

*A Plain English Reference to
The Book of Helaman
A secret band of killers
See Helaman, Chapter 1*

At the beginning of 52 BC, the 40th year of the judges' reign, the Nephites began to have serious problems again, for Pahoran had died, and three of his sons, Pahoran, Paanchi and Pacumeni, were fighting over the judgment-seat.

Pahoran had many sons, but only these three wanted the judgment-seat, and they caused **three divisions** among the people.

The majority of the people voted for Pahoran to be the chief judge and governor over the Nephites. Although disappointed, Pacumeni accepted the voice of the people, yet he and those who wanted him governor were angry.

Paanchi was about to convince his followers to rise up in rebellion against their brethren, when he was taken and tried according to the voice of the people. He was **condemned to death** for attempting to destroy the people's liberty.

When Paanchi's followers heard he was condemned to die, they became very angry. They sent out Kishkumen, who murdered Pahoran as he sat on the judgment-seat. Pahoran's servants chased Kishkumen, but he ran so quickly he could not be caught.

Kishkumen returned to those who had sent him. Together they entered into a secret covenant, vowing by their

everlasting Maker, that they would not tell anyone that Kishkumen had murdered Pahoran.

Because of this covenant, and because he was in disguise when he murdered Pahoran, Kishkumen was not suspected among the Nephites. Kishkumen and his band, who had covenanted with him, mixed with the people in a way they could not all be found. But those who were found were condemned to death.

Now being the rightful heir, and according to the voice of the people, Pacumeni was appointed as chief judge and governor over the people. All this happened in 52 BC.

In 51 BC, the Lamanites gathered a countless number of soldiers and armed them with swords, scimitars, bows, arrows, helmets, breastplates and shields. They came down to fight the Nephites again. This time they were led by Coriantumr, a descendant of Zarahemla, a large, strong man and a Nephite traitor.

King Tubaloth, son of Ammoron, was the Lamanite king. He appointed Coriantumr to lead his army, thinking that Coriantumr was so strong and wise he could beat the Nephites. King Tubaloth stirred up his army to march to Zarahemla to fight the Nephites.

Because the Nephites had so much contention in their government, they had not kept enough guards in the land of Zarahemla. They never thought the Lamanites would dare come to their

capital and attack their great city. But Coriantumr led so many into their city so quickly, there was no time for the Nephites to gather their army.

Coriantumr killed the guards at the city entrance. Then his entire army marched into the city, killing all who opposed, and captured the entire city. Pacumeni, the chief judge, tried to run out of the city, but Coriantumr struck him against the city wall and killed him.

After Coriantumr conquered Zarahemla, the strongest hold in all the land, he became very bold. He did not stay long in Zarahemla, but marched with a large army toward the city of Bountiful (northward), determined to conquer all the northern lands.

Coriantumr thought the army he had just destroyed was the greatest Nephite army in all the land. That is why he marched out quickly against the Nephites, giving them no time to gather, except into small groups. By doing this, he cut them down to the earth.

Even though many Nephites had been killed in Zarahemla, Moronihah had a great advantage over Coriantumr, whose army was now in the center of the land.

Moronihah never thought the Lamanites would dare come to the center of the land. He thought they would attack the outer cities as they had in the past. This is why he had placed his strongest armies in the outer areas.

But under the command of a Nephite traitor, the Lamanites had not been afraid to come into the center of the land. They had taken Zarahemla, and they were taking more cities and strongholds, killing many men, women and children along the way.

When Moronihah learned of this, he immediately sent Lehi with an army to head off Coriantumr's army before they reached Bountiful. Lehi's army met them and began to force them back (southward) to Zarahemla.

Moronihah met Coriantumr in his retreat, and a great, bloody battle ensued. Many Lamanites were killed, and Coriantumr was found among the dead.

The Lamanites were then surrounded and taken as prisoners because Coriantumr had led them right into the hands of the Nephites.

Now Moronihah again took possession of Zarahemla and sent the captured Lamanites out of the land in peace. This is how the year 51 BC ended.

*Kishkuman killed,
Gadianton escapes
See Helaman, Chapter 2*

In 50 BC, the forty-second year of the judges' reign, Moronihah had established peace once again between the Nephites and the Lamanites. But there was no living heir to fill the judgment-seat, so the people started to argue about who would fill it.

Helaman's son, Helaman, was elected to fill the judgment-seat.

Now Kishkumen, who had murdered Pahoran, waited for his chance to kill Helaman. His secret band had entered a covenant with him to keep his wickedness secret.



This system of secret covenants came from a man named Gadianton. He was an expert with words, and his craft was to carry on secret works of murder and robbery. And so he became the leader of Kishkumen's band.

Gadianton had flattered Kishkumen and his band, promising them positions of power and authority if they would place him in the judgment-seat. This is why Kishkumen sought Helaman's life. One of Helaman's servants had been out that night, disguised as one of Gadianton's followers. He had learned of the plot to

kill Helaman and waited for Kishkumen to come.

Kishkumen came and the disguised servant gave him the secret sign. Kishkumen told the servant, "**Take me to the judgment-seat so that I may kill Helaman.**" Helaman's servant knew Kishkumen's desires and the desires of his band — to secretly conspire in order to murder, rob and gain power. Knowing this, Helaman's servant said to Kishkumen, "**Let's go to the judgment-seat.**"

Kishkumen was very pleased to hear this, thinking he would accomplish his plan. But as they went to the judgment-seat the servant stabbed Kishkumen in the heart, and he died without a sound. Then the servant ran and told Helaman everything that had happened.

Helaman sent men out to capture this band of robbers and secret murderers so they might be executed according to the law. But Helaman's men could not find the secret band, for when Kishkumen had not returned, Gadianton was afraid for his life. He had led his band out of the land, by a secret way, into the wilderness.

I, Mormon, will tell you more about Gadianton later.

