater geographical part of the continent than many scholars are willing to admit.

1.28 We cannot be certain exactly where Lehi had been stationed with his army for the past ten years, but his last known assignment had been in the eastern frontier of the land of Zarahemla.

1.28.3—*Moronihah*—This great general of the Nephite armies would serve his country a minimum of 29 years. He is last mentioned by name in conjunction with the Nephi attempts to wrest the land of Zarahemla from the control of the Lamanites (see 4.14–19). This was in the 62nd year of the reign of the judges.

1.28.11—*Lehi*—Although the text never explicitly says so, we should not be surprised to discover that this man is the same as the captain who served with his brother and father when the Lamanite captives from the city of Noah were recaptured (see *AL-C 16.4–5*). This rescue had taken place during the 11th year of the rule of the judges. Lehi had been assigned strategic locations during his military career with Moroni. His was the task to hold the east bank of the Sidon against the combined armies of Zarahemnah and the Zoramites (see *AL-C 43.35–40*). He

27 But behold, the Lamanites were not frightened according to his desire, but they had come into the center of the land, and had taken the capital city which was the city of Zarahemla, and were marching through the most capital parts of the land, slaying the people with a great slaughter, both men, women, and children, taking possession of many cities and of many strongholds.

\* p. 410

28 But when Moronihah had discovered this, he immediately sent forth Lehi with an army round about to head them before they should come to the land Bountiful.

later was given charge of the city of Noah in anticipation of the attack by the first Lamanite army sent by Amalickiah into the land of Zarahemla (see *AL-C 49.12–17*). Lehi was given command of the city of Bountiful at the time when Moroni and Teancum were attempting to lure Jacob out of the city of Mulek and was on hand to harass the flank of the Lamanite army as it tried to return through Moroni's army to the city of Mulek (see *AL-C 52.27–30*). More than thirty years had passed since Lehi's first recorded foray. He had outlived two of the major military leaders of Nephite history: his father Zoram and the chief captain Moroni. He was undoubtedly in his late fifties or early sixties when he was called upon by Moronihah to deal with Coriantumr.

1.28.15–16—*round about*—This phrase would suggest a circuitous route. Had Lehi been located in the southeast of the land, or anywhere on the eastern seaboard, his armies would have pursued their course northward along the shoreline until they neared the city of Bountiful. In this fashion, he would have avoided any direct confrontation with Coriantumr until he was situated between the Lamanites and the narrow neck of land.

1.28.27—*Bountiful*—In reference to the city and surrounding region that was located near to the narrow neck of land that separated the land northward from the land southward.

1.29 Marching south out of the land of Bountiful, Lehi set himself as a bulwark against Coriantumr's northward push. Coriantumr was then faced with an icon of Nephite military sagacity, a character with a notorious reputation among the Lamanites. We should not be surprised that the knees of the Lamanites began to give way when the might of Lehi's army descended upon them.

1.29.16—*Bountiful*—In reference to the city and surrounding region that was located near to the narrow neck of land that separated the land northward from the land southward.

1.29.33—*Zarahemla*—The capital city of the land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.30 We may not know precisely where Moronihah and his men had been stationed at the beginning of the conflict, but clearly the chief captain of the Nephites placed himself strategically between Bountiful and Zarahemla, directly in the path of Coriantumr's broken army. The terror of the Lamanites must have been prodigious once they realized their dire circumstances.

1.30.7—*Moronihah*—This great general of the Nephite armies would serve his country a minimum of 29 years. He is last mentioned by name in conjunction with the Nephi attempts to wrest the land of Zarahemla from the control of the Lamanites (see 4.14–19). This was in the 62nd year of the reign of the judges.

1.30.39—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given

29 And thus he did; and he did head them before they came to the land Bountiful, and gave unto them battle, insomuch that they began to retreat back towards the land of Zarahemla.

30 And it came to pass that Moronihah did head them in their retreat, and did give unto them battle, insomuch that it became an exceedingly bloody battle; yea, many were slain, and among the number who were slain Coriantumr was also found.

the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.31 The Lamanites were encapsulated in the midst of the surrounding armies of the Nephites. They had nowhere to run. They could either continue to fight against impossible odds and die, or they could surrender. Once their captain perished in the battle, the remaining Lamanites chose life.

1.31.5—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.31.36—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.32 The number of the dead among the Lamanites and Nephites was not recorded by Mormon, but the Lamanites no doubt were the worse for the conflict. It is unlikely that there were many casualties among the hardened troops of the Nephites, although the civilian losses were enormous.

1.32.4—*Coriantumr*—There are three men in the narrative of the Book of Mormon who bear this name. Two of them pertained to the Jaredite nation, which fell long before any of the subsequent inheritors of the land became aware of its existence. One of the two Jaredite Coriantumrs was the last king of the Jaredites who lived nine months with the Mulekites, the body of Jewish nobles who eventually established themselves in the land of Zarahemla (see *OM-C 1.20–22*). It is interesting that a descendant from this remnant of the Jewish oligarchy was given the name of the last Jaredite king.

1.32.7—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.32.13—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

1.33 Here we see the spirit of the father working in the heart and mind of the son. Moronihah's policies were no different than Moroni's, so long as the Lamanites expressed a willingness to depart in peace and never return. Thus we see the patience and kindness of the Nephites prevailing over any and all desire for vengeance and retribution.

1.33.7—*Moronihah*—This great general of the Nephite armies would serve his country a minimum of 29 years. He is last mentioned by name in conjunction with the Nephi attempts to wrest the land of Zarahemla from the control of the Lamanites (see 4.14–19). This was in the 62nd year of the reign of the judges.

1.33.14—*Zarahemla*—The capital city of the land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

1.33.20—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teach-

31 And now, behold, the Lamanites could not retreat either way, neither on the north, nor on the south, nor on the east, nor on the west, for they were surrounded on every hand by the Nephites.

32 And thus had Coriantumr plunged the Lamanites into the midst of the Nephites, insomuch that they were in the power of the Nephites, and he himself was slain, and the Lamanites did yield themselves into the hands of the Nephites.

{9—1830}

33 And it came to pass that Moronihah took possession of the city of Zarahemla again, and caused that the Lamanites who had been taken prisoners should depart out of the land in peace.

ings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

1.34 The ended of the 41st year of the reign of the judges would have transpired sometime during the first part of the year 50 BC

2.1 It would seem that the Nephites often could not make a connection between their cultural distresses and the causes of those distresses. They frequently did not understand the relationship between their own spiritual degeneration and the military incursions being made by the Lamanites. They did not perceive that their internal dissensions and contentions derived from a lack of natural affection and a descent into social stratification based on pride, wealth, and unrighteous dominion.

- 2.1.8–10—*forty and second*—The 42nd year of the reign of the judges included portions of the years 50 and 49 BC.
- 2.1.19—*Moronihah*—The worthy son of Moroni, the captain of the Nephites during the wars with Amalickiah and Ammoron.
- 2.1.21—*established*—First by defeating the invading army of Tubaloth and Coriantumr, and second by inviting the Lamanite soldiers to enter into a nonaggression pact.
- 2.1.26—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.
- 2.1.29—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.
- 2.1.33–34—*no one*—The three main candidates had either been assassinated, executed or slain in battle.
- 2.1.45—*contention*—We cannot be certain as to the nature of the contention among the various parties, but we should probably assume that the fuss was more of the same.

2.2 For the first time in thirty-three years, the chief judge and the high priest of the Church of Christ were the same man. Alma, Helaman's grandfather, had been elected the first chief judge of the land of Zarahemla while presiding amidst the saints of God.

- 2.2.7—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.
- 2.2.13—*Helaman*—This son of Alma is the second of three so named mentioned in the text of the Book of Mormon. The first is one of the sons of king Benjamin who is mentioned at the time Mosiah is selected to be Benjamin's successor. The third is Helaman's own son. The present Helaman was the commander of the 2,000 stripling warriors, sons

34 And thus ended the forty and first year of the reign of the judges.

*{Chapter 1; continued}*  
**(Chapter 2)**

*{9–1830}*

1 AND it came to pass in the forty and second year of the reign of the judges, after Moronihah had established again peace between the Nephites and the Lamanites, behold there was no one to fill the judgment-seat; therefore there began to be a contention again among the people concerning who should fill the judgment-seat.

Hel. 2  
EM 1:152  
Hel. 2:1–5  
EM 1:170

2 And it came to pass that Helaman, who was the son of Helaman, was appointed to fill the judgment-seat, by the voice of the people.

of the faithful Anti-Nephi-Lehies. His personal record of his life and ministry became Mormon's source for most of the narrative to be found in Alma 45 to Alma 62. It is for Helaman's son that the book of Helaman is named.

2.3 The men who had supported Paanchi to reign as chief judge had called upon Kishkumen to assassinate Pahoran 2 as he sat on the judgment seat. This gathering of murderers constituted one of the first, if not the first, secret combination among the Nephites. The attempted assault upon Helaman was inevitable, given the designs of Kishkumen's band to subvert the legitimate government of the land.

2.3.3—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen's successor, Gadianton, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah (see 6.21–26).

2.3.7—*Pahoran*—The son of Pahoran and the grandson of Nephihah, all chief judges of the people of Nephi located in the land of Zarahemla. He was murdered by the hand of Kishkumen.

2.3.13—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

2.4 Gadianton was a man like unto the many anti-Christ and political apostates which had attempted to rise to power among the Nephites. He was glib and charismatic, driven by a desire for self-aggrandizement accompanied by wealth, power, and license. He was nefarious and duplicitous in all of his dealings with his fellow men, save in the covenant of wickedness into which he and his companions had entered.

2.4.5—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen's successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah

2.4.25—*murder*—There was no hesitancy to deprive any man of his life if there were some sort of gain involved to benefit his society.

2.4.27—*robbery*—By definition "robbery" is a forcible and felonious depriving of another person any money or goods, putting the victim in fear by violence or menaces of death or personal injury. It is in this peculiar aspect of personal intimidation that robbery differs from "theft". We should not be surprised to learn that Gadianton's band engaged in "theft", but their specialty was "robbery".

2.4.38—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen's successor, Gadianton, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the

3 But behold, Kishkumen, who had murdered Pahoran, did lay wait to destroy Helaman also; and he was upheld by his band, who had entered into a covenant that no one should know his wickedness.

Hel. 2:3–11  
EM 1:153

4 For there was one Gadianton, who was exceedingly expert in many words, and also in his craft, to carry on the secret work of murder and of robbery; therefore he became the leader of the band of Kishkumen.

record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah (see 6.21–26).

2.5 Kishkumen's desire for personal advancement in Gadianton's vision of the future civil government of the land of Zarahemla was great enough that he would risk everything in order that he might live in wickedness without temporal consequences. He certainly anticipated a society like unto that which prospered under King Noah. Murdering Helaman was only the first of a whole series of evils that Kishkumen would have been willing to do.

2.5.8—*Kishkumen*—At first blush we might have some linguistic difficulty determining whether Kishkumen was an object of Gadianton's flattery or a perpetrator of it. The fact that Gadianton had taken control of the secret combination, however, should probably indicate to us that Kishkumen was now one of the dupes of the band.

2.5.11—*they*—That is to say, the members of the band.

2.5.14—*him*—That is to say, Gadianton.

2.5.45—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

2.6 Mormon does not explain to us how this man, the servant of Helaman, came to be involved in these clandestine meetings that were being held among the members of the secret combination. Had he been an innocent, invited by a friend or associate to join the group, who had been horrified by what he had seen and heard? Had he then confided to Helaman what had transpired, wondering what he should do under the circumstances? Had Helaman expressed a desire for the servant to continue his meetings as an agent of the government in order to determine what course the villains were going to take? At some point, Helaman and others of the righteous learned of Gadianton and his band in rather direct terms, even though the murder of Pahoran had been accomplished by a man in disguise. The fact that Helaman's servant had been in disguise, however, would imply that the combination had been infiltrated by a man originally selected by Helaman for that very purpose.

2.6.15—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

2.6.32—*disguise*—We have to ask ourselves the question as to nature of the servant's disguise. Who or what was he disguised as? Is Mormon merely referring to the fact that the servant did not reveal his true allegiance to Helaman, or was the deception more complex? We do not know.

2.7 Note that the nature of the sign was so compelling that Kishkumen did not hesitate in the slightest to reveal all that he was about. Either that or Kishkumen was not particularly bright.

2.7.9—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen's successor, Gadianton, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the

5 Therefore he did flatter them, and \*also Kishkumen, that if they would place him in the judgment-seat he would grant unto those who belonged to his band that they should be placed in power and authority among the people; therefore Kishkumen sought to destroy Helaman.

\* p. 411

{*¶*—1830}

6 And it came to pass as he went forth towards the judgment-seat to destroy Helaman, behold one of the servants of Helaman, having been out by night, and having obtained, through disguise, a knowledge of those plans which had been laid by this band to destroy Helaman—

{*¶*—1830}

7 And it came to pass that he met Kishkumen, and he gave unto him a sign; therefore Kishkumen made known unto him the object of his desire, desiring that he would conduct him to the judgment-seat that he might murder Helaman.



record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah (see 6.21–26).

2.7.16—*sign*—Was this a password, a gesture, or an easily identifiable object of some kind? We have no idea and to speculate would be bootless. Secret combinations have devised a number of ways by which the various members might easily recognize one another

2.7.42—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

2.8 The servant of Helaman had his wits about him. Having discovered all that Kishkumen was prepared to do, he invited the assassin to place himself under the servant’s guidance. Again, there is no hesitancy on Kishkumen’s part. He follows the servant blithely, fully expecting to accomplish his task with comparatively little effort. What is fascinating about the servant’s proposal is that the encounter between Kishkumen and the servant apparently took place during daylight hours, else the recommendation to go to the place of the judgment seat would have made no sense whatsoever. The object of Kishkumen’s homicidal mania was Helaman; the murderer must have accepted it as a given that Helaman was located in the place of the judgment seat.

2.8.6—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

2.8.13—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen’s successor, Gadianton, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah (see 6.21–26).

2.9 If we accept the fact that Kishkumen and Helaman’s servant were walking toward the judgment seat, we are confronted with the question as to where and when the execution of Kishkumen took place. We may suppose that the servant did not wish to make a public display of Kishkumen’s death. Was Kishkumen slain in a side corridor or some other out of the way place? Was it earlier in the morning when there were fewer people about in the capital or at some other time during administrative doldrums? We do not know for a certainty, but Kishkumen apparently had been progressing slowly up until the time that the servant of Helaman met with him. Hence, the delay that began to trouble Gadianton and his co-conspirators.

2.9.5—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen’s successor, Gadianton, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah

8 And when the servant of Helaman had known all the heart of Kishkumen, and how that it was his object to murder, and also that it was the object of all those who belonged to his band to murder, and to rob, and to gain power, (and this was their secret plan, and their combination) the servant of Helaman said unto Kishkumen: Let us go forth unto the judgment-seat.

Hel. 2:8  
CR93-O 32  
CR96-O 104

9 Now this did please Kishkumen exceedingly, for he did suppose that he should accomplish his design; but behold, the servant of Helaman, as they were going forth unto the judgment-seat, did stab Kishkumen even to the heart, that he fell dead without a groan. And he ran and told Helaman all the things which he had seen, and heard, and done.

(see 6.21–26).

2.9.22—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

2.10 Whatever had been the exact relationship between the servant of Helaman and the chief judge prior to the execution of Kishkumen, it seems that the servant had not as yet had the opportunity to reveal to Helaman what had happened the night before as he had met with the members of the combination. Once having explained his activities during the night and then of his encounter with Kishkumen that day, the servant then explained his rationale behind his rather proactive approach to disposing of the threat against the chief judge. Armed with the information that the servant was able to provide regarding the location of the meeting held the night before, officers of the law were sent to apprehend the miscreants.

2.10.7—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

2.11 At what hour had Kishkumen left his band? What had been the intended hour of return? What circumstances had delayed Kishkumen before he came in contact with the servant of Helaman? We do not know, but something had interfered with the timetable, else Gadianton would not have been antsy about Kishkumen's failure to return. Helaman's response to the report of his servant would have been immediate and the capture of the band would have been accomplished without much ado. The delay must have been prior to the meeting of Kishkumen and the servant, a delay that serendipitously afforded Gadianton an opportunity to flee the city.

2.11.4—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen's successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah

2.11.8—*Kishkumen*—One wonders where the party of Paanchi dredged up this fellow. Additionally, one wonders from whence came the initial covenants that Kishkumen instigated among his band of conspirators in order to facilitated the assassination of Pahoran 2. Kishkumen's successor, Gadianton, is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah (see 6.21–26).

2.11.40–41—*secret way*—Probably in reference to a way to get out of the city of Zarahemla other than through the main entrance.

2.11.44—*wilderness*—We cannot be exactly certain as to which wilderness is indicated. The city of Zarahemla was located in the central part of the land of Zarahemla. There were spurs of wilderness on the east and on the west that followed the curvature of the continent, bordering on the east and west seas. There was the main strip of wilderness that lay to the south separating the land of Zarahemla from the land of Nephi. Although it is not mentioned, there may have been a wilderness area in

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10 And it came to pass that Helaman did send forth to take this band of robbers and secret murderers, that they might be executed according to the law.

11 But behold, when Gadianton had found that Kishkumen did not return he feared lest that he should be destroyed; therefore he caused that his band should follow him. And they took their flight out of the land, by a secret way, into the wilderness; and thus when Helaman sent forth to take them they could nowhere be found.

Hel. 2:11  
EM 1:173

connection with the narrow neck of land that lay to the north of the city of Zarahemla. If pressed to decide which of the four possible wilderness areas is indicated here, it seems most likely that the band of conspirators fled into the wilderness spur that lay on the west. It would have been lightly fortified in comparison to the other areas, and yet gave access to populated areas where murdering, plundering, and robbery could be inflicted upon the inhabitants of the land.

2.11.48—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

2.12 Gadianton as an actor in the narrative history of the Nephites is not mentioned by name again. His band, however, is. Seven years later, during the 49th year of the reign of the judges, the combination inveigled its way back into the society of the Nephites (see 3.23). Although there were many intrigues that may have involved the secret combinations, the band of murderers are not specifically mentioned until 67th year of the reign of the judges, some twenty-five years after Mormon left Gadianton and his men weltering in the wilderness (see 6.16–18). Gadianton may have survived those years, but it seems unlikely.

2.12.5—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen’s successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah

2.12.14–16—*forty and second*—The end of the 42nd year of the reign of the judges occurring during the first part of the year 49 BC.

2.12.28—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

2.13 The eventual destruction of the Nephites at the hill Cumorah came about in large measure as the result of the first covenants established by Kishkumen and Gadianton being continually exploited by the wickedness of the Nephites. The spirit of that band, the desire for power, wealth, and self-gratification, would fuel the last conflicts between the Lamanites and the Nephites.

2.13.8—*book*—As will be seen, Mormon is referring to his entire history of the Nephites and not just the account ascribed to Helaman and his sons.

2.13.14—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen’s successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah.

2.13.28—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

12 And more of this Gadianton shall be spoken hereafter. And thus ended the forty and second year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

13 And behold, in the end of this book ye shall see that this Gadianton did prove the overthrow, yea, almost the entire destruction of the people of Nephi.

Hel. 2:13  
EM 2:585  
Hel. 2:13–14  
EM 1:153  
EM 3:1291

2.14 By the book of Nephi, Mormon means the general history begun by Nephi the son of Lehi which came to be known as the Large Plates of Nephi. Those plates encompassed the entire thousand year history of the Nephites, from which Mormon drew much of his account.

2.14.12—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

2.14.22—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

3.1 Pride derives from false self-perception, a misrepresentation that derives from a want of spiritual sensitivity. Those who enjoy the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost do not view themselves as elite, but rather as brethren to all men, filled with charity and compassion. Pride and dissention ultimately derive from sin; repentance derives from humility and gratitude.

3.1.9–11—*forty and third*—The 43rd year of the rule of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 49 and 48 BC.

3.1.27—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

3.1.54—*ending*—The ending of the 43rd year of the reign of the judges would have transpired during the first part of the year 48 BC

3.2 There was no war and no outward hostilities among the Nephites, yet there was an uneasiness in their peace, a silent turmoil that lay just beneath the surface of their apparent tranquility.

3.2.11–13—*forty and fourth*—The 44th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 48 and 47 BC.

3.2.22–24—*forty and fifth*—The 45th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 47 and 46 BC.

3.3 We are not told of the spirituality of those who went into the land of Desolation and beyond. Were they the righteous who looked for an opportunity to be free from the oppressions of their neighbors? Were they fleeing what must have been an increasing societal undercurrent that was beginning to emanate from the adherents of Gadianton and Kishkumen? Or were the wicked looking for places to impose their will without the disturbing righteousness of the sons and daughters of God? Many thousands of the Nephites had gone into the lands north of the narrow neck of land nearly ten years before at the behest of Hagoth and others (see *AL-C 63.4–9*). Had some of these pioneers called upon the inhabitants of the land of Zarahemla to join them in their isolated colonies? We know not.

3.3.8–10—*forty and sixth*—The 46th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 46 and 45 BC.

3.3.35—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay

14 Behold I do not mean the end of the book of Helaman, but I mean the end of the book of Nephi, from which I have taken all the account which I have written.

### {\*Chapter II} (Chapter 3)

{9—1830}

1 AND now it came to pass in the forty and third year of the reign of the judges, there was no contention among the people of Nephi save it were a little pride which was in the church, which did cause some little dissensions among the people, which affairs were settled in the ending of the forty and third year.

2 And there was no contention among the people in the forty and fourth year; neither was there much contention in the forty and fifth year.

3 And it came to pass in the forty and sixth, yea, there was much contention and many dissensions; in the which there were an exceedingly great many who departed out of the land of Zarahemla, and went forth unto the land northward to inherit the land.

\* p. 412  
Hel. 3  
EM 1:152, 186,  
173

Hel. 3:3  
EM 2:585

between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

3.4 We are not privy as to how far the immigrants travelled and we can therefore not say with any kind of accuracy as to where these men and women settled. When Limhi, the grandson of King Zeniff, found that he and his people could no longer tolerate the oppressions of the Lamanite neighbors, he sent forty-three men in search of the land of Zarahemla, that they might call upon their Nephite relatives to deliver them from bondage. This company became lost in the wilderness between the land of Lehi-Nephi and Zarahemla, and completely missed their goal, undoubtedly passing the developed areas of the land of Zarahemla to the east of the western spur of wilderness that lay near the shores of the west sea. They passed through the narrow neck of land into the land of Desolation where they found the ruins of the Jaredites, together with bones, armor, and other evidences of a large and accomplished people. It was at this time that the 24 gold plates of the record of Ether were discovered (see *MS-C 21.25–27*). The men also reported that the land where they found the records was a place of many waters (see *MS-C 8.8*). Some scholars have immediately concluded that the waters discovered by Limhi's men and those by which the Nephites settled some eighty years later are the same. This does not necessarily follow. It seems clear that Limhi's men, for all of their journeying in the wilderness, were gone from the land of Lehi-Nephi less than two years and perhaps even half that period of time elapsed (see *MS-C 12.0*). We are informed that the land of Desolation, for thus was that part of the land called ever after, was indeed a place of many waters (see *MS-C 8.8*), but we are never informed as to the nature of those waters. Were these lakes? Rivers? Swamps? We are not told. During the days prior to the war with Amalickiah and Ammoron, a man by the name of Morianton proposed to take his people north of the narrow neck of land that was covered by large bodies of water (see *AL-C 50.29*). While it seems likely that these bodies of water were located in or near the land of Desolation, we cannot be absolutely certain that this was the case. In any event, we are hard-pressed to equate the "large bodies of water" in the books of Alma and Helaman given what appears to be a difference in travel time. The people of Morianton were determined to bypass the city of Bountiful and make their way through the narrow neck of land into a place where they could settle outside of the jurisdiction of Moroni and Pahoran. Would the land of Desolation have been far enough away for their purposes? We have no way of knowing. Additionally, we are at a loss to interpret precisely what "exceeding great distance" means in the current passage of scripture, but it seems reasonable to assume that the Nephites of 45 BC travelled to an extraordinarily distant land. Does our comprehension of the location of the land of Desolation compel us to believe that the Nephites just journeyed a short distance north of the narrow neck of land? Not hardly. Throughout the length and breadth of the North American continent there are many locations today that would favorably satisfy the description of the land to where the Nephites went. From Panama to New England there are innumerable places of many large bodies of water and rivers. To which did they go? It is a bootless issue. Much of any current argument for a specific location is wasted because of the incomprehensible changes that took place at the time of the Savior's crucifixion seventy years after this exodus. Areas which may have once been lush could have easily become barren desolations. Places that had once been inhospitable may have become paradises by comparison.

4 And they did travel to an exceedingly great distance, inso-much that they came to large bodies of water and many rivers.

3.5 Many readers of the Book of Mormon have been tempted to suggest locations in Central and North America as areas once inhabited by the descendants of Lehi, based on their perceptions of what constitutes a “desolate” area insofar as timber is concerned. One merely needs to ask the question about the nature of forests and jungles over long periods of time. If a land were destitute of vegetation two thousand years ago, does it necessarily follow that that same region would be treeless today? It is interesting to note, however, that over five hundred years had passed since the Jaredites had inhabited the land of Desolation and it was still considered to be without timber.

3.5.25—*timber*—In 19th century usage, “timber” did not refer to trees in general, but specifically to wood that could be used in the manufacture of sturdy furniture or in the construction of buildings. In fact, the English word “timber” derives from Germanic roots that expressly mean “build, frame, fabricate”. Thus, “timber” would refer primarily to trees like oak and white pine rather than cottonwoods or other poplars.

3.6 The region immediately north of the narrow neck of land was called the land of Desolation primarily because of the absence of the Jaredites. Mormon makes it clear that the whole of the land had been completely repopulated by Nephites during the preceding ten years.

3.6.9—*desolate*—The English word “desolate” derives from Latin sources which has reference to the lack of human population in a given area. Among the various definitions employed for both the verb and the adjective are the notions of deprivation, destruction, solitude, and abandonment.

3.7 This expertise in the use of cement and stone would continue for several hundreds of years so that when Moroni, the sole surviving Nephite, prepared a small depository for the breastplate, the Urim and Thummim, and the Plates from which the Book of Mormon would be translated, he too used stones set in cement (see *SH-C 1.51–52*)

3.7.26—*cement*—In the 19th century, the usage of the English word “cement” referred specifically to the practice of employing mortar and other substances in conjoining other materials in close adhesion. It does not refer to a building material that would stand alone. Thus, it would appear that the Nephites became stonemasons rather than carpenters when it came to building their cities in lands without timber.

3.8 We are not certain as to how we should orient our modern maps to that geographical region described here by Mormon. We are also at somewhat of a loss as to how the face of the land, its shape and topography, might have changed during the time of the great upheaval attendant to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

3.8.19—*southward*—No doubt in reference to the land of Zarahemla, but it may be that Mormon had reference to the southernmost point in the land of Desolation.

3.8.23—*northward*—Perhaps this is an indication of the nature of the growth in the beginning of the colonization because of the straitness of the land, being more like unto an isthmus than a region that had wide expanses to the east and to the west.

3.8.37—*whole*—This is a rather embracive term, and one which many students of the Book of Mormon choose to minimize. How much territory is being populated here? Is the colonization limited only to regions which we now refer to as Central America, or did the Nephites expand into the greater regions that constitute the entire northern expanse of

5 Yea, and even they did spread forth into all parts of the land, into whatever parts it had not been rendered desolate and without timber, because of the many inhabitants who had before inherited the land.

6 And now no part of the land was desolate, save it were for timber; but because of the greatness of the destruction of the people who had before inhabited the land it was called desolate.

7 And there being but little timber upon the face of the land, nevertheless the people who went forth became exceedingly expert in the working of cement; therefore they did build houses of cement, in the which they did dwell.

{*¶—1830*}

8 And it came to pass that they did multiply and spread, and did go forth from the land southward to the land northward, and did spread insomuch that they began to cover the face of the whole earth, from the sea south to the sea north, from the sea west to the sea east.

Hel. 3:5  
CR85-A 91

Hel. 3:7,11  
EM 1:174

North America?

- 3.8.41–42—*sea south*—Depending upon the nature of the “whole earth” Mormon refers to in this same verse, the present location of the “sea south” is debatable. In one scenario, portions of the Pacific Ocean may serve. In other definitions the Caribbean, the Gulf of Honduras, or the Gulf of Mexico may be appropriate. We ought not be too quick to settle on modern corollaries until we have a complete understanding as to the extremities to which the Nephites went to colonize the lands of their inheritance.
- 3.8.45–46—*sea north*—Again, the definition of the “whole earth” establishes which bodies of water might have served as the “sea north”. The southern reaches of the Caribbean might be indicated, or portions of the Gulfs of Honduras or Mexico. Did the Nephites become familiar with the vast waters north of modern Canada?
- 3.8.49–50—*sea west*—In reference to the land of Zarahemla and the regions that lay south of the narrow strip of wilderness, the sea west has been identified consistently as what we now called the Pacific Ocean. If Mormon’s description here is to be understood in generalized terms, then we may accept the established definition.
- 3.8.53–54—*sea east*—In reference to the land of Zarahemla and the regions that lay south of the narrow strip of wilderness, the sea east has been identified consistently as what we now called the Atlantic Ocean. If Mormon’s description here is to be understood in generalized terms, then we may accept the established definition.

3.9 We may only speculate as to the nature of the temporary dwellings of the Nephites in this era. We may look to modern corollaries in the Middle East or those to be found among the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas, but the assumptions that we would have to make to identify the latter-day manifestations of that which transpired in another time and place are too varied to make even moderately informed proclamations. The same may be said of the remains of any permanent Nephite buildings erected during the days of Helaman. Do any survive? Do any of the ruins available for study today have any connection at all with those built in the land of Desolation or other areas in North America?

3.9.90—*synagogues*—The earliest mention of “synagogues” in the Book of Mormon is made by Nephi the son of Lehi (see 2 *NE-C* 26.26). The word “synagogue” itself is of Greek origin and means “assembly”. We do not know the Reformed Egyptian word which was used by the writers of the Book of Mormon which has been translated into English as “synagogue”. Modern Jews use different names for their places of assembly depending on the language and culture in which they live. Some scholars have suggested that the “synagogue” was a building devised in connection with the Babylonian Captivity when the Jews had no access to the Temple in Jerusalem. Clearly the places of assembly were in use long before then.

3.10 Presumably, the timber was shipped northward in crafts similar to those built by Hagoth. Did the transportation of timber take place on the west sea or were there ships built for the east sea as well? Once the timber reached the proper latitude, how far inland was the lumber transported and by what means?

3.11 Do any of these buildings survive today? How would we know if we were to find one?

9 And the people who were in the land northward did dwell in tents, and in houses of cement, and they did suffer whatsoever tree should spring up upon the face of the land that it should grow up, that in time they might have timber to build their houses, yea, their cities, and their temples, and their synagogues, and their sanctuaries, and all manner of their buildings.

{*¶*—1830}

10 And it came to pass as timber was exceedingly scarce in the land northward, they did send forth much by the way of shipping.

11 And thus they did enable the people in the land northward that

Hel. 3:9  
AF 487  
CR87-A 87

Hel. 3:10  
EM 1:173

Hel. 3:11  
EM 1:195

3.12 We had speculated earlier about the distances and numbers of Nephites who either entered into Hagoth's ships or who travelled by foot into the lands northward to settle (see *AL-C 63.4-9*). There may have been a contingent of Ammonites among them at that time, but nothing is mentioned as to whether that transpired or not. Here, however, Mormon explicitly testifies that many of the converted Lamanites migrated into the land northward to inherit a part of the land.

3.12.14—*Ammon*—This son of Mosiah served as the high priest of the land of Jershon, among the Anti-Nephi-Lehies, who were at that time referred to as the people of Ammon.

3.12.17—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

3.13 The general aggregate of the Nephite records was consistently referred to as the Large Plates of Nephi, no matter who the author or guardian was. Along with the general accounting of events there were specific histories generated by the servants of God regarding their personal ministries and teachings. While it would appear that Mormon has confined himself primarily to the events that took place in the lands of Zarahemla and Lehi-Nephi, we cannot but assume that those men and women who traveled into the land of Desolation and beyond also kept records of their adventures. When and how these were preserved we cannot say, but they will one day be made available to those who would have a complete history of the children of Lehi.

3.14 If one chooses to be a literalist, the complete record of the Nephite peoples would be no less than 53,100 pages of printed text, or approximately 160 volumes of modern size. No doubt Mormon was making a rather simple point regarding his task as an abridger, that he could not place all of the notable and significant events into his own limited record. Modern accounts of the final depository of the collection of Nephite records suggest that there were wagonloads of plates, implying a far greater historical record than even Mormon's hundred-fold remark would indicate.

3.14.17—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

3.14.21—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

3.14.50—*synagogues*—The earliest mention of "synagogues" in the Book of Mormon is made by Nephi the son of Lehi (see *2 NE-C 26.26*). The word "synagogue" itself is of Greek origin and means "assembly". We do not know the Reformed Egyptian word which was used by the writers of the Book of Mormon which has been translated into English as "synagogue". Modern Jews use different names for their places of assembly depending on the language and culture in which they live. Some scholars have suggested that the "synagogue" was a building devised in connection with the Babylonian Captivity when the Jews

they might build many cities, both of wood and of cement.

12 And it came to pass that there were many of the \*people of Ammon, who were Lamanites by birth, did also go forth into this land.

{*9-1830*}

13 And now there are many records kept of the proceedings of this people, by many of this people, which are particular and very large, concerning them.

14 But behold, a hundredth part of the proceedings of this people, yea, the account of the Lamanites and of the Nephites, and their wars, and contentions, and dissensions, and their preaching, and their prophecies, and their shipping and their building of ships, and their building of temples, and of synagogues and their sanctuaries, and their righteousness, and their wickedness, and their murders, and their robbings, and their plundering, and all manner of abominations and whoredoms, cannot be contained in this work.

\* p. 413

Hel. 3:14  
EM 1:173  
EM 2:585, 933  
CR86-A 75  
CR99-O 89



had no access to the Temple in Jerusalem. Clearly the places of assembly were in use long before then.

3.15 We should probably assume that the books and records of the Nephites were primarily inscribed on plates. In no other fashion would they be relatively easy to transport and still be durable.

3.15.21—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

3.16 The general history of the Nephites had been started by Nephi at the word of the Lord God of Israel. It is continually referred to in the text of the Book of Mormon as the Large Plates of Nephi. Personal journals, sacred writings, and other items of importance were placed with the Large Plates of Nephi for safe-guarding. In every generation a record-keeper was selected and by his hand the entire historical treasury of the people of God was preserved until he was commanded to hand them off to another. The last three custodians, Ammaron, Mormon, and Moroni, were presented with special challenges while attending to their tasks, particularly as the Nephite civilization began to fall apart.

3.16.14—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

3.16.16—*until*—Mormon here is referring to his own time, during which the final battle was fought at the hill Cumorah. One of the questions that has entertained students of the Book of Mormon has to do with the time period during which Mormon wrote the text. When did he actually begin to write? When did he have time to pursue his studies of the Large Plates of Nephi and to devise the text as we have it today? The implication of this verse and this particular word is that Mormon began composing his work shortly after the destruction of the Nephites at that final battle, the time when there were no more Nephites. Certainly by the time he arrived at this point in the narrative, the Nephite civilization was no more. The final battle took place about the year AD 385. How long after this battle was Mormon slain by the Lamanites? Moroni “finishes” his father’s record beginning about the year AD 401. If Mormon had died immediately after the last men fell at Cumorah, why did Moroni wait more than fifteen years to attend to the task that his father had pressed upon him? It seems clear that Mormon lived most of the intervening time between AD 385 and AD 400, preparing his Book for posterity. Shortly after his death, then, Moroni picked up his father’s stylus and began his labors as an historian.

3.16.46—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

3.17 Mormon returns to the time frame that involved the colonization of the land northward by the Nephites and the Ammonites, the narration of which had paused at the end of verse 12. Verses 13 to 17 constitute an aside regarding the records kept by the Nephites and how they came to be in Mormon’s possession.

3.17.10—*what*—The antecedent of this pronoun appears to be in reference to the scarcity of information given in verses 1 through 3 about

15 But behold, there are many books and many records of every kind, and they have been kept chiefly by the Nephites.

Hel. 3:15  
EM 1:174

16 And they have been handed down from one generation to another by the Nephites, even until they have fallen into transgression and have been murdered, plundered, and hunted, and driven forth, and slain, and scattered upon the face of the earth, and mixed with the Lamanites until they are no more called the Nephites, becoming wicked, and wild, and ferocious, yea, even becoming Lamanites.

Hel. 3:16  
EM 1:191

{~~9~~—1830}

17 And now I return again to mine account; therefore, what I have spoken had passed after there had been great contentions, and disturbances, and wars, and dissensions, among the people of Nephi.

the various upheavals that had been taking place among the Nephites. There is the possibility, of course, that he may have been referring to all of the turmoil that he had briefly described in the previous two chapters of the book of Helaman.

3.17.32—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

3.18 The end of the 46th year of the reign of the judges transpired some time during the first part of the year 45 BC.

3.19 We may assume that the contentions in the land of Zarahemla were part of the motivation for many of the inhabitants of the land migrating through the narrow neck of land into the land of Desolation and beyond.

3.19.19–21—*forty and seventh*—The 47th year of the reign of the judges included portions of the years 45 and 44 BC.

3.19.27–29—*forty and eighth*—The 48th year of the reign of the judges included portions of the years 44 and 43 BC.

3.20 By this time, Helaman had been serving as the chief judge for approximately six years. If our chronologies be correct, he was at this time about 42 years of age (see 1.3).

3.20.2—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As will be seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

3.21 If we have figured correctly, these two young men would have been about 20 and 18 years of age respectively at this point in the narrative (see 1.3). There is somewhat of a consensus among scholars that it was about this time when Helaman gave his sons the counsel that is recorded in chapter 5 below. If that were the case, Nephi and Lehi would have been harkening back approximately 14 years (see 5.4–13). Helaman died in the 53rd year of the reign of the judges (see 3.37) or about five years from this time.

3.21.19—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

3.21.27—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

3.22 The wars and contentions referred to had begun during the 46th year of the reign of the judges (see 3.3) and had continued unabated for two years. It seems reasonable to assume that much of the immigration that took place was precipitated in large measure because of the civil unrest.

3.22.23—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred

18 The forty and sixth year of the reign of the judges ended;

19 And it came to pass that there was still great contention in the land, yea, even in the forty and seventh year, and also in the forty and eighth year.

20 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.

21 And it came to pass that he had two sons. He gave unto the eldest the name of Nephi, and unto the youngest, the name of Lehi. And they began to grow up unto the Lord.

22 And it came to pass that the wars and contentions began to cease, in a small degree, among the people of the Nephites, in the latter end of the forty and eighth year of the reign of the judges over the

Hel. 3:20  
MD 231  
EM 1:378  
EM 2:585  
CR85-A 16  
CR02-O 42

years before the birth of Christ.

3.22.27—*end*—The end of the 48th year of the reign of the judges would have transpired sometime during the first part of the year 43 BC.

3.23 Gadianton and his band of robbers and murderers had fled from the city of Zarahemla at the time of Kishkumen’s failed attempt to take the life of Helaman (see 2.11). We have proposed that these villains fled into the western spur of wilderness that lay near the borders of the west sea. During the intervening seven years since their escape, the members of the secret combination had been infiltrating Nephite society and were undoubtedly part of the reason why the wars and contentions had prospered in the land of Zarahemla.

3.23.8–10—*forty and ninth*—The 49th year of the reign of the judges included portions of the years 43 and 42 BC.

3.23.34—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen’s successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah.

3.23.36—*robber*—In the first edition of the Book of Mormon, the typesetter misread the holographic manuscript and the word “nobler” instead of “robber” was printed in this place. Needless to say, much unnecessary controversy resulted from this typographical error.

3.24 Had the Nephites become war-weary? Were they, as had so many of the predecessors, finally realizing that their lives were without meaning, lives filled with sin and transgression, bringing them no happiness? We are not told of those who were instrumental in the conversion of these thousands of souls, but no doubt men like Helaman and his two sons were effective instruments in the hands of the Lord in many instances.

3.25 When men and women openly choose to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by cleansing their lives of all iniquity through sincere repentance, the ordinances of the Gospel become astonishingly effective on the hearts and minds of the new disciples. They are filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost and in a substantial way, become the life blood of the Kingdom of God, stirring the hearts of the faithful. These were men and women who became filled with charity, the pure love of Christ, who reached out to all those around them, inviting all to partake of the tender mercies of a kind and wise Father in Heaven. Apparently, this sort of abundant regeneration had not transpired in the Church for some time.

3.26 Mormon’s account appears to be focused on the land of Zarahemla and environs. As to what was taking place in the more northerly colonies of the Nephites we may only speculate.

3.26.24–25—*many souls*—We may not tell what percentage of the people was brought into the Church and Kingdom of God at this time. Numerically, the disciples had increased tremendously, but the overall population of the land of Zarahemla was far, far greater

3.27 Mormon does not describe the iniquity into which the Nephites had fallen, the sins for the which they were required to fully repent before they could enter into the Kingdom of God. Dissension, contention, and war are all the products of personal and cultural sin. Pride and lust are likewise outward manifestations of the secret desires of the natural man. Notwithstanding the

people of Nephi.

23 And it came to pass in the forty and ninth year of the reign of the judges, there was continual peace established in the land, all save it were \*the secret combinations which Gadianton the robber had established in the more settled parts of the land, which at that time were not known unto those who were at the head of government; therefore they were not destroyed out of the land.

{~~9~~—1830}

24 And it came to pass that in this same year there was exceedingly great prosperity in the church, in-somuch that there were thousands who did join themselves unto the church and were baptized unto repentance.

25 And so great was the prosperity of the church, and so many the blessings which were poured out upon the people, that even the high priests and the teachers were themselves astonished beyond measure.

26 And it came to pass that the work of the Lord did prosper unto the baptizing and uniting to the church of God, many souls, yea, even tens of thousands.

27 Thus we may see that the Lord is merciful unto all who will, in the sincerity of their hearts, call upon his holy name.

\* p. 414

Hel. 3:24–25  
EM 2:585  
CR92-O 59  
Hel. 3:24,26–28  
CR92-A 15

Hel. 3:25  
PM 315

Hel. 3:27  
EM 1:170  
Hel. 3:27–30  
EM 1:200  
EM 2:933

grievousness of the conduct of the Nephites, the Lord God was merciful to those who turned to him in humility.

3.28 There is no salvation for the sons of men in any other fashion than through faith in the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no lasting happiness, no lasting peace, no lasting affection without the power and influence of the spirit of God. The Holy Ghost can only have influence in the lives of men through those principles and ordinances that have been established by divine wisdom and love. There is no mercy and forgiveness that exceeds that of the Father and the Son.

3.28.24–25—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

3.29 There is a double metaphor in operation here. The word of God, that which is couched in the revelations that have been preserved by the servants of God, and that which is communicated personally through the offices of the Holy Ghost, is like unto a two-edged sword that cuts through all of the bonds which the devil employs in his attempt to seduce and lead away captive the souls of men. In almost the same breath, Mormon refers to the rod of iron as portrayed in Lehi’s dream, that well-founded guide which will lead men to the Tree of Life and the fruit of eternal happiness.

3.29.41—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

3.29.44—*strait*—In previous printings of the Book of Mormon this word has been spelled “straight”, perhaps as the result of a confusion of homonyms at the time that the Book of Mormon was being translated. The confusion between the homophones “strait” and “straight” is endemic in the English-speaking world. In the 1829 American Dictionary of the English Language, Noah Webster mistakenly asserts that the spellings are merely variants of the same word. He suggested that “It is customary to write “*straiht*”, for direct or right, and “*strait*” for narrow, but this is a practice wholly arbitrary, both being the same word.” Modern historical linguists and lexicographers have concluded that “strait” derives from a Latin root which also has provided us words like “constrict” and “strain”. It means “to bind tight, or press together”. The Straits of Magellan and the Straits of Gibraltar are so named for that reason. Some confusion was initiated during the Middle English

28 Yea, thus we see that the gate of heaven is open unto all, even to those who will believe on the name of Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God.

29 Yea, we see that whosoever will may lay hold upon the word of God, which is quick and powerful, which shall divide asunder all the cunning and the snares and the wiles of the devil, and lead the man of Christ in a strait and narrow course across that everlasting gulf of misery which is prepared to engulf the wicked—

Hel. 3:28  
PM 147  
CR96-O 100  
Hel. 3:28–30  
PM 314

Hel. 3:29  
MD 508  
CR88-A 9  
CR91-A 61  
CR92-O 91, 114  
Hel. 3:29–30  
MD 769  
CR90-A 95  
CR92-A 17  
CR92-O 113

period of the English language (c. AD 1300) when the orthographic conventions of the time caused several variants spellings of “strait”, including “straight”. The modern word spelled “straight” derives from the Germanic foundations of the English language and means “to stretch”. Thus, a football player in order to “straight-arm” a fellow player has to “stretch out” his hand to deflect his opponent. Also the shortest distance between two points is a “stretched line”, one with such tension that there is no deviation in the direct line. Modern readers of the Book of Mormon are sometimes understandably confused as to what is meant by the “strait and narrow path”: is it “really, really narrow” or is it “direct and narrow”? Perhaps there is little to be gained by choosing one over the other.

3.29.51—*gulf*—In Lehi’s dream as recounted by his son Nephi, the great gulf passed between the path to the Tree of Life and the Great and Spacious Building. The fountain of filthy waters flowed into that gulf. Nephi was told by his angelic informant that the gulf and the river thereof represented the depths of hell (see *1 NE-C 12.15–23*). The nature of Mormon’s reference to the dream suggests that the path and the rod of iron include a bridge that allows the disciple of Christ to avoid the depths of hell. Certainly this view would be consistent with the doctrines of repentance, forgiveness, and redemption.

3.30 Mormon continues his allusion to the Vision of the Tree of Life. Those who successfully traverse the path with the aid of the rod of iron will find themselves beneath the boughs of the Tree of Life, a representation of the Son of God, the Lamb slain before the foundations of the earth were laid, by whom the love of God was manifested unto the children of men in their lost and fallen state. Those who have sought redemption through the atonement of Christ have done no more or less than that which has been done by all of the prophets, seers, and revelators since the beginning of time. The Patriarchs knew of the life and ministry of the Savior and looked forward anxiously to their redemption from death and hell just as the disciples of Christ do today. For every man who is faithful and true there will come a time when the God of Heaven will speak peace to his soul and will declare in no uncertain terms that his calling and election, his salvation and exaltation in the Kingdom of God, is sure, and cannot be overthrown.

3.30.24—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God’s noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham’s ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

3.30.26—*Isaac*—The only son of the union between Abraham and Sarah. There was some strife between Isaac and Ishmael, the son of Hagar, as there had been between Sarah and her handmaiden who had been elevated to the role of wife to Abraham as the result of Sarah’s barren-

30 And land their souls, yea, their immortal souls, at the right hand of God in the kingdom of heaven, to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and with Jacob, and with all our holy fathers, to go no more out.

Hel. 3:30  
DNTPC 3:458

ness. Because Sarah was the first wife, the wife of the covenant, her son Isaac took precedence over the elder half-brother. The animosity engendered during those early years has not completely abated, even into modern times. Isaac was an active participant in the “sacrifice” required by God of his father Abraham.

3.30.29—*Jacob*—The scholars of the world have pointed to Jacob’s name as a term of derision, inasmuch as one of its prominent meanings in Hebrew is “supplanter”. It literally means, however, “heel-catcher” in reference to one of the instances in the manner of his birth, he holding on to Esau’s heel as he was being born. It is interesting that Esau himself used wordplay to deride Jacob’s acquisition of the birthright and the blessing. This complaint and accusation was to come to an end with the angel’s blessing. The scholars of the world have apparently missed this point.

3.31 That the Church had prospered in Zarahemla and environs, perhaps from the sea east to the sea west, seems certain. We are left, however, to speculate to what degree this same transformation took place in the land of Desolation and the regions further north.

3.31.4—*year*—That is to say, in the 49th year of the reign of the judges, or during portions of the years 43 and 42 BC.

3.31.13—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

3.31.23—*all*—This inclusive adjective would imply that all of the colonies of the Nephites, wherever they might have been, enjoyed a time of spiritual regeneration.

3.31.31—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

3.32 The 49th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 43 and 42 BC. We ought not to be particularly upset that the 50th year of the reign of the judges will not be mentioned in the present narrative.

3.33 Pride is the bane of the faithful and is almost always a product of personal prosperity. Financial success sometimes suggests to the faint-hearted that the conduct of the distinctive laborer had been graced by the approval of God and for that reason he had been blessed with abundance. Therefore, the rich themselves are deemed to be worthy of a kind of worship. The humble servants of God are not easily flattered; men who are laden with sin, however, revel in the adulation. Social stratification is antithetical to the principles that govern the Kingdom of God. It is distressing to watch those who should know better engage in this unworthy practice.

3.33.4–6—*fifty and first*—The 51st year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 41 and 40 BC.

3.34 It is a marvelous leap of logic indeed to believe that a man who has been

31 And in this year there was continual rejoicing in the land of Zarahemla, and in all the regions round about, even in all the land which was possessed by the Nephites.

32 And it came to pass that there was peace and exceedingly great joy in the remainder of the forty and ninth year; yea, and also there was continual peace and great joy in the fiftieth year of the reign of the judges.

33 And in the fifty and first year of the reign of the judges there was peace also, save it were the pride which began to enter into the church—not into the church of God, but into the hearts of the people who professed to belong to the church of God—

34 And they were lifted up in

Hel. 3:33–34  
CR92-O 59

Hel. 3:34–35

blessed by the abundance of God is thereby authorized to abuse and torment those less fortunate than himself. But thus it has been since the beginning of time, in every generation of the children of men in this lost and fallen world. Those who have suffered the most in these circumstances have been those who least deserved the treatment. There will be a terrible and eternal price paid by those who have not used their wealth to bless and strengthen their brethren.

3.35 The humble Nephites may have been impoverished in the eyes of those of material means, but through their faith and humility they were blessed with the riches of eternity. The faithful did not concern themselves with the oppressions of wicked men, but sought for the approbation of their God, an effort that did not go unanswered. Strengthened by the spirit of God, His assurances and love, the hearts and minds of His children were fortified against all that the sons of men could do to destroy their trust in Christ.

3.35.25—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

3.36 The 52nd year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 40 and 39 BC. The wealth and prosperity of the wicked worked upon their hearts and minds like a cancer, wasting away their natural affection until they became without feeling. They were ripening for destruction.

3.37 We suggested earlier that Helaman 2 had been born sometime during the 6th year of the reign of the judges (see 1.3). If this is indeed the case, Helaman was no more than 47 when he passed out of mortality. We have also proposed that his son, Nephi, was born during the 28th year of the reign of the judges (see 1.3), implying that he was hardly more than 25 years of age when he assumed the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

3.37.8–10—*fifty and third*—The 53rd year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 39 and 38 BC.

3.37.18—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of

pride, even to the persecution of many of their brethren. Now this was a great evil, which did cause the more humble part of the people to suffer great persecutions, and to wade through much affliction.

35 Nevertheless they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, \*unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God.

36 And it came to pass that the fifty and second year ended in peace also, save it were the exceedingly great pride which had gotten into the hearts of the people; and it was because of their exceedingly great riches and their prosperity in the land; and it did grow upon them from day to day.

{*¶*—1830}

37 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.

CR89-A 6  
Hel. 3:34,35  
CR89-A 29

\* p. 415  
Hel. 3:35  
MD 276, 612  
EM 1:203  
EM 2:663  
EM 3:1260  
CR82-A 38  
CR91-O 82  
CR94-A 10  
CR95-A 104  
CR97-A 80  
CR01-O 34  
CR02-A 29, 101

Hel. 3:37  
EM 2:585

God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As has been seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

3.37.24—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

4.1 Note that Mormon chooses not to regale us with the details of the apostates and political activists. We may assume that this period of Nephite history was merely more of the same that he had recounted in the book of Alma. Helaman had been valiant in every way to maintain the freedoms of the Nephites. With his death there were undoubtedly those who thought to obtain the judgment seat. In this, of course, they were disappointed. It did not take long for the dissidents to discover that Nephi was his father's son in every way. How many of these antagonists pertained to the secret combination of Gadianton and Kishkumen we are not told, but we cannot help but believe that they were some of the usual suspects.

4.1.8–10—*fifty and fourth*—The 54th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 38 and 37 BC.

4.1.15—*dissentions*—That is to say, apostasies of various kinds from the Church of Christ.

4.1.24—*contentions*—That is to say, political intrigues no doubt similar to those which had taken place before between the kingmen and the freemen.

4.2 The king of the Lamanites is unnamed. Thirteen years before, the son of Ammoron, Tubaloth, sat on the throne and had been instrumental in commanding Coriantumr to invade the land of Zarahemla (see 1.15–16). Unless great changes had taken place in the land of Nephi, Tubaloth was probably the monarch.

4.2.22—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.3 The defeated army of Coriantumr had entered into an oath with Moroni-hah that they would never again come up against the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla (1.33). Threats from within the land of Zarahemla, however, had continued to mount, precipitating contentions of all kinds during the 46th year of the reign of the judges (see 3.1–2 and 3.17–18). Notwithstanding the great prosperity of the Church of Jesus Christ during this period of time, a great pride began to insinuate itself into the hearts of many of the members of the Church. This disunity in the Church and in the affairs of state fostered rebellion and eventually treason. Notwithstanding the fact that more than ten years had passed since any armed conflict between the Lamanites and the Nephites, the dissidents could not convince the Lamanites to take up arms against the land of Zarahemla.

4.3.14—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and

*{Chapter II; continued}*  
**(Chapter 4)**

1 AND it came to pass in the fifty and fourth year there were many dissensions in the church, and there was also a contention among the people, insomuch that there was much bloodshed.

Hel. 4  
EM 1:152, 165

2 And the rebellious part were slain and driven out of the land, and they did go unto the king of the Lamanites.

*{¶—1830}*

3 And it came to pass that they did endeavor to stir up the Lamanites to war against the Nephites; but behold, the Lamanites were exceedingly afraid, insomuch that they would not hearken to the words of those dissenters.



Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.3.19—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

4.4 One wonders at what might have been the arguments used to stir up the Lamanites, inasmuch as the previous dissidents had been unable to provoke any kind of militant reaction from them.

4.4.8–10—*fifty and sixth*—The 56th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 36 and 35 BC.

4.4.26—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

4.4.29—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.5 This was an extraordinary achievement on the part of the Lamanites in cooperation with the dissident Nephites. It seems almost impossible that the Lamanites could conquer the garrisons of the Nephites located in the great fortresses that guarded the southern reaches of the land of Zarahemla without some sort of coordinated aid on the part of traitorous Nephites within the walls of every city. Could not this have been the work of the members of that secret society which had been formed to overthrow the judicial government of the Nephites?

4.5.4–6—*fifty and seventh*—The 57th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 35 and 34 BC.

4.5.11—*down*—It should be remembered that the land of Nephi was located in the mountainous regions south of the narrow strip of wilderness. The land of Zarahemla was located in a region considerable lower in elevation

4.5.14—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

4.5.30–32—*fifty and eighth*—The 58th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 34 and 33 BC.

4.5.49—*Zarahemla*—The capital city of the land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

4.5.65—*Bountiful*—The city and land of Bountiful had been the northernmost citadel of the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla, just south of the narrow neck of land.

4.6 All those who had escaped the bloodletting of the Lamanites in the land of Zarahemla, both civilians and military, fled to the city of Bountiful and made their effectual stand against their enemies.

4.6.3—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the

4 But it came to pass in the fifty and sixth year of the reign of the judges, there were dissenters who went up from the Nephites unto the Lamanites; and they succeeded with those others in stirring them up to anger against the Nephites; and they were all that year preparing for war.

5 And in the fifty and seventh year they did come down against the Nephites to battle, and they did commence the work of death; yea, insomuch that in the fifty and eighth year of the reign of the judges they succeeded in obtaining possession of the land of Zarahemla; yea, and also all the lands, even unto the land which was near the land Bountiful.

6 And the Nephites and the armies of Moronihah were driven even into the land of Bountiful;

Hel. 4:5  
EM 1:170  
Hel. 4:5–10  
EM 1:153  
Hel. 4:5–6, 19  
EM 1:173

son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

4.6.8—*Moronihah*—The worthy son of Moroni, the captain of the Nephites during the wars with Amalickiah and Ammoron. Moronihah succeeded his father as the chief captain of the armies of the land of Zarahemla.

4.6.16—*Bountiful*—The city and land of Bountiful had been the northernmost citadel of the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla, just south of the narrow neck of land.

4.7 Can there be anything clearer than this account of the Nephite defenses in the land of Bountiful in conjunction with the fortifications of the narrow neck of land between the sea east and the sea west? Is there any doubt in anyone's mind that Mormon is describing a narrow isthmus separating two vast bodies of water?

4.7.8—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.7.20–21—*day's journey*—What constitutes a travelling “day”? Twelve hours? Eighteen hours? Twenty-four hours? How far might a healthy Nephite soldier travel in a day? What was the terrain like near the narrow neck of land? Was it flat? How much vegetation was there? Did the Nephite travel by roads or trails that had been established between the various fortifications? Did the Nephite run or walk the entire distance? Speculation becomes almost ridiculous given the number of indefinable variables. Walking for 12 hours would suggest a distance from 36 to 60 miles, depending on a pace of 3 to 5 miles per hour over relatively flat and open terrain. The fastest sprinters in the world can achieve speeds approximating 27 miles per hour. Many marathon runners, on average, traverse a mile in about 8 minutes, or about 7.5 miles an hour. If a Nephite could maintain that pace for twelve hours, he or she could run about 90 miles. In the Wasatch 100 Mile Endurance Run, a race held in northern Utah the first weekend after Labor Day, the swiftest runners achieve speeds approaching 5 miles per hour. This is on a course that boasts an overall 26,800 foot ascent and a 26,100 foot descent during the race. It seems unlikely that a Nephite travelling from the sea west to the sea east would encounter those sorts of elevation changes. For the record, the present-day Isthmus of Panama is 30 miles wide at its narrowest and 120 miles wide at its widest.

4.7.24—*Nephite*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

4.7.27—*line*—That is to say, the string of fortifications that were erected by the Nephites as a bulwark against the Lamanite invasion of the land north of the narrow neck of land. This was, of necessity, an extremely short but densely inhabited strip of land.

4.7.39–40—*north country*—That is to say, the land of Desolation and the other regions that lay north of the narrow neck of land.

4.8 Almost every part of the land of Zarahemla had been under assault by the Lamanites at some point in the history of the Nephites, but this was the first time that the entire land had been overrun in this fashion. It must have been

7 And there they did fortify against the Lamanites, from the west sea, even unto the east; it being a day's journey for a Nephite, on the line which they had fortified and stationed their armies to defend their north country.

8 And thus those dissenters of the Nephites, with the help of a numerous army of the Lamanites,

dreadfully ominous in the eyes of Nephi and Moronihah. For them, this would have been a harbinger that had been precipitated by the wickedness of the people.

4.8.7—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

4.8.17—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.8.31—*southward*—Save for the city of Bountiful and the region immediately surrounding the northernmost territory of the land of Zarahemla.

4.9 We are not told what the configuration of the Nephite possessions south of the city of Bountiful was like after Moronihah set about recapturing cities and regions that had been held by the Lamanites and the dissident Nephites. As we will see, however, they did not include the capital city of Zarahemla, notwithstanding the fact that they had retaken one-half of their lands (see 4.10 and 4.16).

4.9.8—*sixtieth*—The 60th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 32 and 31 BC.

4.9.16—*Moronihah*—The worthy son of Moroni, the captain of the Nephites during the wars with Amalickiah and Ammoron. Moronihah succeeded his father as the chief captain of the armies of the land of Zarahemla.

4.9.42—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.10 This moderate success of the Nephites came about as a direct result of personal and cultural repentance (see 4.14–16)

4.10.8–10—*sixty and first*—The 61st year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 31 and 30 BC.

4.11 At the heart of the trials and tribulations of the Nephites was their pride, their elitism and lack of charity for one another. The remnants of the kingmen and the secret combination of Gadianton and Kishkumen would have been filled with rancor and frustration. No doubt there were many among these isolated segments of society who repeatedly rose up in opposition to the government and were banished from the land into the arms of the Lamanites. In addition to the blatantly wicked, the Nephites also suffered from hypocrisy among the members of the Church of Christ, elitists in their own right who clothed their wickedness with a false mantle of righteousness. While these may not have been openly active in the attempted subversions of the government, their conduct ate away at the moral strength of the people.

4.11.7—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

4.12 There were members of the Church of Jesus Christ who apparently had

had obtained all the possession of the Nephites which was in the land southward. And all this was done in the fifty and eighth and ninth years of the reign of the judges.

{¶—1830}

9 And it came to pass in the sixtieth year of the reign of the \*judges, Moronihah did succeed with his armies in obtaining many parts of the land; yea, they regained many cities which had fallen into the hands of the Lamanites.

\* p. 416

{¶—1830}

10 And it came to pass in the sixty and first year of the reign of the judges they succeeded in regaining even the half of all their possessions.

11 Now this great loss of the Nephites, and the great slaughter which was among them, would not have happened had it not been for their wickedness and their abomination which was among them; yea, and it was among those also who professed to belong to the church of God.

Hel. 4:11–12  
CR86-A 32

12 And it was because of the pride

Hel. 4:12

adopted some of the philosophy of the Zoramites, the apostate faction of the Nephites who had dwelt in the land of Antionum. These had driven the poorer segment of their society out of their synagogues and eventually out of the land altogether before receiving the armies of the Lamanites under Zerahemnah into their lands to destroy the Nephites (see *AL-C 43.3–5*). In the case of the Zoramites, their argument against aiding those in poverty had to do with their willful misinterpretation of the mind and will of God. Blessings, they acknowledged, derived from God as a result of personal righteousness. If a person were not blessed with material possessions, it would mean that the poor man must have offended God in some fashion. The Zoramites further reasoned that if God Himself was unwilling to raise such a person out of deprivation, why should the “faithful” be engaged in doing so? It is interesting that the litany of sin almost always ends with betrayal and treason.

- 4.12.22—*oppression*—The oppression of the poor did not consist of restraint. Those who were merely nominal members of the Church seemed to think that it was their task to “punish” the poor as well, as if they were mandated to do so by God. This, of course, was all pretence so that they could vent their pride as natural men.
- 4.12.28—*food*—There would be no fasting by the wealthy for those in need.
- 4.12.34—*clothing*—And by so doing the prideful were stripping themselves of the robes of righteousness. They would one day stand ashamed before the judgment bar of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 4.12.39—*smiting*—It is difficult for us to imagine any theological justification for such conduct, unless the pride of the people had become so outrageous that they considered themselves the vicars of a vengeful god.
- 4.12.53—*sacred*—We are not told specifically that which the prideful members of the Church mocked. Once the influence of the Holy Ghost is lost out of the life of an individual, however, sacred sensibilities are soon abandoned.
- 4.12.58—*prophecy*—This gift of the spirit was rejected usually in conjunction with a loss of faith in the coming of a Messiah. A Nephite might conform outwardly to all of the demands of the Law of Moses and still not accept the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- 4.12.61—*revelation*—Continuing revelation testifies to the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Anyone devoid of that spirit as the result of personal sin has little patience with those who rejoice in the communion that they have with the Comforter.
- 4.12.62—*murdering*—Were these so called members of the Church Gadianton robbers dressed in the robes of the saints?
- 4.12.63—*plundering*—Whether by unrighteous litigation, by robbery, or by theft, the wickedness does not change.
- 4.12.64—*lying*—Once the spirit of truth withdraws from a man, the spirit of the evil one begins to take hold.
- 4.12.65—*stealing*—Whereas “plundering” is open rapaciousness, stealing is accomplished in secret.
- 4.12.67—*adultery*—The desires of the natural man inevitably involve immorality.
- 4.12.80—*Nephi*—A mountainous region east of the first settlement established by Lehi and his entourage. It was the area in which Nephi and his followers established the first Nephite colony. Zeniff and his people from the land of Zarahemla would later settle there. It was also the place where the fertile missionary labors of the sons of Mosiah and their companions bore fruit among the Lamanites.
- 4.12.83—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi

of their hearts, because of their exceeding riches, yea, it was because of their oppression to the poor, withholding their food from the hungry, withholding their clothing from the naked, and smiting their humble brethren upon the cheek, making a mock of that which was sacred, denying the spirit of prophecy and of revelation, murdering, plundering, lying, stealing, committing adultery, rising up in great contentions, and deserting away into the land of Nephi, among the Lamanites—

EM 1:161, 203  
EM 2:663  
EM 3:1316  
CR96-O 12

and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.13 Pride implies self-sufficiency and a rejection of divine providence. The consequences of such attitudes inevitably bring disaster. The Nephites had witnessed this pattern firsthand as they were driven northwards from the lands of their inheritances to the city of Bountiful and the narrow neck of land.

4.13.36—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.14 The prosperity of the Nephites depended upon their willingness to keep the commandments of God and upon their faithfulness in keeping the covenants into which they had entered. The commander of the Nephite military counseled with his soldiers; the leadership of the Church admonished those who would be saints. The history of the Nephites was replete with prophetic instances where the servants of God had testified that the Nephites would be utterly destroyed if they did not abide by the terms of their inheritance of the land. As the Nephites fell before the Lamanites they fearfully witnessed the fulfillment of prophecy.

4.14.3—*Moronihah*—The worthy son of Moroni, the captain of the Nephites during the wars with Amalickiah and Ammoron. Moronihah succeeded his father as the chief captain of the armies of the land of Zarahemla.

4.14.17—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

4.14.19—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

4.14.25—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As has been seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

4.15 It is a difficult lesson to learn, indeed. The Nephites passed through great hardships in order to gain testimonies of true principles that had been preached among them for generations. The problem with the positive reversal of fortunes was that the Nephites easily might have attributed their success to their own talents and gifts, rather than the power of God coupled with the power of their own faith.

4.16 This recapturing of half of the original possessions of the Nephites is a reprise of that which had been related in verse 10. The intervening verses had been given in order to explain why the loss to the Lamanites had taken place and then to illustrate the only method by which that loss might be recouped. It is through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ and the humble petition

13 And because of this their great wickedness, and their boastings in their own strength, they were left in their own strength; therefore they did not prosper, but were afflicted and smitten, and driven before the Lamanites, until they had lost possession of almost all their lands.

14 But behold, Moronihah did preach many things unto the people because of their iniquity, and also Nephi and Lehi, who were the sons of Helaman, did preach many things unto the people, yea, and did prophesy many things unto them concerning their iniquities, and what should come unto them if they did not repent of their sins.

15 And it came to pass that they did repent, and inasmuch as they did repent they did begin to prosper.

16 For when Moronihah saw that they did repent he did venture to lead them forth from place to place, and from city to city, even until they had regained the one-

Hel. 4:13  
CR89-O 18

for forgiveness that brings salvation, whether temporal or spiritual.

4.16.3—*Moronihah*—The worthy son of Moroni, the captain of the Nephites during the wars with Amalickiah and Ammoron. Moronihah succeeded his father as the chief captain of the armies of the land of Zarahemla.

4.17 The end of the 61st year of the reign of the judges took place during the first part of the year 30 BC.

4.18 The military might of the Nephites was limited. The solution to the problem was primarily spiritual, and while there had been some response to the preaching of the Gospel among the people to support Moronihah in his efforts, the final victory was to take place in another venue. The temporary cessation of military hostilities gave Nephi and Lehi an opportunity to bring their gifts to bear upon the problem. In the end, the Nephites would see for themselves that the way to peace is not accomplished solely by the force of arms.

4.18.8–10—*sixty and second*—The 62nd year of the reign of the judges included portions of the years 30 and 29 BC.

4.18.19—*Moronihah*—The worthy son of Moroni, the captain of the Nephites during the wars with Amalickiah and Ammoron. Moronihah succeeded his father as the chief captain of the armies of the land of Zarahemla.

4.18.27—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.19 The Lamanites were numerous because they were a combination of those who had invaded from the land of Nephi plus the dissident Nephites in the land who had defected to the enemy once the cities had begun to fall. As each military objective was taken, the defenders were compelled to flee to the remaining Lamanite holdings, thus intensifying the garrisons in them. Each Nephite military success decreased the chances for a future military success.

4.19.19—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.19.26—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

4.19.34—*Moronihah*—The worthy son of Moroni, the captain of the Nephites during the wars with Amalickiah and Ammoron. Moronihah succeeded his father as the chief captain of the armies of the land of Zarahemla.

4.20 Fear is a poor substitute for repentance. While the Lamanites were forced to traverse the narrow strip of wilderness in order to mount an offensive, the Nephites enjoyed a distinct military advantage. It would appear, however, that many, if not all, of the defending fortresses in the southern reaches of the land of Zarahemla were in Lamanite hands. The Lamanites had a huge staging area

half of their property and the one-half of all their lands.

17 And thus ended the sixty and first year of the reign of the judges.

{*¶*—1830}

18 And it came to pass in the sixty and second year of the reign of the judges, that Moronihah could obtain no more possessions over the Lamanites.

19 Therefore they did abandon their design to obtain the remainder of their lands, for so numerous were the Lamanites that it became impossible for the Nephites to obtain more power over them; therefore Moronihah did employ all his armies in maintaining those parts which he had taken.

{*¶*—1830}

\*20 And it came to pass, because of the greatness of the number of the Lamanites the Nephites were in great fear, lest they should be overpowered, and trodden down, and

\* p. 417

in which they might prepare maneuvers in almost any direction against the holdings of the Nephites. There had been a time, during the wars perpetrated by Amalickiah and Ammoron, in which the Lamanites had taken cities on both the east and west sides of the land of Zarahemla (see *AL-C 52.12–14*). Mormon had described those circumstances as “dangerous”; in these present circumstances the Nephites clearly perceived themselves as imperiled and comprehended the spiritual nature of their danger.

4.20.15—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.20.17—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

4.21 It is quite clear that the teachings of both Alma and Mosiah were readily available to the inhabitants of the land of Zarahemla. How these had been published we cannot say with certainty. One may argue that the leadership of the Church of Jesus Christ had continued to use their words to strengthen and bless the disciples in all parts of the land. What is significant here is that after more than forty years, the words of these two great and good men were easily remembered by the beleaguered Nephites.

4.21.9—*Alma*—The ministry of Alma the younger had begun shortly before the establishment of the reign of the judges, more than sixty years before the time of this great cultural awakening of the Nephites to their deep spiritual peril. He is apparently translated during the eighteenth year of the reign of the judges, more than forty years before the devastating invasion of the Lamanites (see *AL-C 45.18–20*). Though possible, it seems unlikely that the Nephites were remembering from their own personal acquaintance with the chief judge

4.21.15—*Mosiah*—What was said of the Nephites’ personal acquaintance with Alma above, could be repeated in reference to King Mosiah. The last of the kings of the land of Zarahemla had died at the very time that the reign of the judges began (see *MS-C 29.46–47*). There would have been very few of the men and women who were becoming aware of their dire circumstances who had actually heard the king’s voice.

4.22 King Mosiah had perpetuated all of the righteous laws that had been instituted among the Nephites by his grandfather, Mosiah 1, and his father, King Benjamin. His own contribution to the happiness of his people had been the implementation of his recommendation that they surrender their desires for a king in favor of a judiciary. From the first year of the reign of the judges until the time of which Mormon is writing, there had been many factions which had petitioned the government for changes that would have reverted the government back to a monarchy. All of the chief judges and the voice of the people had resisted such a move, but nonetheless there had been subtle modifications to the body of legislation that had been delivered unto the people by their righteous leaders. Mormon does not explain how this was brought about, but we may suspect that much of the corruption was brought about by the apostates and members of the secret combination of Gadianton who inveigled themselves into the policy-making bodies of the government, who then began a campaign of quietly liberalizing the standards of the people through permissive laws and statutes. This process was so gradual that the Nephites did not fully perceive the changes until they were faced with

slain, and destroyed.

21 Yea, they began to remember the prophecies of Alma, and also the words of Mosiah; and they saw that they had been a stiffnecked people, and that they had set at naught the commandments of God;

22 And that they had altered and trampled under their feet the laws of Mosiah, or that which the Lord commanded him to give unto the people; and they saw that their laws had become corrupted, and that they had become a wicked people, insomuch that they were wicked even like unto the Lamanites.

destruction.

4.22.14—*Mosiah*—The son of king Benjamin and the grandson of Mosiah 1, all three of whom were righteous Nephite kings of the land of Zarahemla. Mosiah 2 was instrumental in converting the kingdom into a judiciary.

4.22.53—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.23 In a libertine society, the faith of the people may be eroded away. When more and more of the population begin to indulge in wickedness, the desires of the natural man begin to overwhelm the spiritually weak. The corruption eats away at the hearts and minds of the people until they begin to succumb to the temptations that are continually before them. Falling from grace brings shame, guilt, and a desire to disassociate oneself from the faithful. Hence, the dwindling of the Church of Christ. The testimony of Christ and the influence of the Holy Ghost wither away and men are left unto themselves in growing misery.

4.24 Any extraordinary temporal strength that the Nephites had enjoyed evaporated as they engaged in conduct unbecoming a child of God. As they were overrun by the Lamanites, their lands and possessions forcibly taken from them, they were painfully awakened to reality. There was no comfort for them; they were bereft of all that they had come to hold dear. In the vacuum, they sought their God.

4.24.14—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.25 Repentance under duress is repentance nonetheless. It would have been far better, however, for the Nephites to have come to their senses before they had their wealth and comforts stripped away from them. If they had been spiritually sensitive to their awful state, they might have been able to avoid the disaster that had come upon them.

4.25.32—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

4.26 In times past, the Nephites had managed to defeat Lamanite armies of far greater strength than that of their own. In some instances the opposing armies were perhaps four or five times as great. The Lamanites and their allies who had captured large portions of the land of Zarahemla outnumbered the Nephites and any hope of retaking the fallen cities had dwindled as Moronihah attempted to maintain the half that he and his men had reoccupied.

4.26.10—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

23 And because of their iniquity the church had begun to dwindle; and they began to disbelieve in the spirit of prophecy and in the spirit of revelation; and the judgments of God did stare them in the face.

Hel. 4:23  
CR89-O 18  
CR96-O 12

24 And they saw that they had become weak, like unto their brethren, the Lamanites, and that the Spirit of the Lord did no more preserve them; yea, it had withdrawn from them because the Spirit of the Lord doth not dwell in unholy temples—

Hel. 4:24  
MD 297, 781  
DNCTC 3:275,  
334  
CR86-A 68  
CR88-O 45  
CR89-O 18, 65  
CR96-O 81  
CR98-O 50  
Hel. 4:24–25  
MF 118

25 Therefore the Lord did cease to preserve them by his miraculous and matchless power, for they had fallen into a state of unbelief and awful wickedness; and they saw that the Lamanites were exceedingly more numerous than they, and except they should cleave unto the Lord their God they must unavoidably perish.

Hel. 4:25  
EM 1:192

26 For behold, they saw that the strength of the Lamanites was as great as their strength, even man for man. And thus had they fallen into this great transgression; yea, thus had they become weak, because of their transgression, in the space of not many years.

Hel. 4:26  
CR99-A 28, 29  
CR99-O 5



4.26.45–46—*many years*—Thirteen years before, the Church had gone through a period of great prosperity during which tens of thousands of Nephites had received the covenants of salvation (see 3.23–26).

*{Chapter II; continued}*  
**(Chapter 5)**

*{9—1830}*

5.1 At first blush, the circumstances surrounding the change in the civil leadership of the land of Zarahemla seemed to be quite similar to those that existed at the time that Alma delivered up the judgment seat to Nephihah (see *AL-C 4.15–20*). Both Alma and Nephi perceived that the membership of the Church and the population of the land in general were suffering from a great spiritual malaise and that to continue serving as the chief judge of the land and as the high priest of the Church would not do either position justice. Alma chose his successor, Nephihah, a choice that was sustained by the voice of the people (see *AL-C 4.16*). Mormon does not tell us precisely how Cezoram came to be Nephi’s replacement and we are left to our own devices to determine whether Cezoram was a good man or an evil one. His assassination by the Gadianton robbers four years after his ascension to the judgment seat might suggest that Cezoram had been a good man, one unwilling to bow to the wickedness of the Nephites. Some scholars, however, have suggested that Cezoram was a member of the Gadianton robbers as was Seezoram several years later, even though there is no textual evidence to support this conclusion.

5.1.9–10—*same year*—That is to say, the 62nd year of the reign of the judges, a period of time that corresponds to portions of the years 30 and 29 BC.

5.1.12—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

5.1.23—*Cezoram*—This Nephite chief judge served four years from the 62nd year of the reign of the judges until the 66th year when he was murdered by an unknown assailant from the band of Gadianton robbers (see 6.15). The implications of this and the following verses is that Cezoram was a wicked man chosen by the voice of a wicked people, but perhaps that is too much of a generalization. The laws, however, had been changed by the voice of a wicked people. Notwithstanding the similarity in the pronunciation of the names, this man should not be confused with the chief judge Seezoram who was slain by his brother Seantum seven years later in the 69th year of the reign of the judges (see 8.27–28)

5.2 There is a syllogism set up in this verse that is quite precise. It is tempting, however, to generalize the point that Mormon is making. Mormon is informing his readers that the Nephites at this time and place were ripening for destruction. He gives as evidence the fact that the majority of the people desired changes in just and holy laws given to them by the servants of God. How the changes had been brought about while Nephi was chief judge is not explained, but we might imagine that as in time past, when the chief judge was confronted by a numerous opposition, the matter was submitted to the voice of the people (see *AL-C 2.1–7* and *AL-C 51.1–7*). It would appear that the changes came about in spite of Nephi’s personal and judicial opposition.

1 AND it came to pass that in this same year, behold, Nephi delivered up the judgment-seat to a man whose name was Cezoram.

Hel. 5  
MD 74  
DNTC 2:151  
EM 1:152  
EM 3:1005  
Hel. 5:1–4  
EM 1:152

2 For as their laws and their governments were established by the voice of the people, and they who chose evil were more numerous than they who chose good, therefore they were ripening for destruction, for the laws had become corrupted.

Hel. 5:2  
CR89-A 10  
Hel. 5:2–3  
CR81-O 62

No doubt it became more and more difficult for Nephi to administer justice because of these changes.

5.2.1—*For*—This word marks the first part of the equation; “therefore” marks the conclusion.

5.2.29—*therefore*—This word marks a conclusion that is drawn from the preceding points made.

5.2.35—*for*—A repetition of the word used in 5.2.1, here employed as a brief summary of the first part of the syllogism.

5.3 We may only speculate how this stiffneckedness was manifested in the Nephite daily walk and talk. It would appear, however, that the citizenry of the land of Zarahemla would only obey the law when it was in their interests to do so. If disobedience seemed to be beneficial, then the only thing that would persuade them to obey was the threat of death. No doubt the Gadian-ton robbers made great inroads among the people during this period of time. Acquiring wealth and power in secret combinations frustrated most attempts on the part of the officers of the law to bring such wickedness to justice.

5.4 Nephi was of a mind with Alma, his great grandfather, that in circumstances such as those which he was experiencing, that the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be most effective in healing the distresses in society, both spiritual and political. Alma had given up the judgment seat after nine years; Nephi served from the 53rd year of the reign of the judges until the 62nd year, a period of service equal to that of Alma the younger. Nephi and Lehi’s decision to serve the people as the emissaries of God would prove to be a felicitous one.

5.4.7—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

5.4.41—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

5.5 Helaman was the son of Helaman, the commander of the 2,000 stripling warriors, and the grandson of Alma the younger. We know little about him, save that he was a trusted disciple of Jesus Christ who served for eleven years, from the 42nd to the 53rd year of the reign of the judges, as the chief judge. The only teachings that we have from this great man are the words that he spoke to his two sons, Lehi and Nephi, which Mormon included in the verses which follow.

5.5.9—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As has been seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

5.6 Lehi and his son Nephi had been faithful in their dealings with the God of Heaven, and in so doing they had been the instruments of divine providence in bringing much good to the earth. When one considers all that their devotion to righteousness has provided the children of men, we can understand to some degree the reason why Helaman chose these names for his sons. As will be seen, Helaman’s confidence was well-placed. Nephi and Lehi were faithful

3 Yea, and this was not all; they were a stiffnecked people, inso-much that they could not be gov-erned by the law nor justice, save it were to their destruction.

{*¶*—1830}

4 And it came to pass that Nephi had become weary because of their iniquity; and he yielded up the judgment-seat, and took it upon him to preach the word of God all the remainder of his days, and his brother Lehi also, all the remainder of his days;

5 For they remembered the words which their father He\*lamak spake unto them. And these are the words which he spake:

Hel. 5:5  
CR92-O 34  
\* p. 418  
Hel. 5:5–14  
EM 2:585

6 Behold, my sons, I desire that ye should remember to keep the com-mandments of God; and I would that ye should declare unto the people these words. Behold, I have given unto you the names of our

Hel. 5:6  
CR99-O 98  
Hel. 5:6–7  
CR85-A 27  
CR92-O 34  
Hel. 5:6–12

to the truth and to their covenants in the face of tremendous opposition.

5.6.26–27—*these words*—We are left to decide whether Helaman is referring to that which he has just said or that which he is about to say to his sons. As a matter of grammar, we should probably accept the proposition that Helaman is telling Nephi and Lehi that it is the duty of the children of God to keep the commandments of God. This has been the message of every prophet since the beginning of time. That counsel is the foundation of all that is good in the world, in time and in all of eternity.

5.6.47—*Jerusalem*—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

5.7 The only good that men can do upon the earth is directly connected with the will of God. By definition there is no other good than that which the Father desires for his children. There is no greater good in all of time and eternity than that which the Father has done. There is no greater embodied goodness than the person of the Lord God of Israel. Therefore, the only manner in which a man or woman may be good is to do those things which the Father and the Son require of him or her. The account given of the lives of Nephi and Lehi compares favorably with that given of their namesakes.

5.8 The sons of Helaman would enjoy success among the Nephites and among the Lamanites, perhaps more so than any other pair of missionaries in the history of the world. Insofar as the sacred history that has been committed to our charge thus far in this dispensation, this is certainly the case. The spiritual danger to Nephi and Lehi was great. They must continually view themselves as the humble servants of God and of men, or they would fall err to the vanities of the world.

5.8.27—*boast*—Boasting is the cry of the elitist, and partakes of that same spirit that thought to usurp the power of God by subjugating all of the children of God under a single despotic rule.

5.8.41—*treasure*—The greatest gift that God has to give to His children is eternal life. In that gift there is unity and equality, a fullness which transcends avarice or pride.

5.9 Although King Benjamin's final address to his people is replete with the doctrines of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, the following passage conveys the essence of Helaman's instruction to his sons.

And moreover, I say unto you, that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. For behold he judgeth, and his judgment is just; and the infant perisheth not that dieth in his infancy; but men drink damnation to their own souls except they humble themselves and become as little

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 how that it is said, and also written, that they were good.

7 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.

8 And now my sons, behold I have somewhat more to desire of you, which desire is, that ye may not do these things that ye may boast, but that ye may do these things to lay up for yourselves a treasure in heaven, yea, which is eternal, and which fadeth not away; yea, that ye may have that precious gift of eternal life, which we have reason to suppose hath been given to our fathers.

{*¶*—1830}

9 O remember, remember, my sons, the words which king Benjamin spake unto his people; yea, remember that there is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, who shall come; yea, remember that he cometh to redeem the world.

EM 1:152

Hel. 5:7–8  
CR90-A 83

Hel. 5:8  
CR85-A 27

Hel. 5:9  
AF 107  
MF 340  
EM 1:100  
EM 2:727  
CR85-O 48  
CR88-A 30  
CR92-O 34  
CR93-O 48, 49  
CR95-A 103

children, and believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. (Mosiah 3:17–18)

What we may understand from Helaman’s citation is that both Nephi and Lehi had easy access to the teachings of this prophet/king a hundred years after his death.

5.9.10—*Benjamin*—The only teachings that we have of the second Nephite king of the land of Zarahemla is presented by Mormon in the book of Mosiah, chapters 2 through 5 inclusive.

5.9.36–37—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

5.10 The account of Amulek teachings to the lawyer Zeezrom are recounted by Mormon in the book of Alma, chapters 10 and 11 inclusive. The specific reference made by Helaman here is encapsulated in the following verses.

Now Zeezrom said unto the people: See that ye remember these things; for he said there is but one God; yet he saith that the Son of God shall come, but he shall not save his people—as though he had authority to command God. Now Amulek saith again unto him: Behold thou hast lied, for thou sayest that I spake as though I had authority to command God because I said he shall not save his people in their sins. And I say unto you again that he cannot save them in their sins; for I cannot deny his word, and he hath said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore, how can ye be saved, except ye inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore, ye cannot be saved in your sins. (Alma 11:35–37)

There is salvation given to the children of men, but it is only through the redemption of their sins through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.10.7—*Amulek*—Amulek was a resident of the city of Ammonihah at the height of its wickedness, a Nephite who had for a long time resisted the call to repentance. An angel appeared to him, preparing him and his family to receive into their home the prophet Alma who had previously been rejected by the people of Ammonihah. Amulek’s conversion to Christianity would inspire many of the men of the city to repentance, while the majority would become enraged because of his testimony of Christ. After the destruction of Ammonihah by the Lamanites, Amulek would accompany Alma in other missionary travels, including the venture to the land of Antionum and the Zoramites. He apparently made his home in the land of Melek for a time.

5.10.10—*Zeezrom*—A lawyer hired by the leadership of the people of Ammonihah to discredit and confound the prophet Alma and his companion Amulek. In this effort Zeezrom failed utterly and, in fact, was brought to a state of mind and heart wherein he doubted his course of life. This consternation and distress eventual led to his conversion at the hands of his erstwhile enemies. After the destruction of Ammonihah by the Lamanites, Zeezrom would accompany Alma in other missionary travels, including the venture to the land of Antionum and the Zoramites. He apparently made his home in the land of Melek for a time.

5.10.15—*Ammonihab*—A community of apostates who were actively attempting to overthrow the established rule of the judges in the days of

10 And remember also the words which Amulek spake unto Zeezrom, in the city of Ammonihah; for he said unto him that the Lord surely should come to redeem his people, but that he should not come to redeem them in their sins, but to redeem them from their sins.

CR96-A 109  
CR97-A 80  
Hel. 5:9–11  
AF 94  
CR95-A 103  
Hel. 5:9–12  
AF 94

Hel. 5:10  
AF 94  
DS 2:11  
CR98-A 77  
Hel. 5:10–11  
MD 623  
DNTEC 3:473  
MF 340

Alma the younger. It was destroyed by an army of Lamanites who were angered at having to slaughter the defenseless people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi, the converts of the sons of Mosiah and their companions. From what information that we can glean from the narrative of the Book of Mormon, it seems clear that the city of Ammonihah was located in the western regions of the land of Zarahemla, probably adjacent to the western spur of the narrow strip of wilderness that separated the land of Zarahemla from the land of Nephi. The Lamanite attack that destroyed city undoubtedly descended upon Ammonihah from this same western spur of wilderness (see *AL-C 16.1–3*). Ammonihah was located three days journey north of the land of Melek (see *AL-C 8.3–8*). Everything we know about the land of Melek was that it was located in the southwest quadrant of the land of Zarahemla (see *AL-C 31.6.35*).

5.11 Although the scriptures are replete with examples of angels having been sent unto the children of men in order to announce salvation through Christ’s redemption of sin, it is probable that Helaman is here tacitly referring to the teachings of Alma to the people of Ammonihah on the matter (see *AL-C 12.28–34*).

5.11.2—*he*—That is to say, the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.12 While one may make an argument for a connection between the imagery used here and that contained in the Savior’s parable of the Wise and Foolish Men building upon rock and sand, yet it is clear that Helaman’s construct is somewhat unique and employs elements which are singularly defined in the Book of Mormon, specifically Lehi’s Vision of the Tree of Life.

5.12.12—*rock*—The image of the Lord God of Israel as the foundation of one’s temporal and spiritual salvation is common in ancient scripture.

5.12.18—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

5.12.41—*shafis*—This is the only instance of this word in the text of the Book of Mormon and we are left to speculate as to what is meant. Given the context we may assume that the imagery of shafts in a storm would refer to lightning.

5.12.66—*drag*—In the context of the metaphor being employed by

11 And he hath power given unto him from the Father to redeem them from their sins because of repentance; therefore he hath sent his angels to declare the tidings of the conditions of repentance, which bringeth unto the power of the Redeemer, unto the salvation of their souls.

12 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 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, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall.

Hel. 5:11  
AF 119  
EM 2:740

Hel. 5:12  
MD 508  
TSWK 437  
PM 171  
CR85-A 27  
CR85-O 48  
CR87-O 104  
CR90-A 19, 105  
CR91-A 64, 117  
CR92-A 10  
CR92-O 34, 47,  
61  
CR93-A 85  
CR95-A 103  
CR96-O 26  
CR97-A 112  
CR99-A 29, 85  
CR99-O 76  
CR02-A 91

Helaman, the waters of the storm wash away all those who are not built upon the Rock and are swept away into the river of filthy water which flows into the great gulf that represents the depths of hell.

{9—1830}

5.13 Mormon chose those teachings of Helaman to his sons that contributed to his narrative of Nephi and Lehi's ministry to the Lamanites and the Nephites. When all of the records of the Nephite peoples are made available, we should find great comfort in reading the words of this spiritual giant who inspired two of the greatest missionaries that this world has ever known.

5.13.12—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As has been seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

5.13.26–27—*not written*—The formal education of Nephi and Lehi was no doubt committed to writing that it might easily be reviewed. The informal teachings that came day by day in Helaman's role as a father have not been handed down. We will have to meet the man himself in order to sense the power of his mind and heart and the influence that they played in shaping the character and testimony of his sons.

5.14 In this and in the subsequent verses we are given some idea as to the territory that Moronihah was able to wrest from the occupying armies of the Lamanites and dissident Nephites.

5.14.28—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

5.14.33—*Bountiful*—The city and land of Bountiful had been the northernmost citadel of the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla, just south of the narrow neck of land.

5.15 The implication here is that the Nephites had recaptured a least a portion of the eastern seaboard of the land of Zarahemla. It is interesting that Nephi and Lehi chose to teach the people of Gid after leaving the city of Bountiful, even though Mulek was geographically closer. It may have been that the missionaries traveled as far to the southeast as they could in Nephite held lands.

5.15.8—*Gid*—A coastal city that lay north of the city of Omner and south of the city of Mulek.

5.15.19—*Mulek*—A coastal city that lay north of the city of Gid and south of the city of Bountiful.

5.16 Other than the cities of Zarahemla, Bountiful, Gid, and Mulek, we do not know how the land of Zarahemla was divided between the Lamanites and the Nephites after Moronihah and his armies had retaken half of the conquered lands.

5.16.18—*Nephi*—In reference to the cities that the Nephites inhabited in their half of the land of Zarahemla.

5.16.32—*Zarahemla*—This is in reference to the capital city itself and the regions immediately adjacent rather than the entire area between the narrow neck of land and the narrow strip of wilderness. It may also refer to the territory that remained in the hands of the Lamanites after the Nephite military had recovered all that it could do by force.

5.16.35—*Lamanites*—Certainly in reference to those occupying forces

13 And it came to pass that these were the words which Helaman taught to his sons; yea, he did teach them many things which are not written, and also many things which are written.

\* p. 419

14 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, beginning at the city Bountiful;

Hel. 5:14–19  
AF 132

15 And from thenceforth to the city of Gid; and from the city of Gid to the city of Mulek;

Hel. 5:16–20  
EM 1:153

16 And even from one city to another, until they had gone forth among all the people of Nephi who were in the land southward; and from thence into the land of Zarahemla, among the Lamanites.

from the land of Nephi, but the name undoubtedly includes the Nephite dissidents as well.

5.17 We do not know what exactly precipitated the conjunction of these Nephites with the Lamanites when the land of Zarahemla fell under the power of the invading forces. Were they remnants of the kingmen? Were they members of the Gadianton band? Were they those who for whatever reason were dissatisfied with a Christian government? Were they children of men and women who had forsaken their covenants as the children of God? Had they themselves forsaken such covenants and had been removed from the records of the Church through excommunication? We have no way of knowing at this point. In any event, we should not underestimate the power of Nephi and Lehi in reaching the hearts and minds of the impenitent no matter what the cause of their disunity with the saints of the Most High. It is interesting to note, however, that the returning Nephites assumed an attitude quite similar to that of Alma and the sons of Mosiah after they were brought back into the fold of God (see *MS-C 27.32–37*).

5.17.28—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

5.18 For all that we might say about the character of Nephi and Lehi, yet we must know and understand that their effectiveness among the dissidents and the Lamanites came about as a direct result of the priesthood which had been bestowed upon them, together with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Without that appointment and the aid and support of the spirit of God, they would have been ineffectual in their efforts. The servants of God speak with the tongues of angels, therefore they say those things which the Father and the Son would have them speak.

5.18.7—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

5.18.9—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

5.18.14—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

5.19 Here we find the teachings of Nephi and Lehi redolent of the ministry of the sons of Mosiah among the Lamanites. Ammon and Aaron were particularly influential in helping Lamoni and his father coming to comprehend that the traditions of their fathers were not indicative of the truth.

5.19.11—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

5.19.20–21—*eight thousand*—We do not know what percentage of the entire occupying army of the Lamanites this number represents. With

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17 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.