This is how 50 BC ended. By the end of this book, you will see how those who followed followed **Gadianton's evil system** were responsible for the **overthrow and destruction of nearly all the Nephites**. I do not mean by the end of my account of the book of

Helaman, but by the end of my account of the book of Nephi (read about the Gadianton system at the end of **4 Nephi**) — **the book** to which I have referred while making this particular account of Nephite history.

***More Nephites go North
See Helaman, Chapter 3***

In 49 BC, the Nephites only had a few disputes among themselves, caused by some prideful church members. However, these disputes were settled by the end of the year. There was peace during 48 and 47 BC, but during 46 BC, there were many disputes among the Nephites.

Many left **the land of Zarahemla** and went to inherit **the northern land**. They traveled a **great distance**, and they found **large bodies of water and many rivers**.

They **spread out over all parts of the land**, going wherever they could to find timber, to parts of the land that had not been desolated by the many people (Jaredites) who had lived there before.

The land was not really desolate, it was only without timber. It was called desolate because of the great destruction of the people who had once lived there.

Because there was not much timber, the people became expert in working cement, and they built and lived in **cement houses**.

The people who had **migrated to the north** populated the land. Soon they

spread over all the land — from **the southern to the northern land**, from the **southern to the northern sea**, and from let the young trees grow, so that they would eventually have timber to build houses, cities, temples and churches. **the western to the eastern sea**.

The people in the **northern land** lived in tents and cement houses. They were careful to let the young trees grow so they would eventually have timber to grow houses, cities, temples and churches.



Because timber was so scarce in the **northern land**, it was shipped from the **southern land**. With shipping, people in the **north** were able to build **many cities**, of wood and cement.

Many of Ammon's people who were Lamanites by birth also went north. Many of our people have kept records

concerning them, which records are very extensive.

I, Mormon, **cannot include in my book even 1%** of these records — the Lamanite and Nephite history — their wars, preaching, prophecies, their shipping, their **building of ships**, temples, synagogues and sanctuaries, their righteousness and wickedness — murders, robbery, plunder, immorality, etc.

There are **many** books and records of **every** kind, mostly kept by Nephites. They have handed down the records from one generation to another, even until they have fallen into sin.

They have been murdered, plundered and hunted across the land--even until they have mixed with the Lamanites and are no longer called Nephites. They have become Lamanites and are wicked and ferocious.

Now I will continue with my particular account:

Many Nephites had migrated north after having internal disputes, great contentions and wars throughout 46 BC.

There were still many disputes during 45 and 44 BC, but Helaman continued to judge with justice and equity. He obeyed God's statutes, judgments and commands, **always doing what was right**. Because of his righteousness, Helaman prospered in the land, as had his father, Helaman.

Helaman had two sons. The oldest was Nephi and the youngest Lehi. Helaman taught them to obey the Lord.

Some of the wars and contentions among the Nephites began to stop toward the end of 44 BC, the 48th year of the judges' reign over the Nephites.

In 43 BC, there was continual peace established in the land, except for the **secret combinations** that **Gadianton**, the robber, had established in the more populated areas. But the government **leaders** did **not** know of those secret combinations. This is why Gadianton and his followers were not detected and destroyed.

The church prospered with converts in 43 BC, for **thousands** joined the church and were baptized unto repentance. There was such a great conversion, and so many blessings were poured out upon the people, that **even the high priests and teachers were completely amazed**. The Lord's work prospered, for **tens of thousands were baptized** and united with God's church.

In this way we can see that **the Lord is merciful** to all who will call upon His holy name in the sincerity of their hearts. We see that the gate of heaven is **open to all** who will believe in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

We see that those who accept the word of God, which is quick and powerful to destroy all the devil's cunning plans, will be led, as a man or woman of Christ, in **a straight and narrow**

course, to cross over that everlasting gulf of misery prepared for the wicked. Their immortal souls will end up **at the right hand of God** in the kingdom of heaven, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and with all our holy forefathers, **never to leave again**.

43 BC was a year of continual rejoicing in the land of Zarahemla, and in **all the surrounding regions**, even in all the land populated by Nephites. This peace and great joy continued during 43 and 42 BC.

In 41 BC, there was still peace, though it was somewhat disturbed by **pride in the hearts of those who professed to belong to God's church**.

Those who **truly** belonged to God's church were not proud. The Nephites who lifted themselves up in pride above many of their brothers and sisters persecuted the more humble ones, **causing them to suffer** and wade through **great affliction**. This was a great evil in the church.

But the most humble people prayed and fasted often. Their humility grew stronger and stronger, and their faith in Christ grew more and more, filling their souls with joy and comfort. **Their hearts were purified and sanctified because they allowed God to change the desires of their hearts**.

40 BC ended in peace, but for the great pride that had taken hold of the people's hearts. They had become very **proud** because they were **rich and**

prosperous, and they became more wealthy and proud each day.

Helaman died in 39 BC, the 53rd year of the judges' reign. Helaman's oldest son Nephi began to reign in his place.

Nephi was a just and equitable judge who kept God's commandments and walked in the ways of his father.

Pride within the church causes loss
See Helaman, Chapter 4

In 38 BC, many Nephites left the church because of fighting from within. There was **much bloodshed** among the people, and the rebellious Nephites were either killed or driven out of the land. They went to the Lamanite king and tried to convince the Lamanites to make war against the Nephites. But the Lamanites were very afraid and would not listen to the Nephite dissenters.

Yet in 36 BC, the dissenters finally **convinced** the Lamanites to fight the Nephites, and they spent all that year preparing for war.

In 35 BC, the Lamanites and the Nephite dissenters attacked the Nephites.

By 34 BC they conquered the **land of Zarahemla** and **all the lands** up to the land of Bountiful. Moronihah's armies and the Nephites were **driven north to the land of Bountiful**.

There the Nephites **made fortifications** against the Lamanites. They made these fortifications **from the west sea to the east sea** (a distance

of a day and a half journey for a Nephite). They stationed their armies along these lines of fortification.