18 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—

19 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.

Hel. 5:18  
EM 1:88

the return of the dissident Nephites to the fold and the conversion of this many of the Lamanite soldiers, we may assume that the military jurisdiction over the city of Zarahemla came to an end. The governance of all of the occupied lands, however, would not be returned to the Nephites until after Nephi and Lehi's successful mission in the land of Nephi (see 5.50–52).

5.19.31—*Zarahemla*—This is in reference to the capital city itself and the regions immediately adjacent rather than the entire area between the narrow neck of land and the narrow strip of wilderness. It may also refer to the territory that remained in the hands of the Lamanites after the Nephite military had recovered all that it could do by force.

5.20 The implication here is that by the time Nephi and Lehi passed through the narrow strip of wilderness into the land of Nephi, all of the land that had once pertained to Nephites in the land of Zarahemla was again restored to them through the ministry of the missionaries.

5.20.7—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

5.20.9—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

5.20.13—*thence*—That is to say, from the city and environs of Zarahemla where they had been so successful among the dissident Nephites and the Lamanite soldiers.

5.20.20—*Nephi*—A mountainous region east of the first settlement established by Lehi and his entourage. It was the area in which Nephi and his followers established the first Nephite colony. Zeniff and his people from the land of Zarahemla would later settle there. It was also the place where the fertile missionary labors of the sons of Mosiah and their companions bore fruit among the Lamanites.

5.21 The prison spoken of was located in the city of Nephi, the original capital of Zeniff's Nephite colony in the land of Nephi. It should be remembered that this prison had stood for more than a hundred years when Nephi and Lehi were cast into it.

5.21.15—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

5.21.28—*Ammon*—We ought not confuse this descendant of the Mulekite kings with the son of Mosiah of the same name. This Ammon was the leader of sixteen men sent by King Mosiah to the land of Nephi to discover what had become of the colony of Nephites that had been led there under the direction of Zeniff, the father of King Noah and the grandfather of King Limhi (see *MS-C 7.1–8*).

5.21.31—*brethren*—Only three of the fifteen men who accompanied Ammon in their journey from Zarahemla to Nephi were cast into prison with him; namely Amaleki, Helem, and Hem (see *MS-C 7.6*).

5.21.38—*Limhi*—The third king of the Nephite colony in the land of Nephi established by Zeniff. Limhi was the grandson of Zeniff and the

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20 And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi did proceed from thence to go to the land of Nephi.

21 And it came to pass that they were taken by an army of the Lamanites and cast into prison; yea, even in that same prison in which Ammon and his brethren were cast by the servants of Limhi.

Hel. 5:20–33  
DNTC 2:56  
Hel. 5:20–52  
AF 104

Hel. 5:21  
EM 1:153  
Hel. 5:21–31  
EM 3:1193



son of wicked king Noah.

5.22 We may only speculate as to the period of time that Nephi and Lehi were held captive before the Lamanites determined to deprive them of their lives.

5.23 There is a striking similarity between the glory that attended Nephi and Lehi in the prison in the land of Nephi and other characters in sacred writ. Moses was filled with the power of God when he descended from Mount Sinai so that the Israelites could not bear to look upon him. Moses therefore put a veil upon his face for a time. Although there is nothing spoken of with regard to his physical appearance, something of a similar nature must have happened to Nephi, the son of Lehi, as he was accosted by Laman and Lemuel in the land of Bountiful before they made their great voyage across the ocean. The fear of Noah and his wicked priests was brought about by the glory attending the person of Abinadi when he was delivering his final call of repentance to the people of the land of Nephi. Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James, and John on Mount Tabor during his mortal ministry, his person resplendent with the glory of God. We may believe that all of these men, including Nephi and Lehi, were quickened by the spirit of God, momentarily bestowing upon them a glory no less than that of the Terrestrial kingdom.

5.23.7—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

5.23.9—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

5.23.40–41—*not burned*—They were no more burned than was the bush that attracted the attention of Moses when he was first called by God to bring Israel out of bondage in Egypt. They were not consumed by the fire for essentially the same reason that the bush was not consumed.

5.24 Nephi and Lehi were not afraid to die for their testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. They had been in mortal danger many times. When it became clear that the Lamanites would not be given power to kill them, they knew that their ministry was not at an end. For this reason they were encouraged; further opportunity to preach the Gospel of Christ yet lay before them.

5.24.3—*they*—That is to say, Nephi and Lehi.

5.25 Nephi and Lehi were quite confident as to what was about to transpire, for they were filled with the spirit of God. The Lamanites and dissident Nephites, however, were filled with anxiety, a rampant fear of the unknown. Were they about to die? Was something worse than death going to transpire? This is almost the universal response of the wicked to this sort of spiritual experience.

5.25.6—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

22 And after they had been cast into prison many days without food, behold, they went forth into the prison to take them that they might slay them.

23 And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi were encircled about as if by fire, even insomuch that they durst not lay their hands upon them for fear lest they should be burned. Nevertheless, Nephi and Lehi were not burned; and they were as standing in the midst of fire and were not burned.

24 And when they saw that they were encircled about with a pillar of fire, and that it burned them not, their hearts did take courage.

25 For they saw that the Lamanites durst not lay their hands upon them; neither durst they come near unto them, but stood as if they were struck dumb with amazement.

Hel. 5:22–24  
DNTC 2:35  
Hel. 5:22–33  
DNTC 2:61  
Hel. 5:22–52  
EM 1:153  
Hel. 5:23  
CR97-A 42  
Hel. 5:23–49  
MD 279

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5.26 The Lamanites and dissident Nephites in the prison were not innocents. Each, no doubt, had their own reasons for their determined hatred of the Nephites and their particular hostility toward Nephi and Lehi. Their ire, however, had been quickly transformed into distress by the glorious vision of the forces arrayed about the two missionaries, convincing them in no uncertain terms that they were outside of their comfort zone. Nephi and Lehi were as the angels of heaven to these wicked men and their reaction could not have been much different than that of Alma and the sons of Mosiah when they were abruptly held accountable for their rebellion against the Kingdom of God. Like the angels of heaven, Nephi and Lehi attempted to persuade those with them that they had nothing to fear so long as they refrained from accosting them.

5.26.7—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

5.26.9—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

5.27 How many men in the prison had ever heard the story of Alma and Amulek in the prison of the city of Ammonihah? (see *AL-C 14.26–29*) We may not know at present whether the Lamanites and dissident Nephites had ever perceived themselves as being in the same camp as the Ammonihahites, but it seems certain that the quaking of the earth was a fair warning to the rebels there that they were in dangerous territory spiritually, regardless of their political motivations.

5.27.46—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

5.27.48—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

5.28 As the darkness fell upon the Lamanites and dissident Nephites in the prison, what might have come to their minds? Would they have hearkened back to the experiences of the children of Israel during the plagues in Egypt? (see *EX-C 10.21–23*) The Egyptian suffered three days of dense darkness while the Israelites all had light in their own dwellings. Did the dissident Nephites think upon the mists of darkness described in the Vision of the Tree of Life? Did they suddenly perceive themselves surrounded by the temptations and influence of the evil one while Nephi and Lehi basked in the glorious influence of the Spirit of God? Something about the darkness absolutely terrified the Lamanites, in spite of the fact that the missionaries had bid them to be at peace.

5.29 This experience in the prison in the city of Nephi served as a foreshadowing of the great destruction that would come upon the land at the time of the Savior's crucifixion, albeit there would be three days of darkness like that experienced by the Egyptians. The first act of repentance was to cast the spirit of homicidal mania from out of their own hearts. The abject fear they

\*26 And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi did stand forth and began to speak unto them, saying: Fear not, for behold, it is God that has shown unto you this marvelous thing, in the which is shown unto you that ye cannot lay your hands on us to slay us.

27 And behold, when they had said these words, the earth shook exceedingly, and the walls of the prison did shake as if they were about to tumble to the earth; but behold, they did not fall. And behold, they that were in the prison were Lamanites and Nephites who were dissenters.

28 And it came to pass that they were overshadowed with a cloud of darkness, and an awful solemn fear came upon them.

29 And it came to pass that there came a voice as if it were above the cloud of darkness, saying: Repent ye, repent ye, and seek no more to destroy my servants whom I have

\* p. 420

Hel. 5:27  
MD 211

Hel. 5:29  
CR97-A 42  
Hel. 5:29–30  
CR86-O 98

were experiencing at the time made that act marginally possible.

5.30 This experience clearly anticipates that which would transpire toward the end of the three days of darkness at the time of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even though the men in the prison would not be privy to that future event, they might have been aware of the story of Elijah’s exile in Mount Horeb and his interview with the Lord God of Israel, a being who was not in wind, fire, or earthquake, but was responsible for a still, small voice that penetrated to the center of the soul of man (see *1 KG-C 19.9–18*). Elijah had received a mild call to repentance at that time and he went forth from Horeb a blessed man, prepared to be a blessing to many others. Was this not the tacit promise being extended to the Lamanites and Nephites who trembled in the prison?

5.31 The terrible moment was not passing away. The fate of the Egyptians and that of the wicked in Ammonihah could not be dismissed or dispelled from the minds and hearts of those who stood in fear of their lives. They knew that they were evil men and that the course of life that they were following led to destruction. Yet, to repent would mean to change the very nature of their character, the motives and desires of their day to day existence. They were, indeed, upon the horns of a dilemma, as are all men who are caught in their wickedness.

5.32 Any impressions that might have come to mind during the first trembling of the earth and the oppressive darkness were confirmed. One cannot imagine any man persisting in his desire to take the lives of the servants of God when God was so clearly displeased with their intent. Any termagant souls, however, would have been stricken with a willingness to do anything that would remove them from the situation. Nephi and Lehi’s words to “Fear not” must have seemed ineffectual at first blush, yet the path to fearlessness would come only when the men repented of their desire to rid the world of the prophets of God.

5.33 Inasmuch as that which was communicated to the hearts and minds of the Lamanites and dissident Nephite cannot be uttered by men, we can only surmise the intent of such words. The men had been convicted of their sins and stood in terror of their consequences. Like Alma the younger, they were in fear for their immortal souls, no doubt racked by the multitude of sins that they had committed. In that great moment of alarm, what would the God of heaven say to such men? He had already called them to repentance twice. On this third occasion, after their souls had been laid completely bare, would the Lord repeat His warning or would He extend the tender invitation to return to the fold of Christ? Would He not speak marvelous things to them, to encourage and entice them to embrace the blessings of righteousness? This seems to be the significance of the use of the word “marvelous” in this context.

5.33.15—*marvelous*—The English word “marvelous” derives from roots that mean “wonder, strange, surprise, exceeding natural power”. Its use in the text of the Book of Mormon is universally associated with divine providence.

5.34 The three hundred men who were within the prison walls witnessing, nay, experiencing all of these events were on the cusp of a momentous and

sent unto you to declare good tidings.

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30 And it came to pass when they heard this voice, and beheld that it was not a voice of thunder, neither was it a voice of a great tumultuous noise, but behold, it was a still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper, and it did pierce even to the very soul—

31 And notwithstanding the mildness of the voice, behold the earth shook exceedingly, and the walls of the prison trembled again, as if it were about to tumble to the earth; and behold the cloud of darkness, which had overshadowed them, did not disperse—

32 And behold the voice came again, saying: Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; and seek no more to destroy my servants. And it came to pass that the earth shook again, and the walls trembled.

33 And also again the third time the voice came, and did speak unto them marvelous words which cannot be uttered by man; and the walls did tremble again, and the earth shook as if it were about to divide asunder.

{¶—1830}

34 And it came to pass that the Lamanites could not flee because of

Hel. 5:30  
CR80-A 18  
CR90-O 28  
CR91-O 27  
CR01-O 78  
Hel. 5:30–31  
CR97-A 42

Hel. 5:33–43  
EM 2:750

eternal decision. Before they would be allowed to physically remove themselves from the scene, they would have to choose life or death, salvation or damnation, spiritual freedom or the captivity of the devil.

5.34.8—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

5.35 Aminadab was a man who, like Alma the younger, had changed from the spiritual orientation of his youth, perhaps for many of the same reasons as Alma. He had apparently been born and raised in the land of Zarahemla, among the people of God. In his apostasy, he had fled to the land of Nephi and no doubt had been involved in stirring up the Lamanites to descend upon the Nephites, in order to bring down their judicial government and to destroy the Church of Christ (see 4.1–5).

5.35.10—*Nephite*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

5.36 When the Lamanites and the dissident Nephites had come into the jail, they had done so with the intent to take Nephi and Lehi to their deaths. When the quaking of the earth and the darkness began, the first notion to enter the minds of these wicked men was to pivot about in order to get themselves out of the prison. We may assume that this is the reason that Aminabad had to turn around in order to see Nephi and Lehi; he had been in the act of trying to escape when the darkness descended upon him. What possessed Aminadab to turn around? Had there been something communicated by the still, small voice that had inspired the dissident Nephite to momentarily put aside his fears and face the glorious light that radiated from the two missionaries? What exactly had prompted his faith?

5.36.23—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

5.36.25—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

5.37 Aminadab had been the first of the three hundred to respond positively to the whisperings of the still, small voice. In having done so, something had happened to him, something undoubtedly positive. Finding a degree of respite from the terrible fear that had gripped him, he beckoned to his compatriots that they, too, might experience some relief. While they had all been paralyzed in their attempt to flee, the men were given sufficient strength to turn themselves about, if they so chose.

5.37.41—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

5.37.43—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and reve-

the cloud of darkness which did overshadow them; yea, and also they were immovable because of the fear which did come upon them.

35 Now there was one among them who was a Nephite by birth, who had once belonged to the church of God but had dissented from them.

36 And it came to pass that he turned him about, and behold, he saw through the cloud of darkness the faces of Nephi and Lehi; and behold, they did shine exceedingly, even as the faces of angels. And he beheld that they did lift their eyes to heaven; and they were in the attitude as if talking or lifting their voices to some being whom they beheld.

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\*37 And it came to pass that this man did cry unto the multitude, that they might turn and look. And behold, there was power given unto them that they did turn and look; and they did behold the faces of Nephi and Lehi.

Hel. 5:36  
CR86-O 98

\* p. 421

lators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

5.38 Mormon does not tell us what had been transpiring between the two missionaries and their heavenly correspondents. He simply tells us what Aminadab had seen with his own eyes. Needless to say, once the other men had turned about and were favored with the vision of Nephi and Lehi basking in the light of God, they wished to know how these things would bear on them. Were Nephi and Lehi receiving instructions as to how to deal with their assailants? Was the fate of the people of Ammonihah going to be repeated with them?

5.39 We are left to surmise as to how Aminadab could testify as to who the unseen beings were with whom Nephi and Lehi were talking. Perhaps he was given the power to overhear the conversation that was going on between these holy men and the angels.

5.39.6—*Aminadab*—A dissident Nephite living in the land of Nephi during the ministry of the sons of Helaman. He is instrumental in helping the Lamanites comprehend the miracles that take place among them.

5.40 This is an interesting question. For all of the other terrors that might have faced them, the darkness was the most troubling to the men in the prison. They apparently perceived the darkness as the source of every fear and distress that they had in their lives, intensified to the highest degree at that very moment.

5.40.8—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

5.41 There is no clearer pattern for salvation from any ill than that which is given here by Aminadab. From whence comes faith in Christ? It is a gift from God the Father, His message of peace, hope, and comfort to His children who dwell upon a lost and fallen world, a manifestation of His deep and abiding love. It would be for the Lamanites and dissident Nephites a tender, hopeful light in the darkness of their own iniquity, a beckoning toward peace and rest.

5.41.2—*Aminadab*—A dissident Nephite living in the land of Nephi during the ministry of the sons of Helaman. He is instrumental in helping the Lamanites comprehend the miracles that take place among them.

5.41.21—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of

38 And they said unto the man: Behold, what do all these things mean, and who is it with whom these men do converse?

39 Now the man’s name was Aminadab. And Aminadab said unto them: They do converse with the angels of God.

40 And it came to pass that the Lamanites said unto him: What shall we do, that this cloud of darkness may be removed from overshadowing us?

41 And Aminadab said unto them: You must repent, and cry unto the voice, even until ye shall have faith in Christ, who was taught unto you by Alma, and Amulek, and Zeezrom; and when ye shall do this, the cloud of darkness shall be removed from overshadowing you.

Hel. 5:41  
CR86-O 99

salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

5.41.28—*Alma*—Insofar as the record preserved in the Book of Mormon is concerned, there was only one time when these three men preached together in the same venue. These three, together with a number of other men, attempted to bring the Zoramites back into the fold of Christ when these latter were contemplating a conspiracy with the Lamanites. This would imply that many of the men in the prison were Zoramites who had been dwelling in the land of Antionum when the missionaries came in among them. The preaching to the Zoramites had taken place during the 17th year of the reign of the judges (see *AL-C 35.12*). The mission to the land of Nephi took place sometime during or shortly after the 62nd year of the reign of the judges, or after a period of more than 45 years. We know of no other missionary effort by Alma, Amulek, and Zeezrom before Alma's translation sometime during the 18th year of the reign of the judges (see *AL-C 45.18–20*).

5.41.30—*Amulek*—A resident of the ill-fated city of Ammonihah who provided for Alma the younger in his missionary efforts. He lost all that he possessed, including his family, at the hands of the wicked in Ammonihah. He thereafter became a faithful companion of Alma throughout the remainder of his life.

5.41.32—*Zeezrom*—A resident of the land of Ammonihah and a lawyer by profession. In his attempt to condemn Alma and Amulek, he himself is condemned. He eventually flees the city. Having fallen ill, he is healed in the name of Christ and is subsequently baptized. He with Amulek are frequent companions thereafter in the ministry of the Alma throughout the land of Zarahemla.

5.41.35—*ye*—Aminadab was talking to the remnants of the Zoramites, men who had once lived in the land of Antionum, who had combined with the armies of the Lamanites under the leadership of Zerahemnah, who had suffered an ignominious defeat at the hands of Moroni at the headwaters of the river Sidon, and who had been forced into exile in the land of Nephi with a covenant of peace (see *AL-C 43.4–6* and *AL-C 44.19–20*). Amalekiah had used many of the Zoramites as his chief captains when he brought war out of the southern wilderness into the land of Zarahemla (see *AL-C 48.1–5*). These were a hardened, but weary body of men.

5.42 The three hundred men in the prison were in desperate straits. They were terrified and unable to move away from the terror. They were experiencing sensations which they did not understand. They had been awakened from a fitful spiritual slumber and were faced with a reality that did not bode well for them. They prayed as Aminadab had counseled. That their petitions were sincere and effectual is self-evident.

5.43 These men had been of the worst dye, filled with rancor and wickedness. They had rebelled against their God, against their lawful government, and had been engaged in one armed conflict after another for more than forty years. Yet, they too, like Alma and the sons of Mosiah, were subject to redemption, even though some rather extraordinary measures had to be taken in order to raise them out of the abyss into which they had cast themselves. The object of

{*9*—1830}

42 And it came to pass that they all did begin to cry unto the voice of him who had shaken the earth; yea, they did cry even until the cloud of darkness was dispersed.

43 And it came to pass that when they cast their eyes about, and saw that the cloud of darkness was dispersed from overshadowing them, behold, they saw that they were encircled about, yea every

Hel. 5:43  
MA 87  
Hel. 5:43–45  
DNTC 2:35  
EM 2:551

their salvation was that they would be the means by which the vast majority of the Lamanites would be brought into the Church and Kingdom of God, the means by which the hostilities of that generation would be brought to an end. The three hundred would be to the Lamanite nation what the sons of Mosiah had been to the Anti-Nephi-Lehies.

5.44 At the time that Jesus Christ came among the Nephites after his resurrection, he cited this event among the Lamanites. He testified to the repenting survivors of the destruction and the three days of impenetrable darkness that those men in the prison in the city of Nephi were filled with joy and glory because of the Holy Ghost which had descended upon them. The Lamanites and the dissident Nephites were unaware of the cause of their reversal of fortunes, but they were the beneficiaries nonetheless (see *3 NE-C 9.20*). It is to be imagined that the emotions of the Lamanites were initially mixed. On the one hand, they looked upon each other enveloped completely in flaming fire, yet they were filled with unspeakable joy.

5.44.2—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

5.44.4—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

5.45 Any distress that they might have experienced as the darkness dispelled and they were surrounded by fire was completely swept away as the Comforter settled upon them and breathed peace to their souls. This would be followed by the voice of the Lord reassuring them as well.

5.46 In this instance we are instructed once again that the God of Heaven does not bully His recalcitrant children into repentance and obedience. He simply reveals to them the truth, the natural consequences of their own actions. They are then free to choose whether they will be miserable or happy. That men more often than not choose righteousness over wickedness after having the choice placed clearly before them, should not persuade us that God the Father has compelled the children of men to do his will. In effect, the Lord has invited us to flee a burning building. Only a dolt or a belligerent would remain in the midst of the conflagration.

5.47 Peace implies reconciliation. Reconciliation implies atonement. Through their burgeoning faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the three hundred men in the prison were shedding all of the evil torment that had held them fast for so many years. They called upon the Father in his name and found respite from His own lips. Every man who has found comfort in this lost and fallen world, since the days of Adam and Eve, has done so in the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God. There is no other enduring peace in time or in eternity save through the Savior.

4.48 Aminadab had testified that Nephi and Lehi had been conversing with

soul, by a pillar of fire.

44 And Nephi and Lehi were in the midst of them; yea, they were encircled about; yea, they were as if in the midst of a flaming fire, yet it did harm them not, neither did it take hold upon the walls of the prison; and they were filled with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.

45 And behold, the Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven, and did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire, and they could speak forth marvelous words.

{*¶—1830*}

46 And it came to pass that there came a voice unto them, yea, a pleasant voice, as if it were a whisper, saying:

47 Peace, peace be unto you, because of your faith in my Well Beloved, who was from the foundation of the world.

48 And now, when they heard this

Hel. 5:45  
MD 73  
CR90-O 28  
CR98-A 34  
Hel. 5:45–47  
CR97-A 42

Hel. 5:47  
PM 182

the angels of heaven when they two had been encircled about by the flames of fire (see 5.39). Having found themselves enveloped with fire as were the two missionaries, they had every reason to expect that they would also be instructed and edified by those divine messengers. In this they were not disappointed.

5.49 Could there have been a more effective body of men to bring about the conversion of the Lamanites and dissident Nephites to the Gospel of Jesus Christ? These were the elite members of Lamanite society. They had been the military and political leaders of the people for more than four decades. Their conversion assured the conversion of the vast majority of the inhabitants of the land of Nephi.

5.49.22–23—*marvel not*—There was little or nothing to be gained by standing about contemplating the wondrous experience that they had just had. It was a time for action, a time to share the blessings that they had received from the hand of God

5.50 We are not told of the baptism, confirmation, and ordination of these men, but we may rest assured that all things that were expedient to their serving as the servants of God were performed for them by those who held the keys of the ministry, even the sons of Helaman.

5.50.40—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

5.50.51—*evidences*—The greatest of these, of course, was the conduct of the three hundred men themselves, hardened warriors who had put off the natural man and had become like little children.

5.51 We should not be surprised that the reaction of the Lamanites to their converted brethren was no different than the response of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies to the testimony of the sons of Mosiah. It would appear that the former entered into a covenant similar to that made by the latter.

5.52 The Lamanites had conquered all of the land of Zarahemla at the beginning of the hostilities. Moronihah had managed to retake about one-half of those territories through military means. The city of Zarahemla and environs had been converted to the Christian faith by Nephi and Lehi and we have assumed that their success ameliorated the military occupation of the capital and environs (see 5.14–19). Once the conversion of the Lamanites in the land of Nephi took place, the new members of the Church of Christ restored that which they had taken by force to the original inhabitants.

5.52.13—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.1 The comparison between the Lamanite converts of Nephi and Lehi and those of the sons of Mosiah and their companions is an easy one to make. The

they cast up their eyes as if to behold from whence the voice came; and behold, they saw the heavens open; and angels came down out of heaven and ministered unto them.

49 And there were about three hundred souls who saw and heard these things; and they were bidden to go forth and marvel not, neither should they doubt.

50 And it came to pass that they did go forth, and did minister unto the people, declaring throughout all the regions round about all the things which they had heard and seen, insomuch that the more part of the \*Lamanites were convinced of them, because of the greatness of the evidences which they had received.

51 And as many as were convinced did lay down their weapons of war, and also their hatred and the tradition of their fathers.

52 And it came to pass that they did yield up unto the Nephites the lands of their possession.

*{Chapter II; continued}*  
**(Chapter 6)**

*{¶—1830}*

1 AND it came to pass that when the sixty and second year of the

Hel. 5:49–52  
EM 1:152

\* p. 422

Hel. 5:51  
EM 2:804

Hel. 6  
EM 1:152, 165



results are similar. Thousands of the Lamanites had taken the name of Christ upon themselves and had entered into covenants which effectively disarmed the military establishment that had existed throughout all of the inhabited lands of the descendants of Lehi. Without taking anything away from the ministry of Ammon and his brethren, we should note that Nephi and Lehi's ministry accomplished much the same over a considerably shorter period of time.

6.1.10–11—*sixty and second*—The end of the 62nd year of the reign of the judges transpired sometime during the first part of the year 29 BC.

6.1.22–23—*these things*—That is to say, the events surrounding the conversion of the Lamanites in the land of Nephi

6.1.40—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.1.48—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.2 We are left to imagine which body of Nephites Mormon is discussing here. There were many Nephites who, for political and religious reasons, became Lamanites when the latter invaded the land of Zarahemla. We have often referred to them as dissident Nephites. When the conversion of the Lamanites took place at the hands of the sons of Mosiah, only one of the dissident Nephites were converted back to Christianity (see *AL-C 23.14*). We may assume that many of the hardened Nephites were in this same category after the conversion of the Lamanites by Nephi and Lehi. We might also ask how the members of the Gadianton robbers fit into the picture. Technically speaking they were neither Lamanites nor Nephites in their political and religious orientation, but were pretenders dwelling in the midst of both, albeit more effectively among the Nephites. What becomes quite scary in this picture is the possibility that Mormon was referring to the general body of the Nephites, those who dwelt in the land of Bountiful and environs, together with the other cities that had been recaptured by Moronihah after the invasion of the land of Zarahemla.

6.2.8—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.3 The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is imbued with this marvelous power. Those who had once been enemies, filled with fear and loathing of one another, had been cleansed of their animosity and vitriol, unified in their faith and love for the Savior, thereby learning to love each other as becomes the saints of God in every time and place.

6.3.17—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.4 The irony of this turn in missionary activity should not be lost on any student of the Book of Mormon.

6.4.10—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of

reign of the judges had ended, all these things had happened and the Lamanites had become, the more part of them, a righteous people, insomuch that their righteousness did exceed that of the Nephites, because of their firmness and their steadiness in the faith.

2 For behold, there were many of the Nephites who had become hardened and impenitent and grossly wicked, insomuch that they did reject the word of God and all the preaching and prophesying which did come among them.

3 Nevertheless, the people of the church did have great joy because of the conversion of the Lamanites, yea, because of the church of God, which had been established among them. And they did fellowship one with another, and did rejoice one with another, and did have great joy.

4 And it came to pass that many of the Lamanites did come down into the land of Zarahemla, and did declare unto the people of the

Hel. 6:1  
EM 1:192  
Hel. 6:1–8, 34–36  
EM 1:153

Hel. 6:3  
AF 214  
CR97-A 113

the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.4.13—*down*—It will be remembered that the land of Nephi was located in a mountainous area and that any travel to the land of Zarahemla included a considerable loss in elevation.

6.4.18—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

6.4.27—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.5 These great missionaries remain nameless in the annals of the Nephites, at least in those to which we have access. No doubt those who were directly affected by their ministry will remember them forever.

6.6 We assume that the journey of the Lamanites into the land northward was motivated by the same sentiments that compelled Nephi and Lehi to preach to the Lamanites and Nephites dwelling north of the narrow neck of land.

6.6.10—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.6.19—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

6.6.21—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

6.6.36–38—*sixty and third*—The 63rd year of the reign of the judges ended sometime during the first part of the year 28 BC.

6.7 For generations the Nephites had maintained great fortresses along their southern borders to prevent any incursion on the part of the Lamanites through the narrow strip of wilderness. With the conversion of the Lamanites in the land of Nephi, however, the need for these great bastions had seemingly come to an end. It seems clear as well, that the tracks through the wilderness between the lands of Nephi and Lehi that had been used by the various armies during times of war were now developed into trade routes.

6.7.13—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

Nephites the manner of their conversion, and did exhort them to faith and repentance.

5 Yea, and many did preach with exceedingly great power and authority, unto the bringing down many of them into the depths of humility, to be the humble followers of God and the Lamb.

{*9—1830*}

6 And it came to pass that many of the Lamanites did go into the land northward; and also Nephi and Lehi went into the land northward, to preach unto the people. And thus ended the sixty and third year.

7 And behold, there was peace in all the land, insomuch that the Nephites did go into whatsoever part of the land they would, whether among the Nephites or the Lamanites.

Hel. 6:7–9  
EM 1:173

6.7.30—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.8 We should probably assume that the commercial adventures of the Lamanites were not limited to the land of Nephi and Zarahemla, but extended into the land north of the narrow neck of land as well.

6.8.8—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.8.24—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.8.31—*intercourse*—Notwithstanding its current explicit sexual meaning, the English word “intercourse” carried none of this semantic baggage in the early part of the 19th century. The literal historical meaning is confined to communication, commerce, reciprocal dealings between persons or nations, and the like.

6.9 At one point the medium of common exchange among the Nephites had become formulaic, centered on various set amounts of gold and silver (see *AL-C 11.1–19*). It is clear that this standard continued at least until the time of the visit of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites (see *3 NE-C 12.26*). The superabundance of gold, silver, and other esteemed metals implies wealth, but it is clear that the commodities and labor which the precious metals represented were just as abundant. The Lamanites and Nephites were prosperous peoples because they were industrious peoples.

6.9.13—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.9.16—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.10 We have but a limited understanding of the degree to which the children of Lehi were aware of the nature of the lands of their inheritance. How far south of the narrow neck of land did the Lamanites explore the continent? How far to the north of the land of Desolation did the settlers from among the Lamanites and Nephites establish their colonies?

6.10.4—*south*—The land southward would have included all that we identify as the continent of South America, no matter what the geological and topographical configuration may have been prior to the cataclysmic events attending the crucifixion of the Son of God.

6.10.7—*Lehi*—The father of Nephi and Laman. The ship built by Nephi and his brethren in the land of Bountiful which was guided across the waters of the Pacific Ocean until it arrived on the northwestern coast of that which we now call South America.

6.10.11—*north*—The land northward would have included all that we identify as the continent of North America, no matter what the geological

8 And it came to pass that the Lamanites did also go whithersoever they would, whether it were among the Lamanites or among the Nephites; and thus they did have free intercourse one with another, to buy and to sell, and to get gain, according to their desire.

{*9—1830*}

9 And it came to pass that they became exceedingly rich, both the Lamanites and the Nephites; and they did have an exceeding plenty of gold, and of silver, and of all manner of precious metals, both in the land south and in the land north.

10 Now the land south was called Lehi and the land north was called \*Mulek, which was after the son of Zedekiah; for the Lord did bring Mulek into the land north, and Lehi into the land south.

Hel. 6:9–13  
DS 1:151

Hel. 6:10  
AF 322  
MD 520  
EM 2:706, 969  
\* p. 423

and topographical configuration may have been prior to the cataclysmic events attending the crucifixion of the Son of God.

6.10.14—*Mulek*—A young son of Zedekiah, the king of the Jews at the time the Babylonians laid waste to the city and Temple of Jerusalem in the year 589 BC. The boy and his entourage arrived in the Americas by traversing the vast waters of the Atlantic Ocean. They originally landed on the eastern shores of the Americas, but migrated southward until they settled in the land of Zarahemla. The remnants of the Mulekites were discovered by Mosiah 1 about the year 201 BC (see *OM-C 1.9*). The Mulekites had been in the vicinity for more than three hundred years, had lost what faith they had once possess, had lost the language of their fathers, and were at the mercy of endless civil wars. The arrival of Mosiah1 and his faithful Nephite followers constituted a welcome respite from all that had befallen the Mulekites. In their gratitude they made Mosiah their king.

6.10.21—*Zedekiah*—The last king of Judah before the Babylonian captivity. He was named Mattaniah by his parents, Josiah and Hamutal, but was renamed Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar at the age of twenty-one. When Zedekiah proved unsatisfactory during the eleventh year of his reign, most of the sons of the king were put to death as he stood with them, then the king of Babylon had Zedekiah's eyes thrust out. One of his sons had escaped the vengeance of Nebuchadnezzar, however, and with a group of supporters eventually crossed the ocean to settle in the land of Zarahemla. These Jewish colonists have been traditionally called the Mulekites. It was among the people of Mulek that the sole survivor of the Jaredite civilization, Corinatumr, lived out his last days. More than three hundred years later, the Nephites fleeing from the Lamanites would come in contact with the Mulekites in Zarahemla and the two peoples would become a single nation.

6.11 If the Lamanites and Nephites were in a position to purchase unique pieces of art that members of their society were producing, it would seem reasonable to assume that the overall conditions among them were prosperous indeed. All were well-clothed, well-fed, well-housed. This prosperity came in large measure because the various parties were not at war and shared a common faith, for the most part.

6.11.18–19—*precious ores*—We are not privy to these metals or the manner in which they were used.

6.11.27—*curious*—This constitutes an interesting ambiguity in the text of the Book of Mormon. What is meant by the adjective? Did the craftsmen seem odd to their fellow citizen? Were these men innovators of some kind? The English word “curious” derives from Latin roots that mean “care”. That is to say, if an artifact is carefully made, with exactness and elegance, singular and particular in every way, it is said to be “curious”. The “curious workmen” were master craftsmen and their work was appreciated.

6.12 Mormon articulates the source of their prosperity as being their agricultural pursuits and in their husbandry of domesticated animals. They had plenty and to spare.

11 And behold, there was all manner of gold in both these lands, and of silver, and of precious ore of every kind; and there were also curious workmen, who did work all kinds of ore and did refine it; and thus they did become rich.

Hel. 6:11  
EM 1:178

12 They did raise grain in abundance, both in the north and in the south; and they did flourish exceedingly, both in the north and in the south. And they did multiply and wax exceedingly strong in the land. And they did raise many flocks and herds, yea, many fatlings.

6.13 Every inhabitant in the land contributed to the overall wealth of the people. No doubt the children, too, had tasks to perform in order to prosper their family circumstances.

6.13.5—*toil*—We may assume, in part, that this is in reference to their regular household duties as wives and mothers. We are not told how much these women were involved in the cultivation and harvest of flax and other materials used in the production of the various cloths.

6.13.7—*spin*—The process of making weaving thread from flax or other suitable material.

6.13.16—*fine-twined*—“Twining” has to do with the process of weaving cloth. Obviously, “fine-twined” cloth would be of exceptional quality. Tightly woven and therefore comfortable to wear.

6.13.17—*linen*—A cloth woven from the silky bast fibers of the flax plant.

6.13.30–32—*sixty and fourth*—The 64th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 28 and 27 BC.

6.14 We are not informed as to exactly who these prophetic ministers to the people were. Nephi and Lehi had gone into the land northward some two years before (see 6.6).

6.14.4–6—*sixty and fifth*—The 65th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 27 and 26 BC.

6.15 Some scholars have suggested that Cezoram and his son were members of the secret combination of Gadianton, but there is no evidence to support this assertion. It is likely that these students of the Book of Mormon have inadvertently conflated these two judges with Seezoram and his brother Seantum who were members of the society.

6.15.9–11—*sixty and sixth*—The 66th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 26 and 25 BC.

6.15.20—*Cezoram*—This Nephite chief judge served four years from the 62nd year of the reign of the judges until the 66th year when he was murdered by an unknown assailant from the band of Gadianton robbers. The implications of a previous passage in the book of Helaman are that Cezoram was a wicked man chosen by the voice of a wicked people, but perhaps that is too much of a generalization (see 5.1.23). Notwithstanding the similarity in the pronunciation of the names, this man should not be confused with the chief judge Seezoram who was slain by his brother Seantum three years later in the 69th year of the reign of the judges (see 8.27–28).

6.15.25–26—*unknown hand*—Although we do not know the name of the assassin, we are certain of the body which plotted the murder: the band of Gadianton (see 6.19).

6.15.45—*son*—The name of the son of Cezoram is nowhere mentioned in the text of the Book of Mormon.

6.16 The conversion of the Lamanites and their powerful testimony of the blessings attendant to righteousness had but a short-term effect on the Nephites. The more hardened among the Lamanites rejected their testimony as well. It would appear that the Gadianton robbers were actively recruiting for their secret combination at the same time.

6.16.4—*commencement*—The beginning of the 67th year of the reign of the judges would have transpired sometime during the second part of

13 Behold their women did toil and spin, and did make all manner of cloth, of fine-twined linen and cloth of every kind, to clothe their nakedness. And thus the sixty and fourth year did pass away in peace.

14 And in the sixty and fifth year they did also have great joy and peace, yea, much preaching and many prophecies concerning that which was to come. And thus passed away the sixty and fifth year.

{~~9~~—1830}

15 And it came to pass that in the sixty and sixth year of the reign of the judges, behold, Cezoram was murdered by an unknown hand as he sat upon the judgment-seat. And it came to pass that in the same year, that his son, who had been appointed by the people in his stead, was also murdered. And thus ended the sixty and sixth year.

16 And in the commencement of the sixty and seventh year the people began to grow exceedingly wicked again.

Hel. 6:13  
EM 4:1578

Hel. 6:15–30  
DNTPC 2:193

Hel. 6:16–32  
EM 1:381  
Hel. 6:16,21  
EM 1:170

the year 25 BC.

6.17 At the heart of the matter lies the motive for obtaining wealth. Jacob, the brother of Nephi, had taught his people that seeking for riches should be predicated upon a desire to do good, to bless and strengthen those not as fortunate as oneself (see *JA-C 2.17–19*). In this present case, the motivating desire was to stratify society along financial lines with the wealthy obtaining popularity and power by means of their riches. In lieu of a civil or national war, the Nephites in their ease decided to protract a secret, criminal war against their own brethren.

6.18 The followers of Gadianton had barely escaped with their lives after the death of Kishkumen in his attempt to take the life of Helaman (see 2.8–11). We have speculated that they probably ensconced themselves first in the northwestern spur of wilderness of the land of Zarahemla. As commerce increased between the Lamanites and the Nephites, the Gadianton robbers expanded their sphere of influence. Those Lamanites who had not been converted to the Church of Jesus Christ were easy prey for the secret combination, particularly if they had not been inclined to be as industrious as their Christian brethren.

6.18.16—*Kishkumen*—The instigator of a secret band of conspirators whose initial purpose was the assassination of the chief judge Pahoran 2, so that their man, Paanchi, might be elevated to the judgment seat (see 1.7–12).

6.18.18—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen’s successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah

6.18.33—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.18.50—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.19 The Gadianton robbers were distressed about something that Cezoram and his son were about. It seems unlikely that the chief judge and his family were directly associated with the secret combination.

6.19.11—*Cezoram*—This Nephite chief judge served four years from the 62nd year of the reign of the judges until the 66th year when he was murdered by an unknown assailant from the band of Gadianton robbers. The implications of a previous passage in the book of Helaman are that Cezoram was a wicked man chosen by the voice of a wicked people, but perhaps that is too much of a generalization (see 5.1.23). Notwithstanding the similarity in the pronunciation of the names, this man should not be confused with the chief judge Seezoram who was slain by his brother Seantum three years later in the 69th year of the reign of the judges (see 8.27–28).

17 For behold, the Lord had blessed them so long with the riches of the world that they had not been stirred up to anger, to wars, nor to bloodshed; therefore they began to set their hearts upon their riches; yea, they began to seek to get gain that they might be lifted up one above another; therefore they began to commit secret murders, and to rob and to plunder, that they might get gain.

18 And now behold, those murderers and plunderers were a band who had been formed by Kishkumen and Gadianton. And now it had come to pass that there were many, even among the Nephites, of Gadianton’s band. But behold, they were more numerous among the more wicked part of the Lamanites. And they were called Gadianton’s robbers and murderers.

19 And it was they who did murder the chief judge Cezoram, and his son, while in the judgment-seat; and behold, they were not found.

{*¶*—1830}

Hel. 6:17  
CR85-O 78  
CR89-A 4  
Hel. 6:17–27  
DNTC 2:171  
Hel. 6:17–30  
EM 1:153  
Hel. 6:17–41  
MD 698

6.20 The Lamanites were far more proactive in ridding themselves of the secret combination among them and did so in the most effective and permanent way known to them. They taught them the truths of eternity with power and grace. The result was, notwithstanding the early inroads that the Gadian-ton robbers had made among the Lamanites, that the secret society was utterly destroyed in the land of Nephi and other places that the Lamanites had inhabited (see 6.36–37).

6.20.10—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.21 The hearts of the Nephites were so set upon their own property, their wealth and their luxury that they had obtained by their own industry, that they could not bring themselves to be distracted from their enterprises long enough to do as the Lamanites had done. They were too busy to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those who were eating away at the superstructure of their civilization. The wealthy majority of the Nephites suborned themselves, joining the Gadian-ton robbers so that they need not do anything more to protect their personal belongings or their lives. They became devils so that the devil would not pester them. These were a shortsighted people, whose hearts were set so much upon the things of this world that they forsook the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, blinding themselves spiritually. They would eventually reap the harvest that they were planting with their own indolence.

6.21.15—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.22 In the beginning, the numbers of Kishkumen’s band were limited to those who were interested in having Paanchi be established as the chief judge. As the purposes of the secret combination changed, gravitating to robbery and murder for gain’s sake, the complexion of the combination changed. As the membership became more diverse and expansive, they required a method by which every associate in trouble might be able to identify himself to his kindred spirits whom he may not have known personally. This had been resolved anciently by Cain and his clan, and by all of the subsequent combinations that had appeared among the children of men. We should not be surprised that the perpetrators of these secret combinations of mayhem and death mimicked the most sacred of all of the revelations that had been given to the servants of God.

6.23 Whereas the children of God entered into covenants of righteousness, promising to bless and preserve those around them, the membership of the secret combinations entered into covenants by which they might wrongfully deprive the innocent and the naïve of their means of support, their virtue, and their lives. The methods used by the Gadian-ton robbers and their ilk mocked the very foundations of truth and love which God the Father and His Son had committed into the hands of those willing to live after the manner of happiness.

6.24 Repentance was a difficult principle for the members of the secret combination to observe. To confess one’s sins to God and to those set as sentinels to guard the entrance to the Kingdom of God was to put at risk the life and freedom of every wicked man in the land. Any movement toward light and

20 And now it came to pass that when the Lamanites found that there were robbers among them they were exceedingly sorrowful; and they did use every means in \*their power to destroy them off the face of the earth.

\* p. 423

21 But behold, Satan did stir up the hearts of the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those bands of robbers, and did enter into their covenants and their oaths, that they would protect and preserve one another in whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be placed, that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.

Hel. 6:21–26  
EM 3:1020

{~~9~~—1830}

22 And it came to pass that they did have their signs, yea, their secret signs, and their secret words; and this that they might distinguish a brother who had entered into the covenant, that whatsoever wickedness his brother should do he should not be injured by his brother, nor by those who did belong to his band, who had taken this covenant.

Hel. 6:22–24  
EM 3:1290  
Hel. 6:22–30  
EM 1:246

23 And thus they might murder, and plunder, and steal, and commit whoredoms and all manner of wickedness, contrary to the laws of their country and also the laws of their God.

Hel. 6:23  
CR97-O 54

24 And whosoever of those who belonged to their band should reveal unto the world of their wickedness and their abominations,

truth by any conspirator was met with harsh punishment, and ultimately with death.

6.24.45—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen’s successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah

6.24.47—*Kishkumen*—The instigator of a secret band of conspirators whose initial purpose was the assassination of the chief judge Pahoran 2, so that their man, Paanchi, might be elevated to the judgment seat (see 1.7–12).

6.25 Alma gave these instructions to his son Helaman shortly before the former was translated. Helaman had been made custodian of the entire collection of religious artifacts that had accumulated during the previous five hundred years. He had been given the responsibility of disseminating as much of the sacred writings in his charge to the people dwelling in the land of Zarahemla. The singular proscription, however, had been any publishing of the details regarding the secret combinations that had existed among the Jaredites, details that had been engraved by Ether on the 24 gold plates found by Limhi’s men in the land of Desolation (see *AL-C 37.27–32*).

6.25.11—*Alma*—The ministry of Alma the younger had begun shortly before the establishment of the reign of the judges, more than sixty years before the time of this great cultural awakening of the Nephites to their deep spiritual peril. He is apparently translated during the eighteenth year of the reign of the judges, more than forty years before the devastating invasion of the Lamanites (see *AL-C 45.18–20*). Though possible, it seems unlikely that the Nephites were remembering from their own personal acquaintance with the chief judge

6.26 Mormon makes it clear that Helaman and the other custodians of the histories of the Nephites were not responsible for the development of the oaths and covenants of the Gadianton robbers, but that Satan himself had revealed these wicked things to Gadianton personally

6.26.13—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen’s successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah

6.26.21—*Helaman*—This son of Alma is the second of three so named mentioned in the text of the Book of Mormon. The first is one of the sons of king Benjamin who is mentioned at the time Mosiah is selected to be Benjamin’s successor. The third is Helaman’s own son. The present Helaman was the commander of the 2000 stripling warriors, sons of the faithful Anti-Nephi-Lehies. His personal record of his life and ministry became Mormon’s source for most of the narrative to be found in Alma 45 to Alma 62. It is for Helaman’s son that the book of Helaman is named.

6.26.34–35—*same being*—That is to say, the devil. Satan had tried to seduce Adam and Eve by sophistry in an attempt to rob them of their physical bodies. He did not hesitate to introduce sin and death into the world in order to achieve his goal. Lucifer was and is the archetypal Gadianton robber, the archetypal murderer, the archetypal elitist.

6.26.46–47—*forbidden fruit*—That is to say, the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil which brought with its touch the

should be tried, not according to the laws of their country, but according to the laws of their wickedness, which had been given by Gadianton and Kishkumen.

25 Now behold, it is these secret oaths and covenants which Alma commanded his son should not go forth unto the world, lest they should be a means of bringing down the people unto destruction.

26 Now behold, those secret oaths and covenants did not come forth unto Gadianton from the records which were delivered unto Helaman; but behold, they were put into the heart of Gadianton by that same being who did entice our first parents to partake of the forbidden fruit—

Hel. 6:26  
MD 278



entrance of disease and death, both physical and spiritual.

6.27 For gain and power, Cain was willing to momentarily prostrate himself before Satan, knowing that eventually he would rule over all of those who would hearken to the voice of the devil. Cain played the role of Gadianton to Satan's Kishkumen. They, of course, will be miserable together, forever.

6.27.9—*Cain*—One of the many children of Adam and Eve, and one who in the beginning of his life was obedient to his parents and to the Lord God of Heaven. In the process of time, however, he fell into the web of deceit woven by the enemy of all mankind. He became discontented and jealous of his righteous brother. In his spiritual degeneration he began to think of himself in exalted terms and, encouraged as he was by Lucifer, even thought to deceive God with his half-hearted offering of the fruits of the field. Disappointed in God's justifiable response, Cain sought to do away with his brother in a fit of rage. His desire for a successful secret fratricide opened the door for Satan's consummate covenant with Cain, that through their combination Adam would never come to know what exactly had happened between Cain and Abel. This was, of course, an outrageous lie that Cain was willing to believe.

6.27.17—*Abel*—Another of the many sons of Adam and Eve. He was proper and respectful in all things. In his humility Abel offered an offering acceptable to God, a broken heart and a contrite spirit, in the similitude of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God that would come in the Meridian of Time. He was ostensibly killed for his well-established flocks, but he was the first martyr for the cause of Christ.

6.28 The building of the Tower of Babel was a fool's errand, but one inspired by Satan in order to corrupt the hearts of the descendants of Noah. At the heart of the enticement was the overthrow of the God of Heaven. Through a mockery of the sacred ordinances of exaltation, the apostates of Jared's day hoped to gain ascendancy over their righteous brethren. The appeal of wealth, power, and fame lay at the heart of all that Nimrod attempted to do. The oaths of Nimrod apparently passed over the great waters with the Jaredites in their records. These oaths would be instigated among the Jaredites once their wickedness blossomed. The wickedness and abominations that arose afterwards eventually destroyed the people spiritually; the complete destruction of their civilization came close on the heels of their spiritual death.

6.28.20—*tower*—In reference to the tower of Babel, a work instigated by Nimrod a short time after the Great Flood, through which only Noah and seven members of his immediate family had passed. From the confusion of tongues brought about by the wickedness of the people, Jared, his brother, and a few of their friends, together with their immediate families were able to make their way to the promised land in what we refer to today as the western hemisphere. The Jaredites inhabited this land for many centuries until they were ultimately destroyed about the time that Lehi and his company were arriving from the land of Jerusalem.

6.29 Satan does not hesitate; he will wreck havoc upon any people who are willing to succumb to his enticings.

6.29.14—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen's successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah

27 Yea, that same being who did plot with Cain, that if he would murder his brother Abel it should not be known unto the world. And he did plot with Cain and his followers from that time forth.

28 And also it is that same being who put it into the hearts of the people to build a tower sufficiently high that they might get to heaven. And it was that same being who led on the people who came from that tower into this land; who spread the works of darkness and abominations over all the face of the land, until he dragged the people down to an entire destruction, and to an everlasting hell.

29 Yea, it is that same being who put it into the heart of Gadianton to still carry on the work of darkness, and of secret murder; and he has brought it forth from the beginning of man even down to this time.

Hel. 6:27  
EM 1:5

Hel. 6:28  
MD 350

6.30 Every expression of willful rebellion against the mind and will of God the eternal Father is fostered by him who is the quintessential rebel. Any man or woman who partakes of that spirit is destined to incur great misery in time and in eternity.

6.30.30—*their*—Although the antecedent of this plural pronoun may indeed refer to Cain, Nimrod, and the Gadianton robbers, in the syntax of the verse it is just as likely that the reference is to “his works”, which are defined by “plots”, “oaths”, “covenants”, and “plans”.

6.31 The great conversion that had taken place at the hands of Nephi and Lehi had been primarily among the Lamanites and dissident Nephites (see 5.16–19 and 5.49–52). It was among those nominal Nephites that wickedness and rebellion abounded, due in large measure to the temptings of the Gadianton robbers and their own desire to preserve their carnal security.

6.31.14—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.32 It is sobering to think about the capricious nature of the human heart as manifested in the lives of the Nephites, especially when we may witness the same sort of conduct in the present day.

6.32.19–20—*many years*—The period of time spoken of was approximately seventeen years long, from the 49th year of the reign of the judges when the Nephites experienced a tremendous spiritual awakening (see 3.23–27) to the 67th year. The degeneration had been progressive, however.

6.32.34–36—*sixty and seventh*—The 67th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 25 and 24 BC.

6.32.48—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

6.33 We may assume that the righteous men and women among the Nephites were not just idle bystanders witnessing the corruption destroy the freedoms and peace that the Nephites had preserved for so long. They were also, undoubtedly, the victims of the increasing wickedness, not being card-carrying members of the Gadianton band. They were the only ones left who could be plundered and murdered.

6.33.10–12—*sixty and eighth*—The 68th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 24 and 23 BC.

6.34 We do not know if the Nephites left off observing the requirements of the Law of Moses; the wicked are not above hypocrisy. But it is clear that where the Lamanites had not observed that temporal law, their conversion to the Gospel of Jesus Christ inspired them to do all that the great Lawgiver had instructed ancient Israel to do. Their obedience to the letter of the Law

30 And behold, it is he who is the author of all sin. \*And behold, he doth carry on his works of darkness and secret murder, and doth hand down their plots, and their oaths, and their covenants, and their plans of awful wickedness, from generation to generation according as he can get hold upon the hearts of the children of men.

31 And now behold, he had got great hold upon the hearts of the Nephites; yea, insomuch that they had become exceedingly wicked; yea, the more part of them had turned out of the way of righteousness, and did trample under their feet the commandments of God, and did turn unto their own ways, and did build up unto themselves idols of their gold and their silver.

{~~¶~~—1830}

32 And it came to pass that all these iniquities did come unto them in the space of not many years, insomuch that a more part of it had come unto them in the sixty and seventh year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

33 And they did grow in their iniquities in the sixty and eighth year also, to the great sorrow and lamentation of the righteous.

34 And thus we see that the Nephites did begin to dwindle in unbelief, and grow in wickedness and abominations, while the Lamanites began to grow exceed-

\* p. 425  
Hel. 6:30  
MD 538, 736  
CR82-A 36  
CR97-O 54

Hel. 6:31  
AF 51  
CR00-A 33

Hel. 6:32  
CR88-A 6

Hel. 6:34  
EM 1:378

provided opportunities to draw even closer to the God of Heaven.

6.34.7—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.34.22—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.35 The activities of the Gadianton robbers constituted conduct unbecoming a Christian. The Lord God of Israel cannot abide the least degree of sin and His Spirit is offended by the rebellion of His children. As the Holy Ghost withdrew from the hearts and minds of the Nephites, they became more and more agitated, easily distracted from the truths they still observed, filling up with the anxiety and distress of the damned.

6.35.16—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.36 The Lamanites who entered into the covenants placed before them by Nephi and Lehi were faithful and true to their promises and thereby reaped the benefits thereof. They were far happier and content than were their counterparts. They were far more congenial as a people, less afraid of those around them, dedicated to enhancing the comfort of their neighbors, and blessing all those who entered their sphere of activity.

6.36.16—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.37 Note that there is nothing said of hunting down the Gadianton robbers and taking their lives. They simply taught the principles of eternal life to their brethren with power and conviction, just as Nephi and Lehi had taught it to them. They were filled with Christian love and compassion and inspired their erstwhile enemies to acquire the same sentiments. This is by far and away the most effective manner to destroy the wicked in any society.

6.37.8—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

6.37.16—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen's successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah.

6.38 This course of conduct taken by the Nephites is a common one. When the Spirit of God begins to withdraw from a people, the wicked begin to be filled with fear of all kinds. The Gadianton robbers effectively frightened their fellow citizens into believing that there was nothing they could do to preserve their wealth and position in society except to join their society. It apparently never occurred to the Nephites in their degenerating state that they could

ingly in the knowledge of their God; yea, they did begin to keep his statutes and commandments, and to walk in truth and uprightness before him.

35 And thus we see that the Spirit of the Lord began to withdraw from the Nephites, because of the wickedness and the hardness of their hearts.

36 And thus we see that the Lord began to pour out his Spirit upon the Lamanites, because of their easiness and willingness to believe in his words.

{¶—1830}

37 And it came to pass that the Lamanites did hunt the band of robbers of Gadianton; and they did preach the word of God among the more wicked part of them, inasmuch that this band of robbers was utterly destroyed from among the Lamanites.

38 And it came to pass on the other hand, that the Nephites did build them up and support them, beginning at the more wicked part of them, until they had overspread all the land of the Nephites, and

Hel. 6:36  
TSWK 178, 567  
CR95-O 38

Hel. 6:37  
CR97-O 54

Hel. 6:38  
CR87-A 3  
CR97-O 54  
Hel. 6:38–39  
EM 1:153

actually convert the members of the secret combination as had the Lamanites. Additionally, as the Spirit of God withdrew from them, they replaced the comforts of the spirit with the lusts of the flesh, once again resorting to the desires of the natural man. The Gadianton robbers, by definition, were men and women who wholehearted embraced the lost and fallen nature of the world.

6.38.12—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

6.39 Cezoram and his unnamed son, the chief judge and his successor, were both assassinated by men sent from among the Gadianton robbers. We are not told who succeeded Cezoram's son in the judgment seat, but it seems likely that it was a Gadianton robber named Seezoram. This corrupt judge would be murdered by his brother sometime during the 69th year of the reign of the judges, only a year from the time that Mormon is describing here (see 8.27). During the year that Seezoram ruled, great deprecations were wrought against the saints of the Most High.

6.39.3—*they*—That is to say, the Gadianton robbers and their wicked compatriots.

6.40 Nephi would testify to the unrepentant that a destruction awaited them if they did not hearken to the voice of the Lord (see 10.12–15). They did not repent and their wickedness became so intolerable that they began a war of epic proportions in the 71st year of the reign of the judges (see 10.18–19). In order to bring the Nephites to an awareness of their precarious position, Nephi petitioned God to withhold the temporal blessings of heaven from them. A great famine ensued which brought them to their senses somewhat (see 11.5–9).

6.41 The end of the 68th year of the reign of the judges would have transpired sometime during the first part of the year 23 BC.

6.41.24—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

7.0 The record of Helaman 2, the son of Helaman who was the son of Alma the younger, was condensed into first three chapters of the present edition of the Book of Mormon. Beginning with chapter 4, Mormon appears to be drawing from the preserved records of Nephi and probably those of his brother Lehi as well. One of the distinctive features of the first six chapters of the book of Helaman is that there is very little of Nephi and Lehi's teachings recorded, but rather much of the material is more of a historical treatise embracing about 28 years. This, in part, explains why in the original edition of the Book of Mormon the chapter divisions at first blush seem to be counter-intuitive. Chapter I (currently chapters 1 and 2) introduced the machinations of the Gadianton robbers against the established government of the land of Zarahemla during the three years immediately following the death of the chief judge Pahoran. Chapter II (currently chapters 3 through 6) traces the military confrontations between the Lamanites and the Nephites for the next twenty-

had seduced the more part of the righteous until they had come down to believe in their works and partake of their spoils, and to join with them in their secret murders and combinations.

39 And thus they did obtain the sole management of the government, insomuch that they did trample under their feet and smite and rend and turn their backs upon the poor and the meek, and the humble followers of God.

40 And thus we see that they were in an awful state, and ripen\*ing for an everlasting destruction.

41 And it came to pass that thus ended the sixty and eighth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

### {Chapter III} (Chapter 7)

#### The Prophecy of Nephi The Son of Helaman

*God threatens the people of Nephi that he will visit them in his anger, to their utter destruction except they repent of their wickedness. God smiteth the people of Nephi with pestilence; they repent and turn unto him. Samuel, a Lamanite, prophesies unto the Nephites. Comprising chapters 7 to 16 inclusive*

Hel. 6:39  
MLM 65

\* p. 426

Hel. 7  
EM 1:152, 165

five years, together with the successful efforts of Nephi and Lehi to bring peace and prosperity to both peoples. Beginning with Chapter III (currently chapters 7 through 10), Mormon returns again to the specific teachings of the prophet of God, Nephi in this instance, that had marked much of the narrative in the book of Alma. The historical narrative advances only three years. Chapter IV summarizes the next 13 years of Nephi's ministry, most of which is to be found in chapter 11 of the current edition. Chapter 12 is actually Mormon's personal reflections on this period of time. Chapter V (currently chapters 13 through 16) recounts the ministry of Samuel the Lamanite, much of which was probably recorded by Lehi, the brother of Nephi (see 16.1–6).

7.0.4—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

7.0.8—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As has been seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

7.0.14—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

7.0.40—*pestilence*—Strictly speaking, the word “pestilence” derives from Latin sources which refer to “plague”; that is to say, any contagious or infectious disease that is epidemic and mortal. In general usage, however, the word also includes corruption or moral disease destructive to happiness. Nephi himself will refer to the civil war in the midst of the Nephites as a “pestilence of the sword” (see 11.14). We are not told if there were virulent diseases that accompanied the famine and the other horrors of war, but Mormon suggests that there is more than one kind of pestilence (see 12.3) and that the Nephites had these in abundance.

7.0.47—*Samuel*—A Lamanite prophet who appeared in the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He correctly foretells all that would transpire prior to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites and the eventual destruction of the Nephite civilization.

7.0.49—*Lamanite*—Specifically one of the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

7.0.54—*Comprising*—This word and the accompany phrase does not appear in the first edition of the Book of Mormon, for obvious reasons. Strictly speaking, however, the actual prophecy of Nephi ends in chapter 11.

7.1 Nephi and Lehi had journeyed into the land northward sometime during the 63rd year of the reign of the judges, making their ministry in that place about six years long (see 6.6).

7.1.9–11—*sixty and ninth*—The 69th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 23 and 22 BC.

7.1.24—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi,

{*9—1830*}

1 BEHOLD, now it came to pass in the sixty and ninth year of the reign of the judges over the people of the Nephites, that Nephi, the son of Helaman, returned to the land of Zarahemla from the land

the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

7.1.26—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

7.1.30—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As has been seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

7.1.36—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi, It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

7.2 One has to ask the question as to how far afield did Nephi go in his attempt to take the fullness of the Gospel into the land northward. It seems unlikely that that he merely preached in the land of Desolation, that limited region just north of the narrow neck of land. How far could one travel in a six year period of time, particularly since the people in every part of the country rejected his teachings? It would seem reasonable to assume that he visited every colony that had been established by the Nephites and Lamanites. He must have suffered great sorrow in discovering that the children of the people of Ammon and other covenant Lamanites had fallen in to such a state of spiritual degeneration that they would not entertain him and his brother in their labors.

7.3 We are not told precisely what the inhabitants of the land northward did to usher Nephi and Lehi out of their lands. One wonders if it became as rigorous as the reaction of the people of Ammonihah or the citizens of the land of Antionum.

7.4 When Nephi had left on his mission six years before, the people of Zarahemla had been in the midst of a great spiritual rejuvenation brought about by the conversion of the Lamanites in the land of Nephi, many of whom brought their testimonies personally into the land of Zarahemla in order to bless the recalcitrant Nephites, bringing many of them into the depths of humility (see 6.1–7). After the murder of Cezoram and his son, the Gadianton robbers were able to install their own men into the seats of the judges, in large measure because of the willingness of the Nephites to embrace the covenants of wickedness in order to preserve their wealth and their lives.

7.4.14—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen's successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah.

7.5 It has been said often that power corrupts, and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. No greater truth has been spoken of the natural man. A wicked man in power brings every corruption and abomination known to mankind in among the people he rules. The Gadianton robbers had been

northward.

2 For he had been forth among the people who were in the land northward and did preach the word of God unto them, and did prophesy many things unto them;

3 And they did reject all his words, insomuch that he could not stay among them, but returned again unto the land of his nativity.

4 And seeing the people in a state of such awful wickedness, and those Gadianton robbers filling the judgment-seats—having usurped the power and authority of the land; laying aside the commandments of God, and not in the least aright before him; doing no justice unto the children of men;

5 Condemning the righteous because of their righteousness; letting the guilty and the wicked go unpunished because of their

Hel. 7:4–5  
MLM 65

Hel. 7:5  
CR89-A 5  
CR02-A 91

formed in order to be able to commit great sins against God and man without being held accountable for their actions. They favored their brother robbers over those who were expecting equality under the law. They were susceptible to graft and bribes of all kinds; “justice” was given to the highest bidder. The gratification of all lusts, the honors of men, the wealth of nations, and increasing power over the minds, hearts, and bodies of men and women lay at the heart of every motivation of those who ruled in the land of Zarahemla.

7.6 Nephi had left the lands of Nephi and Zarahemla in a condition of spiritual rejuvenation. To discover that the Nephites and some of the Lamanites had fallen into deep apostasy and corruption was almost more than he could bear.

7.6.9—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

7.6.15–16—*many years*—We should probably assume that Mormon is referring to the six-year period between the time that Nephi and Lehi journeyed into the land northward and the murder of Cezoram.

7.6.19—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

7.7 Nephi’s days were not completely free from distress and discouragement. The eight years in the wilderness of Arabia had been a refiner’s fire for all who travelled with Lehi. Laman and Lemuel were not particularly cooperative when the time came to build the ship that was to carry them to the promised land, and their conduct on the ship was not particularly exemplary in the beginning of their voyage. After the death of Lehi, family circumstances deteriorated quickly and Nephi and his followers were compelled to flee into the mountains of Nephi in order to escape oppression and death. Only then did Nephi and his people have any kind of respite in which they could prosper spiritually in peace and love. No doubt this was the period of time to which Nephi the son of Helaman was referring.

7.7.15—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

7.7.23—*Jerusalem*—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

7.8 The early Nephites were devoted to righteousness, but it was some time before they dwelt in comfort, having to carve a home out of a formidable

money; and moreover to be held in office at the head of government, to rule and do according to their wills, that they might get gain and glory of the world, and, moreover, that they might the more easily commit adultery, and steal, and kill, and do according to their own wills—

6 Now this great iniquity had come upon the Nephites, in the space of not many years; and when Nephi saw it, his heart was swollen with sorrow within his breast; and he did exclaim in the agony of his soul:

7 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—

8 Yea, if my days could have been in those days, then would my soul

Hel. 7:7–9  
EM 1:152  
\* p. 427  
Hel. 7:7,9  
CR82-O 99

wilderness. But they were happy, living “after the manner of happiness” (see 2 NE-C 5.27). This was, indeed, a golden age to which anyone might look and desire to be a participant.

7.9 A natural lament, but we ought not to be critical of this great man’s view of his own time upon the earth. He was faced with trials and tribulations with which few men in any dispensation could cope. He and his brother had been instruments in the hands of the Lord to bring an entire nation to repentance and peace to warring factions that had been at each other’s throats for hundreds of years. No doubt they expected to prosper in their mission to the land northward, but their words were utterly refused by the inhabitants there. Then to find that in less than six years that their native land had once again succumbed to vices and abominations of all kinds, must have been an almost unbearable disappointment.

7.10 Nephi’s anguished cry, as articulated in the three preceding verses, was made in a somewhat public place, notwithstanding the fact that it was in his own garden. Did Nephi go there to his tower so that he might be overheard by his fellow citizens? It is hard to imagine that that was his sole motivation. We are not privy as to the reason this tower existed, but it seems reasonable to assume that it was a place of peace for Nephi, a place where he might enjoy some privacy from the world. Nephi’s lament was not exactly a prayer, even though it was an outpouring of the most tender of his feelings at the time. We may be certain that the recorded words, however, were not the only things which he said while upon the tower.

7.10.20—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

7.10.38—*Zarahemla*—The land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

7.11 One must wonder somewhat if the terrain around the home of Nephi had changed in some degree during his six-year mission to the land northward. Had the highway always been where it was and had it always been the thoroughfare that it appeared to be at this point in time? One must also ask the question as to whether or not the men who overheard Nephi upon the tower were actually on the highway or whether they were passing through Nephi’s garden on their way to the highway. In Nephi’s absence, the garden may have become more of a public place than it had been before, at least for the certain men that apparently were passing through. One also wonders at the motivation of the men who gathered up the multitude. Were they lapsed disciples who were suddenly aroused to their lamentable circumstances? Were they members of the secret combination who were dismayed at Nephi’s return and wished to humiliate him before the people? We do not know at this point. The crowd, however, would be composed of both.

7.11.15—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat

have had joy in the righteousness of my brethren.

9 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.

10 And behold, now it came to pass that it was upon a tower, which was in the garden of Nephi, which was by the highway which led to the chief market, which was in the city of Zarahemla; therefore, Nephi had bowed himself upon the tower which was in his garden, which tower was also near unto the garden gate by which led the highway.

{¶—1830}

11 And it came to pass that there were certain men passing by and saw Nephi as he was pouring out his soul unto God upon the tower; and they ran and told the people what they had seen, and the people came together in multitudes that they might know the cause of so great mourning for the wickedness of the people.

Hel. 7:9  
CR92-A 57  
CR92-O 64  
CR02-O 17

Hel. 7:10  
MD 541

Hel. 7:11–12, 14,  
24  
EM 1:88



of the land of Zarahemla.

7.12 Where was the multitude? Was it on the street that passed by Nephi's residence or did the people actually enter into the garden, milling about at the foot of the tower?

7.12.4—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

7.13 There had been a time when Nephi and Lehi had been revered by both the Lamanites and the Nephites. Nephi's question here is perfectly reasonable. Had the people been aroused from their spiritual stupor? Were they anxious to repent and return to the Church and Kingdom of God in full fellowship? Were they seeking to know what they must do in order to enjoy the blessings that they had once been party to?

7.14 In part, the motivation of at least some of the people had been that they might know from Nephi what they must do in order to be found acceptable before God. They had been lulled away by the enticements of their carnal, sensual, and devilish society, a fact that had been brought to the fore because of Nephi's vocal petition to God the eternal Father. Some of the people, perhaps a goodly number of them, were distressed because their former mentor was distressed.

7.15 Satan's grasp upon the people of Nephi had come as a result of their willingly allowing the Gadianton robbers to prosper in the land of Zarahemla. Those who desired wealth, fame, and power more than anything else had formerly aligned themselves with the secret combination; the remainder merely hoped that they would not become the object of the oppression and rapacity of the coven of evil. Fear, and not faith, had governed their hearts and minds for several years.

7.16 The shortsightedness of the wicked hardly ever takes into consideration the eternal consequences of their actions. The natural man knows nothing of the things of God. Or if there is a modicum of awareness, the poor in spirit simply do not concern themselves with anything that does not bring them immediate pleasure or temporal success. Satan is the friend of no man, even those who consider themselves his associates, or those who have been enlisted into his service. There is no one in time or in all eternity who is more self-centered than Lucifer. He is quintessentially selfish. He is also quintessentially sadistic.

7.17 As has been observed in many places by the servants of God, rebellion against the will of God is the harbinger of death, both physical and spiritual. Many of the Nephites had been soured spiritually because of the many long years of fruitless war against the Lamanites. Others, after having witnessed the liberation of the Nephites from Lamanite aggression, may have felt betrayed when the Gadianton robbers rose to power in their midst. Had God forsaken them? Or had they turned from their God out of fear of those who seemed to triumph at every turn, who engaged in all manner of illicit conduct and yet seem to prosper? No doubt many of the erstwhile righteous had questioned their faith. What was the point of living the law of God when it brought

12 And now, when Nephi arose he beheld the multitudes of people who had gathered together.

13 And it came to pass that he opened his mouth and said unto them: Behold, why have ye gathered yourselves together? That I may tell you of your iniquities?

14 Yea, because I have got upon my tower that I might pour out my soul unto my God, because of the exceeding sorrow of my heart, which is because of your iniquities!

15 And because of my mourning and lamentation ye have gathered yourselves together, and do marvel; yea, and ye have great need to marvel; yea, ye ought to marvel because ye are given away that the devil has got so great hold upon your hearts.

16 Yea, how could you have given way to the enticing of him who is seeking to hurl away your souls down to everlasting misery and endless wo?

17 O repent ye, repent ye! Why will ye die? Turn ye, turn ye unto the Lord your God. Why has he forsaken you?

Hel. 7:13–29  
EM 1:152

Hel. 7:16  
MD 508

Hel. 7:17  
AF 119

nothing but ridicule and oppression? In succumbing to the enticements of a wicked world, the failed saints found that the Spirit of God, the Comforter, withdrew from them and they became more and more miserable.

7.18 Nephi assures the crowd that regardless of their perception as to what had transpired between them and their God, the fact of the matter was that they had been the offenders, they had destroyed their capacity to perceive the mind and will of God, they had been the ones to reject the whisperings of the Spirit of God. In their emptiness and spiritual solitude, they could only suppose that the God of Heaven was angry with them. In the sense that they had rejected his willing protection of them and they would be miserable in their lack of repentance, he could not look upon them in happiness or pleasure.

7.19 The great blessing that was given to the Nephites was that they would always be firmly reminded when they became crosswise with the God of the promised land. They were promised that they would be left unto themselves, dependent upon their own strength in the face of a persistent and vicious enemy. The promise continued that if they would not respond to their peril in a godly manner, their destruction would be so complete that there would not be enough able-bodied men to bury the dead.

7.20 A great peace had come to the Nephites when the Lamanites had been converted to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All of the lands which had been occupied by the Lamanites were unconditionally returned to the Nephites. This deliverance took place in the 62nd year of the reign of the judges (see 5.52). During the 63rd year of the reign of the judges, many of the converted Lamanites came into the land of Zarahemla to bear their testimonies as to what had transpired to them, establishing many of the Nephites in the Church and Kingdom of God. In the 66th and 67th years the ugly head of apostasy arose among the Nephites and nothing was done to curtail it (see 6.15–17).

7.21 We cannot know at this point if every person that stood in Nephi's garden was a member of the Gadianton robbers, but it is clear that the society had become so corrupt that the people of Zarahemla had adopted the societal philosophy of the secret combination. Wealth, fame, power, and self-gratification had become the goals of the Nephites, and they were willing to commit almost any kind of sin in order to acquire their hearts' desire.

7.22 Twelve years before, the Lamanites had accomplished just exactly what Nephi was prophesying here. Ever city between the narrow strip of wilderness to the land of Bountiful and been overrun and occupied by the enemy (see 4.5). Moronihah had been moderately successful in recovering one-half of the cities through military action (see 4.16–18). Nephi's warning here is that if the land were overrun again, the ability to recapture their lands of inheritance would not be forthcoming. Nephi's words could not have been clearer or more germane.

18 It is because you have hardened your hearts; yea, ye will not hearken unto the voice of the good shepherd; yea, ye have provoked him to anger against you.

19 And behold, instead of gathering you, except ye will repent, behold, he shall scatter you forth that ye shall become meat for dogs and wild beasts.

20 O, how could you have forgotten your God in the very day that he has delivered you?

21 But behold, it is to get gain, to be praised of men, yea, and that ye might get gold and silver. \*And ye have set your hearts upon the riches and the vain things of this world, for the which ye do murder, and plunder, and steal, and bear false witness against your neighbor, and do all manner of iniquity.

22 And for this cause wo shall come unto you except ye shall repent. For if ye will not repent, behold, this great city, and also all those great cities which are round about, which are in the land of our possession, shall be taken away that ye shall have no place in them; for behold, the Lord will not grant unto you strength, as he has hitherto done, to withstand against your enemies.

Hel. 7:18  
MD 328

Hel. 7:20  
CR01-O 18

Hel. 7:21  
CR85-O 78  
\* p. 428

7.23 Either Nephi is quoting from a written source to which we at present have no access or he is revealing to the Nephites in his garden the mind and will of the Lord God as it is being whispered to him at that very moment. The righteous are filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. They are capable of perceiving the hand of God operating in their lives and in the lives of those around them. The wicked have no such advantage and therefore welter in ignorant anxiety.

7.23.13—*wicked*—The wicked in this case are the resident Nephites of Zarahemla. Certainly the dissident Nephites and the Lamanites had been shown time and again the visible power of God in their battles and wars against the Nephites, much to their dismay.

7.23.55—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

7.24 The Lamanites as a people had hearkened to the voice of Nephi and Lehi and had, for the most part, continued to observe the covenants into which they had entered at the time of their conversion. It is not the case that they had less knowledge as the Nephites; they were simply faithful to that which they had acquired through faith and repentance.

7.24.19—*ye*—Note that the pronoun is plural here, referring to the Nephites as contrasted with the Lamanites.

7.24.43—*thou*—Note that Nephi has changed the pronoun to the singular, clearly testifying to all of those in the range of his voice that each one of them individually is on the cusp of personal destruction, regardless of what may happen to the Nephite nation as a whole. It had already been prophesied that the Nephite civilization would continue until after the personal appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ among them.

7.25 The Lamanites had exterminated the Gadianton robbers from among them by preaching to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ (see 6.36–37). The Nephites, in fear for their wealth and comfort, had embraced the secret combination (see 6.38–40).

7.25.32—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen’s successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah.

7.26 When one thinks of himself as being better than his fellows because of temporal possessions, political power, or social prestige, his dependence upon spiritual affirmation dwindles. The Spirit of God gradually withdraws from such a man and he is left unto himself. Invariably, the natural man gains ascendancy in his life, introducing one abomination after another into his personal conduct. In the place of righteous and love, there is wickedness and the spirit of contention.

7.27 Without the guidance of God, the wicked merely careen through life, abusing themselves and those around them in a frantic lust for personal gratification. Ultimately, they burn out completely and they are left to themselves, filled with frustration and misery.

23 For behold, thus saith the Lord: I will not show unto the wicked of my strength, to one more than the other, save it be unto those that repent of their sins, and hearken unto my words. Now therefore, I would that ye should behold, my brethren, that it shall be better for the Lamanites than for you except ye shall repent.

24 For behold, they are more righteous than you, for they have not sinned against that great knowledge which ye have received; therefore the Lord will be merciful unto them; yea, he will lengthen out their days and increase their seed, even when thou shalt be utterly destroyed except thou shalt repent.

25 Yea, wo be unto you because of that great abomination which has come among you; and ye have united yourselves unto it, yea, to that secret band which was established by Gadianton!

26 Yea, wo shall come unto you because of that pride which ye have suffered to enter your hearts, which has lifted you up beyond that which is good because of your exceedingly great riches!

27 Yea, wo be unto you because of your wickedness and abominations!

Hel. 7:23–24  
EM 2:799

Hel. 7:28  
CR91-A 14

7.28 The cynics in Nephite audience may have thought to themselves, “And precisely who is it that will deprive me of my land? The Lamanite aggressors are no more and I pertain to a combination that protects all of my interests. This man is nothing but a pompous buffoon!” Their lands would be taken from them as civil war broke out in their midst and as the famine devastated their living.

7.29 Nephi gave credit where credit was due. Within days the people would have placed before them undeniable evidence that Nephi was indeed a prophet of God. They would do little more than bicker among themselves as to his exact role in the proceedings that had revealed him for what he was. These were a hardened and corrupt people.

8.1 It is clear that the discourse that is provided in the previous chapter is a redaction of all that which Nephi had declared to those who had gathered at the foot of his tower. Most of what has been articulated, however, might have been shrugged off by the audience had it not been for Nephi’s candid remark about the band of Gadianton. While we have no trouble whatsoever in perceiving the machinations of that secret combination, it is certain that those who were not members of the cabal were not aware of the extent to which the robbers had infiltrated their society.

8.1.9—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

8.1.29—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen’s successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah.

8.1.64—*crime*—One wonders as the nature of the change in Nephite law that a man could be condemned for raising his voice against the conduct of the officers of the government or be censured for objecting to an unjust piece of legislation. This smacks of the legislation enacted by Noah and his priests that forbade the teaching of the coming of the Christ into the world (see *MS-C 17.7–9*).

8.2 Again, we are not privy to exactly what aspect of the law of the land of Zarahemla to which the corrupt judges are referring, but that Nephi had been specific there can be no doubt. The hesitancy of the people must have signaled to all in the crowd that what Nephi had been revealing to them had the ring of truth about it. Of course, the judges knew that what he had been saying was true.

8.3 Mormon was faced with what must be considered an almost impossible

28 And except ye repent ye shall perish; yea, even your lands shall be taken from you, and ye shall be destroyed from off the face of the earth.

29 Behold now, I do not say that these things shall be, of myself, because it is not of myself that I know these things; but behold, I know that these things are true because the Lord God has made them known unto me, therefore I testify that they shall be.

*{Chapter III; continued}*  
**(Chapter 8)**

*{¶—1830}*

1 AND now it came to pass that when Nephi had said these words, behold, there were men who were judges, who also belonged to the secret band of Gadianton, and they were angry, and they cried out against him, saying unto the people: Why do ye not seize upon this man and bring him forth, that he may be condemned according to the crime which he has done?

2 Why seest thou this man, and hearest him revile against this people and against our law?

3 For behold, Nephi \*had spoken

Hel. 8  
EM 1:152, 165  
Hel. 8:1  
EM 1:162

\* p. 428

task. He had in his possession the prophetic record of a people that spanned nearly a thousand years. How does one choose to preserve in one's own writing a particular passage over another, when all of the ancient writings were precious in their own way. Well might we duplicate Mormon's dilemma were we to attempt to redact the Old or New Testaments a hundred-fold.

8.3.3—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

8.4 Mormon recounts that Nephi mentioned the Gadianton robbers almost in passing (see 7.25), but Nephi must have been far more explicit in his condemnation of the secret combination and of the power which they were wielding in the upper echelons of the government. Notwithstanding the cloaked presence of the secret band, the robbers did not as yet have an absolute stranglehold on the people.

8.4.37—*they*—That is to say, the Nephites who were in the crowd who were not members of Gadianton's band.

8.4.42—*them*—That is to say, the judges who did belong to the secret combination. Any physical attack upon a man who had been such a prominent figure in the peace and prosperity of the nation would be interpreted as evidence in favor of the prophet's teachings.

8.5 The judges attempted to enrage the crowd into believing that Nephi's condemnation was universal, that everyone was being excoriated. Of course, the prophet was speaking in all cases to those who were unwilling to repent of their wickedness and abominations.

8.5.17—*us*—In the context of the narrative, it is possible to conclude that Nephi had been quite candid about the leadership of the government and perhaps the very judges who were standing in the crowd. "Us", then, would be understood as the judges who were members of the Gadianton robbers.

8.5.23—*all*—This in contrast to the "us" who were the corrupt judges.

8.6 Again we hear an echo of the citizenry of the city of Ammonihah, who scoffed at the idea that their fair community could fall into the hands of the Lamanites, particularly since those wicked men had undoubtedly been in collusion with the leadership of that people dwelling in the land of Nephi. The judges assumed that since they, the Gadianton robbers, possessed the reins of the government, there was no adversary that could rise up against them.

8.6.20—*enemies*—The Nephites would have been hard-pressed to identify any external body of warriors who were at odds with the government of Zarahemla, much less any body of men that was powerful enough to make an effective assault upon any of the strongholds in the land of Zarahemla.

8.7 What the judges did not foresee, however, was that while there were some among the crowd who would respond to their inflammatory remarks, there were far more who were convicted of their sins, who suddenly were awakened to their circumstances, that all was not well in the land of Zarahemla. As is almost always the case with the uninspired, they underestimated the prophet's appeal.

8.7.17—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators

unto them concerning the corruptness of their law; yea, many things did Nephi speak which cannot be written; and nothing did he speak which was contrary to the commandments of God.

4 And those judges were angry with him because he spake plainly unto them concerning their secret works of darkness; nevertheless, they durst not lay their own hands upon him, for they feared the people lest they should cry out against them.

5 Therefore they did cry unto the people, saying: Why do you suffer this man to revile against us? For behold he doth condemn all this people, even unto destruction; yea, and also that these our great cities shall be taken from us, that we shall have no place in them.

6 And now we know that this is impossible, for behold, we are powerful, and our cities great, therefore our enemies can have no power over us.

7 And it came to pass that thus they did stir up the people to anger against Nephi, and raised contentions among them; for there were some who did cry out: Let this man alone, for he is a good man, and those things which he saith will surely come to pass except we

who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

8.8 It will be remembered that not many years had passed away since the time that the Nephites had been a spiritually rich people. They had been led carefully away from the truth, but they were not as yet inured to it. With the clarion call of Nephi's inspired witness, many of the people comprehended their plight, recognizing Nephi as a servant of God who had been sent to teach them to walk in the paths of righteousness.

8.9 Nephi's testimony had been in complete harmony with all that had been prophesied by the righteous men who had led and guided the Nephites through their most troubled times. Nephi himself had been received in his own day as a man with a divine mandate, a calling that had been accompanied by the power of the priesthood and the ministry of angels.

8.9.10—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

8.10 We may quibble about the percentages involved in the division, but whatever the actual numbers, those in favor of Nephi's dismissal, either by death or imprisonment, were not sufficient to accomplish the task by force. Nephi comprehended the ambivalence of the people gathered at his tower and pursued his initial course with them.

8.10.13—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

8.11 Whether or not the corrupt government of the land of Zarahemla had achieved all of the legislation they desired to put into place, the Gadianton robbers had apparently been proactive in other venues attempting to persuade the people to disbelieve in the coming of the Son of God. Here Nephi begins a recital of historical religious figures who had all testified in the coming of the Messiah into the world to redeem his people. Whatever else may have been corrupted by the men in control of the Nephite government, the people apparently still hung on to the fundamental teachings that sprang from an observance of the Law of Moses. Thus, Nephi could still make effective reference to Moses, Abraham, and the prophets of the Lord God whose writing could be found upon the Brass Plates. It is of particular interest to note that Nephi will be given power at least equal to that which was given to Moses (see 10.5–11).

8.11.26—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means "is born". The cognate in Hebrew means "drew him out".

8.11.34–35—*Red Sea*—That is to say, that tongue of the Egyptian sea that separates Egypt from the Sinai peninsula. The southern border of Israel.

8.11.64 25—*Egyptians*—The inhabitants of the land naturally watered by

repent;

8 Yea, behold, all the judgments will come upon us which he has testified unto us; for we know that he has testified aright unto us concerning our iniquities. And behold they are many, and he knoweth as well all things which shall befall us as he knoweth of our iniquities;

9 Yea, and behold, if he had not been a prophet he could not have testified concerning those things.

10 And it came to pass that those people who sought to destroy Nephi were compelled because of their fear, that they did not lay their hands on him; therefore he began again to speak unto them, seeing that he had gained favor in the eyes of some, insomuch that the remainder of them did fear.

11 Therefore he was constrained to speak more unto them saying: Behold, my brethren, have ye not read that God gave power unto one man, even Moses, to smite upon the waters of the Red Sea, and they parted hither and thither, insomuch that the Israelites, who were our fathers, came through upon dry ground, and the waters closed upon the armies of the Egyptians and swallowed them up?

Hel. 8:11  
DS 2:312  
Hel. 8:11–12  
DNTC 3:214  
Hel. 8:11–20  
EM 3:1164  
Hel. 8:11–28  
EM 1:152

the Nile River, the delta region of the same being luxuriant as one could hope for in terms of animal and vegetable life.

8.12 Jesus posed a similar question at the healing of the impotent man in the city of Capernaum. Which is easier, to forgive a man of his sins or to heal him of the palsy? (see *MT-C 9.1-8*) In this present case, which would be easier for God to do: give a man power to disrupt the elements or the power to know the future? The truth of the matter is that there is no relative difference between the two acts, but the decadent judges were intent on making one. What makes the argument even more compelling is that Nephi's name was not unassociated with miracles in the past.

8.13 We must ask ourselves the question as to how much the laws had been changed so as to make Nephi a criminal, or at least so that the judges would attempt condemning him as a criminal. At the heart of the matter was what must have been a public display of the judges' incredulity as to the coming of the Son of God into the world to redeem mankind. Nephi's testimony vented the truth that the judges were mere politicians with a hidden agenda. On the one hand they gave lip service to the writings of the ancient prophets, Moses being the preeminent one among them, and yet they gave no heed to the testimony of these servants of God that there would be a Messiah who would bring about the atoning sacrifice. Moses had both power and foreknowledge; the judges only gave him credit for half of his divinely appointed gifts.

8.13.33—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means "is born". The cognate in Hebrew means "drew him out".

8.14 Some people are deeply troubled by the imagery that seems to equate the Son of God with the poisonous serpent. Yet there is nothing in the scriptures that makes the equation explicit. What is equated are the acts of faith required of the Israelites to retain their mortal lives and the acts of faith required of those who desire to have eternal life. The Israelites were commanded to look upon the divinely mandated symbol of healing. The Lord God did not explain why He chose that particular symbol on that occasion; it is bootless for us to speculate *ad nauseum* about His motivations. The children of men likewise are presented with a simple choice. If they would have salvation, redemption from sin, there is only one way, only one name given under heaven by which man can be saved. In both cases there is no debate, no quibbling, no negotiating; either one chooses to live or one chooses to die. The comparisons between the salvation of the Israelites and the redemption of the saints from sin is so striking and sublime that they have been repeatedly been employed to strengthen the faith and resolve of the children of God to focus their spiritual attention on the only effective means of their salvation. Although the Torah does not record Moses' teachings regarding the connection between the brass serpent on the pole and the coming of the Messiah, it is clear from the writings of the prophets that the connection was publically taught to the Israelites in the wilderness.

8.15 What would deter a man or a woman from looking at the brass serpent that Moses had raised up before the stricken people? Ignorance? Not hardly. The task required was explained so that the simplest of minds could comprehend; all that they needed to do was to turn their heads toward the place where Moses was standing with the pole. Were the people unaware that they

{9—1830}

12 And now behold, if God gave unto this man such power, then why should ye dispute among yourselves, and say that he hath given unto me no power whereby I may know concerning the judgments that shall come upon you except ye repent?

13 But, behold, ye not only deny my words, but ye also deny all the words which have been spoken by our fathers, and \*also the words which were spoken by this man, Moses, who had such great power given unto him, yea, the words which he hath spoken concerning the coming of the Messiah.

14 Yea, did he not bear record that the Son of God should come? And as he lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, even so shall he be lifted up who should come.

15 And as many as should look upon that serpent should live, even so as many as should look upon the Son of God with faith, having a contrite spirit, might

Hel. 8:13-15  
MD 773  
DNTC 1:143  
DS 1:22  
PM 401  
MM 1:364, 477  
\* p. 430  
Hel. 8:13-17  
EM 2:892  
Hel. 8:13-19  
EM 4:1624  
Hel. 8:13-20  
EM 2:481, 722  
CR88-O 102  
Hel. 8:13-22  
EM 2:731  
Hel. 8:13-23  
PM 144  
CR93-A 34  
Hel. 8:14-15  
MD 104, 705  
Hel. 8:14-16  
MD 490  
Hel. 8:14-23  
PM 233  
Hel. 8:14-24  
MD 490

Hel. 8:15  
AF 117  
MD 161

had been bitten? Unlikely in the extreme. The venoms of the vipers of the middle east are notorious for the excruciating pain that precedes death, pain which is frequently described as a consuming fire. In the midst of a physical torment unspeakable, many of the Israelites refused to acknowledge Moses as the servant of God. They were destroyed by the prejudice of their own pride. There is little or no difference between the stubborn willfulness of the Israelites and those who refuse to come unto Christ because of the company that they would have to keep as a result.

8.15.28—*contrite*—At the heart of the meaning of this word is a sense of commonality. There is no elitism among sinners seeking salvation. One cannot be saved exclusively; we are saved inclusively or not at all.

8.16 What may we say of the biblical prophets who lived between the days of Abraham and the days of Moses? We can mention a few by name: Isaac, the son of Abraham; Jacob, the son of Isaac; Joseph, the son of Jacob; and Jethro the high priest of Median, the father-in-law of Moses. Modern revelation provides us with the names of several more (see *DC-C 84.6–13*). Our scriptures are graced with but few of their words, but had we the opportunity to gaze upon their written records we would discover their solemn testimonies regarding the fullness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, including their open visions of the life and ministry of the Savior of all men. It is clear that the Brass Plates contained some of the explicit teachings of these men or Nephi would have not used this reference to convince his audience of the truthfulness of his own prophecies.

8.16.4—*Moses*—We have no idea how Amram and Jochebed referred to their son by name. This given by the princess, however, essentially is a reference to his deliverance from the Nile. In its elemental form, the name of the prophet means “is born”. The cognate in Hebrew means “drew him out”.

8.16.17—*prophets*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

8.16.26—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God’s noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham’s ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

8.17 Unto Abraham was revealed the whole plan of salvation, from the pre-mortal councils in Heaven unto the time of the exaltation of the earth at the end of time. Jesus testified of Abraham’s foreknowledge regarding his life and ministry, including the reality of the resurrection and of the atoning sacrifice for sin (see *JN-C 8.56*).

8.17.4—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern

live, even unto that life which is eternal.

16 And now behold, Moses did not only testify of these things, but also all the holy prophets, from his days even to the days of Abraham.

17 Yea, and behold, Abraham saw of his coming, and was filled with gladness and did rejoice.

Hel. 8:16–22  
PM 79  
EM 2:727

Hel. 8:17  
EM 1:8



biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God's noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham's ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

8.18 Before the days of Abraham, the greatest of the ancient Patriarchs testified to their peoples of the coming of the Messiah and of his atoning sacrifice. Melchizedek was one of the greatest high priests to have ever lived upon the earth. Noah was no less a servant of God and a disciple of Christ. Before the Great Deluge, there was a continuous line of faithful saints who partook of the grace of God and lived their lives in accordance with the principles of exaltation. All of these holy men knew the Lord of Life personally and worshipped him as the Son of God thousands of years before he came to earth in the flesh (see *DC-C107.41-57*).

8.18.9—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God's noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham's ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

8.19 We should probably assume that the prophets whom Nephi mentions by name are those who lived after the times of both Abraham and Moses.

8.19.15—*Abraham*—The undisputed “Father of the Faithful”. Modern biblical scholars are generally kind to Abraham as are most theologians in the sister religious of Judaism. The spiritual stature of Abraham is, for the most part, immeasurable by man. Abraham is one of the Lord God's noblemen, whose faith and confidence in the divine word are equaled or excelled by few who have come into mortality upon this earth. Removing the Lord Jesus Christ from the list of candidates, however, would probably render our estimation of Abraham all but absolute. Abraham was one of three sons born to Terah during a millennium of poverty and famine. Through Abraham's ministrations the promises made to the ancient fathers were preserved and re-established in earnest. In one of the most tender of moments recorded in secular or ecclesiastical history, the Lord God of Heaven instructed Abraham in

18 Yea, and behold I say unto you, that Abraham not only knew of these things, but there were many before the days of Abraham who were called by the order of God; yea, even after the order of his Son; and this that it should be shown unto the people, a great many thousand years before his coming, that even redemption should come unto them.

Hel. 8:18  
CR99-O 90  
Hel. 8:18-20  
EM 2:701

19 And now I would that ye should know, that even since the days of Abraham there have been many prophets that have testified these things; yea, behold, the prophet Zenos did testify boldly; for the which he was slain.

Hel. 8:19  
PM 33  
EM 4:1624  
Hel. 8:19-20  
MD 454, 490  
EM 4:1623

the nature of the greatest gift that a loving God may bestow upon his creation when he asked for the sacrificed life of his son Isaac.