During 34 and 33 BC, the Nephite dissenters and the large Lamanite army had taken over all the Nephite lands in the south (land of Zarahemla).

But in 32 BC, Moronihah and his armies regained many cities. After another year of fighting, in 31 BC, the Nephites had regained half of their possessions.

All the Nephite losses, including the loss of many lands and possessions, and the great loss of life among them, happened **because of the wicked practices among them, upheld by many who claimed to be members of God's church. The pride of those who were very rich, who did not give** food and clothing to the poor, but oppressed them, was **responsible for this destruction.**

The proud were unkind to the poor. They made fun of sacred things and denied prophecy and revelation. They murdered, stole, lied, plundered and committed adultery. They also fought among themselves for power, and many of them defected to the Lamanites.

Because of their great wickedness and boasting, they were left to their own strength. They were not protected, but were attacked and killed. They were driven out by the Lamanites **until they had lost nearly all their lands.**

Moronihah had preached many things to the people because of their sinfulness. Nephi and Lehi, Helaman's sons, had also preached many things. They had **prophesied** to the Nephites about their sins, and about what would happen if they did not repent.

As the people repented, they **immediately** began to prosper. When Moronihah saw that they had repented, he led them from city to city until they had regained **half** their property and lands.

This is how 31 BC ended. After yet another year of fighting, Moronihah and his armies could not regain any more land. There were so many Lamanites, that it was all Moronihah's army could do to maintain what they had retaken.

The Nephites became very frightened for their lives, and began to remember Alma's prophecies and Mosiah's words. They realized they had been stubborn and had ignored God's commandments. They knew they had ignored the laws Mosiah had left for them — laws that the Lord had commanded him to give to the people.

They **realized** their **laws had become corrupt** and they had **become a wicked people**, like the Lamanites.

Because of their sins, the church as a whole began to lose its strength, for **some church members stopped believing in the spirit of prophecy and revelation.** This is why God's

judgments were staring them in the face.

They finally realized just how weak they really were — that they had become like the Lamanites. **The Spirit of the Lord no longer saved them in their battles.** It had left them because the Spirit of the Lord does not dwell in unholy temples.

Once the Spirit had left them, the Lord stopped saving them by His **miraculous and matchless power.** They had fallen into a state of unbelief and awful wickedness. They saw that they were out-numbered by the Lamanites, and they realized that unless they looked to and held on to the Lord their God, they would certainly be destroyed. They saw that man for man, the Lamanites were just as strong as they.

Because they had fallen into this great transgression, they had become weak **in just a few years.**

*Helaman teaches his sons
See Helaman, Chapter 5*

And in that same year, 30 BC, Nephi gave up the judgment-seat to Cezoram.

The laws had been established by the voice of the people, but most of the people had **chosen evil.** Because of this, the Nephites were becoming **ripe for destruction**, having corrupted their laws.

This was not all. They had become **too stubborn to be governed by just laws**, which were written for a **righteous**

people. In their fallen condition, just laws could only condemn them.

Nephi had grown weary of the people's sinfulness, so he gave up the judgment-seat to go out and preach God's word the rest of his days. Nephi's brother Lehi went out and did the same.

They both remembered these words of their father Helaman:

"My sons, I hope you remember to obey God's commands and teach them to the people. I named you both after our forefathers who came out of Jerusalem, hoping you would remember their good works.

I hope you will both do good so that it may be said and written of you, the same as it has been said and written of our forefathers.

Now, my sons, do not boast of your good works. Do them so you may have that precious gift of eternal life — a gift that we have reason to believe has been given to our forefathers.

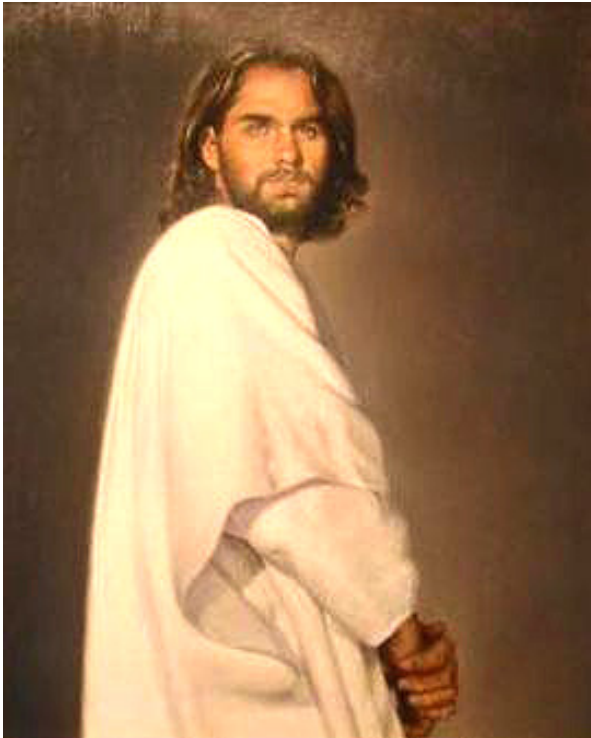
My sons, remember King Benjamin's words...

. . . that there is no other way for anyone to be saved other than through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, who will come to redeem the world.

Also remember the words of Amulek to Zeezrom while in the city of Ammonihah. Amulek said the Lord will surely come to redeem His people, **not in their sins**, but *from* their sins.

The Father has given Jesus Christ the power to redeem us **from** our sins **through our repentance**. This is why He sends angels to us to teach us **how** to repent.

Always remember, my sons, that you



must **build your foundation upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God**. If you trust in Him, then you cannot fall, and the devil's temptations will not overpower you and drag you down to a condition of endless torment."

Helaman taught his sons many other things, some of which are written, and some of which are not.

Nephi and Lehi **remembered** their father's words and **kept** God's commandments. They went out to teach the Nephites, beginning in the city of Bountiful. From there they went to Gid and then to Mulek.

They continued going from city to city until they had gone into **every Nephite city in the southern land**. Then they went to the **land of Zarahemla** to teach the Lamanites.

They taught with great power, confounding many Nephite dissenters, who came forward and confessed their sins. Those who repented were baptized, after which they immediately returned to the Nephites to try to repair the damage they had done.

As Nephi and Lehi preached, **God gave them great power and authority and told them what to teach**. While in Zarahemla, they astonished the Lamanites with their teaching, and convinced 8,000 of them to repent of their forefathers' wicked traditions.

Then Nephi and Lehi went from Zarahemla to the **land of Nephi** (further south). There they were captured by Lamanite soldiers and thrown into prison — the same prison that Ammon and his brethren had been put into by Limhi's servants.

After they had been in prison for many days without food, the Lamanites went into the prison with the intention of taking them out and killing them.

In the prison, the Lamanites saw Nephi and Lehi surrounded with what appeared to be fire. Not a single Lamanite dared touch them, for they were afraid of being burned. Nephi and Lehi stood among the flames unharmed.

When they realized they were safe from the fire, and from the Lamanites, Nephi and Lehi became courageous — for the Lamanites just stood there in complete amazement.

Nephi and Lehi said to them, "Don't be afraid, for it is God who shows you this marvelous thing. It is He who prevents you from harming us."

Then a great earthquake began, and it seemed as if the prison walls would collapse at any moment, but they did not.

Everyone was overshadowed by a dark cloud, and an awful, sobering fear came over the Lamanites and Nephite dissenters.

Then a voice was heard, coming from above the dark cloud, saying, "**Repent ye, repent ye, and seek no more to destroy my servants, whom I have sent to declare good tidings.**"

This voice was not loud, like thunder. It was **a calm voice of perfect mildness, like a whisper**. However, it **pierced** everyone to their **very souls**.

Then another earthquake began to shake the prison walls, and the dark cloud remained.

Again, the **calm, whisper-like voice** spoke from above, "**Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Seek no more to destroy my servants.**"

Then the **earth shook a third time** and the prison walls trembled again.

A **third time** the voice came, saying such **marvelous words** they cannot be uttered by man, and the **earth shook** as if it were about to split open and devour them! The Lamanites were surrounded by darkness, so afraid, they could not move.

One of them, Aminadab, a Nephite by birth, had once belonged to God's church, but had left it. He turned and saw Nephi and Lehi's faces through the dark cloud. Their faces shone very brightly, like the faces of angels, and they were looking up into heaven, talking to some being.

Aminadab shouted to the multitude, "**Look over there!**"

And the people were given the power to turn and see Nephi and Lehi's faces. They asked Aminadab, "**What do all these things mean, and with whom are Nephi and Lehi speaking?**" Aminadab answered, "They are speaking with the angels of God."

Then the Lamanites asked, "**What can we do to make this darkness go away?**" Aminadab replied, "You must repent and cry to the voice until you have faith in Christ, of whom Alma, Amulek and Zeezrom spoke. After you do this, the darkness will go away."

So they all cried out **to the voice of Him who had shaken the earth, pleading with God** until the dark cloud was taken away.

When they looked around, they saw **the darkness was gone**. But now they



were surrounded by a pillar of fire! Nephi and Lehi stood in the middle of the people, also surrounded by fire. The fire did not burn anyone, nor did it burn the prison walls, but every soul was filled with glory and unspeakable joy.

Then God's Holy Spirit came down from heaven and entered their hearts, filling them with what seemed to be fire. It enabled them to speak marvelous words. Then a pleasant voice came to them, like a whisper, and said,

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

Upon hearing this, they looked up to see from where the voice was coming. They saw the heavens open, and angels came down out of heaven and spoke to them.

About 300 souls saw and heard these things. They were told to go their way, and **not to wonder or doubt**.

These 300 Lamanites went and told other people what had happened, testifying **hroughout the entire land** of what they had seen and heard.

Most of the Lamanites who were told of this great event believed it. All those who believed put away their weapons and hatred of the Nephites. They gave up their forefathers' false traditions, and they gave the Nephites back their land.

Short-lived peace
See Helaman, Chapter 6

By the end of 30 BC, the 62nd year of the judges' reign, **most of the Lamanites** had become a righteous people — **more righteous than the Nephites** — because of their **great faith**.

Many Nephites had become hardened, unrepentant and very wicked. They had rejected God's word and all the preaching and prophesying that had come to them.

However, the people of the church were overjoyed by the conversion of the Lamanites. They fellowshipped them and with great joy established God's church among them.

Many Lamanites **came down** to the **land of Zarahemla** and told the Nephites of their conversion, calling them back to the faith. They preached with great power and authority, bringing many Nephites to the depths of humility and convinced them to **become humble followers of God** and the **Lamb**.

At the end of 29 BC, many Lamanites **went north** to preach, as did Nephi and Lehi.

There was peace in **all the land**, and the Nephites traveled freely without any fear among the Nephites and Lamanites.

The Lamanites also traveled freely — buying, selling and profiting as they wished. **Everyone became rich**

together, having plenty of gold, silver and other precious metals that were found both in **the southern** and **northern lands**.

The **southern land** had been named after Lehi, and the **northern land** after Mulek, for they were the first inhabitants of those lands, and they had been brought there by the Lord.

There was plenty of gold, silver and precious ore to be found in **all the lands**, and many Nephites and Lamanites became very skilled in the art of refining and metal working. This is how they became very rich. They also raised plenty of grain in the north and south.

Soon they became a populous, strong people. They raised many flocks, herds and fatlings, and their women spun and wove all types of cloth and fine linen.

Their peace continued throughout 28 and 27 BC. The people were filled with joy and peace **as they listened to the many prophecies** of what was to come.