- 8.19.29—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.
- 8.19.30—*Zenos*—Another Israelite prophet who, like Zenock, was a scion of Joseph, he who was sold into Egypt, and one of the direct ancestors of the family of Lehi (see *3 NE-C 10.16*). The prophecy of Zenos as recorded by Nephi the son of Lehi, begins with Nephi's testimony that the prophet of Israel knew of the burial of the Savior, together with other important details that clearly testified of the open vision that Zenos had enjoyed (*1 NE-C 19.10–17*). Jacob, the brother of Nephi quotes the entire Allegory of Zenos in his writings in order to explain how a people who once having rejected the Son of God could ever be established again as a covenant people (see *JA-C 4.15–18* and *JA-C 5–6*). Alma cites Zenos in order to demonstrate to the Zoramites that they did not need a synagogue in order to worship God (see *AL-C 33.2–11*). He also uses that same prophet to inspire them to believe in the coming of the Son of God (see *AL-C 33.12–15*). Amulek refers to Zenos as well (see *AL-C 34.7*) in conjunction with the atonement of Jesus Christ. Nephi testifies of the martyrdom of Zenos. Samuel will bear witness that Zenos prophesied that there would come a time when the Lamanites would come to a knowledge of the truth, no doubt in conjunction with the Allegory of Zenos recorded by Jacob in his testimony of the same effect (see *HE-C 15.11*).

8.20 The greatest witness given by this bevy of prophets to the people of Zarahemla was that of Jeremiah, inasmuch as there was no question in anyone's mind that Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Babylonians after Lehi's departure, the existence of the Mulekites having sealed that witness. Since the prophet clearly saw the future on that occasion, what was to keep him from seeing the ministry of the Son of God before it took place?

- 8.20.4—*Zenock*—A prophet of the Lord God of Israel whose prophecies were engraved upon the Brass plates. Nephi the son of Lehi refers to the prophecy made by Zenock that Christ would be lifted up, or crucified (see *1 NE-C 19.10*). He was undoubtedly of the loins of Joseph, either through Ephraim or Manasseh because Mormon testifies that he was one of the grand progenitors of their race (see *3 NE-C 10.15–17*). Zenock would be cited by Alma and Amulek in order to help the poverty-stricken Zoramites in the land of Antionum to believe in the coming of the Son of God to redeem mankind (see *AL-C 33.15–16* and *AL-C 34.7*).
- 8.20.7—*Ezias*—This ancient prophet is mentioned only once in the scriptures, but clearly he was a man of great faith who testified of the coming of the Son of God into the world. Some scholars have suggested that Ezias might possibly be equated with Esaias, a contemporary of Abraham who was blessed by the latter. If our supposition be correct, that Nephi's list of prophets lived after the days of both Moses and Abraham (see 8.19), Ezias would be another prophet who pertained to the House of Israel rather than one who did not.
- 8.20.10—*Isaiah*—There is hardly another man in the history of the world whose writings have received both the accolades of the Savior and the admiration of men. Isaiah lived during the tumultuous years that defined the eighth century before the birth of Jesus Christ. He testified

20 And behold, also Zenock, and also Ezias, and also Isaiah, and Jeremiah, (Jeremiah being that same prophet who testified of the destruction of Jerusalem) and now we know that Jerusalem was destroyed according to the words of Jeremiah. O then why not the Son of God come, according to his prophecy?

Hel. 8:20  
AGQ 4:139  
EM 4:1623  
Hel. 8:20–22  
MD 33, 520

the word of the Lord to the kings of Judah; Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh. Tradition suggests that Isaiah was martyred at the hands of Manasseh for his fervent and unrelenting witness of the truth. While Isaiah testified to his own people regarding their circumstances, his writings may find application to the entire House of Israel in every time and place, including the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times and thereafter. His testimony of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ is among the clearest that appears in the Old Testament today.

8.20.12—*Jeremiah*—A priest born in the city of Anathoth who directly opposed the faint hope of deliverance from the Babylonians generated by the alliance between Jehoiakim and the Egyptians (see *1 NE-C 7.6.33*). Not all of the prophecies of Jeremiah can be found on the Plates of Brass, inasmuch as Lehi and his family departed from Jerusalem before Jeremiah had finished his labors. There were, however, a sufficient amount of Jeremiah’s early writings inscribed upon the Plates so has to have him ranked among the finest witnesses of the coming of the Son of God.

8.20.17—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

8.20.24—*Jerusalem*—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

8.21 Jeremiah had testified to the people of Judah that their stance with the Egyptians would bring about the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple. It was this impending destruction and captivity of the Jews that motivated Lehi’s exodus into the wilderness of the Arabian peninsula. Laman, Lemuel, and others of Lehi’s company did not believe that the nation could be destroyed under the circumstances and much of the continual bickering during the journey to the promised land was founded in their incredulity. Both Lehi and Nephi received revelations regarding the destruction of the city and the Babylonian captivity, but these visions were not externally confirmed until the peoples of Zarahemla and Nephi came together three hundred years later.

8.21.7—*Jerusalem*—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

8.21.17—*Zedekiah*—The last king of Judah before the Babylonian captiv-

21 And now will you dispute that Jerusalem was destroyed? Will ye say that the sons of Zedekiah were not slain, all except it were Mulek? Yea, and do ye not behold that the seed of Zedekiah are with us, and they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem? But behold, this is not all—

Hel. 8:21

AF 322

EM 1:141

Hel. 8:22–23

PM 99, 527

ity. He was named Mattaniah by his parents, Josiah and Hamutal, but was renamed Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar at the age of twenty-one. When Zedekiah proved unsatisfactory during the eleventh year of his reign, most of the sons of the king were put to death as he stood with them, then the king of Babylon had Zedekiah's eyes thrust out. One of his sons had escaped the vengeance of Nebuchadnezzar, however, and with a group of supporters eventually crossed the ocean to settle in the land of Zarahemla. These Jewish colonists have been traditionally called the Mulekites. It was among the people of Mulek that the sole survivor of the Jaredite civilization, Corinatumr, lived out his last days. More than three hundred years later, the Nephites fleeing from the Lamanites would come in contact with the Mulekites in Zarahemla and the two peoples would become a single nation.

8.21.25—*Mulek*—We know little or nothing regarding this royal scion's life prior to his arrival in the Americas. Some scholars have proposed that Mulek's mother escaped from Jerusalem with some of the king's courtiers prior to Mulek's birth, but there is nothing to support the speculation. Other students of the Book of Mormon have assumed that Zarahemla, the leader of the people whom Mosiah 1 discovered about 200 years before the birth of Christ, was a direct descendant of Zedekiah. While there is some evidence for this notion, the fact that the people of Mulek had engaged in multiple civil wars during the previous three hundred years, it is difficult to say with any certainty that Zarahemla was the legitimate heir of Mulek. Several other characters in the text of Mormon's narrative, however, claimed to be descendants of Zarahemla.

8.22 Lehi had testified of the sins of the people of Jerusalem, for the which he was vilified and mocked. When he bore witness of the coming Messiah, however, they were enraged and sought to take his life (see *1 NE-C 1.18–20*). The entire corpus of Nephi's record constitutes a memoir of the prophet's convictions regarding the coming of the Son of God into the world to bring about the redemption and salvation of men. The testimonies of those who wrote upon the Small Plates of Nephi are no less replete with their witness of the Christ. Mormon's redaction of the records of the Nephites demonstrates repeatedly that the Nephites were, for the most part, a Christian nation that looked forward to the life and ministry of Jesus with unquenchable faith. The times when the Nephites faltered in their progress transpired when they were engaged in practices that diminished their sensitivity to the whisperings of the spirit of God, when they were blinded and deafened by their own wickedness.

8.22.3—*Lehi*—The first prophet of the Lamanites and the Nephites who left the land of Jerusalem about the year 600 BC. Many of his experiences are recorded in the writings of his son, Nephi, engraved upon the Small Plates of Nephi.

8.22.8—*Jerusalem*—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

22 Our father Lehi was driven out of Jerusalem because he testified of these things. Nephi also testified of these things, and also almost all of our fathers, even down to this time; yea, they have testified of the coming of Christ, and have looked forward, and have rejoiced in his day which is to come.

8.22.15—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

8.22.41—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

8.23 From the days of father Lehi until the hour that Nephi the son of Helaman taught the people in his garden, many of the ancient prophets raised up among the Nephites were confirmed in their faith and found deliverance from the world through their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They were as familiar with the Savior as we are with our friends and neighbors, and more so because of their willing obedience to the principles of the Gospel. The faithful proved themselves in every way and were promised the fullness of eternal life.

8.23.5—*God*—Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Firstborn of the Father, the Only Begotten in the flesh. In a substantive way, Jesus is the executor of the Father in all things pertaining to the prospects of immortality and eternal life. Jehovah, the given name of the Savior before his birth in Bethlehem, was the instrument by which the earth and all life that dwells upon it came into existence. He is the Creator, the Father of Heaven and Earth. He was empowered to do so by divine investiture of authority from God the eternal Father. The burden to redeem the earth and the inhabitants thereof from the effects of the Fall was also placed upon him. Thus, the power of the resurrection is centered in the Savior. The atoning sacrifice wrought during the final hours of Jesus’ life provided the means whereby all men might exercise faith, repent of their sins, and enter into eternal covenants with the Father in the name of the Son. Is Jesus God? There can be no question about the issue for the Father has declared Jesus Christ to be His heir, inheriting all that the Father has, including all titles.

8.24 Those who had gathered themselves at Nephi’s tower were not ignorant. Not many years before they themselves had borne faithful testimonies as to the effects of the atonement of Jesus Christ in their own lives. In the process of time, due to what they perceived as inconveniences in the Nephite society, many of the saints forsook their covenants and joined themselves to the Gadanton robbers, forfeiting the blessings of the covenants into which they had

23 And behold, he is God, and he is with them, and he did manifest himself unto them, that they were redeemed by him; and they gave unto him glory, because of that which is to come.

24 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

\* p. 431

willingly entered. They were knowingly culpable.

8.25 A man with his spiritual eyes open may easily perceive the purpose of life and the movements of the hand of God in the affairs of men. The apostates had once enjoyed those blessings, but for the fears and lusts of a lost and fallen world, had abandoned their faith and had embraced the natural man, an act which prohibited their entrance into the Celestial Kingdom of God. They would have to pass through a rigorous transformation of mind and heart before they could be found acceptable before God.

8.26 The men at the foot of the tower did not know of the fomentations within their own secret society that would eventually burst forth in open war. Nephi would momentarily reveal to them the opening salvo of that devastating war when he announced to them the death of their chief judge, a member of the Gadianton band who had been assassinated by his own corrupt brother. In addition there would come a lengthy famine that would do much to end the war and would in large measure cleanse the land of the wicked. They had been preparing themselves for everlasting destruction, a destruction that would begin with their own premature deaths.

8.27 Ostensibly, the oaths of the Gadianton robbers forbade the murder of a fellow robber, but Seantum had no hesitancy in taking the life of Sezoram in order to ascend to the judgment seat of the land. Within the band there were already fractures and disturbances that would soon burst forth upon the entire Nephite society in the form of open warfare.

8.28 Any political or social security that the apostates had ever hoped to find with their membership in the secret combination of Kishkumen and Gadianton was to be completely swept away by the duplicity of Seantum. If one could not trust one's fellow robber to protect and sustain one in one's wickedness, where could anyone find peace and security? This was an unnerving question, indeed.

8.28.13—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen's successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah.

9.1 We cannot at this point know precisely what motivated the five to run to the judgment seat, save that they were determined to prove that Nephi was

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.

25 But behold, ye have rejected the truth, and rebelled against your holy God; and even at this time, instead of laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where nothing doth corrupt, and where nothing can come which is unclean, ye are heaping up for yourselves wrath against the day of judgment.

26 Yea, even at this time ye are ripening, because of your murders and your fornication and wickedness, for everlasting destruction; yea, and except ye repent it will come unto you soon.

27 Yea, behold it is now even at your doors; yea, go ye in unto the judgment-seat, and search; and behold, your judge is murdered, and he lieth in his blood; and he hath been murdered by his brother, who seeketh to sit in the judgment-seat.

28 And behold, they both belong to your secret band, whose author is Gadianton and the evil one who seeketh to destroy the souls of men.

Hel. 8:28  
MD 246

*{Chapter III; continued}*  
**(Chapter 9)**

*{¶—1830}*

1 BEHOLD, now it came to pass that when Nephi had spoken these

Hel. 9  
EM 1:152, 162,

wrong about the death of the chief judge.

9.1.9—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.1.14–15—*certain men*—We know little or nothing about these five men. We do not know their names, whether or not they were members of the secret combination, or who selected them to find out the truth of the matter. All that we know is that they were susceptible to improvement, for they would be converted to the Church of Christ as a result of this experience, much in the same fashion as Alma, King Lamoni, and others.

9.2 There is clear ambivalence depicted here, even though the men are initially biased against Nephi and his prophecies. Their acceptance of Nephi as a servant of God hinged on whether or not the chief judge was dead. They thought this to be almost an impossibility, even though during the past thirty years several leaders of the people had been assassinated or had attempts made on their lives. The men could not have been depending upon judicial stability. Their disbelief must have been founded on the likelihood that such a man as Seezoram could not have been assassinated. If they had been members of the combination, their confidence in Nephi's prophecies would have been even less, for they would have known that there was no opposition power strong enough to have plotted against judgment seat. Within the combination, it was unthinkable that Seantum could have murdered his own brother.

9.2.14—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

9.3 For these five men, the sight of Seezrom lying in his gore must have been as stunning as the angel appearing to Alma and the sons of Mosiah.

9.4 This sudden awareness that Nephi had been correct all along constituted an epiphany which their systems could not bear, and like many others who have come to the perfect realization that their lives were seriously out of order, they were compelled to reevaluate their fundamental assumptions about mortal life and the eternity that awaited them. These five did so in an unconscious state.

9.4.27—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.5 When their world was turned upside down, when on a sudden these five men realized that their conduct had been soundly condemned by a prophet of God, they immediately began to perceive the impending consequences that awaited them. To say that they were unnerved would be an understatement indeed.

words, certain men who were among them ran to the judgment-seat; yea, even there were five who went, and they said among themselves, as they went:

2 Behold, now we will know of a surety whether this man be a prophet and God hath commanded him to prophesy such marvelous things unto us. Behold, we do not believe that he hath; yea, we do not believe that he is a prophet; nevertheless, if this thing which he has said concerning the chief judge be true, that he be dead, then will we believe that the other words which he has spoken are true.

3 And it came to pass that they ran in their might, and came in unto the judgment-seat; and behold, the chief judge had fallen to the earth, and did lie in his blood.

4 And now behold, when they saw this they were astonished exceedingly, insomuch that they fell to the earth; for they had not believed the words which Nephi had spoken concerning the chief judge.

5 But now, when they saw they believed, and fear came upon them lest all the judgments which Nephi had spoken should come upon the people; therefore they did quake,

9.5.18—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.6 Although we cannot be completely certain, it appears that Seezrom was slain in the presence of the servants who immediately aroused the population of the city. Seantum was cleverly disguised and escaped the place of judgment without being apprehended. It is unlikely that any of the servants were armed or they might have attempted to apprehend the assailant. The five men sent from Nephi's garden tower arrived on the scene during the intervening time between the servants fleeing for their lives and the gathering of the people at the judgment seat. Their prostrate bodies were found in the same room as the chief judge.

9.7 The astonishment of the people must have been exacerbated by the fact that there were five men with the corpse of their chief judge. No doubt the servants had reported that there had been a single assassin and now there were five inexplicable bodies in addition to Seezoram's.

9.8 Apparently there was no consultation between the people who had gathered to the place of judgment and the servants who had announced the murder of the judge, once everyone was within the chamber where the bodies lay. A sole assassin had suddenly become five. It is interesting that the people immediately jumped to the conclusions that they did. These people knew nothing of the gathering in the garden of Nephi, nor were they aware of the purpose which had brought the five-man emissary to the judgment seat. Yet, they immediately supposed two things: first, that the five men had been responsible for the death of the judge; and, second, that God had prevented the five from escaping. What sort of man had Seezoram been that the people of the city would consider him defensible by the God of their fathers? It would appear that these individuals, at least, had no clue that Seezoram was a member of Gadianton's band.

9.8.19—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.9 It seems certain that the five men were still somewhat incapacitated when they were bound and carted off to prison, else some of the confusion might have been cleared up almost immediately. If they had been completely awake, the five could have easily explained who they were and while they were at the judgment seat, a runner could have been sent to Nephi's garden to corroborate their story, and only the mystery of the judge's death would have remained. Why the event played out as it did is part of the economy of God to which we are not entirely privy. Once the proclamation had been made, however, the official story of the death of the chief judge became public. This did nothing but cause an enormous amount of confusion in the hearts and minds of all concerned. What would Seantum have thought when the news arrived at his house? There could be no ready explanation for the five accused. When the five were exonerated by the group from Nephi's tower, the confusion became

and had fallen to the earth.

6 Now, immediately when the judge had been murdered—he being stabbed by his brother by a garb of secrecy, and he fled, and the servants ran and told the people, raising the cry of murder among them;

7 And behold the people did gather themselves together unto the place of the judgment-seat—and behold, \*to their astonishment they saw those five men who had fallen to the earth.

8 And now behold, the people knew nothing concerning the multitude who had gathered together at the garden of Nephi; therefore they said among themselves: These men are they who have murdered the judge, and God has smitten them that they could not flee from us.

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9 And it came to pass that they laid hold on them, and bound them and cast them into prison. And there was a proclamation sent abroad that the judge was slain, and that the murderers had been taken and were cast into prison.

\* p. 432



even more intense. What must have been going through the minds of the members of the secret combination? How did they try to explain these turns of events?

9.10 Was Seezoram a beloved judge whose untimely passing distressed all who dwelt in the city of Zarahemla? Or was this a perfunctory ceremony of some kind? Note, however, that there was no hesitancy in burying the chief judge immediately. Whether this represents a change in their theology or an accommodated reality because of conditions that existed in that part of the country, we cannot say. They did not wait the traditional three days prior to burial.

9.10.8—*morrow*—Notwithstanding all arguments to the contrary, the English word “morrow” always refers to the next day, less than twenty-four hours.

9.11 The five who had been sent to the judgment seat to discover the truth of all that which Nephi had been teaching them were struck senseless when they discerned what had happened to Seezoram. Were the rest of the people who had been at Nephi’s tower not impressed by the proclamation?

9.11.12—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.12 The judges who had been at Nephi’s tower when the prophet was pronouncing the Lord’s doom upon the land of Zarahemla were members of the same secret combination that Seezoram and Seantum belonged to (see 8.1). We may only speculate about the political and religious orientation of the five messengers sent from the garden to the judgment seat. The judges must have been a little concerned that Nephi’s prediction had proven to be true, but they wished to have the story straight from the lips of their own men. No doubt confusion began to reign in the hearts and minds of the judges when they discovered that their own people had been implicated in the assassination of the chief judge. The unlikelihood of the chief judge having been killed by his brother was replaced by the impossibility of the five having done the deed. This could have been nothing but deeply disturbing.

9.13 The five men had been in prison, having been carried off there after they were found prostrate in the hall of the judgment seat. We do not know how long the five men remained unconscious. Mormon tells us that they were converted while in jail (see 9.39), but we are not privy to the mechanism that brought about that conversion. It would seem unlikely that there were mortal instruments involved in their acquiring testimonies of the truth.

9.14 We must assume that the five men were not completely recovered from their astonishment or they might have been a little more forthcoming in their protestations to the people who took them to jail (see 9.9). Of course, it is possible that the people were so fixed in their minds as to what had happened at the judgment seat that no one was willing to listen to anything that the five men had to say.

9.14.19—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through

10 And it came to pass that on the morrow the people did assemble themselves together to mourn and to fast, at the burial of the great chief judge who had been slain.

11 And thus also those judges who were at the garden of Nephi, and heard his words, were also gathered together at the burial.

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12 And it came to pass that they inquired among the people, saying: Where are the five who were sent to inquire concerning the chief judge whether he was dead? And they answered and said: Concerning this five whom ye say ye have sent, we know not; but there are five who are the murderers, whom we have cast into prison.

13 And it came to pass that the judges desired that they should be brought; and they were brought, and behold they were the five who were sent; and behold the judges inquired of them to know concerning the matter, and they told them all that they had done, saying:

14 We ran and came to the place of the judgment-seat, and when we saw all things even as Nephi had testified, we were astonished inso-much that we fell to the earth; and when we were recovered from our astonishment, behold they cast us into prison.

Hel. 9:10  
MD 276, 518  
EM 1:203

their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.15 The five men could do no more than to related what had transpired to them from the time they left the garden tower until they were brought from prison to tell their tale. Note that there is no mention of their conversion to Christianity in their account to the judges. No doubt they had been instructed by the Spirit of God as to the manner in which they should tell the judges of their experience. Had the five men borne their solemn witness as to the divine origin of Nephi's commission and to the veracity of all of his teachings, no doubt the judges would have allowed the five to be executed by the people for the murder of Seezoram.

9.15.40—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.16 At this point the judges who had been at the tower in Nephi's garden begin to make fools of themselves. Nephi had long since proven to many tens of thousands of the Nephites and the Lamanites that he and his brother were the servants of the Most High. Their missionary labors were unparalleled in Nephite history. The accusation against Nephi, that he was complicitous with another person in order to deceive the people was something that could only have evolved in minds as perverse as their own. This was the sort of tactic that members of the Gadianton robbers would attempt.

9.16.22—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.17 This was, of course, a rash promise, one that could not possibly be fulfilled. The wicked frequently underestimate their adversaries, especially those who are filled with the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Note that the judges are quick to eliminate any possibility of their five associates having been involved in the assassination of the chief judge. It would appear that the servants who had been present at the time that Seezoram was killed had been consulted and their testimony had been that a single man in disguise had slain their master.

9.18 Once the five men had been completely cleared of all charges and the facts of the matter had been laid before the people, the erstwhile ambassadors of the judges began to testify to the people that Nephi had nothing at all to do with the murder. No doubt they repeated the essence of the prayer that Nephi had been uttering when he was surrounded by the judges and other that had overheard him. They also may very well had been rather explicit about the condemnation that Nephi had pronounced regarding those of the Nephites who had forsaken their covenants and had joined themselves to the Gadianton band. The judges were more than startled at this turn of events.

9.18.31—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

15 Now, as for the murder of this man, we know not who has done it; and only this much we know, we ran and came according as ye desired, and behold he was dead, according to the words of Nephi.

{9—1830}

16 And now it came to pass that the judges did expound the matter unto the people, and did cry out against Nephi, saying: Behold, we know that this Nephi must have agreed with some one to slay the judge, and then he might declare it unto us, that he might convert us unto his faith, that he might raise himself to be a great man, chosen of God, and a prophet.

17 And now behold, we will detect this man, and he shall confess his fault and make known unto us the true murderer of this judge.

18 And it came to pass that the five were liberated on the day of the burial. Nevertheless, they did rebuke the judges in the words which they had spoken against Nephi, and did contend \*with them one by one, insomuch that they did confound them.

Hel. 9:21–38  
EM 1:153

\* p. 433

9.19 The major weakness in the judges' argument against Nephi was that they had not taken Nephi into custody when the news was first announced about the death of the chief judge. Why had Nephi not been immediately arrested if the judges were so certain as to his guilt? Were not these judges grasping at straws? These men thought, however, that they would make quick work of Nephi.

9.19.5—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.20 What an extraordinary offer! "We will give you money and your freedom if you will simply testify against your partner". Nephi's expected confession would reveal and explain the entire mystery surrounding his supposed foreknowledge of the assassination. It would seem that the judges were also somewhat impressed with Nephi's ingenuity. No doubt they were prepared to offer him a position within the councils of the Gadianton robbers as well. It is intriguing that the judges were willing to make this sort of proposal before the general public. These were bold men indeed.

9.20.6—*confederate*—That is to say, Nephi was accused of being an accomplice in the death of the chief judge.

9.21 It is interesting that Amulek had responded in a similar fashion to Zeezrom's offer of money for a false confession, albeit with a little more verbal pungency (see *AL-C 11.23*).

9.21.2—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.21.8—*fools*—Typical of fools, the judges did not comprehend their own ignorance, particularly they had little or no knowledge of the operations of the Spirit of God by which Nephi was made infinitely wiser.

9.21.10—*uncircumcised*—If the Nephites present were still following the demands of the Law of Moses, the men in the audience would have received the sign of the covenant in their flesh. Nephi here testifies that there is no spiritual counterpart to that covenant and they were therefore dead to the things of God. They were a hardhearted people.

9.21.14—*blind*—These were men who thought that they could see clearly, but who were, in reality, completely without vision.

9.21.17—*stiffnecked*—These were men who could only look at the world in one way, and what they did see of that world was hardly ever with the right perspective.

9.21.23—*long*—Of course, they had no idea what awaited them during the impending civil war and famine.

9.22 Nephi had been quite explicit in his discourse to the judges and their associates gathered at his garden tower the day before regarding the judgments that awaited the Nephites if they did not repent (see 7.17–28). Those who were unwilling to howl and mourn at that hour would have greater opportunities later when the nation was prostrate with war and distressed by famine.

9.23 The secret combination had thought itself secure in their covenants one with another. No doubt Seantum thought himself above reproach and dis-

19 Nevertheless, they caused that Nephi should be taken and bound and brought before the multitude, and they began to question him in divers ways that they might cross him, that they might accuse him to death—

20 Saying unto him: Thou art confederate; who is this man that hath done this murder? Now tell us, and acknowledge thy fault; saying, Behold here is money; and also we will grant unto thee thy life if thou wilt tell us, and acknowledge the agreement which thou hast made with him.

21 But Nephi said unto them: O ye fools, ye uncircumcised of heart, ye blind, and ye stiffnecked people, do ye know how long the Lord your God will suffer you that ye shall go on in this your way of sin?

22 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.

23 Behold ye say that I have agreed with a man that he should

covery because both he and his brother were members of Gadianton's band, and therefore under oath to protect and preserve one another. He figured that he could not be even considered a suspect in the assassination. The fact that Nephi knew just how comprehensively the Gadianton robbers had inveigled themselves into the government was unnerving to the combination. Had the judges been in Nephi's place, their motives would have included coming to power and wealth among the Nephites at any price. Therefore, they accused Nephi of what they themselves would have done. In some respects, the judges and their associates were forced to assert that Nephi had a confederate because the only other explanation would have included having to accept him as the servant of God who had just condemned their entire way of life.

9.23.15—*Seezoram*—The chief judge of the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He was murdered by his brother who sought for position in spite of their family's membership in the Gadianton band.

9.24 Signs are extremely difficult to logically explain away. That is why they are considered signs. Nephi had prophesied an event that he could not have possibly known unless he was party to the crime or he was indeed a prophet of God. The judges were unwilling to entertain the latter so they falsely asserted the former.

9.25 The second sign was to be so explicit that there could be no doubt as to significance and explanation of the first sign. And the two signs put together would be irrefutable proof that Nephi was who he had said he was all along. To persist in opposing the servants of God thereafter would bring about the destruction prophesied upon their heads.

9.26 Seantum, of course, was not a conspirator with Nephi, but rather the very murderer of the chief judge.

9.26.11—*Seantum*—The brother of the chief judge Seezoram who sought for the judgment seat through fratricide. The prophet Nephi unveiled his perfidy.

9.26.17—*Seezoram*—The chief judge of the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He was murdered by his brother who sought for position in spite of their family's membership in the Gadianton band.

9.27 Note that Nephi is willing to have his accusers use their own evaluation of Nephi as they confronted Seantum. Was Nephi a pretended prophet? Had there been a conspiracy? Only in the minds and hearts of the men who were about to discover a great and abiding truth regarding the God of Heaven.

9.27.2—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.27.5—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

9.27.21—*ye*—Playing with words, Seantum could say with a straight face that "he and Nephi" had not killed Seezoram.

9.27.24—*Seezoram*—The chief judge of the land of Zarahemla during the

murder Seezoram, our chief judge. But behold, I say unto you, that this is because I have testified unto you that ye might know concerning this thing; yea, even for a witness unto you, that I did know of the wickedness and abominations which are among you.

24 And because I have done this, ye say that I have agreed with a man that he should do this thing; yea, because I showed unto you this sign ye are angry with me, and seek to destroy my life.

25 And now behold, I will show unto you another sign, and see if ye will in this thing seek to destroy me.

26 Behold I say unto you: Go to the house of Seantum, who is the brother of Seezoram, and say unto him—

27 Has Nephi, the pretended prophet, who doth prophesy so much evil concerning this people, agreed with thee, in the which ye have murdered Seezoram, who is your brother?

ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He was murdered by his brother who sought for position in spite of their family's membership in the Gadianton band.

9.28 Nephi gave a phrase by phrase accounting of what would happen when they accosted Seantum in his home. The details of the exchange alone would be compelling evidence as to from whence Nephi had received his information.

9.29 Here was the inescapable question. We do not know precisely who would be sent to ask these questions of Seantum, but certainly some of those present would have been members of the secret combination to whom Seantum was not supposed to lie.

9.30 For all of his secret machinations against his brother's life, Seantum would not be able to face down the men who would ask this poignant question. Note the dramatic tension that Seantum would feign when first accused.

9.31 The elements of Seantum's disguise when he killed his brother were not provided before, but here we learn that not only had Seantum used his own clothing in the act, a day later he was wearing the same clothes. Either Seantum was extraordinarily cocky about the prospects of his success or he was an extraordinarily stupid man.

9.32 The murderous act had been accomplished quickly, but it would appear that Seantum's escape from the judgment seat had been delayed sufficiently for there to have been copious amounts of blood on the floor through which Seantum dragged his cloak. It is interesting that he had not noticed the blood before.

9.33 With undeniable and compelling evidence before his eyes, Seantum would be shocked into unspeakable fear. He was caught and there would be no escape from the demands of justice.

9.34 Having been forewarned of Seantum's reactions in great detail, it would not take much for the inquirers to cause the assassin to confess that he himself was the murderer.

9.35 Each step of the process of extracting the confession from Seantum was detailed such that no honest man could deny that Nephi was a man with a great gift of discernment.

9.36 It is interesting that Seantum did not deliberately try to take Nephi down with him. We may only speculate about the frame of mind that would have brought about this reaction.

9.36.10—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

28 And behold, he shall say unto you, Nay.

29 And ye shall say unto him: Have ye murdered your brother?

30 And he shall stand with fear, and wist not what to say. And behold, he shall deny unto you; and he shall make as if he were astonished; nevertheless, he shall declare unto you that he is innocent.

31 But behold, ye shall examine him, and ye shall find blood upon the skirts of his cloak.

32 And when ye have seen this, ye shall say: From whence cometh this blood? Do we not know that it is the blood of your brother?

33 And then shall he tremble, and shall look pale, even as if death had come upon him.

34 And then shall ye say: Because of this fear and this paleness which has come upon your face, behold, we know that thou art guilty.

35 And then shall greater fear come upon him; and then \*shall he confess unto you, and deny no more that he has done this murder.

36 And then shall he say unto you, that I, Nephi, know nothing concerning the matter save it were given unto me by the power of God. And then shall ye know that I am an honest man, and that I am sent unto you from God.

\* p. 434

9.37 The evidence exonerating Nephi and the five men sent from his tower was irrefutable. The exchange between Seantum and the men sent to confront him progressed as if it had been a scripted play. Seantum's confession made it virtually impossible for the judges to make reprisals on Nephi or on their former companions.

9.37.14—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.38 One wonders where Nephi and the five men were detained while the investigators travelled to and from the residence of Seantum.

9.38.25—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.39 The conversion of the five men sent from the tower of Nephi's garden proved to be as compelling as any other aspect of the episode. The conversion of former antagonists of the truth has inevitably stirred up the hearts and minds of both the righteous and the wicked. Alma and the sons of Mosiah were effective in their ministries, in part because of their former conduct and the reputations that had managed to create for themselves before the angel of God appeared to them. The same might be said of Amulek and Zeezrom or of the various groups who witnessed the power of God in their midst that could be explained in no other way except were they to deny the power of the Holy Ghost that had convicted them of their sins and had encouraged them to repent and receive the covenants of salvation.

9.39.7—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

9.39.14—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

9.39.33—*converted*—We are not privy as to the process that brought about their conversion, but certainly there must have been elements similar to those which brought about the conversion of men like Alma the younger, the sons of Mosiah, King Lamoni, and King Lamoni's father. Whatever other aspects of divine power were manifested to these men Mormon has not articulated.

9.40 Much of the people who had been in attendance at the various proceedings that attended the death of the chief judge were persuaded to one degree or another regarding the veracity of Nephi and his teachings. Some of the responses were straight forward. Nephi, of a truth, must be a prophet of God.

9.40.12—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

9.40.15—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ.

37 And it came to pass that they went and did, even according as Nephi had said unto them. And behold, the words which he had said were true; for according to the words he did deny; and also according to the words he did confess.

38 And he was brought to prove that he himself was the very murderer, insomuch that the five were set at liberty, and also was Nephi.

39 And there were some of the Nephites who believed on the words of Nephi; and there were some also, who believed because of the testimony of the five, for they had been converted while they were in prison.

40 And now there were some among the people, who said that Nephi was a prophet.

This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

9.41 Those who professed that they believed that Nephi was a god, had no inkling whatsoever as to the nature and power of the Holy Ghost. These were a carnal people, as unfamiliar with the whisperings of the spirit of God, as any who have ever lived upon the earth. They were children of men who were filled with zeal, but devoid of knowledge, and therefore were frequently guilty of excesses of all kinds. The ensuing arguments as to whether Nephi was a prophet or a god were as unproductive as the any of the vain philosophies of men. Were he either, the people should have flocked to his side and absorbed every bit of truth he might dispense to them. They did not, and therein lay their most egregious sin.

10.1 This stands as one of the most pathetic pictures ever painted in a passage of scripture. Nephi the son of Helaman had been proven to be a prophet of God, with as much external evidence that any natural man might have desired in his lost and fallen state. Yet, the fruit from this episode was almost universally bitter. Few if any hearts were drawn unto their Father and God. The division among the people consisted primarily of intellectual debate regarding deeply spiritual matters. There is a cautionary tale implicit in this narrative for all those who desire proof to precede their belief: there can never be enough. A convinced mind does little to reform a heart laden with sin. It is faith that reforms and regenerates the soul of any man and not just the presentation of truth.

10.1.26—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

10.2 The authorities had apprehended Nephi at his home, perhaps at the garden tower where he had originally been praying. The multitude had gathered near the judgment seat where the whole matter had been resolved. Nephi had been proven innocent of all of the accusations that had been made against him, the true assassin of the chief judge had been revealed, and the corrupted underbelly of the Nephite society had been revealed. For all of this, however, only the five men sent to determine the truth of the matter of Seezoram's death had been converted to the Gospel. One wonders where these men were and what they were about as Nephi walked back to his home. Without the general repentance that the Lord had commanded of His people, the devastation and ruin prophesied would come to pass. That destruction weighed heavy of Nephi's heart and mind.

10.2.7—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

41 And there were others who said: Behold, he is a god, for except he was a god he could not know of all things. For behold, he has told us the thoughts of our hearts, and also has told us things; and even he has brought unto our knowledge the true murderer of our chief judge.

*{Chapter III; continued}*  
**(Chapter 10)**

*{¶—1830}*

1 AND it came to pass that there arose a division among the people, insomuch that they divided hither and thither and went their ways, leaving Nephi alone, as he was standing in the midst of them.

2 And it came to pass that Nephi went his way towards his own house, pondering upon the things which the Lord had shown unto him.

Hel. 9:41  
MD 777, 792

Hel. 10  
EM 1:152, 165  
Hel. 10:1  
MD 30

10.3 Prophets are, by nature and inspiration, optimists. Though they be surrounded by appalling wickedness and impending doom, they see beyond the wretchedness to the bright light of possible redemption of those around them. What we witness in these verses, however, is the point of inspiration, the moment of truth from which Nephi would be able to draw strength during the days that lay ahead.

10.3.24—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

10.4 Nephi had been an extraordinary missionary. With Lehi his brother as his companion, he had entered into the lands possessed by the Lamanites and the dissident Nephites and had been the means whereby most of these had been brought back into the fold of Jesus Christ. Having wrought a great work in the land of Zarahemla, they had ventured into the land of Nephi, bringing salvation to many thousands of the Lamanites dwelling there, insomuch that peace among the Nephites and Lamanites became essentially universal. The brothers had thought to do the same in the lands that lay to the north of the narrow neck of land, but in this they were unsuccessful. We are not told how much this failure weighed upon the mind and heart of Nephi, but we here witness that the grand apostasy of the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla nearly brought him to despair. What sort of doubts had begun to plague him as he walked back to his residence?

10.4.4—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

10.4.20—*unwearyingness*—An extraordinary English word which can be found in but very few places in the corpus of English literature. It is a descriptor of a singular group of men whose faith and diligence have provided the children of men with stellar examples of dedicated service.

10.5 The Lord assures Nephi that there are circumstances existing among the Nephites that he cannot personally correct, no matter how much preaching and teaching he might do. The people were devoid of faith, as the preceding hours had demonstrated. They were filled with pride and vanity in superabundance and there would have to be a series of events that would bring them into the depths of humility before they would be susceptible to the principles of salvation. Nephi would be the instrument in the hands of God to provide the inhabitants of the land with another opportunity to turn their lives around and seek forgiveness. The Lord testified unto Nephi that his previous labors were acceptable unto Him, notwithstanding the apparent failures in the work, and that he need not fear that which he would be called upon to do. The Nephites were about to pass through a three-year civil war that would result in the deaths of many thousands of souls. They would then be required to suffer starvation because of a tremendous famine that would afflict the land, a famine that would continue for nearly four years. Only at the end of these long years of affliction and death would the Nephites begin to recognize the source of their distress. In their forced humility they would turn to Nephi, the servant of God. Throughout these several years, Nephi would witness thousands descend into the dust completely unprepared to meet their God.

10.6 The Lord does not tell Nephi the precise circumstances under which he

3 And it came to pass as he was thus pondering—being much cast down because of the wickedness of the people of the Nephites, their secret works of darkness, and their murderings, and their plunderings, and all manner of iniquities—and it came to pass as he was thus pondering in his heart, behold, a voice came unto him saying:

4 Blessed art thou, Nephi, for those things which thou hast done; for I have beheld how thou hast with unwearyingness 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.

5 And now, because thou hast done this with such unwearyingness, 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.

6 Behold, thou art Ne\*phi, and I

Hel. 10:3–10  
MD 683  
Hel. 10:3–17  
MD 201  
DS 1:162

Hel. 10:4  
MM 3:41  
CR90-A 43  
Hel. 10:4–5  
CR92-O 113  
Hel. 10:4–10  
MD 412  
Hel. 10:4–11  
DNTC 1:383  
EM 1:153

\* p. 435



would be compelled to bring a famine upon the land. He simply tells His servant that when that time came, the act would be acceptable and consistent with the mind and will of God.

10.6.4—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

10.7 We are at a loss as to what precisely the Lord is bestowing upon Nephi at this point. One the one hand He may be referring to the authority of the priesthood by which men and women are extended the promise of eternal life. Nephi was certainly not the only individual among all of the Nephites who exercised faith unto salvation. Lehi undoubtedly qualified and perhaps the five who had been converted while in prison for their supposed involvement in the death of the chief judge. No doubt there were thousands of faithful saints that would need to be strengthened and sustained by the power of God during the war and the subsequent famine. Nephi was to be the judge in these matters. His testimony of the faithfulness or wickedness of the people would endure unto the final judgment, much the same as that of his namesake, the son of Lehi (see *2 NE-C 31.13–15*). In practical temporal terms, Nephi had the power to seal the heavens that there would be no rain. He would also have the power to unloose the heavens that rainfall would again bless the land with vegetation and crops.

10.8 We know little of the layout of the city of Zarahemla, but it is clear from the narrative that the temple there was visible on the road that led from the place of the judgment seat to Nephi's home. Nephi must have been walking quite close to the building when the Lord pronounced this blessing upon him. We are not specifically told if Nephi was ever required to wield this particular power.

10.9 We know little or nothing about the mountain that could be seen from where Nephi was at that particular moment. The only account that we have regarding any mountainous region becoming smooth was in conjunction with the great turmoil that took place at the time the Lord Jesus Christ expired upon the cross in Jerusalem. This fact leads us to wonder about Nephi's role during that troubled time. So far as we can tell, Nephi the son of Helaman was taken into heaven without tasting death (see *3 NE-C1.2–3* and *3 NE-C 2.9*). Were these bestowed powers that were given to Nephi used at some time after his translation? We do not know.

10.10 Whether a truth is spoken by the mouth of the Lord or that of any of His servants, it is the same. Nephi's character had been purified and sanctified such that he knew and understood the mind and will of the Lord in any given instance.

10.11 There may have been some clever sorts among the Nephites who thought that they comprehended the prophecies given by their forefather, that the circumstances and the timing were not right for the utter destruction of the people. In this they may have had some justification, but there was nothing in the Nephite records that promised any one of them personal freedom from utter destruction.

am God. Behold, I declare it unto thee in the presence of mine angels, that ye shall have power over this people, and shall smite the earth with famine, and with pestilence, and destruction, according to the wickedness of this people.

7 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 this people.

8 And thus, if ye shall say unto this temple it shall be rent in twain, it shall be done.

9 And if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou cast down and become smooth, it shall be done.

10 And behold, if ye shall say that God shall smite this people, it shall come to pass.

11 And now behold, I command you, that ye shall go and declare unto this people, that thus saith the Lord God, who is the Almighty: Except ye repent ye shall be smitten, even unto destruction.

{*¶*—1830}

Hel. 10:6  
DNTC 1:385  
Hel. 10:6–7  
MM 3:41

Hel. 10:7  
AGQ 4:95

Hel. 10:8  
AF 487  
MD 781

Hel. 10:11–12  
EM 2:526

10.12 Almost in an instant, Nephi was renewed in his determination to press forward with faith in the ministry that had been entrusted to him. A divine burden had been placed upon his shoulders and he was now prepared to bear it off to fruition, doing anything that they Lord would give him to do in order that his people might receive some degree of salvation. No doubt he began in the city of Zarahemla and from thence into the regions round about. In his labors he would have been assisted by his brother Lehi, together with the five men who had been converted as a result of their experience at the place of the judgment seat.

10.12.17—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

10.13 Here we are presented with an ageless conundrum. How is it that a people who were privy to one of the greatest miracles ever presented unto the children of men choose to remain in their sins? All who were present at the scene were persuaded that Nephi was either divine himself or an emissary of God. In spite of their convictions, they could not bring themselves to forsake the temptations and lusts of the flesh. These were carnal men and women, natural men and women, who had no desire to change the manner in which they had been living their lives.

10.14 Nephi, at this juncture, was compelled to be quite plain with his fellow men. Either they repent or they would be struck down. The Nephites would not take kindly to Nephi's admonitions any more than the Jews took kindly to the prophesying of Jeremiah and Lehi.

10.14.2—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

10.15 These were men without faith, with no sensitivity to the whisperings of the spirit of God. These were men who had sinned grievously against God and their fellow men. Many belonged to the band of robbers and murderers founded by Kishkumen and Gadianton. Many others were either sympathetic to or deathly afraid of those who wielded power beneath the banner of that secret combination. The Nephites sought the life of Nephi in the same spirit that King Noah and his priests had sought the lives of Abinadi and Alma the elder.

10.15.8—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

10.16 A mighty change had been affected in the mind, heart, and body of Nephi. He was wiser than he had ever been before, thereby anticipating all of the machinations of his enemies. He escaped their every move. They in turn knew nothing of the mind of God and therefore could not anticipate anything that He or His servant prepared for the wicked. Nephi could not be apprehended. In many respects he demonstrated many of the characteristics of other men who had been transfigured or translated. He was like unto the three

12 And behold, now it came to pass that when the Lord had spoken these words unto Nephi, he did stop and did not go unto his own house, but did return unto the multitudes who were scattered about upon the face of the land, and began to declare unto them the word of the Lord which had been spoken unto him, concerning their destruction if they did not repent.

13 Now behold, notwithstanding that great miracle which Nephi had done in telling them concerning the death of the chief judge, they did harden their hearts and did not hearken unto the words of the Lord.

14 Therefore Nephi did declare unto them the word of the Lord, saying: Except ye repent, thus saith the Lord, ye shall be smitten even unto destruction.

15 And it came to pass that when Nephi had declared unto them the word, behold, they did still harden their hearts and would not hearken unto his words; therefore they did revile against him, and did seek to lay their hands upon him that they might cast him into prison.

16 But behold, the power of God was with him, and they could not take him to cast him into prison, for he was taken by the Spirit and conveyed away out of the midst of them.

Hel. 10:16–17  
DNTC 2:88  
MM 1:414

Nephite disciples of Jesus Christ and John the Beloved who could not be entrapped or destroyed by the hands of mortal men.

10.17 No doubt the Lord revealed to Nephi precisely where he should go in order to be the most efficient and most effective in his ministry. All great missionaries are so directed by the power and influence of the Holy Ghost.

10.17.34—*sent*—While it is conceivable that Nephi may have committed all that the Lord had revealed to him to a written record to be distributed among the people, it is far more likely that he had help in the ministry, not the least of which would have been Lehi and the five men converted by their experiences with Nephi at the time of the death of Seezoram.

10.18 The prophets of God warn the children of men of the dooms which they are bringing upon themselves because of their personal and collective conduct. Being devoid of the Spirit of God, the Nephites more easily took affront on every hand, formed clans and parties based on uninspired tenets and sentiments, and eventually lost all desire for civil discourse. These resulted in the very societal conflagration predicted by Nephi and others. There is no wisdom in ignoring the teachings of the living prophets.

10.19 The end of the 71st year of the reign of the judges transpired during the first part of the year 20 BC.

11.1 We may only surmise as to the reasons behind the civil disturbances that eventually erupted into open warfare. While it is conceivable that the warring parties did so because of their differing views regarding who and what Nephi was, yet it seems far more likely that the confrontations occurred as various members of the elite class of the Nephites were revealed as members of the Gadianton robbers, that the rule of law had been subverted such that the majority of the population was reduced to trusting no one at all, forced in their own minds to take the law into their own hands. This could do nothing but escalate the tension and the nature of the atrocities committed one against the other.

11.1.9–11—*seventy and second*—The 72nd year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 20 and 19 BC.

11.1.38—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

11.2 Again it is somewhat difficult to know precisely the nature of the arguments and what brought the various parties into open armed conflict. Certainly the secret combination wished to maintain power and authority among the Nephites, but most of that control depended on the various officers being undetected. Perhaps there were portions of the combination whose responsibility was to incite riots, waging a guerilla war against the Nephites to keep the

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17 And it came to pass that thus he did 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.