But in 26 BC, Cezoram was murdered by an unknown assassin while sitting upon the judgment-seat. That same year, his son, who had been appointed by the people to take his father's place, was also murdered. As the next year began, the people began to grow very wicked again. The Lord had blessed them with so many riches of the world that they began to set their hearts upon them, and they began to war with one another.

They sought for **more and more wealth** in order to put themselves **above their neighbors**. They committed secret murders, robbed and plundered in order to obtain **more wealth and power**.

Those who did these things were part of the band that had been formed by Kishkumen and Gadianton. At this time, there were **many members** of this secret band, **even among the Nephites**.

However, most of the band was made up of wicked Lamanites, and they were called Gadianton's robbers and murderers. They had murdered the chief judge, Cezoram, and also his son, yet they had not been found.

When the Lamanites discovered there were robbers among them, they were **very sorrowful** and did **everything in their power** to destroy them off the face of the earth.

But Satan had taken hold of the hearts of **most of the Nephites**, who united with those bands of robbers. They entered covenants and oaths to protect and preserve one another in whatever difficult circumstances they might be placed. This is how they escaped justice and did not suffer for their murder, plunder and theft.

All of the bands had secret signs and words to distinguish a brother who had

entered into the covenant. Once identified, regardless of what crime he had committed, an evil brother would not be hurt by another brother of his own band who had taken this covenant.

This is how they were able to get away with murder, theft, immorality and all types of wickedness, contrary to the laws of their country and their God.

If any brother that belonged to their band revealed their wickedness to the outside world, he was tried and punished, not by the laws of the land, but according to their wicked laws given to them by Gadianton and Kishkumen.



These **evil secret oaths and covenants** were the **same ones** that Alma had commanded his son **not** to describe to the world. For if they were known among the people, they would bring them all down to destruction.

These **secret oaths and covenants** did **not** come to Gadianton from the records that were delivered to Helaman.

They were put into Gadianton's heart by that **same being** who enticed our first parents to eat of the forbidden fruit --by that **same being** who plotted with Cain that if he would murder his brother, Abel, it would not be known to the world. **He** plotted with Cain and his followers from that time forward.

It was that **same being** who had inspired people to build a tower high enough to get to heaven. Then **he** inspired those people, who came to this land from the tower (the Jaredites), to spread the works of darkness over the land until he had dragged them down to an **entire destruction and everlasting hell**.

It was that **same being** who had inspired Gadianton to continue the work of darkness and secret murder. **He** has done this from Adam and Eve's day **even until now**.

He is the author of all sin, carrying on his works of darkness and secret murder, handing down their plots, oaths, covenants and plans, from generation to generation, as **he takes hold of the people's hearts**.

He had a great hold on the Nephites' hearts, and they became very wicked. **Most** of them turned away from righteousness and trampled God's commands. They turned to their **own ways** and built up for themselves idols of gold and silver.

All these sins came to them **in only a few years**, and most of them had come in **25 BC**. Their sinfulness continued to

grow during 24 BC, to the great sorrow and lamentation of the righteous.

From this history we see that the Nephites began to **lose their power and faith**, while **at the same time, the Lamanites began to spiritually grow in the knowledge of their God**. For they kept His statutes and commandments, and walked in truth and uprightness before Him.

We also see that the Lord's Spirit began to leave the Nephites because of **sin and pride**.

The Lord began to **pour out His Spirit** upon the Lamanites because of their **willingness to believe in His words**.

The Lamanites hunted the band of Gadianton's robbers.

They **preached** God's word among its **most wicked members** until the band of robbers was **completely dissolved** from among the Lamanites.

But on the other hand, the Nephites ***built up and supported the robbers***.



Note: Ezra T. Benson's message to LDS Church members:

*"If we don't quit **building up and supporting secret combinations**, the situation will continue to degenerate, as it did anciently."*

- ENSIGN, Jan. 1988

At first, only the most wicked Nephites built up these bands. Then, over a period of time, the Gadianton system *seduced most of the righteous* — **those who belonged to God's church** - until they not only believed in the Gadianton system, but **actively participated** in its wickedness and in **reaping its benefits**.

This is how the **wicked system gained complete control of the government**, putting down God's poor, meek and humble followers.

We know that these people were in an **awful state**, ripening for an everlasting destruction.

This is how 24 BC ended--the sixty-eighth year of the judges' reign over the Nephites.

Nephi laments and preaches
See Helaman, Chapter 7

By 23 BC, Helaman's son, Nephi, returned to Zarahemla from the **northern land**. He had been preaching God's word to the people there, prophesying many things to them. But they had rejected all his words, so he could not stay among them, and he returned to his native land.

Nephi had seen the people in a state of awful wickedness.

Those Gadianton robbers had taken over the judgment-seats. He saw God's commands being laid aside in their judgments as they **denied the people justice**. He saw Gadianton robbers sitting in *his* judgment-seat,

condemning the righteous because of their righteousness and **letting the guilty go free because of their money**.

The Gadiantons did this to gain riches and to be re-elected at the head of the government, ruling and doing as they wished while the world praised them.

They also did this so that they could more easily get away with adultery, theft, murder or anything else they wanted. This great iniquity had come upon the Nephites **in only a few years**.

When Nephi saw all this, his heart was swollen with sorrow, and he exclaimed in the agony of his soul,

"How I wish that I could have lived when my father Nephi first came from Jerusalem, so that I could have enjoyed the promised land with him. His people were teachable, firm to keep God's commands, and slow to sin. They were quick to listen to the Lord's words.

If I could have lived in those days, then my soul would have had joy in the righteousness of my brethren. But I must live in these days, and my soul is filled with sorrow because of my brethren's wickedness."

Nephi had raised his voice while atop his garden tower — a tower near the highway that led to the main Zarahemla marketplace.

As some men passed by, they saw Nephi on his tower pouring out his soul to God. Since Nephi was well-known, the men ran and told the people what

they'd seen, and a crowd came to find out why Nephi was mourning.

When Nephi arose and saw the crowd, he said to them, "Have you gathered so I may tell you of your sinfulness? Yes, you are here because I have been pouring out my soul to my God because of your iniquities!

You have gathered to wonder, and you should wonder, because the devil has taken such a great hold on your hearts! How could you have given way to the enticings of the devil, who seeks to hurl your souls down to an everlasting misery and endless woe?

Oh repent, for why will you allow yourselves to die spiritually? Turn to the Lord your God now, for His Spirit has already left you!

This has happened because you have hardened your hearts and will not listen to the Good Shepherd's voice. You have provoked His anger against you. Now instead of gathering you, He will scatter you, and you will become food for dogs and wild animals, unless you repent!

How could have you forgotten your God in the very day He has delivered you?

You have done these things to get gold and silver, and to be praised. You have set your hearts on riches and the vain things of this world. To get them, you murder, plunder, steal and bear false witness against your neighbors.

Because you do this, a curse will come upon you unless you repent!

This city, and other great cities in this region, will be conquered, and you will have no place in them, for the Lord will not give you the strength to defend your cities as in the past.

He says,

'I will not show my strength to the wicked, but only to those who repent and listen to my words.'

My brethren, it will be **better for the Lamanites** than for you unless you repent. They are **more righteous than you**, for they have **not sinned against the great knowledge** you have.

Note: Sinning against gospel knowledge is much more offensive to God than not accepting the gospel. In **each prophecy** about those **with** the gospel . . . **Alma's prophecy** to the Nephites of Ammonihah in 82 BC (**Alma 9:23-24**), **Nephi's prophecy** to the Nephites around 20 BC (**Helaman 7:23-24**), **Samuel's prophecy** to the Nephites in 6 BC (**Helaman 15:12-17**), and **Christ's 34 AD prophecy** to the latter-day Gentiles (**3 Nephi 16:10-15**), when those with gospel light and knowledge **"sin against"** it, the **Lamanites fare much better** than the **"offenders,"** who are either **trodden down or completely destroyed**.

This is why the Lord will be **merciful to them** by sparing their lives and allowing them to have many descendants long after you are extinct!

You are cursed for joining that secret Gadianton band! **You are cursed** for being so proud of your great prosperity, and finally, **you are cursed** because of your wicked deeds.

If you don't repent, your lands will be taken away and you'll be destroyed from the face of the earth!

This is not just my opinion, for the Lord God has made this known to me, and I **testify** it will surely happen!"

Nephi confronts corrupt judges
See Helaman, Chapter 8

Hearing Nephi, some of the Gadianton judges became angry, and cried out to the people, "**Why don't you seize this man and bring him forward to be condemned for his crime? Why are you doing nothing when you've seen and heard this man revile against us and our law?**"

Nephi had spoken about their corrupt laws. He had also said many other things, but **nothing contrary to God's commandments**. Those judges were angry because Nephi had spoken plainly to them about their secret works of darkness. But they dared not lay their hands on him, fearing that the people might cry out against them.

This is why they cried to the people, "**Why do you allow this man to revile against us? He condemns our people to destruction, saying our great cities will be taken from us and we'll have no place in them! We know this is impossible because we're so powerful. Our cities are so great our enemies could never overpower us!**"

The judges stirred up some of the people to become angry with Nephi,

and the people started to argue among themselves.

Some said, "Leave this man alone. He's a good man, and what he says will surely happen unless we repent. We know all the judgments of which he has testified will come upon us because he has correctly testified of our many sins. If he were not a prophet, he could not have testified of our sins so accurately."

The judges were too afraid to lay their hands on Nephi, and he continued to speak, having gained favor with some of the people.

Nephi said, "Haven't you read that God gave power to **one man**, even Moses, to strike the waters of the Red Sea? After the waters parted, and after our forefathers, the Israelites, walked through on dry ground, the waters closed up **over the Egyptian armies**.

If God gave this much power to one man, then why should you argue whether or not He has given me **the power to know the judgments** that will come upon **you** unless you repent?

But rather than repent, you will deny my words. You also deny all our forefathers' words.

You deny the words of Moses, who had great power given him, who spoke of the coming of the Messiah.

Didn't Moses testify that the Son of God would come? Just as Moses lifted up the brass snake in the wilderness, the Messiah will also be lifted up. Just as those who looked upon that

snake **lived**, all who humbly look to the Son of God with faith **will have eternal life**.

All the holy prophets since Adam have also testified of the Son of God.

Abraham saw His coming and was filled with gladness and joy. Like many before him, Abraham was called to the **order of the Son of God** (Melchizedek priesthood), so thousands of years beforehand, **his people would know** the Son of God was coming to redeem them.

And since Abraham, many prophets have continued to testify of these things.

Because Zenos testified so boldly, he was killed.

Zenock, Ezias, Isaiah and Jeremiah all testified the Son of God would come.

Jeremiah also testified that Jerusalem would be destroyed. And you know Jerusalem was destroyed. You also know that Zedekiah's sons were killed, except Mulek, whose descendants are now among us.

And there's more. Our forefather Lehi was driven out of Jerusalem because he testified of these things.

Nephi and nearly all of our forefathers also testified of these things, even down to this time. They testified of Christ's coming, **looking forward and rejoicing in it!**

Our forefathers are now with Christ. He **showed Himself** to them while they lived and **redeemed them spiritually**.

Because they knew He would yet redeem **them physically** through the resurrection they praised Him.

Seeing that you know these things, if you deny them, you are liars, and you reject the many witnesses from heaven and earth that testify these things are true.

Even now you have rejected the truth, rebelling against your holy God. Instead of securing a place for yourselves in heaven, where no unclean being may enter, you're inviting God's anger **on judgment day**.

You're becoming ripe for **an eternal destruction** because of your immorality, murder and sinfulness. Unless you repent, this destruction will soon come to you.

This destruction is very near, for as I speak your judge has been murdered by his brother, who wants the judgment-seat for himself. These two brothers both belong to your secret band that Gadianon organized as inspired by the devil, who seeks to destroy everyone's soul."