18 And it came to pass that they would not hearken unto his words; and there began to be contentions, insomuch that they were divided against themselves and began to slay one another with the sword.

19 And thus ended the seventy and first year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

*{Chapter IV}*  
**(Chapter 11)**

{*9—1830*}

1 AND now it came to pass in the seventy and second year of the reign of the judges that the contentions did increase, insomuch that there were wars throughout all the land among all the people of Nephi.

2 And it was this secret band of robbers who did carry on this work of destruction and wickedness. And this war did last all that year; and in the seventy and third year it did also last.

\* p. 436

Hel. 11  
EM 1:152, 165  
Hel. 11:1–18  
EM 1:153

Hel. 11:2–5  
EM 1:170

people preoccupied about the marauders rather than spending time ferreting out the criminals that still held on to the judgment seats.

11.2.25–26—*that year*—That is to say, the 72nd year of the reign of the judges.

11.2.30–32—*seventy and third*—The 73rd year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 19 and 18 BC.

11.3 The war had begun during the 71st year of the reign of the judges, just shortly after Nephi had revealed the true assassin of the chief judge of the people. For more than two years the conflict continued, undoubtedly marked by a breakdown of civility in the entire society. How could one know whom to trust? To whom could one turn to obtain justice? These circumstances must have been somewhat of a foreshadowing of the conditions that would exist during the thirtieth year after the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ when the entire government fell apart after the chief judge was murdered (see *3 NE-C 7.1–6*).

11.3.10—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

11.4 At first blush, one wonders at Nephi’s logic in requesting the famine to replace the warfare. Men, women, and children would die in either scenario. Murder, however, is a brief process; starvation takes a while. At the heart of the matter is Nephi’s desire that the people be given time to forsake their sins, even if they had to be brought into the depths of humility for that to be accomplished. Needless to say, there were many among the people whose lives were so completely devoted to the acquisition of wealth, power, and fame that they would resort to any wickedness no matter how hungry they became.

11.5 The work of destruction continued, notwithstanding that the warfare came to an end. We are not privy as to how the famine began or the ancillary circumstances that might have aggravated the process. Did the rains not fall after the planting of the crops? Were there other natural forces in place that either destroyed or diminished the harvest? We are not told, but it seems clear that the famine somehow began in the 73rd year and continued throughout the 74th year.

11.5.11—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

11.5.26—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

11.5.31–33—*seventy and fourth*—The 74th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 18 and 17 BC.

11.6 The famine appears to have been universal throughout all of the accessible regions open to the Nephites and Lamanites. The lands of Zarahemla and Nephi were unquestionably afflicted with the dearth, and it might be suspected that much of the land northward suffered from the same devastating

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3 And it came to pass that in this year Nephi did cry unto the Lord, saying:

4 O Lord, do not suffer that this people shall be destroyed by the sword; but O Lord, rather let there be a famine in the land, to stir them up in remembrance of the Lord their God, and perhaps they will repent and turn unto thee.

5 And so it was done, according to the words of Nephi. And there was a great famine upon the land, among all the people of Nephi. And thus in the seventy and fourth year the famine did continue, and the work of destruction did cease by the sword but became sore by famine.

6 And this work of destruction did also continue in the seventy and fifth year. For the earth was smitten that it was dry, and did not

Hel. 11:4  
EM 1:204

Hel. 11:6–17  
EM 1:170

weather. It is interesting to note that the Lamanites had, for the most part, ridded themselves of the Gadianton robbers by converting them to the Gospel of Jesus Christ while the Nephites embraced the secret combination with enthusiasm (see 6.36–39). Why then did the land of Nephi suffer equally with the land of Zarahemla where the real wickedness was? Had the Lamanites prospered in the face of the famine, nothing would have restrained the Gadianton robbers, and perhaps a goodly number of the Nephites as well, from attacking the land of Nephi in order to obtain food. The Lord preserved the righteous saints with a blessing in disguise.

11.6.11–13—*seventy and fifth*—The 75th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 17 and 16 BC.

11.6.44—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

11.6.50—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

11.6.61—*thousands*—These people died by the sword if they would not surrender their stored food to the robbers. Those who delivered up their commodities remained destitute because of the selfishness and depravity of their neighbors.

11.6.64–66—*more wicked parts*—We should probably assume that Mormon is speaking of the land of Zarahemla, or those regions where the Gadianton robbers wielded the most power. In those areas where the righteous dwelt, they would have nourished and tended one another, rather than rob and plunder one another as did the robbers.

11.7 We do not know how storage-minded the Nephites and Lamanites were as a people, nor do we know how the domesticated and game animals were faring during this time. Whatever the detailed conditions might have been, the reserves were astonishingly insufficient to maintain the population. The imminent destruction prophesied by Nephi three years before stared them in the face. In many respects, they had been of the same mentality as Laman and Lemuel and their colleagues who had despised Nephi’s counsel while sailing toward the promised land. Only when confronted with certain death did the wicked have any sense of remorse for their wickedness.

11.7.35—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

11.8 One wonders how many of the chief judges and leaders of the people who remained in power were still members of the secret combination. Did they acquiesce to the demands of the people for fear of being ousted from their positions or were they, too, completely aware of the dire circumstances in which they found themselves? Had those who had belonged to the secret combination perceived the folly of their conduct and had forsaken those abominable oaths? Had the members of the Gadianton robbers been driven from their judgment seats as part of the repentance process of the people? Mormon does not provide us with the details of the process. It is notable that the Nephites did not consider themselves sufficiently worthy to petition the Lord God on their own, even though they were in the process of repenting in sack-

yield forth grain in the season of grain; and the whole earth was smitten, even among the Lamanites as well as among the Nephites, so that they were smitten that they did perish by thousands in the more wicked parts of the land.

{9—1830}

7 And it came to pass that the people saw that they were about to perish by famine, and they began to remember the Lord their God; and they began to remember the words of Nephi.

8 And the people began to plead with their chief judges and their leaders, that they would say unto Nephi: Behold, we know that thou art a man of God, and therefore cry unto the Lord our God that he turn away from us this famine, lest all the words which thou hast spoken concerning our destruction be fulfilled.

cloth and ashes. It is also notable that the people did not even consider themselves worthy to come into Nephi's presence, but sent their delegates. Of course, the majority of the people may have realized that their sin had been a cultural and societal sin as much as a concatenation of personal sins. They justifiably sensed the worst and knew that only the prophet of God could offer an effectual prayer in their behalf.

11.8.19—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

11.9 The original intent of the famine being called down upon the ears of the people was to bring about the very effect that Nephi perceived filled the hearts and minds of the Nephites. How had the Gadianton robbers been disposed of? Had they been sought out and destroyed in the flesh during the famine? Had they also repented of their sins, fearing for their eternal souls, abandoning the covenants of damnation?

11.9.12—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

11.10 At least from the perspective of Mormon's narrative, it appears that the process of reversing a devastating famine is more complex than initiating one. It required only one verse to bring about the famine (see 11.4) and seven verses to bring it to an end.

11.10.15—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen's successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah.

11.10.28—*concealed*—It would seem reasonable to assume that the repentant members of the secret combination were instrumental in burying the records of their wicked society as their contribution to the repentance process. Given the fact that there were considerable records to dispose of, it would seem that the secret combination and its rituals had become quite elaborate since the initial oaths administered by Kishkumen.

11.11 The humility had been forced upon them because of their indigent circumstances. While it would have been considerably better for the people to have repented out of a desire for righteousness, the forced repentance or desire for repentance was better than no repentance at all. Thousands of Nephites had died in the war and in the famine, the vast majority of them having been members of the secret combination. Had the Gadianton robbers become openly aggressive during the days of the famine, permitting themselves to be identified and eliminated? Had the Nephite society been sufficiently cleansed that they might have hope? Nephi apparently seems to think so.

11.12 Nephi was confident in his prayer. He sincerely felt that the Nephites had earned a reprieve. He had been told at the beginning of this terrible time that the Lord would grant unto him whatever Nephi desired of Him, because he would always ask for that which is right. Yet Nephi is solicitous of the Father, for his reverence for God has not been affected by his intimacy with Him.

9 And it came to pass that the judges did say unto Nephi, according to the words which had been desired. And it came to pass that when Nephi saw that the people had \*repented and did humble themselves in sackcloth, he cried again unto the Lord, saying:

10 O Lord, behold this people repenteth; and they have swept away the band of Gadianton from amongst them insomuch that they have become extinct, and they have concealed their secret plans in the earth.

11 Now, O Lord, because of this their humility wilt thou turn away thine anger, and let thine anger be appeased in the destruction of those wicked men whom thou hast already destroyed.

12 O Lord, wilt thou turn away thine anger, yea, thy fierce anger, and cause that this famine may cease in this land.

Hel. 11:9  
MD 659

\* p. 437

Hel. 11:10–16  
EM 1:152

Hel. 11:11  
CR86-A 6

11.13 The soil had become barren for want of rain. We may also suppose that after three years of drought that the rivers, even ones as large as the Sidon, had long since dwindled to mere trickles.

11.13.30—*she*—Of the three Hebrew words that are usually translated as “earth” in English, only one is specifically marked for gender, but it is feminine. It is an easy conclusion to draw that the Nephites considered the earth as a “she” for grammatical reasons, but we have no idea how the written or the spoken language of the Nephites had been modified during the nearly six hundred years since Lehi left Jerusalem. We may assume, however, that the grammatical conventions inscribed upon the Brass Plates persisted. Why any culture would assign either masculine or feminine characteristics to the earth or any other supposedly inanimate object is a matter for conjecture.

11.14 The war had taken the lives of many thousands of the Nephites; the famine had done the same. The horror of destruction was apparent to the people everywhere they turned. The nature of the Nephite repentance was sufficiently contrite that Nephi was willing to petition the Lord in their behalf, fully expecting a response in the positive.

11.15 The goal of the afflictions sent upon the Nephites was to bring repentance into their minds and hearts; that had been to a degree achieved.

11.15.17—*pestilence*—Nothing is said in Mormon’s narrative regarding rampant disease, but perhaps that was unnecessary. The task of entering tens of thousands of bodies under wartime conditions or during times of great physical weakness brought on by starvation may have produced any number of physical plagues upon the people. We have noted before, however, that “pestilence” is often used to describe the nature of warfare itself.

11.16 With repentance comes the promised blessings of forgiveness and prosperity, both temporal and spiritual.

11.16.12—*try*—Though this word has several meanings in the English language, it seems clear that Nephi was requesting of the Lord God that the Nephites be given another opportunity to prove themselves, that they might be put to the same test that they had failed earlier.

11.17 It is one thing to have the rain fall after three or four years, it is quite another for the people to entrust what little grain that they might have on hand to the earth. Repentance must always be associated with faith, even when one has been compelled to be humble.

11.17.9–11—*seventy and sixth*—The 76th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 16 and 15 BC.

11.17.38—*her*—For a detailed consideration of the feminine usage here, see 11.13.30

11.18 This high estimation of Nephi the son of Helaman was a reprise of that which had taken place at the time he had revealed the true murderer of the chief judge Seesoram. Yet with the elimination of the influence of the Gadi-

13 O Lord, wilt thou hearken unto me, and cause that it may be done according to my words, and send forth rain upon the face of the earth, that she may bring forth her fruit, and her grain in the season of grain.

14 O Lord, thou didst hearken unto my words when I said, Let there be a famine, that the pestilence of the sword might cease; and I know that thou wilt, even at this time, hearken unto my words, for thou saidst that: If this people repent I will spare them.

15 Yea, O Lord, and thou seest that they have repented, because of the famine and the pestilence and destruction which has come unto them.

16 And now, O Lord, wilt thou turn away thine anger, and try again if they will serve thee? And if so, O Lord, thou canst bless them according to thy words which thou hast said.

{*¶*—1830}

17 And it came to pass that in the seventy and sixth year the Lord did turn away his anger from the people, and caused that rain should fall upon the earth, insomuch that it did bring forth her fruit in the season of her fruit. And it came to pass that it did bring forth her grain in the season of her grain.

18 And behold, the people did rejoice and glorify God, and the whole face of the land was filled

anton robbers from among the people, this latter honor appears to have had a far more spiritual impact upon the people rather than intellectual.

11.18.29—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

11.18.38—*prophet*—A prophet is one who testifies that Jesus is the Christ. This is a patently clear definition as one peruses the writing of the ancient seers and revelators, none of whom wrote without bearing their witness of the coming Messiah.

11.19 During this seven year narrative nothing had been said of Lehi's involvement in the affairs of the Nephites. In fact, the last time that the brother of Nephi had been mentioned by name was in conjunction with their mission into the lands north of the narrow neck of land in the 63rd year of the reign of the judges (see 6.6).

11.19.3—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

11.19.9—*whit*—The English word “whit” derives from Middle English sources that mean “creature, thing, bit” and is generally interpreted as referring to “the smallest part or particle imaginable”.

11.20 The repopulation of the devastated lands was extensive because the effects of the famine and the war had been extensive.

11.20.12—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

11.20.26–27—*waste places*—Probably not so much in reference to wildernesses, but rather to those cities and towns that had been destroyed or abandoned as a result of the wars and the famine.

11.20.48—*northward*—Perhaps in reference to the land of Zarahemla, but it is likely that the famine was far reaching, even to the devastating of all of the inhabited lands north of the narrow neck of land.

11.20.52—*southward*—A minimalist might suggest that this was only in reference to the land of Nephi, the land of Zarahemla being the land “northward”. It is likely, however, that Mormon is writing of all of the land south of the narrow neck of land wherein there had been Lamanite and Nephite inhabitants.

11.20.55–56—*sea west*—No doubt in reference to that body of water which we presently called the Pacific Ocean.

11.20.59–60—*sea east*—No doubt in reference to that body of water which we presently called the Atlantic Ocean.

11.21 As the Nephites and Lamanites began rebuilding all that had been lost during the previous decade, the missionary efforts of the Church of Christ expanded as well, bringing many thousands of souls to Christ while they were still feeling such great gratitude toward Nephi and the Lord God of Israel.

11.21.7–9—*seventy and sixth*—The end of the 76th year of the reign of the judges took place during the first part of the 15 BC.

11.21.17–19—*seventy and seventh*—The 77th year of the reign of the

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 unto him from God.

19 And behold, Lehi, his brother, was not a whit behind him as to things pertaining to righteousness.

20 And thus it did come to pass that the people of Nephi began to prosper again in the land, and began to build up their waste places, and began to multiply and spread, even until they did cover the whole face of the land, both on the northward and on the southward, from the sea west to the sea east.

21 And it came to pass that the seventy and sixth year did end in peace. And the seventy and seventh year began in peace; and the church did spread throughout the face of all the land; and the more part of the people, both the Nephites and

Hel. 11:19–23  
DS 1:162

Hel. 11:21  
AF 214  
EM 1:170  
Hel. 11:22  
EM 2:560



judges corresponds to portions of the years 15 and 14 BC.

11.21.46—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

11.21.49—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

11.21.66—*ended*—The end of the 77th year of the reign of the judges would have transpired sometime during the first part of the year 14 BC.

11.22 Mormon does not share with us those particular points of doctrine that had stirred up the saints of God within the Church.

11.22.8–10—*seventy and eighth*—The 78th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 14 and 13 BC.

11.22.30—*prophets*—We are not privy as to which prophets some of the saints were taking exception to. Needless to say, most doctrinal issues that foment among the children of men are really matters involving conduct rather than just philosophical disagreement.

11.23 Not only did Nephi and Lehi receive many revelations daily in order to put down the doctrinal strife, they also taught the people how to receive personal revelation that the spirit of God might comfort them in all of their concerns.

11.23.4–6—*seventy and ninth*—The 79th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 13 and 12 BC.

11.23.20—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

11.23.22—*Lehi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Nephi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries.

11.24 One wonders at the motivations of the dissenters and the susceptibility of the Lamanites to respond to them. The issues that created this tumult and eventual warfare must have been ones of long standing. Perhaps the form of government was once again being contested, particularly if some of the men involved had lost face or virtual power through the times of war and famine. Like Laman and Lemuel, these men had no spiritual staying power.

11.24.9—*eightieth*—The 80th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 12 and 11 BC.

11.24.21—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

11.24.29—*dissenters*—We are not told precisely when these individuals had become Lamanites, but the causes for their dissensions were almost always in protest over the nature of the judicial system that was the established form of government of the land of Zarahemla. They were often kingmen, frustrated at not being able to rise to prominence with

the Lamanites, \*did belong to the church; and they did have exceedingly great peace in the land; and thus ended the seventy and seventh year.

22 And also they had peace in the seventy and eighth year, save it were a few contentions concerning the points of doctrine which had been laid down by the prophets.

23 And in the seventy and ninth year there began to be much strife. But it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi, and many of their brethren who knew concerning the true points of doctrine, having many revelations daily, therefore they did preach unto the people, insomuch that they did put an end to their strife in that same year.

{~~9~~—1830}

24 And it came to pass that in the eightieth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi, there were a certain number of the dissenters from the people of Nephi, who had some years before gone over unto the Lamanites, and taken upon themselves the name of Lamanites, and also a certain number who were real descendants of the Lamanites, being stirred up to anger by them, or by those dissenters, therefore they commenced a war with their brethren.

\* p. 438

Hel. 11:24–29  
EM 1:170  
Hel. 11:24–34  
EM 1:153

all of the wealth and power that usually attended a totalitarian form of government.

11.24.44—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

11.25 This group of Nephite dissenters and their Lamanite followers had no way to usurp power over an established group of people as had Amalickiah and Ammoron when they fled from the land of Zarahemla to the land of Nephi. In lieu of subverting a government, the men began robbing those unfortunate enough to fall into their grasp. Thus, being enriched and striking terror into the hearts of the innocent, their successes inspired other corrupt and depraved men to join them in their enterprise, which eventually took on all of the aspects of the secret combination that had been completely eliminated several years before.

11.25.16—*mountains*—We cannot be certain which particular mountains served as refuge for the robbers and their minions. Certainly the narrow strip of wilderness that lay between the lands of Zarahemla and Nephi could have provided plenty of resorts, as well as the eastern and western spurs of wilderness that embraced the central part of the land of Zarahemla. It will be remembered that when Gadianton and his band fled from the city of Zarahemla shortly after Kishkumen attempted taking the life of Helaman, they probably settled in the mountainous wilderness that lay to the northwest of the city (see 2.11).

11.26 One wonders if some of the lapsed converts to the Gospel of Christ were privy as to where the records of the secret combination had been buried. In their attempts to “search out” all of the covenants, did they actually disinter the ancient oaths that had been buried when the famine had been at its greatest?

11.26.32—*Gadianton*—Kishkumen’s successor who is credited for having been sufficiently receptive to the spirit of the adversary that he was able to restore the ancient oaths and covenants that had existed among the Jaredites without resorting to the record that had been preserved by Ether and later translated by Mosiah.

11.27 As the number of robbers grew, as the abominable oaths were sworn, the dissenters and their fellows became emboldened so that they despoiled the rest of the inhabitants of their rightful possessions and took the lives of those who resisted them.

11.27.17—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father’s family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

11.27.25—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

11.28 The bandits swarmed out of the wilderness continuously, robbing and pillaging those who were tilling the land and keeping herds and flocks. The

25 And they did commit murder and plunder; and then they would retreat back into the mountains, and into the wilderness and secret places, hiding themselves that they could not be discovered, receiving daily an addition to their numbers, inasmuch as there were dissenters that went forth unto them.

26 And thus in time, yea, even in the space of not many years, they became an exceedingly great band of robbers; and they did search out all the secret plans of Gadianton; and thus they became robbers of Gadianton.

27 Now behold, these robbers did make great havoc, yea, even great destruction among the people of Nephi, and also among the people of the Lamanites.

{¶—1830}

28 And it came to pass that it was expedient that there should be a

Hel. 11:28  
EM 1:162, 164

stock and goods were spirited away into the mountains. No doubt people, primarily women and children, were carried away as well to serve as slaves. Destruction of the Gadianton robbers by a force of arms would prove to be ineffectual. Whenever the secret combinations among the Nephites and the Lamanites had been destroyed, it had been through the preaching of the Gospel. Either the Gadianton band was beyond redemption or there were few among the Nephites who were willing to risk their lives in order to bring them unto Christ.

11.29 Again, we do not know where the band of robbers had located themselves, whether on the east, west, or south. It is clear however, that they were well entrenched and easily defeated any force that was sent against them. Never again would the secret combination in exile be roused out of their hiding places in the wilderness. They would, however, be dealt with in another fashion by men who were filled with the spirit of God, the wisdom of heaven, and the patience of saints.

11.29.25—*eightieth*—The end of the 80th year of the reign of the judges transpired sometime during the first part of the year 11 BC.

11.29.37—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

11.30 The effect of these incursions into the wilderness, the subsequent battles and loss of life, bred nothing but a deepening bitterness on both sides.

11.31.8—*commencement*—The beginning of the 81st year of the reign of the judges transpired sometime during the latter part of the year 11 BC.

11.31 One of the great appeals of the robbers' organization was that they were capable of taking what they wanted, when they wanted it. Little labor was required in the fields or in the pastures. An occasional foray was necessary to confiscate the wealth of others. The combination fed on the natural desires of fallen men to exercise unrighteous dominion, to terrorize and persecute the weak and the innocent. These men were feared, notorious rather than famous, hated rather than loved. They ravaged the countryside because they were unwilling to work for prosperity. They thought nothing of the lives and privileges of anyone other than themselves. The various members of Gadianton's band may have had a variety of reasons for initial joining the group, religious or political reasons, but they soon descended to a communality of self-indulgence and viciousness.

11.32 After several forays into the wilderness to destroy the band of robbers, the Nephites realized that they had been and would probably continue to be unsuccessful in their efforts. Those who lost all in the deprecations of the robbers were faced with few options, but their decisions would be based upon their spiritual strength, their faith in the God of Heaven. It is clear that there were those who despaired beyond comfort, who might seek to join those who had deprived them of all that they thought worthwhile in this world. These apparently joined the robbers in droves.

11.32.9–10—*this year*—That is to say, the 81st year of the reign of the judges.

11.32.30—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi,

stop put to this work of destruction; therefore they sent an army of strong men into the wilderness and upon the mountains to search out this band of robbers, and to destroy them.

29 But behold, it came to pass that in that same year they were driven back even into their own lands. And thus ended the eightieth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

{9—1830}

30 And it came to pass in the commencement of the eighty and first year they did go forth again against this band of robbers, and did destroy many; and they were also visited with much destruction.

31 And they were again obliged to return out of the wilderness and out of the mountains unto their own lands, \*because of the exceeding greatness of the numbers of those robbers who infested the mountains and the wilderness.

32 And it came to pass that thus ended this year. And the robbers did still increase and wax strong, insomuch that they did defy the whole armies of the Nephites, and also of the Lamanites; and they did cause great fear to come unto the people upon all the face of the land.

\* p. 439

the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

11.32.35—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

11.33 The kidnapping of women and children by the Gadianton robbers needs no explanation. These were corrupt and vile men fully intent in satisfying every vicious desire that rages in the heart of the natural man.

11.34 Mormon does not inform us of which sins the people felt particularly convicted at this point. Whatever their crimes, the premiere sin was their unwillingness to hearken to the voices of Nephi and Lehi as they cried repentance throughout all the land. They went so far as to attempt to imprison them rather than have the prophets continue to remind them of their transgressions against the law of God (see 10.14–18). The subsequent civil war and famine brought them to a point where they were willing to forsake many things, but the conversion of their hearts was a process that would continue only until they began to prosper and enjoy a degree of carnal security. Then they were willing to be at each other's throats, intellectually and then physically.

11.35 The end of the 81st year of the reign of the judges transpired sometime during the first part of the year 10 BC.

11.36 The Nephites had become a people as unstable as water, blown about by every wind of circumstance.

11.36.4–6—*eighty and second*—The 82nd year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 10 and 9 BC.

11.36.20–22—*eighty and third*—The 83rd year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 9 and 8 BC.

11.36.34–36—*eighty and fourth*—The 84th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 8 and 7 BC.

11.37 This had been a destructive period of time. During the first year they forgot God, during the second, they could not restrain themselves from committing sin, and finally during the third year they were completely determined to be as vicious and destructive as the Gadianton robbers whom they loathed.

11.37.8–10—*eighty and fifth*—The 85th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 7 and 6 BC.

11.38 The end of the 85th year of the reign of the judges transpired sometime during the first part of the year 6 BC.

12.1 An argument might be made for the authorship of this chapter of the book of Helaman. Nephi had every reason to express the sentiments that are

33 Yea, for they did visit many parts of the land, and did do great destruction unto them; yea, did kill many, and did carry away others captive into the wilderness, yea, and more especially their women and their children.

34 Now this great evil, which came unto the people because of their iniquity, did stir them up again in remembrance of the Lord their God.

35 And thus ended the eighty and first year of the reign of the judges.

36 And in the eighty and second year they began again to forget the Lord their God. And in the eighty and third year they began to wax strong in iniquity. And in the eighty and fourth year they did not mend their ways.

37 And it came to pass in the eighty and fifth year they did wax stronger and stronger in their pride, and in their wickedness; and thus they were ripening again for destruction.

38 And thus ended the eighty and fifth year.

*{Chapter IV; continued}*  
**(Chapter 12)**

1 AND thus we can behold how false, and also the unsteadiness of

Hel. 11:36  
CR88-A 6

Hel. 12  
EM 1:152

to be found here, as did Mormon. Given the context, particularly as to be found in the first edition of the Book of Mormon, it is most likely that Mormon is the one drawing the conclusions. His motivation for doing so at this particular point in his narrative no doubt has to do with the end of this particular section of his account. Beginning in chapter 13, Mormon will write of the mission of Samuel the Lamanite in the land of Zarahemla. As we have suggested before, it is likely that Mormon's source document for Samuel's teachings was the written record of Lehi, the brother of Nephi (see 0.0.40, 7.0, and 16.1–6). Mormon's lament here could be echoed by every prophet, seer, and revelator who has every lived upon this earth

12.1.1—*And*—Note that the chapter division in the current edition of the Book of Mormon occurs in a paragraph that includes the nine final verses of chapter 11 and the entirety of chapter 12.

12.1.7—*false*—The semantic value of the English word “false” is rich, indeed, but the sentiments are invariable negative: “not true, not well founded, not according to lawful standard, substitution, counterfeit, not solid or sound, not agreeable to rule or propriety, not honest or just, not faithful or loyal, inconstant, deceitful, treacherous, betrayer, hypocritical, feigned, evade”.

12.1.11—*unsteadiness*—This state is often depicted in scriptural literature as being like unto a man drunken, but not with wine. That is to say, a man so burdened with sin that he cannot walk correctly, blind and insensate.

12.2 The Lord God of Israel looks for every opportunity to pour out His blessings upon the children of men, particularly those who have entered into eternal covenants with Him by the power of the holy priesthood and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It seems inconceivable that a man who has partaken of the divine nature, has enjoyed the blessings of Heaven, and has been at peace with his fellow men through the power and influence of the Holy Ghost would ever choose a course of action that would lead him away from that state of grace. But so it is, in every generation, among every people. This is not mere cynicism; it is a statement of fact grounded in reality. Is it possible that a people can endure the prosperity of peace without reverting to the lusts of the natural man? Yes. It has been so in the past and it will be so in the future. Without being specific, it might be said that Mormon's generalization is most apt. The main problem among the children of men is the facility for deception; it is the falseness of the hearts of men that is at the root of the problem. Repentance is for many somewhat superficial, not really covering the interior of the soul. Outward conduct is conveniently changed, but the inward struggle is short-lived or nonexistent. Should God withhold all blessings until His people have fully perfected themselves? Were He to do so there would be no living mortal upon the face of this earth. The cycle of prosperity and affliction is mirrored in the cycle of obedience and disobedience. As frustrating as it is, this duality is part of the learning process, that men might learn for themselves to distinguish between good and evil; not only in the conduct of others, but in the innermost sanctuaries of the heart. Those who are caught in the midst of the oscillation often respond as manic-depressives, exulting in their good fortune and despairing of their lot in life. Those who have fully partaken of the divine nature, who have been converted to the principles of eternity, find themselves frequently partaking of the cup of bitterness as they helplessly watch their loved ones being whipped about by sin, sorrow, and decay. The cure for all of this, of course, is the complete regeneration of the hearts and minds of the sons and daughters of God, a regeneration that is encouraged by the frequent blessings that come to those who turn unto the

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.

2 Yea, and we may see at the very time when he doth prosper his people, yea, in the increase of their fields, their flocks and their herds, and in gold, and in silver, and in all manner of precious things of every kind and art; sparing their lives, and delivering them out of the hands of their enemies; softening the hearts of their enemies that they should not declare wars against them; yea, and in fine, doing all things for the welfare and happiness of his people; yea, then is the time that they do harden their hearts, and do forget the Lord their God, and do trample under their feet the Holy One—yea, and this because of their ease, and their exceedingly great prosperity.

EM 2:933  
Hel. 12:1  
CR86-A 36  
Hel. 12:1–2  
EM 1:200  
CR92-O 59  
Hel. 12:1–3  
EM 4:1488  
CR01-O 18  
Hel. 12:1–4  
CR91-O 110

Hel. 12:2  
PM 168  
Hel. 12:2–3  
CR86-A 36  
Hel. 12:3  
MD 123  
DNTEC 3:223  
MLM 375  
CR82-O 97  
CR91-O 40  
CR92-O 13, 90  
CR95-O 29  
CR01-A 75

Lord of Hosts. Our God is an optimist, fully expecting that there will come a day in which the blessings will be well-received, without compromise.

12.3 Humility and humiliation are not the same principle, notwithstanding their linguistic similarity. Humility comes from within; humiliation is most frequently imposed from without. So long as afflictions, death, terror, famine, and pestilence are externally experienced, not much conversion will transpire in the hearts and minds of the people in such negative circumstances. It is possible to be humble without oppression and a far better path to walk upon. Many of the sons and daughters of God have achieved humility without suffering the depravities of war and sin. Those who are bent on destroying themselves spiritually by partaking of the lusts of the flesh, may find themselves humiliated in any number of ways, in order that their eyes might be opened, that they might see their way clear to put off the natural man that has brought them such misery, and completely partake of the divine nature.

12.4 It is not an easy task to put off carnality, for we are born into a lost and fallen world. Our physical bodies are particularly susceptible to the lusts of the flesh and there is a constant running battle between the desires of the body and the desires of the eternal spirit that dwells within that tabernacle of clay. The spirit must rise to the occasion and subdue the flesh through willing obedience to the commandments of God, which commandments are designed to point the direction in which we should go in order to overcome the world. The struggle between the body and the spirit is, for the most part, life-long. Lucifer's hue and cry has been from the beginning that the effort is not worth the prize. He, of course, has been a liar from the beginning.

12.5 The task before each child of God as he or she comes into this world is intimidating. We are surrounded on every side by disease, decay, and death; everything is transitory, slipping through our fingers in the blink of an eye. Nothing in the world speaks of eternity. The Spirit of God, however, bears constant witness of the eternal worlds and the blessings which await the faithful. The challenge, then, is to learn to hear the voice of that spirit, in spite of the cacophony which assails us during every waking hour. The ability to hear the voice of the spirit requires patience, focused attention, and persistence. The gifts tend to come slowly, gradually, one point of faith building upon another, until the spiritual substance of our lives begins to outweigh the carnal and the sensual. Those who find comfort in the ragged remnants of the paradise that once was here upon the earth are relying upon the smoke and ashes of the Fall. That the sons of men take pride in the acquisition of these things, seek power over the ruins, and would have prominence in such a lowly place, reveal the depth of ignorance to which they have fallen.

12.6 It is the spirit of the evil one that prompts men not to submit to the rule of goodness and mercy. Satan rebelled at the notion of not being able to excel above all of the hosts of Heaven, desiring to be greater than God Himself. Lucifer is the consummate blasphemer, the prime instigator of suspicion and mistrust, and the fomenter of rebellion in all of its nefarious forms. Men, in their natural state, are easy prey for the Destroyer and he bids them to drink from that same cup of bitterness that has banished him from the presence of God the eternal Father forever. He is miserable in his eternal exile and he would that all men were as filled with anguish as he is.

12.7 Men, in their lost and fallen mortal condition, are capable of little by themselves. They are dependent upon the forces of nature for all that they

3 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.

4 O how foolish, and how vain, and how evil, and devilish, and how quick to do iniquity, and how slow to do good, are the children of men; yea, how quick to hearken unto the words of the evil one, and to set their hearts upon the \*vain things of the world!

5 Yea, how quick to be lifted up in pride; yea, how quick to boast, and do all manner of that which is iniquity; and how slow are they to remember the Lord their God, and to give ear unto his counsels, yea, how slow to walk in wisdom's paths!

6 Behold, they do not desire that the Lord their God, who hath created them, should rule and reign over them; notwithstanding his great goodness and his mercy towards them, they do set at naught his counsels, and they will not that he should be their guide.

7 O how great is the nothingness of the children of men; yea, even

Hel. 12:3-17  
DS 2:312

Hel. 12:4  
MD 246  
CR88-A 6  
Hel. 12:4-6  
CR01-O 18

\* p. 440

Hel. 12:6  
CR89-A 4

Hel. 12:7  
CR89-A 90

hold dear, yet in their perversity they would rather remain in ignorance rather than discern the source from which all things come. The pride of men, in opposition to the humility which they ought to be experiencing, boasts of intelligence, progress in civilization, advancements in academia, social accomplishments, yet in hardly anything do they aspire to the perfection that the God of Heaven has proffered the children of men since the days of Adam and Eve. That perfection in all things comes as we are directed by the influence of the Holy Ghost, as we obey the commandments which have been revealed unto us by the servants of the Most High. The children of men vaunt themselves for having traversed an inch, when their Father would have them capable of comprehending the universe in all of its infinite immensity and eternalness. Men are nothing because they choose to be, a product of their pride and ignorance.

12.8 For the children of God to have fallen in estimation below that which most men consider inanimate is a great descent indeed. We need not enter into a philosophical discussion regarding the relative intelligence of men, animals, plants, or that of the earth itself in order to perceive that the disobedient are the least intelligent of them all. Who will not hearken to the voice of God? Who in his right mind ignores or defies that Being who provides all that sustains life and order? What justifies such belligerence? This is no more than the conduct of a petulant child.

12.9 Modern man, in his inimitable astuteness, has figured out for himself why it is that the earth trembles and quakes; in his belligerent ignorance he has left the God of Heaven out of the equation. While it is true that the natural function of this planet includes a wide variety of explicable and quantifiable movements, the truth is that there are forces in operation on this world and in the universe which are simply beyond the ken of lost and fallen man. So long as a man will not see, will not hear, and will not understand, he will continue to be surprised and dismayed at much of that which inexplicably transpires every day. A far more important question to be asked and answered is why God speaks at all to the hills and mountains; to what end do they hearken to Him? Nephi the son of Lehi suggested that Laman and Lemuel perceived the earth to tremble because their hearts were hardened such that they were past feeling, unable to hear the still, small voice of the Spirit (see *1 NE-C 17.44-46*). Enoch spoke the word of the Lord and the elements obeyed with stunning effect; the enemies of the people of Zion were terrified and scattered (see *MO-C 7.13-14*).

12.10 Nephi testified to his brethren of their own knowledge regarding the power of God to change the topography of the land (see *1 NE-C 17.46*). Whether this was the result of their studies of ancient scripture available to them at the time or from their personal experience, we do not know. Mormon had available to him the records of the Nephites at the time of the Savior's crucifixion and could easily read of the great changes that took place (see *3 NE-C 8.12-19*).

12.11 A localized earthquake is unnerving to those who dwell near the epicenter. Imagine the distress of the entire population of this earth were there to be a disruption great enough to be felt in every quarter of this planet.

12.12 Were the crust of this world to be rocked to the very center, there would no doubt be additional effects produced other than the mere quaking of the ground beneath one's feet. Certainly the possibility of volcanism would

they are less than the dust of the earth.

Hel. 12:7-17  
MD 211

8 For behold, the dust of the earth moveth hither and thither, to the dividing asunder, at the command of our great and everlasting God.

9 Yea, behold at his voice do the hills and the mountains tremble and quake.

10 And by the power of his voice they are broken up, and become smooth, yea, even like unto a valley.

11 Yea, by the power of his voice doth the whole earth shake;

12 Yea, by the power of his voice, do the foundations rock, even to the very center.

not be out of the question, an effect that may very well have taken place during the great cataclysm shortly before the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites (see *3 NE-C 8.10*).

12.13 How stable would the orbit of the earth be were the Creator to speak a word of alteration. Men in their abject ignorance and arrogance cannot imagine such power vested in a single being, yet it is so. If the truth be known, the orbit of this planet has undergone divine manipulation before and will experience such manipulations in the future. Needless to say, these changes would produce extraordinary effects upon the inhabitants of the earth and no doubt would be interpreted in a variety of ways, depending on their knowledge and faith.

12.14 There are two episodes in scriptural history that come immediately to mind with regard to this particular manifestation. When the prophet Joshua led the children of Israel against the Amorites and their confederates, the day was lengthened by the Lord so that the victory could be completed (see *JO-C 10.1–14*). The second instance involved the sign that the prophet Isaiah gave to Hezekiah, the king of Judah, to persuade him that the Lord God of Israel would grant him another fifteen years of mortality. The effect appeared on Hezekiah's sundial, the shadow retreating ten degrees during the middle of the day, rather than advancing (see *2 KG-C 20.1–11*). Academics have mocked at the notion that either one of these events took place literally, proffering all sorts of geological and meteorological consequences were such a manipulation of the earth to take place. It is with surprising facility that learned men use such fallacious reasoning to disparage divine power.

12.15 Modern men have pointed with derision to this verse asserting that all of the ancient inhabitants of this world believed that the earth was the center of the universe and all things revolved about it. This is a blatantly untrue statement. The Ptolemaic geocentric universe was not formalized until the second century AD by the Greco-Egyptian philosopher Claudius Ptolemy. Even though the Ptolemaic system would reign supreme for more than a thousand years in European and Islamic academic circles, the geocentric model was by no means universal. Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler did not invent the heliocentric model, they simply observed the truth of the matter, a truth that could be observed by anyone, at any time, and at any place since the creation of the earth. Secular history is replete with heliocentric proposals that greatly antedate Ptolemy by over five hundred years. Scriptural accounts testify that a correct understanding of the earth and its relationship to the sun was known to Abraham more than two thousand years before the birth of Jesus Christ. The prophets of God have been privy to the truth of all things, regardless of any perceived technological inadequacy. Nothing but the vanity of the modern mind denies the possibility of an earlier age knowing more than the current one.

12.16 Certainly the dividing of the Red Sea in order to provide the Israelites a means to escape their tormentors would qualify as one example. The crossing of the river Jordan, though not quite as dramatic, would serve as another example. In the days of Enoch a great body of land arose out of the sea at the command of the Lord (see *MO-C 7.14*). Nephi the son of Lehi expressed similar sentiments as Mormon does here when he was confronted by his brethren about the building of the ship in the land of Bountiful. In his heart and mind, Nephi knew that they could have walked the entire distance to the promised land had the Lord decreed it, but the building of the ship would suffice (see *1 NE-C 17.50–51*).

13 Yea, and if he say unto the earth—Move—it is moved.

Hel. 12:13–15  
EM 1:82

14 Yea, if he say unto the earth—Thou shalt go back, that it lengthen out the day for many hours—it is done;

15 And thus, according to his word the earth goeth back, and it appeareth unto man that the sun standeth still; yea, and behold, this is so; for surely it is the earth that moveth and not the sun.

16 And behold, also, if he say unto the waters of the great deep—Be thou dried up—it is done.



12.17 Mormon could easily point to similar events that took place during the transformation of the land when the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified. The city of Moronihah was buried beneath a great mountain (see *3 NE-C 8.10*) and the cities of Gadiandi, Gadiomnah, Jacob, and Gimgimno were buried up in the earth, hills and vales in the place thereof (see *3 NE-C 9.8*). In neither of these instances, however, is the mechanism of their destruction precisely described. Jesus described the power of faith to move mountains in conjunction with the healing of the lunatic, suggesting one's faith need be hardly more than that of a mustard seed (see *MT-C 17.14–21*). The brother of Jared is reported to have had this sort of faith with regard to mount Zerin (see *ET-C 12.30*) and Enoch was no less gifted (see *MO-C 7.13*).

12.18 In this statement, Mormon anticipates a similar prophecy made by Samuel the Lamanite (see 13.18–20). Mormon himself recounts that during his earlier years this very effect transpired among the Nephites (see *MM-C 1.15–19*). The Jaredites experienced similar conditions toward the end of their civilization (see *ET-C 14.1–2*).

12.19 Some treasures have been cursed so that they could not be found again once they were hidden up. By the same token, there have been treasures blessed and sealed up that they could not be found save it be by the righteous who had been commanded to reveal them to the saints. The plates containing the Book of Mormon constitute but a single example of this sort of preservation.

12.20 The earth is transformed by the voice of God, the artifacts of humanity are lost or found according to His word, and the destinies of the children of men are declared by those same lips.

12.21 One may choose to obey or disobey the voice of God; every man has the agency to decide which path he will follow in this life and in the eternities. He operates within an immutable system, however; no man can change the consequences of his willful actions. Justice is absolute and will be satisfied every whit. From the judgment of God there is no appeal.

12.22 Having strayed from the path of eternal life, is there no respite? Holistically speaking, there is none. The damage done by sin is permanent and must be rectified legally and lawfully according to the justice of God. Were it not for the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, that which satisfies justice and eternal law, every man would be required to bear the full weigh and measure of the consequences of his actions while in the flesh. Jesus suffered the punishment for all sin and by so doing has opened a path by which all men might come unto the Father without blemish or stain. A man who wishes to find peace and security in the eternities must look to the Son of God as his Redeemer, the only source of reconciliation. He must also resolve never to replicate those things for the which he would have been punished had it not been for the Savior's sacrifice. This confession and abandonment of disobedience is repentance.

12.23 The natural man is considered less than the dust of the earth, inasmuch as the natural man will not and cannot hear the voice of the Lord calling unto him to repent and be perfected in Christ. Those who have put off the natural man and have become like little children in their faith, seek in all things to

17 Behold, if he say unto this mountain—Be thou raised up, and come over and fall upon that city, that it be buried up—behold it is done.

18 And behold, if a man hide up a treasure in the earth, and the Lord shall say—Let it be accursed, because of the iniquity of him who hath hid it up—behold, it shall be accursed.

19 And if the Lord shall say—Be thou accursed, that no man shall find thee from this time henceforth and forever—behold, no man getteth it henceforth and forever.

20 And behold, if the Lord shall say unto a man—Because of thine iniquities, thou shalt be accursed forever—it shall be done.

21 And if the Lord shall say—Because of thine iniquities thou shalt be cut off from my presence—he will cause that it shall be so.

22 And wo unto him to whom he shall say this, for it shall be unto him that will do iniquity, and he cannot be saved; therefore, for this cause, that men might be saved, hath repentance been declared.

23 Therefore, blessed are they who will repent and hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; for these are \*they that shall be saved.

Hel. 12:23–24  
CR93-A 99

\* p. 441

please their Benefactor, inasmuch as they love Him and are grateful for the plan of eternal happiness which has been provided through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

12.24 The spirit children of God come into this world through physical birth. They are pure and innocent in the beginning. As their bodies mature in this lost and fallen world, they fall err to the commandments of God, placing their eternal destiny in jeopardy. Through the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the sons and daughters of God may return to a state of innocence and perfection, free from the consequences of all sin. They do so line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until they have completely put off the natural man and have completely partaken of the divine nature.

12.24.8—*fullness*—God the eternal Father is filled with light, truth, and wisdom, by which He is able to discern every ill in the heart and mind of man and is able to devise a possible reconciliation for all who would hearken to His voice. He is filled with justice, mercy, and grace as well, by which provisions for redemption are made manifest among the children of men. In the Father there is no inadequacy, no error, no fault by which His children might be lost to salvation if they so desired it.

12.24.22—*restored*—Restoration suggests a preexistent set of circumstances.

12.24.25–27—*grace for grace*—There is only one gift that man is capable of giving unto God the Father. That is the willing sacrifice of one's own will, through faith and repentance, to that of the Father. It is a poor gift in comparison to all that He has prepared for those who love Him, but it is an acceptable one. It seems odd that men are generally hesitant to make the exchange.

12.25 There are those who will utterly refuse to call upon God in the name of the Son in order to find a degree of glory in the Kingdom of Heaven. These are those who have sold themselves, who have traded the possibility of eternal joy and happiness for the company and misery of Satan. It seems incredible that anyone would make such a foul decision, but there is no accounting for injured pride and unrestrained anger. The want of humility invariably leads to spiritual death.

12.26 There are undoubtedly those who would desire to parse this simply dichotomy, but it is bootless to do so. In the end, there will be beings who have eternal potential and those who do not.

12.26.40—*Amen*—The harmony between the Father and the Son is perfected in this word of assent. The Hebrew word which is translated as “Amen” derives from roots which mean “true”. This word is one of the many titles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

13.0 The ministry of Samuel the Lamanite appears as one chapter in the first edition of the Book of Mormon, which in the present edition is divided into four chapters, 13 through 16. Mormon makes it clear in two places in his narrative that his source material for the book of Helaman consisted of the records of Helaman and his two sons, Nephi and Lehi (see 0.0.40 and 16.25). Helaman's contribution, perforce, would have ended at the conclusion of chapter 3 (see 3.37). Chapters 4 through 6 may very well have been Mormons

24 And may God grant, in his great fulness, that men might be brought unto repentance and good works, that they might be restored unto grace for grace, according to their works.

25 And I would that all men might be saved. But we read that in the great and last day there are some who shall be cast out, yea, who shall be cast off from the presence of the Lord;

26 Yea, who shall be consigned to a state of endless misery, fulfilling the words which say: They that have done good shall have everlasting life; and they that have done evil shall have everlasting damnation. And thus it is. Amen.

*{Chapter V}*  
**(Chapter 13)**

**The Prophecy of Samuel, the Lamanite to the Nephites.**

*Comprising chapters 13 to 15 inclusive.*

Hel. 12:24  
CR88-O 50

Hel. 12:26  
MD 177, 508

Hel. 13  
EM 1:152, 183,  
213  
EM 3:1164,  
1259

synthesis of Nephi and Lehi's record. Chapters 7 through 11 appear to be extracted from Nephi's personal history. Chapter 12 was undoubtedly Mormon's observation about this turbulent and distressing period of time in Nephite history (see 12.1). We have speculated before that chapters 13 through 16 may have been taken from Lehi's personal account of the time, particularly in light of the fact that while Samuel was calling the people of Zarahemla to repentance, Nephi was elsewhere, teaching and baptizing all who would come unto Christ (see 16.1–5).

13.0.4—*Samuel*—A Lamanite prophet who appeared in the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He correctly foretells all that would transpire prior to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites and the eventual destruction of the Nephite civilization.