***Nephi falsely accused,
Exposes murderer
See Helaman, Chapter 9***

When Nephi said this, five men ran to the judgment-seat. As they ran, they said to each other, "Now we'll know for sure if God has really commanded Nephi to prophesy such incredible things to us. We don't believe he's a prophet, but if what he said about the

chief judge is true, we'll believe his other words."

The five men quickly ran to the judgment-seat and found the chief judge lying in his blood. Now they **knew Nephi was truly a prophet**. They never thought they'd actually see what Nephi had prophesied, and were so astonished, so afraid of God's judgments upon the people, that they trembled and fainted.

The judge had been secretly stabbed by his brother, who had run away in disguise.

Being the first to discover the dead judge, his servants had gone out to tell the people of the murder. When the people came to the judgment-seat, they were surprised to find five men lying on the ground.

The people didn't know anything about the other crowd gathered at Nephi's garden, so they said, "**These men have killed the judge, and God has struck them down so they would not escape!**"

They tied up the men and carried them off to prison. Then a proclamation was sent throughout the land that the judge had been killed, and that his murderers had been captured.

The next day, the people assembled to mourn and fast at the great chief judge's funeral. The corrupt judges who had heard Nephi in his garden were also there. They asked the people where the five men were whom they had sent. The people answered, "**We don't know**

anything about five men who were sent by the judges, but we have five murderers in prison."

The judges called for the five men, who were indeed the five who had been sent. The judges asked them what had happened.

The men reported: "We ran to the judgment-seat, and when we saw everything Nephi had testified was true, we were so shocked we fainted.

When we recovered, we were bound and put in prison. We don't know who killed the chief judge! All we know is that when we went to the judgment-seat as you asked us, we found the judge murdered, just as Nephi said he would be!"

Then the judges explained the matter to the people, accusing Nephi of conspiring with someone to kill the judge. They said, "**He told us about this murder, attempting to trick us into converting to his faith, and to get us to believe that he is a great man--a chosen prophet of God. We'll question him, and he'll confess his guilt and tell us who murdered the judge.**"

The people untied the five men, but still held them as suspects. These men defended Nephi by **arguing with and confounding the judges**.

But the judges **still took Nephi** and bound him. They questioned him, trying to trap him with his words. They wanted to trick him into confessing so

they could legally execute him. They said,

"Nephi, you have conspired with someone to kill the judge. If you will confess and tell us who killed the judge, we'll give you money and spare your life."

Nephi replied, "Oh you fools with unclean hearts. You blind, stubborn people. Do you know **how long** the Lord your God will tolerate your sins? You should start to howl and mourn because of the great destruction that awaits you if you don't repent. You accuse me of conspiring with

Because **I showed you this sign, you are angry** with me and want to put me to death. Now let us see if you will still seek my life after I show you **another sign**:

Go to Seantum's house, who is Seezoram's brother. Ask him, 'Has Nephi, the pretended prophet, who prophesies so much evil about our people, conspired with you to murder your brother?'

He will say, 'No, I have not conspired with Nephi.'

Then ask him if he murdered his brother. He'll become afraid and not



someone to murder Seezoram, our chief judge. I testified to you about his murder in order to witness to you that I know about the wickedness among you. Because of this, you now accuse me of conspiring to murder.

know what to say. Then he'll act surprised, denying everything, declaring his innocence.

Then examine his cloak and you'll find blood on it. Ask him where the blood came from. Ask him if it's his brother's

blood. Then he'll turn pale and shake as if about to die.

Then say to him, 'Because you're so afraid and pale, we know you're guilty!'

Seantum will then become even more afraid and confess that he murdered his brother. He'll also tell you that I, Nephi, could only have known these things through **the power of God**. Then **you'll know** that I'm an **honest man, sent to you from God**."

The people did as Nephi said. Seantum denied the murder and then confessed, just as Nephi said he would. Seantum was convicted of murder, and Nephi and the five men were set free.

Some of the Nephites believed Nephi's testimony and were converted. Others believed the testimony of the five men who had been converted while in prison.

Some said, "Nephi is a prophet!" Others said, "He's a god, for only a god could know all things, telling our thoughts and who murdered our chief judge."

God blesses Nephi
See Helaman, Chapter 10

Then the people went their separate ways, leaving Nephi standing alone. He walked toward his home, thinking of what the Lord had shown him. He was very sorry because of the Nephite wickedness, for they participated in **all types of secret works of darkness, murder and theft**.

As Nephi was sorrowing, the Lord's voice said to him,

"Nephi, you are blessed for what you have done. I have seen how dedicated you have been in telling my words to this people. You have not been afraid of them or of losing your life. You have only wanted to do my will and obey my commands.

Because you have been so dedicated to me, **I will bless you forever**. I will make your faith, words and actions mighty. Whatever you say will be done, for know you will not ask for anything that is not my will.

I, God, tell you in the presence of my angels, you will have **power over this people**. You will smite the earth with drought, pestilence and destruction according to their wickedness. **I give you my power** among this people. Whomever you bless will be blessed **forever**, and whomever you curse will be cursed **forever**.

If you command a temple to **split in two**, it will be done.

If you command a **mountain to fall down** and become a smooth valley, it will be done.

If you say that **God will smite** this people, **then I will**.

And now, I command you to tell this people the Lord God, who is Almighty, has said,

***'Unless you repent,
you will be destroyed.'***

As soon as the Lord's voice had come to Nephi, **he went** to the many groups of people scattered throughout the land, telling them what the Lord had told him — that if they did not repent, they would be destroyed.

Even after seeing Nephi's great miracle — telling of their chief judge's murderer, **they were still too proud and stubborn to listen.**

Nephi repeated the Lord's warning to the people **wherever he went**, but the people just became angry with him and tried to throw him in prison.

So much of God's power was with Nephi that the Spirit carried him **away from the crowds** that wanted to put him in prison, and he **freely walked away** from them.