13.0.6—*Lamanite*—Specifically one of the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

13.0.9—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

13.0.10—*Comprising*—The phrase that begins with this word does not appear in the first edition of the Book of Mormon, inasmuch as chapters 13 through 16 were all one chapter, Chapter V.

{9—1830}

13.1 The wickedness of the Nephites and the righteousness of the Lamanites is most poignantly perceived in their association with the Gadianton robbers, the former having embraced their secret oaths and the latter having eschewed them completely.

13.1.8–10—*eighty and sixth*—The 86th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 6 and 5 BC.

13.1.13—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

13.1.25—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

13.1.38–40—*law of Moses*—In order to keep these observances, the Lamanites would have needed to possess a complete copy of that which had been preserved upon the Plates of Brass. In addition, many of their number would necessarily have had the Melchizedek priesthood confirmed upon them so that they could performed the ordinances that pertained to the Levitical order.

13.2 The appearance of Samuel, the rejection of his message, his departure and return, and his subsequent flight from the city under duress, parallels the adventures of Alma the younger when he attempted to preach the Gospel of Christ to the inhabitants of the city of Ammonihah (see *AL-C 8.6–16*).

13.2.13—*Samuel*—A Lamanite prophet who appeared in the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He correctly foretells all that would transpire prior to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites and the eventual destruction of the Nephite civilization.

1 AND now it came to pass in the eighty and sixth year, the Nephites did still remain in wickedness, yea, in great wickedness, while the Lamanites did observe strictly to keep the commandments of God, according to the law of Moses.

Hel. 13:1  
EM 1:161  
Hel. 13:1–39  
EM 1:170

2 And it came to pass that in this year there was one Samuel, a Lamanite, came into the land of Zarahemla, and began to preach unto the people. And it came to pass that he did preach, many days, repentance unto the people, and they did cast him out, and he was about to return to his own land.

13.1.15—*Lamanite*—Specifically one of the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

13.2.19–21—*land of Zarahemla*—It may have been that Samuel preached for many days outside of the city walls before entering approaching the urban inhabitants.

13.2.58–59—*own land*—Most students of the Book of Mormon have assumed that Samuel hailed from the land of Nephi, south of the narrow strip of wilderness. An argument could be made that the prophet came from the land northward.

13.3 In the case of Alma the younger, the same angel that had cut short his works of wickedness as a young man, appeared to him again as he was making his way from the city of Ammonihah to the city of Aaron (see *AL-C 8.13–18*). Whether an angel appeared to Samuel or whether the Lord himself reversed the prophet's steps is of no real import.

13.4 Alma had been cast out of the city of Ammonihah and forbidden to return. We earlier speculated that he had been cast out of the city through a gate that lay toward the north (see *AL-C 8.18.33–34*). He later explicitly re-enters Ammonihah from the south (see *AL-C 8.18.43*). We cannot be absolutely certain as to how the city of Zarahemla was configured, but if it were still fortified after the manner that Moroni had established, there would have been only one entrance into the city. How, precisely, Samuel managed to ascend to the top of the wall of the city, we cannot say. It is clear, however, that the fortifications around the city were somewhat in disrepair inasmuch as Samuel was able to escape his antagonists by jumping from the wall (see 16.7) and fleeing into his own country.

13.5 The fact that Samuel the Lamanite had been sent to preach unto the people of Zarahemla was a biting irony. The Nephites already had among them two of the most effective missionaries that the descendants of Lehi had ever known. Nephi and Lehi had been repeatedly esteemed as men of God, upon whom the people had called to relieve them of their afflictions. By comparison, Samuel was an unknown, someone who had never performed any kind of a miracle in the presence of the Nephites. Additionally, Samuel hailed from a region that had been held in contempt for generations by the self-righteous. The Lamanites had been pawns in the hands of the Nephite dissenters, being stirred up continually to waste their lives in the schemes of those who would destroy the government, peace, and religious life of the faithful saints. That the Lamanites were more righteous than the Nephites at any time was a notion that would have been rejected by the latter with derision. The prophecy that the Nephites would eventually be completely destroyed, had been repeated in the ears of the Nephites for nearly six hundred years. There was little new in Samuel's teachings. It is hard to imagine that the wicked Nephites would get worked up over a prophesied event that would not take place for another ten or twelve generations.

13.5.8—*Samuel*—A Lamanite prophet who appeared in the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He correctly foretells all that would transpire prior to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites and the eventual destruction of

3 But behold, the voice of the Lord came unto him, that he should return again, and prophesy unto the people whatsoever things should come into his heart.

{¶—1830}

4 And it came to pass that they would not suffer that he should enter into the city; therefore he went and got upon the wall thereof, and stretched forth his hand and cried with a loud voice, and prophesied unto the people whatsoever things the Lord put into his heart.

5 And he said unto them: Behold, I, Samuel, a Lamanite, do speak the words of the Lord which he doth put into my heart; and behold he hath put it into my heart to say unto this people that the sword of justice hangeth over this people; and four hundred years pass not away save the sword of justice falleth upon this people.

Hel. 13:5–39  
EM 1:152, 153

the Nephite civilization.

13.5.10—*Lamanite*—Specifically one of the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

13.5.49–51—*four hundred years*—The final battle between the Nephites and the Lamanites took place during the 385th year after the appearance of the signs announcing the birth of Jesus Christ. Samuel the Lamanite’s prophecy was made during the 86th year of the reign of the judges or sometime during the latter part of the year 6 BC and the first part of the year 5 BC. The destruction of Nephites, therefore, took place no more than 391 years from the time Samuel uttered his words.

13.6 The principles of faith and repentance, coupled with the ordinances of salvation, constitute the only means whereby men can be saved, in time or in eternity. The coming of the promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, would establish forever the effectual power of the Gospel. In his life and ministry the redemption from death and hell would be made possible.

13.6.29–30—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

13.6.41–42—*many things*—The Messiah would experience mortality in all of its intensity. As part of his atoning sacrifice, Jesus would suffer more than any man who had ever lived or who would ever live upon this earth.

13.6.48–49—*his people*—That is to say, those who had chosen and would choose to be disciples of the Savior, his sons and daughters, clothed with immortality and eternal life.

13.7 Again, we have an angel instructing one of the Lord’s servants in the principles of eternity. We know little or nothing regarding this divine emissary, although speculations are plentiful. Was the angel who appeared to Samuel the same as he who had watched over Alma during his ministry? Was this particular angel among those who had strengthened Nephi and Lehi while they imprisoned among the Lamanites? Was the angel a translated being like Alma? Was he the same being who announced the coming of the Savior to Joseph, Mary, Simeon and the shepherds? We know not.

13.8 Here begins Samuel’s citation of the angel’s message from the Lord God of Israel. It is interesting to note that during the intervening time between the prophecies of Samuel and the final conflict at the hill Cumorah, there would be a long period of time during which the Nephites and Lamanites lived in complete harmony, a product of their individual and collective repentance. Once the “word” and the “Spirit” were withdrawn during the latter half of the fourth century AD, the Nephites never recovered any degree of spirituality, but sank further and further into ruin.

13.8.27—*word*—Although there are many ways in which this prophecy was fulfilled, there was a period of time during which Mormon was not allowed to preach to the Nephites, a prohibition that lasted approximately 34 years (see *MM-C 1.15–17* and *MM-C 3.1*). A whole generation passed away without the word of the Lord being taught to the people because of their great wickedness and hardness of heart.

13.8.35—*Spirit*—During that same period of time referred to in 13.8.27, Mormon testifies that Spirit of the Lord had completely withdrawn

6 Yea, heavy \*destruction awaiteth this people, and it surely cometh unto this people, and nothing can save this people save it be repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, who surely shall come into the world, and shall suffer many things and shall be slain for his people.

7 And behold, an angel of the Lord hath declared it unto me, and he did bring glad tidings to my soul. And behold, I was sent unto you to declare it unto you also, that ye might have glad tidings; but behold ye would not receive me.

8 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.

\* p. 442  
Hel. 13:6  
PM 502, 526

Hel. 13:7  
EM 3:1164

from the Nephites (see *MM-C 2.26*).

13.9 The voice of the Lord continues through his servant, the angel, as transmitted through Samuel. We should probably assume that all of the effects that Samuel the Lamanite had been describing up to this point would occur during the last days of the Nephite civilization. Although it is possible to point to other events that appear to fulfill the prophecies, such connections disturb the natural flow of Samuel's discourse.

13.9.25—*sword*—The destruction of the Nephites would come primarily at the edge of the Lamanite blades, tens of thousands of them expiring in their own gore around the hill Cumorah.

13.9.28—*famine*—Starvation is not specifically mentioned as part of Mormon's narrative, but the war is so extensive, bringing about the arming almost every man who could handle a weapon, that it is difficult to imagine how the Nephites were able to tend flocks or cultivate fields. There must have been a natural dearth because of the extended war. Once the Nephites began their retreating war from the narrow neck of land to the hill Cumorah, food would have been a serious problem for the soldiers and their families. In Mormon's second letter to his son, however, the prophet/historian describes a brutality which may have initially derived from a lack of regular victuals (see *MR-C 9.7–10*).

13.9.31—*pestilence*—Again, such wide-spread sickness is not recounted by Mormon directly, but the fact that the war produced tens of thousands of corpses that were not adequately buried (*MM-C 2.15*), it is certain that any number of diseases could have followed.

13.10 The complete destruction of the Nephite civilization took place about the year AD 385, toward the end of the fourth generation prophesied by Samuel. The cause of this destruction was the fact that for more than sixty years, the Nephites refused to hearken to the voice of Mormon and the other prophets, choosing to die rather than repent.

13.10.17–18—*fourth generation*—With respect to the period of time following the appearance of the signs that would be given of the birth of Jesus Christ, the term "generation" is almost always defined as a hundred years by the Nephite prophets. Thus, the first generation would begin about the year 1 BC and continue until AD 100; the second, from AD 100 to AD 200; the third, AD 200 to AD 300; and the fourth from AD 300 to AD 400. There are some notable exceptions to this general rule. In Nephi's reprise of his father's dream of the Tree of Life, the prophet testified that three complete generations passed away in righteousness, and many of the fourth generation (see *1 NE-C 12.9–23*). Given what we know of the history of the Nephites after the appearance of Jesus Christ to them, a generation must be defined as something between 60 to 70 years. Mormon testifies that sometime between the years AD 110 and AD 194 there was a small rebellion among the Nephites that reestablished the Lamanites once more in the land (see *4 NE-C 1.18–20*). Shortly after AD 201, pride began to enter into the hearts of the people in general, bringing about a social stratification and the destruction of the Zion society (see *4 NE-C 1.24–26*). One may quibble about the point at which that the people were no longer living in righteousness, but it is explicit in Mormon's narrative that after AD 210 great wickedness entered into the Nephite culture with the formation of the diverse churches (see *4 NE-C 1.27–34*). In AD 230, the great division between the Nephites and Lamanites transpired (see *4 NE-C 1.35–39*). Between the years AD 240 and AD 300,

9 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.

Hel. 13:9  
EM 3:1259

10 Yea, I will visit them in my fierce anger, and there shall be those of the fourth generation who shall live, of your enemies, to behold your utter destruction; and this shall surely come except ye repent, saith the Lord; and those of the fourth generation shall visit your destruction.

the people had become so wicked that the secret combinations once again appeared among the people. Thus, we may conclude that the three generations of righteousness mentioned by Nephi the son of Lehi did not extend to the year AD 300.

13.11 The Lord's invitation to happiness, peace, and love was patiently extended to the sons and daughters of Lehi until the people utterly refused to have anything to do with Him. Then they were left unto themselves, open to destruction by their enemies, completely unprotected from the hatred and violence inspired by Satan.

13.12 By the time the last Nephites fell at the hill Cumorah, the city of Zarahemla had long since been overrun and destroyed by the Lamanites (see *MM-C 2.28–29*). There was also, however, an immediacy to the prophecy of Samuel that would affect the city of Zarahemla twice within the next fifty years. In AD 17, the Nephites were forced by the Lamanites and Gadianton robbers to withdraw from most of the land that lay north of the narrow strip of wilderness and the narrow neck of land that separated the land of Desolation from the land of Lehi. Although the line of common defense mentions the land of Zarahemla, it does not specifically mention the city itself. One is left to wonder if the city itself was abandoned during the Lamanite siege. During the great disruption that took place at the time of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ, the city of Zarahemla was burned to the ground (see *3 NE-C 8.8*). This leveling of the city no doubt occurred because of the unrepentant wickedness of its inhabitants (see *3 NE-C 9.1–3*). Within 35 years after the Savior's appearance among the Nephites, the city of Zarahemla was rebuilt (see *4 NE-C 1.6–8*).

13.12.8—*Zarahemla*—The capital city of the land originally settled by the Mulekites that lay between the narrow neck of land to the north and the narrow strip of wilderness to the south that separated it from the lands of Nephi and Lehi. It became the great bastion of Nephite civilization for more than five hundred years. The name is directly associated with that of the last of the great Mulekite leaders.

13.13 Here the Lord is quite explicit about the impending doom that was about to fall upon the inhabitants of the city of Zarahemla. One is reminded of the petitions of Abraham to the Lord God regarding the city of Sodom where Lot and his family resided. Had there been ten righteous people within the walls of the city, it would have been spared. When Lot, his wife, and his two daughters fled Sodom, the judgment of God fell, completely obliterating the place. We may suppose that 6 years before the birth of Jesus Christ there were more than ten righteous people in the city of Zarahemla. At the time of the crucifixion, however, there appears to have been less.

13.14 The perfect example of this ripening for iniquity is that of the city of Ammonihah, a Nephite city which rejected the words of Alma and Amulek. They drove out any of the men who believed in any of the teachings of the prophets and then burned their wives and children to death. The consequences of their rebellion and blasphemy soon enveloped them as the Lamanites from the land of Nephi descended upon them and slew every soul (see *AL-C 16.1–3*). By the year AD 30, the Nephites in the city of Zarahemla were completely dominated by the corruptions of the Gadianton robbers among them (see *3 NE-C 6.17–30*).

11 But if ye will repent and return unto the Lord your God I will turn away mine anger, saith the Lord; yea, thus saith the Lord, blessed are they who will repent and turn unto me, but wo unto him that repenteth not.

12 Yea, wo unto this great city of Zarahemla; for behold, it is because of those who are righteous that it is saved; yea, wo unto this great city, for I perceive, saith the Lord, that there are many, yea, even the more part of this great city, that will harden their hearts against me, saith the Lord.

13 But blessed are they who will repent, for them will I spare. But behold, if it were not for the righteous who are in this great city, behold, I would cause that fire should come down out of heaven and destroy it.

14 But behold, it is for the righteous' sake that it is spared. But behold, the time cometh, saith the Lord, that when ye shall cast out the righteous from among you, then shall ye be ripe for destruction; yea, wo be unto this great city, because of the wickedness and abominations which are in her.

13.15 Although the judgments of God are called down upon the city of Gideon, the precise fulfillment is not mentioned in subsequent narrative. In fact, the city is not mentioned again by name from this point on.

13.15.9—*Gideon*—This city and valley were named after the man who had been instrumental in liberating the people of Lehi-Nephi from the oppressions of the Lamanites. It was located on the opposite side of the river Sidon from Zarahemla; that is to say, on the east side. It was located somewhat south of the hill Amnihu, a military resort for Amlici and his following prior to the great battle that reduced their numbers by over 19,000 men (see *AL-C 2.15–20*). Some scholars have rightly observed that the city of Gideon was probably located somewhat upstream from Zarahemla in that Captain Moroni and Pahoran went “down” from the land of Gideon to the city of Zarahemla (see *AL-C 62.6–7*). Gideon also was located north of the land of Manti (see *AL-C 17.1*), a place of resort near the headwaters of the river Sidon bordering on the wilderness between the land of Zarahemla and the land of Nephi.

13.16 A careful reading of 3 Nephi will reveal at least two major occasions in which the cities of the land of Zarahemla were deeply traumatized by the events of the day. One of them took place at the time the Nephites were forced to retire near the borders of the narrow neck of land in order to withstand the siege that the Lamanites and the Gadianton robbers proposed against them (see *3 NE-C 3–4*). The second transpired at the time of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ (see *3 NE-C 5–19* and *3 NE-C 9.3–12*).

13.16.21—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

13.17 The wealth of the Nephites did not in itself bring about a curse. It was the fact that their hearts were fixed upon their personal wealth as a matter of pride and power, by which they thought of themselves as elitists, and by which they oppressed those who were less fortunate than themselves. Like the Zoramites, they looked upon their riches as an outward sign of the approval of God. Therefore, any who attempted to censure them for their conduct were despised or ignored. Thus, the prophets, seers, and revelators were driven out from among them; thus, the pretenders who tickled their ears with pleasant observations were esteemed and exalted among them.

13.18 This constitutes a reprise of that which Mormon had said previously on his own authority as a prophet of God (see 12.18–19). Here Samuel the Lamanite is quoting directly from the angel of the Lord who had delivered the warning. One naturally wonders why any man would bury treasures in the earth, what set of circumstances would justify such an action. We know little or nothing regarding the financial systems of the Nephites, whether or not they had anything approaching a modern bank. It seems unlikely, however, that a society rife with corruption would entrust any group of men with the responsibility of preserving one’s wealth and power. The secret combinations were fond of robbing and pilfering any valuables that they could get their hands on. Perhaps burying one’s reserves was one of many extremes that the Nephites employed to protect their goods. Did the Nephites built secret, well-disguised depositories beneath the ground? Did they take advantage of natural grottoes? We do not know.

15 Yea, and wo be unto the city of Gideon, for the wickedness and abominations which are in her.

16 Yea, and wo be unto all the cities which are in the land round about, which are possessed by the Nephites, because of the wickedness and abominations which are in them.

17 And behold, a curse \*shall come upon the land, saith the Lord of Hosts, because of the peoples’ sake who are upon the land, yea, because of their wickedness and their abominations.

{~~9~~—1830}

18 And it shall come to pass, saith the Lord of Hosts, yea, our great and true God, that whoso shall hide up treasures in the earth shall find them again no more, because of the great curse of the land, save he be a righteous man and shall hide it up unto the Lord.

\* p. 443  
Hel. 13:17–20,  
23, 30, 35–36  
EM 3:1259

Hel. 13:18–19,  
21, 31  
EM 3:1259



13.19 We have speculated about how and where the prophets of the Lord kept the records of the Nephites, together with the other ancient artifacts that had come into their possession. The bulk of these treasures were passed down from generation to generation, through times of apostasy, rebellion, and war. We are not certain how the prophets managed to preserve their stewardship. After the visit of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites, the growing volume of records were watched over by a series of guardians until the prophet Ammoron hid them in the hill Shim in the land of Antum (see *4 NE-C 1.48–49* and *MM-C 1.2–4*). We know little about the nature of Ammoron’s depository. Later, when the Lamanites were about to overrun the land of Antum, Mormon gathered up all of the records from the hill Shim and carried them with him until he reached the depository located at the hill Cumorah (see *MM-C 4.23*). As will be seen, the large depository at Cumorah was probably of Jaredite construction. There the literary and religious treasures of the Nephites were hidden up and sealed up unto the Lord. Throughout the temporal history of the Nephite people down to the modern era, many attempts have been made to find and despoil this vast collection of metal plates. No one has been successful, a product of the blessings of the Lord encapsulated in the prophecies of Mormon and Samuel.

13.20 The purpose for hiding up any treasure it to preserve it from unwanted access. In the case of the Nephites, wanted access was also denied, inasmuch as access to the treasure’s location was out of reach once they were compelled to flee for their lives before the armies of the Lamanites. Eventually, all those who had ensconced their valuables perished in battle and no one, then, knew where to look. Thus, the disappearance of the wealth of the Nephites transpired because of their unwillingness to repent and the subsequent lack of divine protection from their enemies.

13.21 Had the inhabitants of the city of Zarahemla hearkened to the voice of the Lord through His servants and by the whisperings of the Holy Ghost, they would have known better ways to deal with their accumulated wealth other than placing it in the ground. The wicked have no use for the poor, the naked, the hungry, and the destitute.

13.22 Using wealth to foster social stratification is antithetical to the establishment of Zion and the Kingdom of God. Committing sin ultimately, but quickly, leads to ingratitude. Those focused on the acquisition of personal wealth seldom if ever contemplate the source of all such blessings. When men fail to acknowledge the hand of God in all of their affairs, they are cursed indeed. Wealth in concert with an accursed people exacerbates the problem, ripening that people in wickedness. Disregard for God is invariably associated with disregard for one’s fellow man. Disregard for one’s fellow man allows for villainy of every kind, the fundamental spirit of the secret combination of Gadianton and Kishkumen.

19 For I will, saith the Lord, that they shall hide up their treasures unto me; and cursed be they who hide not up their treasures unto me; for none hideth up their treasures unto me save it be the righteous; and he that hideth not up his treasures unto me, cursed is he, and also the treasure, and none shall redeem it because of the curse of the land.

20 And the day shall come that they shall hide up their treasures, because they have set their hearts upon riches; and because they have set their hearts upon their riches, and will hide up their treasures when they shall flee before their enemies; because they will not hide them up unto me, cursed be they and also their treasures; and in that day shall they be smitten, saith the Lord.

21 Behold ye, the people of this great city, and hearken unto my words; yea, hearken unto the words which the Lord saith; for behold, he saith that ye are cursed because of your riches, and also are your riches cursed because ye have set your hearts upon them, and have not hearkened unto the words of him who gave them unto you.

22 Ye do not remember the Lord your God in the things with which he hath blessed you, but ye do always remember your riches, not to thank the Lord your God for them; yea, your hearts are not drawn out unto the Lord, but they do swell with great pride, unto boasting, and unto great swelling, envyings, strifes, malice, persecutions, and murders, and all manner

Hel. 13:19–20  
EM 1:190  
Hel. 13:19–24  
EM 3:1259  
Hel. 13:19,21, 32,  
38  
EM 3:1259

Hel. 13:21  
CR85-O 78

Hel. 13:22  
DNTEC 2:451

13.23 The worship of the Son of God, the basis upon which any nation ever hopes to prosper in the promised land, is not merely an acknowledgement of his sovereignty, but an emulation of his conduct and teachings. Jesus Christ devoted all that he was toward the improvement of the children of men, both temporally and spiritually. When we, as inhabitants of a land consecrated for the righteous, fail to observe to do as he does, then we are cursed beyond measure, and our eternal prospects are dim indeed.

13.24 Although Nephi and Lehi may have been held in some esteem because of their many contributions to the prosperity of the Nephites as a people, it is clear that there were many others in addition to Samuel who were violently abused as they set about on the errands which the Lord had given them. Samuel would eventually be driven from the walls of Zarahemla by stones and arrows (see 16.2, 7–8). Within six years, the threat of violent death would loom over the believing Nephites and had it not been for the appearance of the prophesied signs of the birth of Christ, the saints would have been murdered by the thousands (see 3 *NE-C 1.9–18*).

13.25 Notwithstanding the similarity between Samuel’s pronouncement and that which the Savior made to the scribes and Pharisees (see *MT-C 23.29–32*), more than just the Jewish ancestors of the inhabitants of the city of Zarahemla are being censured. The priests and many of the people of King Noah had no hesitancy putting Abinadi to death, nor were above pursuing the prophet’s converts into the wilderness with intent to kill. From the days of father Lehi, his children had frequently opposed the servants of God with violence.

13.25.27—*prophets*—We are not privy as to which prophets some of the saints were taking exception to. Needless to say, most doctrinal issues that foment among the children of men are really matters involving conduct rather than just philosophical disagreement.

13.26 This has ever been the *modus operandi* of the wicked, by which good is accused of being evil and evil is proffered as the ultimate good. This was the philosophical foundation stone upon which the secret combinations established themselves. It reflects a narcissistic attitude which cannot exist among the righteous. Relativism such as this can only be found among those who love themselves more than they do God, those who despise and take advantage of anyone who stands between them and self-gratification. Any man who speaks the truth of eternity is a threat and must be disposed of.

13.27 There are many who will not brave the anger of the wicked by telling the truth. Among these fainthearted souls are those who are prepared to say anything in order to enjoy the lusts of the flesh; glib, clever men who tickled the ears of their listeners with undeserved compliments and doctrines without poignancy. These are the servants of Satan, whether they acknowledge him as their master or not. They are liars in the employ of liars.

of iniquities.

23 For this cause hath the Lord God caused that a curse should come upon the land, and also upon your riches, and this because of your iniquities.

24 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.

25 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.

26 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.

27 But behold, if a man shall come among you and shall say: Do this, and there is no iniquity; do that and ye shall not suffer; yea, he will say: Walk after the pride of your own hearts; yea, walk after the pride of your eyes, and do whatsoever your heart desireth—and if a man shall come among you and say this, ye will receive him, and say

Hel. 13:24–26  
PM 37  
Hel. 13:24–27  
CR88-O 102  
Hel. 13:24–28  
MD 470  
DNTEC 3:484  
Hel. 13:24–39  
DS 2:195

Hel. 13:25–26  
DNTEC 1:621

\* p. 444

Hel. 13:27–28  
PM 37

13.28 Those who have gained favor with the wicked are given leave to join in their wickedness, embraced as brethren. In the end, this is the design, the temptation, and the quintessence of priestcraft.

13.29 So long as the wicked enjoy the spoils of their wickedness, there is little that will persuade them to change their approach to life. It is only when they no longer have access to the pleasures of this lost and fallen world that they begin to regret their circumstances. Hence, the frequent deprivations experienced by the Nephites. Regret, however, is no guarantee of subsequent, productive repentance as the history of the Nephites frequently demonstrates. The lord of the foolish and blind guides is Lucifer himself, and he will always work his will upon those who reject the whisperings of the Spirit of God.

13.30 Within a relatively short period of time, the Nephites would be cut off from the bounty of their fields. From AD 17 until AD 26, the Nephites found themselves exiled from their own lands, subsisting on that which they were able to carry with them during the siege. There may have been other outward signs evident to the Nephites that Samuel is identifying as being part of the Lord's curse upon the land.

13.31 Had the Nephites buried their wealth prior to abandoning their lands during the nine years of exile, they would not have had access to those things which had defined their positions in society, their power, their self-righteousness, and their self-indulgence. Death, of course, is the final arbiter of material comfort; spiritual poverty is the most painful of all.

13.32 Is this the cry of those who have merely lost their material possessions that provided comfort and ease, or is this the cry of their spirits in prison, their bodies having fallen into the dust through death? Perhaps this is the general lament of the wicked once they have been disabused of their pride in any fashion.

13.33 At what point does a wicked man fully acknowledge his persecution of the servants of God? Are these the words of a man who is simply reduced to poverty? Is there any humility in these words, or do they simply express the cries of a damned soul, one who no longer needs to speculate one way or the other as to his spiritual circumstances? The tragedy here is that even in the depths of hell, whether in the body of out of it, the souls of the wicked still hanker for the lusts of the flesh. This is a cautionary tale, indeed, for those of us still enjoying the benefits of mortal life. We cannot indulge ourselves with impunity; there will come a time of reckoning, a time that will determine if we have any substance of character without the props of mortality.

that he is a prophet.

28 Yea, ye will lift him up, and ye will give unto him of your substance; ye will give unto him of your gold, and of your silver, and ye will clothe him with costly apparel; and because he speaketh flattering words unto you, and he saith that all is well, then ye will not find fault with him.

29 O ye wicked and ye perverse generation; ye hardened and ye stiffnecked people, how long will ye suppose that the Lord will suffer you? Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides? Yea, how long will ye choose darkness rather than light?

30 Yea, behold, the anger of the Lord is already kindled against you; behold, he hath cursed the land because of your iniquity.

31 And behold, the time cometh that he curseth your riches, that they become slippery, that ye cannot hold them; and in the days of your poverty ye cannot retain them.

32 And in the days of your poverty ye shall cry unto the Lord; and in vain shall ye cry, for your desolation is already come upon you, and your destruction is made sure; and then shall ye weep and howl in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts. And then shall ye lament, and say:

33 O that I had repented, and had not killed the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out. Yea, in that day ye shall say: O that we had remembered the Lord our God in the day that he gave us our riches, and then they would not have become slippery that we should lose them; for behold, our riches are gone from us.

Hel. 13:29  
MD 445  
CR88-O 7

Hel. 13:32–33  
MD 834  
Hel. 13:32,36–38  
CR81-O 63

13.34 How may a man be productive without tools? How may he defend himself without weapons? If a man has lived his entire life in carnal security, how does he survive in an existence without those tangible things which provided a semblance of security? Such a man in the world of spirits would be stripped naked, without hope, without joy, without love, completely exposed to the power of the evil one and his minions.

13.35 In life or in death this is a pitiful expression of loss. The great tragedy is that it is meaningless in eternity.

13.36 So long as the children of men think in these terms, there is no opportunity for growth or change. To regret not having repented because of the loss of material possessions, is not sufficient purpose in the man's heart to bring about a substantive change of character.

13.37 Those who have lived lives of self-indulgence, greed, and power have no great expectations once they leave this life. Those truths which they rejected in the persecution of the servants of God will shine brightly, unquenchable. The falsehoods they rebelliously entertained will melt away, providing no comfort of any kind. They will be surrounded with those like unto themselves, for they will be demons, angels of the devil, suffering the misery he suffers in expectation of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Redemption from this suffering would be possible in a few years, but only by hearkening to the voices of those whom they rejected while in mortality.

13.38 Wickedness never was happiness, and never will be so long as truth and light reign supreme in eternity. The wicked who persist in their wickedness will partake of that same spirit of rebellion in the world of spirits, cast into a prison of their own making. The powers of faith and repentance will exist there, but those who are self-obsessed will find difficulty bringing those principles of salvation into their lives. The spirits of the unjust will find the way of salvation far more arduous there, yet possible, given enough time and effort. Many may choose to suffer rather than humble themselves. Self-pity is still a function of pride.

13.39 The far better course of action for the inhabitants of Zarahemla would be to hearken to the words of Samuel the Lamanite, beginning the process of sanctification while still in the midst of mortality. Many of the people would take advantage of that opportunity as they turned to the servants of God for baptism and the other saving ordinances.

14.1 Samuel had been quite specific and candid about those events that would take place in the far distant future, at the time the Nephite nation would come

34 Behold, we lay a tool here and on the morrow it is gone; and behold, our swords are taken from us in the day we have sought them for battle.

35 Yea, we have hid up our treasures and they have slipped away from us, because of the curse of the land.

36 O that we had repented in the day that the word of the Lord came unto us; for behold the land is cursed, and all things are become slippery, and we cannot hold them.

37 Behold, we are surrounded by demons, yea, we are encircled about by the angels of him who hath sought to destroy our souls. Behold, our iniquities are great. O Lord, canst thou not turn away thine anger from us? And this shall be your language in those days.

38 But behold, 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.

39 O ye people of the land, that ye would hear my words! And I pray that the anger of the Lord be turned away from you, and that ye would repent and be saved.

*{Chapter V; continued}*  
**(Chapters 14)**

*{1830}*

1 AND now it came to pass that Samuel, the Lamanite, did proph-

Hel. 13:37  
MD 190  
Hel. 13:37–38  
AGQ 1:79  
AGQ 5:110  
\* p. 445

Hel. 13:38  
AF 95  
AGQ 1:72  
MF 118  
FPM 256  
EM 1:153  
CR86-A 71  
CR89-O 94

Hel. 14  
MD 490

to an end at the hands of the Lamanites. He also testified to them that those conditions that would ultimately destroy their posterity were already apparent among them and would be the means by which multitudes who then lived would be swept from the face of the earth. As is the case with every fallen society, the causes and effects of the tragedies which were befalling the Nephites were numerous. Samuel the Lamanite apparently was as articulate about these other failings as he was about the ones which he described in the foregoing chapter. From this point on, Samuel will be definitive about the short time frame that lay between his preaching and the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

14.1.8—*Samuel*—A Lamanite prophet who appeared in the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He correctly foretells all that would transpire prior to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites and the eventual destruction of the Nephite civilization.

14.1.10—*Lamanite*—Specifically one of the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

14.2 Samuel began his ministry among the Nephites in Zarahemla in the 86th year of the reign of the judges (see 13.1). This would correspond to sometime during the latter part of the year 6 BC and the beginning of the year 5 BC in our modern calendar. Inasmuch as the birth of Jesus Christ is a matter of inspired record, the 6th of April, 1 BC, enterprising mathematicians might be inclined to figure out exactly how the Nephites reckoned their calendar year. Suffice it to say, however, that Samuel was clear enough in his revelation that the rebellious Nephites would use his information against their faithful brethren when the five years were completed, fixing the very day upon which the saints would be murdered, if the signs of the Lord's birth did not appear exactly on time (see 3 *NE-C 1.4–9*).

14.2.23—*cometh*—Speaking specifically of the birth of the Son of God. Samuel was not the only one who had been this specific. Lehi had testified that the Messiah would be raised up among the Jews six hundred years from the time his family left the land of Judea. This prophecy transpired no more than a few months after their departure (see 1 *NE-C 10.14*). Nephi iterates the same after his experience with the Vision of the Tree of Life (see 1 *NE-C 19.8*). Nephi later testifies that the prophets whose teaching had been preserved upon the Plates of Brass, likewise had been so detailed that the Nephites could clearly make a correlation between their prophecies and that of Lehi and Nephi (see 2 *NE-C 25.19*). It will be interesting one day to read those same prophecies and understand them as did Nephi.

14.3 We are not privy to the nature of the “lights” in the heaven that made the night as bright as daytime at the time Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Inasmuch as no such effect was reported in the records that we have from the eastern hemisphere, we must assume that the lights were short lived, lasting no more than twelve hours, or that they were luminaries that appeared in a geosynchronous orbit above the land of Zarahemla. The plurality of the lights that made the night as if it were day is not mentioned in the record made by Nephi, the son of Nephi (see 3 *NE-C 1.15–20*).

14.4 Simply put, there would be 36 hours of continual daylight, the twelve

esy a great many more things which cannot be written.

2 And behold, he said unto them: Behold, I give unto you a sign; for five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name.

3 And behold, this will I give unto you for a sign at the time of his coming; for behold, there shall be great lights in heaven, insomuch that in the night before he cometh there shall be no darkness, insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day.

4 Therefore, there shall be one

PM 233  
EM 1:152, 170,  
183, 205, 213  
EM 2:749  
EM 3:1163,  
1259  
Hel. 14:1–6  
JC 52  
Hel. 14:1–7  
MD 714  
Hel. 14:1–9  
JC 101

Hel. 14:2  
MA 54, 59  
AF 118  
JC 101  
EM 2:731  
EM 3:1163  
CR85-A 104  
Hel. 14:2–5  
AF 84  
DNTC 1:97  
Hel. 14:2–6  
MM 1:359  
Hel. 14:2–8  
AF 84  
EM 2:727  
Hel. 14:2–25  
EM 1:153  
Hel. 14:2–27  
EM 2:750  
Hel. 14:2–31  
EM 1:152  
Hel. 14:2–8, 20–  
28  
EM 2:893  
Hel. 14:3–7  
EM 2:730

Hel. 14:4  
EM 3:1259

hours of illuminated night transpiring just before the time of the Lord's birth. Without going into all of the mechanics involved, we may clearly say that as the sun was rising after the day-lit night in Zarahemla, that same sun would have been setting in the land of Israel, marking the beginning of the next day there, according to the reckoning of the Jews at the time. That evening would be, according to our present method of calculating time, the night of the 6th of April 1 BC.

14.4.54—*surety*—The sign was stunning to the inhabitants of the land, insomuch as the wicked were absolutely terrified for a time (see *3 NE-C 1.15–20*). So startled were the wicked that their planned day of execution was indefinitely postponed.

14.5 The star was in addition to the “light” that had made the night as bright as the day. Samuel does not tell the Nephites that the star would appear on the night of daylight, nor does Nephi's account establish precisely when that sign of the Lord's birth appeared (see *3 NE-C 1.21*). It seems certain, however, that the star that the Nephites observed in their part of the earth was the same one that announced to the wise men from the east that the Son of God had been born (see *MT-C 2.1–2*). That star was still apparent nearly two years later when these inspired divine emissaries arrived in Jerusalem and Bethlehem (see *MT-C 2.7–16*). It would be reasonable to assume as well that the Nephites were able to see that star during those same two years.

14.6 In the account provided here, Samuel does not specify exactly what other signs and wonders would take place, nor does Mormon's account of Nephi's record provide more detail. All that is said is that the prophesied events, all of the signs and wonders, took place (see *3 NE-C 1.20*).

14.7 It would be the wicked, those who would plot against the lives of the saints, who would fall to the earth as a result of their astonishment (see *3 NE-C 1.16*). We might assume that those who had been targeted for execution by the wicked also fell to their knees in order to express their deep gratitude for the temporal salvation that had come as a result of the fulfillment of the prophecy.

14.8 One would think that the manifestation of the power of God and the truth of the prophecies that had been made over the centuries would have been sufficient to have convinced the entire population of the Nephites and the Lamanites that Nephi and his brethren had been right all along. There were, however, a goodly number of the inhabitants of the land of Zarahemla who were willing to believe anything, other than the truth (see *3 NE-C 1.22*).

14.9 Mormon provides no account of the original call extended to Samuel to preach the Gospel by crying repentance to the inhabitants of the land of Zarahemla. Mormon does testify to us, however, that once he had been cast out from among the people, the voice of the Lord came unto him again and commanded him to return to the city of Zarahemla to finish the task that had been assigned to him (see 13.2–4).

14.9.11—*angel*—We cannot be certain precisely when this angel appeared to Samuel. Was this the divine messenger that had been sent to him while he yet dwelt in the land of his nativity, or was this the angel that had been commissioned to send the prophet back to the city of Zarahemla after he had been cast out? There is always the possibility that the angel was present on both occasions.

day and a night and a day, as if it were one day and there were no night; and this shall be unto you for a sign; for ye shall know of the rising of the sun and also of its setting; therefore they shall know of a surety that there shall be two days and a night; nevertheless the night shall not be darkened; and it shall be the night before he is born.

5 And behold, there shall a new star arise, such an one as ye never have beheld; and this also shall be a sign unto you.

6 And behold this is not all, there shall be many signs and wonders in heaven.

7 And it shall come to pass that ye shall all be amazed, and wonder, insomuch that ye shall fall to the earth.

8 And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall believe on the Son of God, the same shall have everlasting life.

9 And behold, thus hath the Lord commanded me, by his angel, that I should come and tell this thing unto you; yea, he hath commanded that I should prophesy these things unto you; yea, he hath said unto me: Cry unto this people, repent and prepare the way of the Lord.

Hel. 14:4–5  
EM 2:727

Hel. 14:5  
MD 765  
JC 99  
Hel. 14:5–6  
EM 3:1259

Hel. 14:7  
CR00-A 16

14.10 As we might expect, the appearance of a Lamanite among the Nephites, calling them to repentance, would be received as an affront of the first order. In Nephite society, one of the great assumed verities was that the Nephites were always more spiritually minded than the Lamanites, and had been for centuries. The fact that there were numerous examples that defied the stereotype, once a Nephite succumbed to the lusts of the flesh, he no longer thought clearly. The issues Samuel raised were irrelevant; he was a Lamanite, therefore his words were easily dismissed. The Nephites could cry out against him, saying that they had prophets, seers and revelators among them already, in the persons of Lehi and Nephi. The irony was, of course, is that they gave no more heed to them than they did to Samuel. Racial bigotry is one of the markers for underlying sin; the pure in heart always perceive the divinity in every man.

14.10.7—*Lamanite*—Specifically one of the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

14.11 Samuel was upon the walls of the city of Zarahemla because those posted at the gates of the city had not allowed him in (see 13.4). He had been commissioned to testify of their wickedness and to instruct them how they might obtain forgiveness of their sins. This has been the role of prophets since the beginning of time.

14.12 The signs associated with the birth of Jesus Christ were designed to help the Lamanites and the Nephites become aware that the prophecies that had been handed down since the days of their father Lehi were true, that redemption for the grave and from hell was possible to those who believed in the Son of God.

14.12.11–12—*Jesus Christ*—The author of eternal salvation, both of the body and the spirit through the power of the resurrection and his atoning sacrifice for sin.

14.12.18—*Father*—Under the direction of God the eternal Father, the Lord Jesus, known in the premortal councils as Jehovah, was the instrument by which the heavens and earth, as we perceive them, were brought into existence. He was the Creator and his has become the Redeemer of that creation as well. Those who will receive salvation and exaltation at his hands will be those who have become his sons and daughters through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the Gospel of Christ. They become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

14.13 True faith unto salvation focuses on the Son of God and motivates the children of God to become as he is through true repentance. The atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ provides the means by which a man or woman might be forgiven of all sin and transgression, cleansed of all spot and stain.

14.13.26—*merits*—The merits of Jesus Christ are manifold. In the first place, the Savior took upon himself, at his Father's request, the task of providing a way whereby men might be sanctified and purified. This was accomplished in part because of the priesthood authority that was placed upon him before the foundations of the earth were laid. In

10 And now, because I am a Lamanite, and have spoken unto you the words which the Lord hath commanded me, and because it was hard against you, ye are angry with me and do seek to destroy me, and have cast me out from among you.

11 And ye \*shall hear my words, for, for this intent have I come up upon the walls of this city, that ye might hear and know of the judgments of God which do await you because of your iniquities, and also that ye might know the conditions of repentance;

12 And also that ye might know of the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and that ye might know of the signs of his coming, to the intent that ye might believe on his name.

13 And if ye believe on his name ye will repent of all your sins, that thereby ye may have a remission of them through his merits.

\* p. 446

Hel. 14:12  
AF 252  
JC 13, 34  
PM 60, 526  
EM 1:100

Hel. 14:13  
MF 151  
CR01-A 30

addition, Jesus in no thing ever defied the will of the Father, passing through his entire mortal experience without sin. This sinlessness made him capable of an indescribable and infinite love by which he willingly suffered the punishment for all sin and rebellion of the children of men.

14.14 About the time of the 34th anniversary of the signs of the birth of Jesus Christ, the signs attendant to the death of the Son of God disrupted the affairs of the inhabitants of the land (see 3 *NE-C* 8.2–5). Note that Samuel does not reveal the exact time of the interval.

14.15 The salvation of the children of men is two-fold, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ being an integral part of both. Jesus held the keys of death, the power of the resurrection, and was designated in the beginning to be the first-fruits of them that slept. Therefore, from the time of Adam and Eve until the Meridian of Time, no man, woman, or child ever came forth from the tomb as a glorified being. Jesus was the first. By definition, Jesus could not be resurrected until he had died. On the cross, the spirit of the Son of God was loosed from his physical body and ventured into the world of spirits where he announced to the disembodied spirits there that the resurrection from the dead was possible, that the long-awaited blessing of the body and the spirit being eternally rejoined, never again to be separated, was about to be made available to all of the sons and daughters of God. Within a few short hours, Jesus came forth from the tomb prepared for eternity, empowered to provide that blessing to every person who would ever live upon this planet. Resurrection constitutes the salvation of the physical body. The second aspect of the salvation of mankind entails the satisfying the law of God, that the absolute justice of God the eternal Father might be without flaw or exception. For every sin committed by the inhabitants of this earth there is a punishment affixed, an immutable punishment which cannot be ignored for any reason. For reasons almost beyond our ken, Jesus Christ took upon himself all of these aggregated punishments. The deleterious effects upon the Savior's body, mind, and spirit cannot be articulated fully, although there have been some wonderful attempts to do so. The punishment for any one person's sins would have been sufficient to destroy any man in the flesh, yet through the power that Jesus held as a result of his foreordination and his sinless life, the Son of God satisfied the entire spiritual debt incurred by the children of men. When that task was complete, the Lord let natural law take its course and he expired, as a testimony that atoning sacrifice was in effect. The crucifixion did not take the Savior's life; the sins of men did.

14.16 The power of the resurrection could not be in effect for the whole of mankind until after the Lord Jesus Christ himself came forth from the tomb as an exalted, glorified being. He could not be resurrected unless he first suffered the effects of death. Without resurrection, the spirits of men would have welter forever in the world of spirits, eternally separated from the presence of God. The resurrection provides the means whereby men can at least come before Him to be judged. The death of Christ came about when it did because of the destructive effects of his having suffered the consequences of the sins of mankind.

14.16.3–4—*this death*—That is to say, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross at the end of his mortal ministry.

14.16.16–17—*first death*—The first death was that which transpired almost immediately when Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil: they were cast out of the Garden of Eden and they were thereby denied personal access to God

14 And behold, again, another sign I give unto you, yea, a sign of his death.

15 For behold, he surely must die that salvation may come; yea, it behooveth him and becometh expedient that he dieth, to bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, that thereby men may be brought into the presence of the Lord.

16 Yea, behold, this death bringeth to pass the resurrection, and redeemeth all mankind from the first death—that spiritual death; for all mankind, by the fall of Adam being cut off from the presence of the Lord, are considered as dead, both as to things temporal and to things spiritual.

Hel. 14:14–27  
 JC 722  
 EM 3:1259  
 Hel. 14:14,20, 27  
 EM 2:731  
 Hel. 14:15  
 AF 393  
 PM 526  
 CR88-A 18  
 Hel. 14:15–17  
 MA 54  
 AF 384  
 JC 24  
 PM 268  
 EM 2:728  
 Hel. 14:15–18  
 MD 62, 758  
 DNTC 2:242  
 Hel. 14:15–19  
 EM 3:1407  
 CR93-A 34

Hel. 14:16  
 AF 73  
 EM 2:833  
 CR87-O 77  
 Hel. 14:16–17  
 AF 94  
 DS 1:106, 111  
 EM 2:485  
 EM 3:1089,  
 1090  
 CR90-O 96  
 Hel. 14:16–18  
 DS 2:224  
 Hel. 14:16–19  
 EM 3:1391



the eternal Father. Had there been no resurrection, or a promise of a resurrection, physical death would have brought about a permanent separation between God and man, inasmuch as the spirits of all men would have remained in the world of spirits. In that unembodied state, the children of men would have eventually become completely subjected to the devil and his minions. They would have become devils, angels to a devil, shut out from the presence of God forever (see *2 NE-C 9.8–10*). The resurrection spares all men from that otherwise unavoidable fate.

14.16.19–20—*spiritual death*—The separation of God and man comes about as the result of sin. Had there been no resurrection from death, the problem would have been infinitely compounded.

14.16.28—*Adam*—Our first father partook of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thereby disassociating himself from the presence of God the Father by that transgression. All men who ignore the counsels of the Father and the Son bring that same consequence upon themselves. A further effect of the fruit was that it changed the very nature of the bodies of Adam and Eve. Had those deleterious elements not been introduced into their systems, our first parents would have remained forever in the Garden of Eden (see *2 NE-C 2.22–25*) without ever tasting mortal death. The fruit of the Tree changed them genetically so that they were susceptible to disease, injury, decay, and death. This has been passed on to all of their posterity, the entire population of the earth for the past 6,000 years. Every man, woman, and child who has ever taken one breath upon this earth, will eventually suffer the consequences of that singular act by Adam and Eve.

14.17 The physical resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ allows the spirits of the dead to depart from the world of spirits, thereby freeing them from the power of Satan in spirit prison. All men, therefore, are physically redeemed from that particular effect of the fall of Adam. As resurrected beings, regardless of their comparative spiritual status, all men are brought before the judgment seat of the Father and the Son.

14.17.6—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

14.18 The physical death and resurrection of the Savior serve as outward tokens of a far greater achievement on his part. In the hours prior to his

17 But behold, the resurrection of Christ redeemeth mankind, yea, even all mankind, and bringeth them back into the presence of the Lord.

Hel. 14:17  
EM 2:463  
Hel. 14:17–18  
AGQ 1:75

18 Yea, and it bringeth to pass the condition of repentance, that who-

Hel. 14:18  
AF 394

physical death, Jesus suffered the punishments for all sin that had been or ever would be committed by the children of men upon this earth. The law of justice having been satisfied, every whit, men were then free to choose what sort of eternal existence they desired to have. As odd as it may seem, there will be those who will refuse to associate themselves with the Father and the Son, completely rejecting redemption and exaltation, preferring to dwell with the devil and his angels for eternity. These are the Sons of Perdition upon whom the second death has all power; these are they who refuse to repent; these are they who are cast out without glory of any kind; these are they who are miserable forever. The remainder of our Father's children, those who will who choose more wisely, will all exercise faith and repentance to one degree or another. They are thereby cleansed through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and inherit that portion of the Father's glory for the which they have prepared themselves.

14.18.3—*it*—That is to say, the literal physical resurrection of the Son of God.

14.19 Many of those in Samuel's audience were on the brink of becoming sons of perdition. They had once possessed the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their lives, but had willfully rejected those principles of happiness that they might seek for temporal power, obtain wealth in worldly things, and glut their malignant appetites in immorality and excess.

14.20 How many in Samuel's audience would live to observe the signs of which the prophet testified? No more than forty years would pass before the destruction would descend upon them. During those four decades great wars would occur wherein many thousands would perish. The government of the land of Zarahemla would collapse, bringing about dire circumstances for those unaffiliated with the tribal chieftains who filled the vacuum. How many of the multitude who listened at Samuel's feet would pursue their wickedness until the very day that the signs appeared?

14.20.26—*sun*—The lack of light would be absolute. Not only would the sun be darkened, but no man would be able to make a fire of any kind (see *3 NE-C 8.20–23*).

14.20.70–71—*three days*—The Savior was interred in Joseph's tomb late Friday afternoon. His body lay in the tomb all of Saturday while his spirit communed with the righteous in the world of spirits. He arose from the tomb early on Sunday morning. In the land of Palestine, then, the three days were understood as *portions* of three days; that is to say a period of time approximating 36 hours rather than 72 hours. We do not know precisely how the Nephites calculated their days. If they had maintained the Jewish manner, their days would have begun and ended at sunset. Without going into great detail, we assume that there is about a nine-hour difference between Jerusalem and the city of Zarahemla. That is to say, if the sun were setting in Jerusalem (6:00 PM), Zarahemla would be experiencing midmorning (9:00 AM). Matthew testifies that Jesus gave up his spirit shortly after the ninth hour, or about 3:00 PM (see *MT-C 27.46–51*). This would have corresponded to about 6:00 AM in Zarahemla. Thus, the Nephites would have been perceiving the new dawn at the time of the Savior's death, when, on a sudden, the storms and earthquakes begin, followed by the impenetrable darkness. The passage of 36 hours would have included most of Friday and Saturday's daylight hours, and the night in between. After sunset on Saturday, the darkness would have dissipated, the light of the

soever repenteth the same is not hewn down and cast into the fire; but whosoever repenteth not is hewn down and cast into the fire; and there cometh upon them again a spiritual death, yea, a second death, for they are cut off again as to things pertaining to righteousness.

19 Therefore repent ye, repent ye, lest by knowing these things and not doing them ye shall suffer yourselves to come under condemnation, and ye are brought down unto this second death.

20 But behold, as I said unto you concerning another sign, a sign of his death, behold, in that day that he shall suffer death the sun shall be darkened and refuse to give his light unto you; and also the moon and the stars; and there shall be no light upon the face of this land, even from the time that he shall suffer death, for the space of three days, to the time that he shall rise again from the dead.

AGQ 5:107  
MD 655  
MF 125  
EM 2:833  
EM 3:1391  
CR92-A 102

Hel. 14:20  
DNTC 1:828  
MLM 409  
Hel. 14:20–21  
AGQ 3:44  
Hel. 14:20–24  
MM 4:225  
Hel. 14:20–27  
AF 84  
JC 723  
Hel. 14:20–29  
PM 542  
Hel. 14:20–31  
EM 1:153

moon and stars would have become visible, and men would then have been able to light fires. See also 14.21.4.

14.21 Samuel's prophecy is exacting and its fulfillment undeniable. Thunder and lightning accompanied the initial storm (see 3 *NE-C* 8.6–7). The earth would shake in part because of the storm, but also as a result of the breaking up of the solid mass of bedrock that lay beneath the land of Zarahemla and elsewhere (see 3 *NE-C* 8.11–18). One wonders how it was that the Nephites knew that the land beneath them was, for the most part, a solid mass. Was there obvious geological evidence? What sort of activities on their part had revealed the superstructure of the region? Do we underestimate the technology of the Nephites?

14.21.4—*time*—There are details about the sequence of events that ought to be sorted out. The storms and earthquakes in the land of Zarahemla lasted for about three hours. Should we assumed that these natural effects took place during the same time period as the three hours of darkness that attended the waning moments of the Savior's life? Some scholars have suggested that we should. There are problems with this theory, however. The time of darkness in Jerusalem occurred between noon and 3:00 PM (see *MT-C* 27.45); the corresponding time period would have been between 3:00 AM and 6:00 AM in the land of Zarahemla. When did the storm begin? When did the darkness begin? Samuel does not clarify for us precisely what he meant by "time". Did he mean the exact moment of death? Mormon's later account of the tribulations suggests that the darkness followed the storm and earthquakes (see 3 *NE-C* 8.19–20). We should probably conclude that the storm began at 6:00 AM and the absolute darkness descended three hours later at 9:00 AM. Thus, the three hours of darkness would have no corollary in the western hemisphere. See also 14.20.70–71.

14.21.22–23—*many hours*—The eyewitness accounts of the great destruction state that most of the natural turmoil took place during a three-hour period, even though for most it seemed considerably longer (see 3 *NE-C* 8.19).

14.22 Some cities would be buried, others would be shaken apart or largely damaged by the earthquakes. The topography of all of the known lands of the Lamanites and the Nephites would be altered. Many of the great roads connecting the cities would be destroyed. A great deal of time would pass before they would know what was left to them. Any maps that would have existed before the death of the Son of God would have become useless.

14.23 The city of Moronihah would be replaced by a mountain (see 3 *NE-C* 8.10, 25 and 3 *NE-C* 9.5). Many other cities would be swallowed up in the earth (see 3 *NE-C* 8.14 and 3 *NE-C* 9.6, 8). With regard to other great mountains and valleys, little is recorded, but we may assume with confidence that these extremities transpired.

14.24 This prophecy was explicitly fulfilled (see 3 *NE-C* 8.13–14).

14.25 There can be no question that this prophecy was fulfilled, inasmuch as the resurrected Jesus pointed it out to Nephi when he appeared to the

21 Yea, at the time that he shall yield up the ghost there shall be thunderings and lightnings for the space of many hours, and the earth shall shake and tremble; and the rocks which are upon the face of this earth, which are both above the earth and beneath, which ye know at this time are solid, or the more part of it is one solid mass, shall be bro\*ken up;

Hel. 14:21  
MD 312  
Hel. 14:21–23  
DNTC 1:831

\* p. 447

22 Yea, they shall be rent in twain, and shall ever after be found in seams and in cracks, and in broken fragments upon the face of the whole earth, yea, both above the earth and beneath.

23 And behold, there shall be great tempests, and there shall be many mountains laid low, like unto a valley, and there shall be many places which are now called valleys which shall become mountains, whose height is great.

24 And many highways shall be broken up, and many cities shall become desolate.

25 And many graves shall be opened, and shall yield up many of

Hel. 14:25  
AF 394

Nephites (see 3 NE-C 23.7–13). Some students of the Book of Mormon have suggested that Lehi, the brother of Nephi, was the one who failed to record Samuel’s prophecy about the saints coming forth from their tombs after the resurrection of the Son of God. It is far more likely, however, that Nephi the son of Nephi was the one who had failed, in the midst of the turmoil, to record the fulfillment of Samuel’s prediction.

14.25.17—*saints*—In reference to the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, those who have covenanted to no longer partake of the wickedness of the world. The Greek word used in the New Testament means “those not of the earth”.

14.26 Samuel did not speak of his own accord, but communicated the details of the destruction as he had been taught them by the Lord through His messenger. Thunder and lightning was undoubtedly known to the Nephites, but such extensive and persistent storms would have been new to them.

14.27 After the three hour storm and earthquakes, the darkness descended, probably about 9:00 AM. That the storm would have obscured the light of the sun is interesting, but the nature of the following darkness was more than just solar occlusion; it had palpability (see 3 NE-C 8.20–23).

14.28 As the time drew near for the Savior to be born, indisputable witnesses and other signs would be revealed among the Nephites.

14.28.8—*many*—The syntax of this verse suggests that there would be others who would have greater revelations given to them than those that had been given to Samuel. Therefore, there would be multiple witnesses as to that which would transpire among the Nephites regarding the birth and death of the Son of God. Within three or four years from the time that Samuel stood on the walls of the city of Zarahemla, many others would be privy to the same revelations (see 16.13–14). These wise men were no doubt visited in conjunction with Samuel’s prophecy.

14.29 The signs and tokens of the Savior’s mortal ministry upon the earth, together with the testimonies of the prophets of God, would leave the children of Lehi without excuse. Opportunities to express faith unto salvation and sincere repentance would abound prior to the trials and tribulations that would come upon the land.

14.30 The Nephites were free to choose eternal life or death, because they had been instructed sufficiently, and were privy to an ongoing array of miracles connected with the powers of the priesthood and the Spirit of revelation

their dead; and many saints shall appear unto many.

26 And behold, thus hath the angel spoken unto me; for he said unto me that there should be thunders and lightnings for the space of many hours.

27 And he said unto me that while the thunder and the lightning lasted, and the tempest, that these things should be, and that darkness should cover the face of the whole earth for the space of three days.

28 And the angel said unto me that many shall see greater things than these, to the intent that they might believe that these signs and these wonders should come to pass upon all the face of this land, to the intent that there should be no cause for unbelief among the children of men—

29 And this to the intent that whosoever will believe might be saved, and that whosoever will not believe, a righteous judgment might come upon them; and also if they are condemned they bring upon themselves their own condemnation.

30 And now remember, remember, my brethren, that whosoever perisheth, perisheth unto himself; and whosoever doeth iniquity, doeth it unto himself; for behold, ye are free; ye are permitted to act for yourselves; for behold, God hath given unto you a knowledge and he hath made you free.

MD 36, 493,  
639, 667  
DNTC 1:847  
DNTC 2:528  
JC 724  
PM 268, 278  
EM 3:1163  
Hel. 14:25–26  
EM 2:725

Hel. 14:28  
PM 458

Hel. 14:29  
MD 655

Hel. 14:30  
AF 71  
CR82-O 24  
CR88-O 9  
CR89-O 94  
Hel. 14:30–31  
AF 54  
EM 2:799  
EM 3: 986,1314

14.31 Obedience to the principles of truth and righteousness is instrumental in the process of partaking of the divine nature. The more that we obey, the closer we draw to God in spirit and in character. Those aspects of the divine nature that we acquire in life will find expression in the resurrection, predisposing us for the glory that awaits the faithful. Those who disobey will acquire attributes unbecoming a son or daughter of God, and will find themselves alienated from their eternal Father in Heaven.

15.1 Note that the entirety of chapters 14 and 15 was originally one paragraph in the first edition of the Book of Mormon. The desolation spoken of occurred on several occasions, culminating in the final exodus northward that eventually brought the Nephites and the Lamanites to the hill Cumorah where the Nephite civilization was extinguished. Desolations also took place during the Lamanite siege about the year AD 17 (see *3 NE-C 3.22–26*). Devastating loss of life also took place at the time of the Savior’s crucifixion. As each tragedy occurred, the Nephites would have been reminded of Samuel’s prophecies.

15.2 One may imagine scenes in which Nephite mothers would have difficulty in any of the distressing times that lay before the people during the forty years prior to the visit of the Lord Jesus Christ at the city Bountiful. Once the wars of attrition began, women and children would receive little or no consideration in the desperate flight from destruction. During the battles that took place during the 366th year after the birth of Christ, the treatment of women and children became barbaric and merciless (see *MM-C 4.10–15*). In his second letter to his son, Moroni, Mormon described the despicable treatment of women and children by his own forces (see *MR-C 9.9–20*). Once the atrocities began, the attempted escape by the women and children from both the Nephites and the Lamanites would have been common fare. Pregnant women and nursing mothers would have had little or no chance for survival. Similar conditions existed during the Roman siege of Jerusalem in AD 69 and later when the Jewish state was destroyed in the year AD 130 (see *MT-C 24.19*). Women with any maternal instincts at all would have perished in the fray.

15.3 The key to survival would be repentance. Hopefully, the number who repented at the time Samuel’s ministry would be great. There would be signs aplenty when the Nephites attempted to kill Samuel upon the walls. Within the five years between Samuel’s teachings and the birth of Christ, there would be other events that would persuade many to change their lives and receive the fullness of the Gospel into their lives. With the three days of light and the other wonders in heaven, many of the Nephites relented in their wickedness. The chastisements came, however, and would continue to come upon those who persisted in defying their God and their Father. The extremities of life that accompanied the various disasters that befell the Nephites were frequently persuasive enough to turn the hearts of the wicked to the covenants of their fathers. Needless to say, however, as time progressed, no amount of distress was sufficient to soften the hearts of the apostates.

15.3.12—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a

31 He hath given unto you that ye might know good from evil, and he hath given unto you that ye might choose life or death; and ye can do good and be restored unto that which is good, or have that which is good restored unto you; or ye can do evil, and have that which is evil restored unto you.

*{Chapter V; continued}*  
**(Chapters 15)**

1 AND now, my beloved brethren, behold, I declare unto you that except ye shall repent your houses shall be left unto you desolate.

2 Yea, except ye repent, your women shall have great cause to mourn in the day that they shall give suck; for ye shall attempt to flee and there shall be no place for refuge; yea, and wo unto them which are with child, for they shall be heavy and cannot flee; therefore, they shall be trodden down and shall be left to perish.

3 Yea, wo unto this people who are called the people of \*Nephi except they shall repent, when they shall see all these signs and wonders which shall be showed unto them; for behold, they have been a chosen people of the Lord; yea, the people of Nephi hath he loved, and also hath he chastened them; yea, in the days of their iniquities hath he chastened them because he loveth them.

Hel. 14:31  
MD 26  
CR90-O 108  
CR96-O 79  
CR00-A 18

Hel. 15  
EM 1:152, 170,  
183, 213  
EM 3:1259  
Hel. 15:1–2  
EM 4:1579  
Hel. 15:1–3  
EM 1:153  
Hel. 15:1–17  
EM 1:152  
Hel. 15:1–3, 17  
EM 3:1259

\* p. 448  
Hel. 15:3  
MD 122  
DNCTC 3:223  
CR89-A 6  
CR00-O 95  
CR02-A 99

faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

15.4 From the days of Laman and Lemuel, the Lamanites had been a murderous and bloodthirsty people. Their belligerence could not and did not please God. Yet, in the generations that followed the apostasy of their first fathers, the truculence of the Lamanites was primarily due to the traditions that had been instilled into their hearts and minds by the anger and frustration of their parents. When the posterity of the wicked paused sufficiently to hearken to the words of truth, they frequently responded positively, frequently living the Gospel far better than their brethren among the Nephites. The converts of the sons of Mosiah are a case in point, as were those who listened to the testimonies of Nephi and Lehi the sons of Helaman. The potential for the salvation of the Lamanites without the Gospel was frequently greater than that of the Nephites with the Gospel, hence the Lamanites were allowed to continue until a goodly number were prepared to listen to the truth and find salvation and exaltation. This, of course, was the primary purpose of the compilation of the text of the Book of Mormon, that the posterity of the Lamanites might once again be brought into the fold of Christ.

15.4.6—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

15.4.41—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

15.5 The missionary labors of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman, had been extraordinary, insomuch as the vast majority of those who lived in the land of Nephi had repented of their sins and sought to observe all that had been commanded of the righteous.

15.5.47–49—*law of Moses*—Although Mormon does not spend a great deal of time describing the ordinances of the Mosaic Law among the posterity of father Lehi, yet we may safely say that the majority of the Nephites and a goodly number of the Lamanites were as faithful in their observance of the rituals contained on the Plates of Brass as were the Jews in Jerusalem. The sacrifices and offerings were performed under the auspices of the Melchizedek priesthood which Lehi obtained and passed on to his righteous sons.

15.6 Samuel was part of a cadre of missionaries who were actively attempting to bring all of the posterity of Laman and Lemuel unto Christ. Why he had been particularly singled out to cry repentance to the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla? We do not know, save that his commission was divinely mandated.

15.7 The posterity of the people of Ammon had lived among the Nephites in the land of Zarahemla for more than seventy years. Thousands of other Lamanite converts had dwelt among the Nephites after their conversion. The

4 But behold my brethren, the Lamanites hath he hated because their deeds have been evil continually, and this because of the iniquity of the tradition of their fathers. But behold, salvation hath come unto them through the preaching of the Nephites; and for this intent hath the Lord prolonged their days.

Hel. 15:4–16  
EM 1:153  
EM 3:1259

5 And I would that ye should behold that the more part of them are in the path of their duty, and they do walk circumspectly before God, and they do observe to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments according to the law of Moses.

Hel. 15:5  
AF 454  
PM 420  
EM 1:378

6 Yea, I say unto you, that the more part of them are doing this, and they are striving with unwearied diligence that they may bring the remainder of their brethren to the knowledge of the truth; therefore there are many who do add to their numbers daily.

Hel. 15:6  
CR90-A 43

7 And behold, ye do know of yourselves, for ye have witnessed it, that as many of them as are

Hel. 15:7  
CR82-A 37  
CR90-O 95

Nephites were not unfamiliar with the faithfulness of the Lamanites to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

15.7.35—*traditions*—Samuel is quite candid here about Lamanite traditions. We do not know if he had ever been under their influence, but he certainly knew enough about them that he could speak freely about the wickedness and abominations that accompanied them.

15.7.52—*prophets*—We are not privy as to which prophets some of the saints were taking exception to. Needless to say, most doctrinal issues that foment among the children of men are really matters involving conduct rather than just philosophical disagreement.

15.8 Anyone who had lived in the land of Zarahemla would have been familiar with the longstanding commitment of the Ammonites to the principles of righteousness. The children and grandchildren of those brought into the fold by the sons of Mosiah were stellar examples of the effect of righteous traditions in the lives of good men and women.

15.9 The first covenant had been entered into by the people of King Lamoni and his father at the time their brethren came upon them to destroy the faithful (see *AL-C 24.4–17*). There were subsequent bodies of men who entered into the same oath of nonaggression (see *AL-C 25.13–14*, *AL-C 47.22–29*, *AL-C 62.14–17*, and *AL-C 62.26–29*). Although we may easily point to the 2000 stripling warriors who volunteered to join the Nephites in their battle against the forces of Amalekiah and Ammoron, we should probably accept them as being exceptions to the rule. Most of the children of the people of Ammon entered into the covenant of their fathers. Thus, even fifty years after the great war against Amalekiah had ended, the people of Ammon were still noted for their oath.

15.9.67—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

15.10 Mormon had said much the same thing of the people of Ammon when they were received into the land of Zarahemla as brethren of the Nephites (see *AL-C 27.25–30*). These faithful people had engendered at least two generations of faithful saints, and were well-known throughout the land of Zarahemla. For this capacity to completely repent from their sins, the Lamanites would continue to be preserved.

brought to the knowledge of the truth, and to know of the wicked and abominable traditions of their fathers, and are led to believe the holy scriptures, yea, the prophecies of the holy prophets, which are written, which leadeth them to faith on the Lord, and unto repentance, which faith and repentance bringeth a change of heart unto them—

8 Therefore, as many as have come to this, ye know of yourselves are firm and steadfast in the faith, and in the thing wherewith they have been made free.

9 And ye know also that they have buried their weapons of war, and they fear to take them up lest by any means they should sin; yea, ye can see that they fear to sin—for behold they will suffer themselves that they be trodden down and slain by their enemies, and will not lift their swords against them, and this because of their faith in Christ.

10 And now, because of their steadfastness when they do believe in that thing which they do believe, for because of their firmness when they are once enlightened, behold, the Lord shall bless them and pro-

CR92-O 113  
Hel. 15:7–8  
CR92-O 113

Hel. 15:9  
EM 2:804

15.11 Many of the Lamanites had received the fullness of the Gospel and in Samuel's day were faithfully observing to do all that the Lord God of Israel required of them. During the 200 years of prosperity and tranquility that would reign after the visit of the Savior to those who had survived the great destruction, all of the inhabitants of the land would live in accordance to the principles of happiness. Eventually, however, all of those who professed any kinship with the faithful would be destroyed, leaving only those who considered themselves Lamanites to continue in the land. The posterity of those who survived the destruction at the hill Cumorah would be those who would be given the blessing of having the truth revealed to them in the latter days by the text of the Book of Mormon and the influence of the Holy Ghost.

15.11.27—*fathers*—This certainly in reference to the teachings of father Lehi, and that of his righteous posterity, including Nephi and Jacob.

15.11.33—*Zenos*—This is probably in reference to the allegory of Zenos that is related in the writings of Jacob (see *JA-C 5-6*). It is doubtful that Samuel would have had access to the Small Plates of Nephi, but he certainly would have had access to the scriptures contained on the Brass Plates.

15.11.42-43—*our brethren*—In this particular instance it is clear that Samuel considers himself to be following the tradition of the Nephites and as such a Nephite. The Lamanites, whether genetic or philosophical, were those who had rejected the teachings of the Gospel. In any case, he is speaking in much the same vein as the “fathers” and Zenos, looking down the corridors of the distant future when the Lamanites would have the opportunity in the latter days to accept the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the records that would be preserved.

15.11.45—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

15.12 As to the period of time between the destruction of the Nephites and the arrival of the Gentiles we have little information as to how the Lamanites fared in the land. More than a thousand years would pass with little or no history committed to writing. From what we can discern from the indigenous peoples who remain, however, wars and destructions were frequent and severe. The history of the Lamanites since the arrival of the Gentile nations in this hemisphere has been tragic and brutal. Samuel's description of their condition during this time cannot be more accurate in general terms.

15.12.23—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

15.13 Many millions of the posterity of father Lehi have been edified by the power of the priesthood, and they have received all of the blessings that have ever been available to the faithful saints in any dispensation. Many hundreds of millions more will yet receive those same blessings.

long their days, notwithstanding their iniquity—

11 Yea, even if they should dwindle in unbelief the Lord shall prolong their days, until the time shall come which hath been spoken of by our fathers, and also by the prophet Zenos, and many other prophets, concerning the restoration of our breth\*ren, the Lamanites, again to the knowledge of the truth—

12 Yea, I say unto you, that in the latter times the promises of the Lord have been extended to our brethren, the Lamanites; and notwithstanding the many afflictions which they shall have, and notwithstanding they shall be driven to and fro upon the face of the earth, and be hunted, and shall be smitten and scattered abroad, having no place for refuge, the Lord shall be merciful unto them.

13 And this is according to the prophecy, that they shall again be brought to the true knowledge, which is the knowledge of their Redeemer, and their great and true shepherd, and be numbered among

Hel. 15:11  
AGQ 4:139  
MD 454

\* p. 449

Hel. 15:12  
AF 321

Hel. 15:13  
MD 328



15.14 To have the Gospel and not live by its precepts brings disaster, both physical and spiritual, temporally and eternally.

15.15 The Nephites had been blessed by many generations of priesthood blessings, by which innumerable miracles had touched their lives. The miracles and blessings, the faith and testimony of those who had experienced them, had been committed to writing and were readily available to their sons and daughters, and to their extended posterity. The Lamanites had been cursed by their fathers, having been taught false accounts regarding their brethren, having been instilled with mindless anger and implacable hatred. Samuel's point was that the Lamanites were just as susceptible to improvement and salvation as were the Nephites, given the same opportunities. The preservation of the Lamanites came as a direct result of the apostasy of the Nephites.

15.16 The restoration of the Lamanites to the truth has long since commenced and will continue throughout the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times.

15.17 The destruction of the Nephites became a *fait accompli* more than sixteen hundred years ago when they fell by the hundreds of thousands at the final battle with the Lamanites at the hill Cumorah

15.17.12—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

16.1 In the headnote to the book of Helaman, Mormon indicates that his account of this period of Nephite history was gleaned from the record kept by Helaman and his two sons, Nephi and Lehi. Helaman died during the 53rd year of the reign of the judges as recounted in the 37th verse of the 3rd chapter. We should probably assume that Mormon begins taking most of his narrative from the records of Nephi and Lehi, even though an argument might be made for the material contained in chapter 5 having been derived from Helaman's writings. Lehi accompanies his brother into the land northward (see 6.6) and is not mentioned again by name until the eleventh chapter of Helaman (see 11.19–23). The headnote to chapter 7 explicitly states that many of the subsequent chapters were derived from the teachings and writings of Nephi, the son of Helaman. The current edition of that headnote implies that all of the material from chapter 7 through the end of chapter 16 is derived from Nephi's material. There is no question that Nephi is the major character of the text after the death of his father, but at what point is the record of Lehi

his sheep.

14 Therefore I say unto you, it shall be better for them than for you except ye repent.

15 For behold, had the mighty works been shown unto them which have been shown unto you, yea, unto them who have dwindled in unbelief because of the traditions of their fathers, ye can see of yourselves that they never would again have dwindled in unbelief.

16 Therefore, saith the Lord: I will not utterly destroy them, but I will cause that in the day of my wisdom they shall return again unto me, saith the Lord.

17 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.

*{Chapter V; continued}*  
**(Chapters 16)**

*{¶—1830}*

1 AND now, it came to pass that there were many who heard the words of Samuel, the Lamanite, which he spake upon the walls of the city. And as many as believed on his word went forth and sought for Nephi; and when they had come forth and found him they confessed unto him their sins and denied not, desiring that they might be baptized unto the Lord.

Hel. 15:14–15  
AF 520  
DS 2:29

Hel. 16  
EM 1:152, 213  
Hel. 16:1–9  
EM 1:170

used in the formation of the text of Mormon's narrative? During the time that Samuel was prophesying from the walls of the city of Zarahemla, where were the two brothers? According to the present verse and those that follow, Nephi was outside of the city somewhere, teaching and baptizing, perhaps as far away as the river Sidon which lay to the east of the city walls (see 16.1–5). Assuming that Nephi was on the banks of the river Sidon, who recorded the words of Samuel? Would it not be reasonable to assume that Lehi was responsible for the written account that we have of the prophecy of Samuel the Lamanite? Thus, Nephi's record explicitly informed chapters 7–11 and Lehi's record would have explicitly informed chapters 13 through 16. Notice that the Nephites knew precisely what they needed to do to be reconciled to their God: they exercised faith, repented of their sins, and sought out the priesthood of God in order to receive the saving ordinances.

16.1.16—*Samuel*—A Lamanite prophet who appeared in the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He correctly foretells all that would transpire prior to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites and the eventual destruction of the Nephite civilization.

16.1.18—*Lamanite*—Specifically one of the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

16.1.41—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

16.2 We have no idea as to the distance that separated Samuel from his audience, but it was clearly not so far that his antagonists fully expected to hit him with their stones and arrows. Were the stones thrown by hand or did the antagonists use slings? Inasmuch as the Nephites were experts in the use of slings, we should probably assume that their attempts to kill Samuel were serious. The fact that the people could not hit Samuel with either stones or arrows, persuaded them that he was protected by the hand of God. The people had every reason to expect that Samuel would be destroyed where he stood, and yet he was not.

16.2.15—*Samuel*—A Lamanite prophet who appeared in the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He correctly foretells all that would transpire prior to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites and the eventual destruction of the Nephite civilization.

16.3 Those who witnessed the attempted slaying of the prophet were astonished beyond measure. They knew and understood their own skills, their accuracy with the sling and the bow. What they had seen with their own eyes was impossible. Many more of the multitude were therefore convinced, resorting to the place where Nephi was continuing to teach and baptize those who had come to an understanding of the truth, who were determined to observe the commandments of God.

16.3.27—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat

2 But as many as there were who did not believe in the words of Samuel were angry with him; and they cast stones at him upon the wall, and also many shot arrows at him as he stood upon the wall; but the Spirit of the Lord was with him, insomuch that they could not hit him with their stones neither with their arrows.

Hel. 16:2  
EM 3:1259

3 Now when they saw that they could not hit him, there were many more who did believe on his words, insomuch that they went away unto Nephi to be baptized.

Hel. 16:3–4  
AGQ 3:205

of the land of Zarahemla.

16.4 We are left to speculate about the nature of the miracles, signs and wonders that encouraged the faithful and persuaded the doubting that the coming of Christ was nigh. We may rest assured, however, that these were not frivolous. No doubt there were many of the people who assembled to be near the son of Helaman who stood in need of blessings of one sort or another. Many of the wonders were apparently more outwardly miraculous than others.

16.4.3—*Nephi*—One of the sons of Helaman, the son of Helaman. He and his brother Lehi were extraordinary prophets, seers, and revelators who restored peace and prosperity to the land of Zarahemla through their effectual ministries. He succeeded his father in the judgment seat of the land of Zarahemla.

16.4.30—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

16.5 In nothing had Nephi changed his teaching of the first principles and ordinances of God. It is difficult to imagine that Samuel was more spiritually informed than was Nephi. The people of the city of Zarahemla had already rejected the words of Nephi, notwithstanding the fact that he had proven to be one of the greatest prophets who had ever lived among the people. Samuel was a second witness to all that Nephi and Lehi had taught from the beginning, a witness whose teachings were clear and who, much like Abinadi and others, had been protected by the hand of God until he had completed the task that the Lord God had given him to do.

16.5.46—*Samuel*—A Lamanite prophet who appeared in the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He correctly foretells all that would transpire prior to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites and the eventual destruction of the Nephite civilization.

16.6 These were a hardhearted people indeed. In many respects they were like unto Laman and Lemuel who, notwithstanding the many experiences they had had with the power of God, attributed all of the manifestations to Nephi’s ability to deceive (see *1 NE-C 16.38*). In the eyes of the wicked, the miracles of God are almost always misinterpreted, and frequently they are deliberately misinterpreted. The citizens of Zarahemla knew that they lied when they accused Samuel of being possessed of a devil. Their captains knew that these

4 For behold, Nephi was 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—

5 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.

6 But the more part of them did not believe in the words of Samuel; therefore when they saw that they could not hit him with their stones and their arrows, they cried unto their captains, saying: Take this fellow and bind him, for behold he

Hel. 16:4  
MD 507

\* p. 450  
Hel. 16:5  
CR88-A 8

were false charges as well and for that reason were willing to step forward to apprehend Samuel. Had they really believed that Samuel was possessed by Satan, they would have made no move whatsoever, out of abject fear.

16.6.14—*Samuel*—A Lamanite prophet who appeared in the land of Zarahemla during the ministries of Nephi and Lehi, the sons of Helaman. He correctly foretells all that would transpire prior to the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Nephites and the eventual destruction of the Nephite civilization.

16.7 Samuel descended the wall at the same place that had originally given him access to its heights (see 13.4). As to Samuel's success among the Lamanites, Mormon tells us little or nothing. What is certain, however, is that the Lamanites were also left without excuse; they had the fullness of the Gospel preached to them as well, together with the explicit prophecies regarding the signs accompanying the birth and death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

16.8 Again, we cannot be certain as to from whence came the prophet Samuel. Lamanites were prevalent both in the land of Nephi which lay to the south of the land of Zarahemla, and in the land northward, beyond the narrow neck of land that led to the land of Desolation and the vast regions which lay farther to the north still.

16.8.11—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

16.9 The end of the 86th year of the reign of the judges would have transpired sometime during the first part of the year 5 BC.

16.9.19—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.10 The majority of the Nephites were ripening quickly for destruction. We may expect that the treatment of the righteous was less than pleasant and that the affairs of the government were not much improved either.

16.10.6–8—*eighty and seventh*—The end of the 87th year of the reign of the judges would have transpired during the first part of the year 4 BC.

16.11 The 88th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 4 and 3 BC.

16.12 The majority of the population of the land of Zarahemla continued to embrace wickedness more openly. No doubt this was reflected in the conduct of the established government toward the faithful in Christ.

16.12.42–44—*eighty and ninth*—The 89th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 3 and 2 BC.

hath a devil; and because of the power of the devil which is in him we cannot hit him with our stones and our arrows; therefore take him and bind him, and away with him.

7 And as they went forth to lay their hands on him, behold, he did cast himself down from the wall, and did flee out of their lands, yea, even unto his own country, and began to preach and to prophesy among his own people.

8 And behold, he was never heard of more among the Nephites; and thus were the affairs of the people.

9 And thus ended the eighty and sixth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

10 And thus ended also the eighty and seventh year of the reign of the judges, the more part of the people remaining in their pride and wickedness, and the lesser part walking more circumspectly before God.

11 And these were the conditions also, in the eighty and eighth year of the reign of the judges.

12 And there was but little alteration in the affairs of the people, save it were the people began to be more hardened in iniquity, and do more and more of that which was contrary to the commandments of God, in the eighty and ninth year of the reign of the judges.

Hel. 16:8  
EM 3:1259

16.13 We are not privy to the specific signs and wonders which were given to the people, nor are we told which of the many prophecies were fulfilled. The effects were profound, however, both upon the righteous and the wicked.

16.13.8—*ninetieth*—The 90th year of the reign of the judges corresponds to portions of the years 2 and 1 BC.

16.14 Alma taught specifically about this period of time some eighty years before when he and Amulek testified in the city of Ammonihah (see *AL-C 13.21–26*). We may assume that there were wise men in every part of the world who were receiving similar angels into their midst testifying of the coming of the Messiah into the world.

16.14.7–8—*wise men*—Wise men are those who live the truth which has been revealed unto them.

16.14.14–15—*glad tidings*—This is the essential meaning of the word “Gospel”. The fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was revealed at this time to the hearts and minds of the righteous no matter where they were to be found upon this earth.

16.14.21–22—*this year*—That is to say, the 90th year of the reign of the judges.

16.14.24—*scriptures*—All of the prophets from the days of Adam and Eve down to the time of the coming of the Son of God in the flesh had more or less prophesied of the events that would transpire at the time of the Savior’s birth. These had been preserved on the Brass Plates and elsewhere to serve as longstanding witnesses of the truth wherever scattered Israel might be found in the world.

16.15 Most of the fallacious arguments brought to bear at this time failed to account for all that had been said. The detractors merely chose those snippets of scripture that they could use as evidence to counter the expectations of the saints. Had they been honest, they could not have concocted such blatantly false accusations against the word of God.

16.15.22—*Nephites*—In reference to the posterity and followers of Nephi, the son of Lehi, who provided leadership to the righteous six hundred years before the birth of Christ.

16.15.27—*Lamanites*—Specifically the posterity of the eldest son of Lehi and Sariah, and generally those who apostatized away from the teachings of the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They were the primary opposition of the Nephites who in general adhered to the teaching of the prophets, seers, and revelators of the Lord God of Israel.

16.16 The scriptures were beginning to be fulfilled; these outward signs were dismissed as meaningless, as being insufficient to prove the validity of all that had been said by the prophets. The wicked said that they would not believe until all had been fulfilled. This has ever been and ever will be the stance of a wicked and an adulterous generation. Once everything has been fulfilled to the letter, it is everlastingly too late for those who have procrastinated the day of their repentance. The deciding factor in all of this is that the Lord expects His children to seek light and truth by the power and influence of the Spirit of God, thereby knowing for themselves, just as assuredly as the prophets themselves, that all that has been spoken by the mouth of God since the world began will be fulfilled.

13 But it came to pass in the ninetieth year of the reign of the judges, there were great signs given unto the people, and wonders; and the words of the prophets began to be fulfilled.

14 And angels did appear unto men, wise men, and did declare unto them glad tidings of great joy; thus in this year the scriptures began to be fulfilled.

15 Nevertheless, the people began to harden their hearts, all save it were the most believing part of them, both of the Nephites and also of the Lamanites, and began to depend upon their own strength and upon their own wisdom, saying:

16 Some things they may have guessed right, among so many; but behold, we know that all these great and marvelous works cannot come to pass, of which has been spoken.

Hel. 16:14  
EM 2:730  
CR86-O 86

Hel. 16:16  
CR99-O 7

16.17 This sounds more like an academic debate than a desire to know the truth.

16.18 From the time that Lehi and his family departed from the land of Jerusalem, he and the prophetic members of his posterity had testified that the Lord Jesus Christ would appear to their descendants in the promised land. These polemicists were either purposefully ignorant or perverted. If the wicked had read the scriptures, it had not been for the intent to know the truth about the matter.

16.18.12—*Christ*—Simply put, the name “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah”. In both Hebrew and Greek, the terms mean “anointed one”. Every prophet of God from the days of Adam has been anointed in preparation for their ministry to the world. Every king who has ruled by divine right has also been anointed as part of his ascendancy to the throne and the scepter. The same may be said of every priest who has administered the ordinances of the Priesthood, particularly those of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and most specifically in the House of the Lord. Some scholars have suggested that even though certain men have been anointed to be prophets and priests, or kings and priests, or prophets and kings, none but Jesus has been anointed prophet, priest, and king. Of course, these scholars have asserted such out of ignorance, not understanding that all those who are heirs of salvation and exaltation have been anointed prophets, priests, and kings in similitude of their Savior. Jesus is Lord of Lords, King of Kings, the Great High Priest who presides over all priesthood, the prophet who has inspired all prophets in whatever time or place in which they might have lived. He is our Master in all things, but his labors have been designed to bring us all back into the presence of God as he is.

16.18.53—*Jerusalem*—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

16.19 The question is malformed, based on untrue assumptions. The fact of the matter is that all of the prophets of God among the Nephites had testified of the appearance of the Savior to the Nephites.

16.19.18—*Jerusalem*—A city located about 32 miles from the Mediterranean Sea and 18 miles from the Jordan River and the northern tip of the Dead Sea. Once the city was captured by the children of Israel from the Jebusites, it served as the capital of the kingdom of Israel and Judah for many centuries. Jerusalem sits aside of several prominences including mount Moriah, where Abraham was commanded to take Isaac as an offering unto the Most High God, and mount Zion. The Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives lie immediately to the east. The traditional sites of Calvary and the Garden Tomb lie immediately to the north. The king at the time of the initial entry into the land of promise was Adonizedek.

17 And they began to reason and to contend among themselves, saying:

18 That it is not reasonable that such a being \*as a Christ shall come; if so, and he be the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of earth, as it has been spoken, why will he not show himself unto us as well as unto them who shall be at Jerusalem?

19 Yea, why will he not show himself in this land as well as in the land of Jerusalem?

Hel. 16:18  
CR88-A 6  
\* p. 451

16.20 The attempt here on the part of the wicked is to paint the righteous as elitists rather than as the servants they really were. Korihor had used much of the same type of argument against the leadership of the Church of Christ, accusing them of greed and priestcraft when he knew that it was not the case (see *AL-C 30.24–36*). Korihor merely desired to incite the people to doubt and anger with false accusations. Many of those who were protesting against the prophecies would witness for themselves the fulfillment of them all, much to their own personal hurt.

16.21 This is more elitist talk much like that which has been spewed out by the wicked since the beginning of time. The truth is that the wicked are those who are seeking distinction, acquiring wealth and power that they might dominate those around them.

16.22 The wicked are foolish and vain because they think only in temporal terms, seldom if ever contemplating the principles of eternity. Without the revelations of God, the natural man seeks self-gratification, comfort and ease, dominance over others, to the end that everything contrary to the will of God becomes desirable. The more that a man sins against the truth and knowledge which he has, the more determined he becomes to engage in all else that has been prohibited by the word of God. Thus, Satan entices all who will hearken to him to indulge themselves in carnality, sensuality, and devilishness, extremities in sin.

16.23 The natural man does not wish to know the truth; he wishes only to be left to enjoy himself in the lusts of the flesh. Signs and wonders are either ignored or dismissed. Hardly any evidence, save for obvious impending death, motivates the heart and mind of the wicked to reconsider their untenable circumstances.

16.24 The end of the 90th year of the reign of the judges transpired during the first part of the year 1 BC.

16.24.17—*Nephi*—The fourth son of Lehi and Sariah. He proved to be a faithful follower of the Lord and a willing servant who did much to preserve his father's family from privation and destruction. His posterity and the posterity of those who followed his example are generally known as Nephites.

16.25 That is to say, the records of these three men which had been included

20 But behold, we know that this is a wicked tradition, which has been handed down unto us by our fathers, to cause us that we should believe in some great and marvelous thing which should come to pass, but not among us, but in a land which is far distant, a land which we know not; therefore they can keep us in ignorance, for we cannot witness with our own eyes that they are true.

21 And they will, by the cunning and the mysterious arts of the evil one, work some great mystery which we cannot understand, which will keep us down to be servants to their words, and also servants unto them, for we depend upon them to teach us the word; and thus will they keep us in ignorance if we will yield ourselves unto them, all the days of our lives.

22 And many more things did the people imagine up in their hearts, which were foolish and vain; and they were much disturbed, for Satan did stir them up to do iniquity continually; yea, he did go about spreading rumors and contentions upon all the face of the land, that he might harden the hearts of the people against that which was good and against that which should come.

23 And notwithstanding the signs and the wonders which were wrought among the people of the Lord, and the many miracles which they did, Satan did get great hold upon the hearts of the people upon all the face of the land.

24 And thus ended the ninetieth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

25 And thus ended the book of

Hel. 16:22  
CR89-A 85

Hel. 16:25

with the Large Plates of Nephi and used by Mormon to compose the narrative of the book of Helaman.

16.25.7—*Helaman*—We know little of the youth of this great prophet of God except to say that he was entrusted with the custody of the records of the Nephites when he was very young, perhaps no older than 28 years of age (see *AL-C 63.10–13*). As has been seen, Helaman was a goodly man in whom both God and the Nephites had great confidence.

Helaman, according to the record of Helaman and his sons.

EM 1:152

EM 2:585



## Alphabetized List of Specifically Noted Words and Phrases in Helaman Commentary

- Abel*—6.27.17  
*Abraham*—3.30.24  
*Abraham*—8.19.15  
*Abraham*—8.16.26  
*Abraham*—8.17.4  
*Abraham*—8.18.9  
*Adam*—14.16.28  
*adultery*—4.12.67  
*all*—3.31.23  
*all*—8.5.23  
*Alma*—4.21.9  
*Alma*—5.41.28  
*Alma*—6.25.11  
*Amen*—12.26.40  
*Aminadab*—5.41.2  
*Aminadab*—5.39.6  
*Ammon*—3.12.14  
*Ammon*—5.21.28  
*Ammonihab*—5.10.15  
*Ammoron*—1.16.16  
*Amulek*—5.41.30  
*Amulek*—5.10.7  
*And*—12.1.1  
*angel*—14.9.11  
*Benjamin*—5.9.10  
*blind*—9.21.14  
*boast*—5.8.27  
*book*—2.13.8  
*Bountiful*—1.29.16  
*Bountiful*—1.23.26  
*Bountiful*—1.28.27  
*Bountiful*—4.6.16  
*Bountiful*—4.5.65  
*Bountiful*—5.14.33  
*brethren*—5.21.31  
*Cain*—6.27.9  
*capital parts*—1.27.40–41  
*cement*—3.7.26  
*certain men*—9.1.14–15  
*Cezoram*—5.1.23  
*Cezoram*—6.19.11  
*Cezoram*—6.15.20  
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*Christ*—3.35.25  
*Christ*—3.29.41  
*Christ*—5.12.18  
*Christ*—5.41.21  
*Christ*—8.22.41  
*Christ*—14.17.6  
*Christ*—16.18.12  
*Christ*—15.9.67  
*Christ*—16.4.30  
*cimeters*—1.14.36  
*cities*—1.27.61  
*clothing*—4.12.34  
*cometh*—14.2.23  
*coming*—0.0.45  
*commencement*—1.1.9  
*commencement*—6.16.4  
*commencement*—11.31.8  
*Comprising*—7.0.54  
*Comprising*—13.0.10  
*concealed*—11.10.28  
*confederate*—9.20.6  
*contention*—2.1.45  
*contentions*—0.0.9  
*contentions*—4.1.24  
*contrite*—8.15.28  
*conversion*—0.0.52  
*converted*—9.39.33  
*Coriantumr*—1.16.19  
*Coriantumr*—1.17.20  
*Coriantumr*—1.21.16  
*Coriantumr*—1.15.24  
*Coriantumr*—1.20.2  
*Coriantumr*—1.22.4  
*Coriantumr*—1.30.39  
*Coriantumr*—1.32.4  
*Coriantumr*—1.19.7  
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*crime*—8.1.64  
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*dissentions*—0.0.12  
*dissentions*—4.1.15  
*down*—4.5.11  
*down*—6.4.13  
*drag*—5.12.66  
*Egyptians*—8.11.64 25  
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*eighty and second*—11.36.4–6  
*eighty and seventh*—16.10.6–8  
*eighty and sixth*—13.1.8–10  
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*established*—2.1.21  
*evidences*—5.50.51  
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*fifty and sixth*—4.4.8–10  
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*forty and eighth*—3.19.27–29  
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*fourth generation*—13.10.17–18  
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*Gadianton*—2.13.14  
*Gadianton*—2.11.4

*Gadianton*—2.12.5  
*Gadianton*—2.4.5  
*Gadianton*—3.23.34  
*Gadianton*—6.18.18  
*Gadianton*—6.26.13  
*Gadianton*—6.29.14  
*Gadianton*—6.37.16  
*Gadianton*—6.24.45  
*Gadianton*—7.4.14  
*Gadianton*—7.25.32  
*Gadianton*—8.1.29  
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*Helaman*—0.0.31  
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*Helaman*—2.14.12  
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*Helaman*—2.11.48  
*Helaman*—2.6.15  
*Helaman*—2.10.7  
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*Helaman*—2.5.45  
*Helaman*—2.7.42  
*Helaman*—2.9.22  
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*Helaman*—5.13.12  
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*Helaman*—7.1.30  
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*Jesus Christ*—5.9.36–37  
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*Lamanite*—16.1.18  
*Lamanites*—1.14.20  
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*Lamanites*—1.18.37  
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*Lamanites*—1.16.6  
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