Nephi went from crowd to crowd in the Spirit, telling them God's word, until he had **personally** told or had sent His word among **all of them.**

But no one would listen. Instead, they began to again fight among themselves, killing each other with swords.

This is how 21 BC ended—the 71st year of the judges' reign over the Nephites.

Nephi asks for a drought to begin, and to end
See Helaman, Chapter 11

By 20 BC, the Nephites were fighting with one another throughout all their lands, and it was the **secret band of robbers who were responsible** for this destruction and wickedness.

Their wars continued throughout 19 BC. In that year Nephi prayed, "Oh Lord, do not allow this people to destroy themselves by the sword.

Instead, let there be a drought to stir them to **remember Thee**, and perhaps they will repent and return to Thee."

Then there was a great drought in the land among all the Nephites.

It continued throughout 18 BC, forcing the Nephites to stop fighting.

During 17 BC, the third year of drought, no grain could be grown by the Nephites or Lamanites. And in the more wicked parts of the land, **thousands of people died of starvation.**

When the people realized they were all about to die of starvation, they began to remember the Lord their God by remembering Nephi's words.

They begged their chief judges and leaders to tell Nephi, "We know you are a man of God, so pray to the Lord our God to end this drought, or else everything you said about our destruction will happen!"

The judges then asked Nephi to pray for the people.

Seeing the people humble themselves and repent, Nephi prayed, "Look how this people repent, oh Lord. They have destroyed Gadianton's band and have buried the band's secret plans in the earth. Now, oh Lord, because of their humility, please turn away your anger, and let it be appeased by the

destruction of those wicked men who have already died.

Oh Lord, will you turn away your fierce anger and end this drought? Oh Lord, will you hear me and do according to my words, sending rain so the earth may bring forth her fruit and grain again? Oh Lord, you listened when I said, 'Let there be a drought.'

I know you hear my words now, for you said, 'If these people repent, I will spare them.' You see they have repented because of the drought, pestilence and destruction upon them.

And now, oh Lord, will you turn away your anger **and see if they will serve you again**? If they serve you, oh Lord, you can bless them according to your words."

By 16 BC, the Lord had **turned away His anger** from the people. He caused rain to fall, and the earth brought forth her fruit and grain once again.

The people rejoiced, **glorifying God**, and they stopped trying to destroy Nephi. They considered him a great prophet, a man of God, with great power and authority given to him from God.

And Nephi's brother Lehi was just as righteous.

The Nephites started to prosper in the land again and to rebuilt their cities. They multiplied and spread out, covering the whole face of the land from the **north to the south**, and from the **western to the eastern seas**.

Throughout the year 16 BC, there was peace.

Fifteen BC was also a peaceful year, and the church spread throughout the land. Most of the people, both Nephites and Lamanites, belonged to the church and enjoyed great peace.

The year 14 BC was also peaceful, except for a few disagreements about some of the doctrine given by the **prophets**.

In 13 BC, there was much debating and arguing over church doctrine. But Nephi, Lehi and many of their brethren who knew the true points of doctrine, having **many revelations daily**, preached to the people. Because of their preaching, many arguments ended.

However, by 12 BC, there were many Nephite dissenters calling themselves Lamanites. They persuaded the Lamanites to attack the Nephites. The Lamanites and dissenters came out of their hiding places to murder and plunder, and then retreated back into the mountains, wilderness and secret places.

Each day their numbers grew as more Nephite dissenters joined them. In **only a few years** there was again a large band of robbers. They studied all the secret plans of Gadianton in order to become Gadianton robbers. These robbers brought havoc and destruction among the Nephites and Lamanites.

Soon it became critical to destroy these robbers, and a strong army was sent into the wilderness and mountains to search for and destroy the robbers, but **the robbers drove the army back** into their own lands.

This is how 12 BC ended--the 80th year of the judges' reign over the Nephites.

In the beginning of 11 BC, the army again went out against this band of robbers, killing many of them, but not without great losses of their own. They were forced to retreat out of the wilderness and mountains, for there were too many robbers there.

By the end of the year, the robbers were so numerous and strong that they resisted the entire combined Nephite and Lamanite armies. They continued to terrorize all the people in the land. They destroyed cities, killed many people, and carried away many women and children into the wilderness.

This great evil had come upon the people because of their sins, and again they were stirred to remember the Lord their God. As 11 BC ended, they were beginning to remember Him, but just a year later they started to forget their God again. In 10 and 9 BC, they were very sinful, with no desire to repent.

By 7 BC, their pride and wickedness had grown stronger than ever, and they were once again ripening for destruction by the end of that year.

Nephite apostasy *See Helaman, Chapter 12*

Mormon comments:

From all this we learn just how false and unsteady are people's hearts.

We learn that the Lord, in His great, infinite goodness, **blesse**s and prospers those who **trust** in Him.

We learn that at the **very moment** the Lord gives temporal blessings to His people, they **forget** Him, because their prosperity makes their lives so easy.

For **it was the Lord** who fed them, making their crops grow and herds increase.

It was the Lord who gave them their gold, silver and precious things, and inspired every kind of art.

The Lord saved their lives by delivering them from their enemies, who were softened and did not declare war on them.

The Lord did everything to insure the welfare and happiness of His people, but instead of thanking Him, the people considered His words to be worthless.

We also learn **unless** the Lord **afflicts** His people with death, terror, famine and all types of pestilence, they will **not remember** Him.

Oh how foolish, vain, evil and devilish are the people. **How quick** they are to sin — listening to the evil one and setting their hearts upon the vain things of the world — and **how slow** they are to do good!

How quickly they lift themselves up in **pride**, boasting and sinning in every way, and **how slowly** they remember the Lord their God.

How slow they are to listen to His counsel and walk in wisdom's paths!

So many people do not **want** the Lord their God, their Creator, to rule and reign over them. Even though He extends His great goodness and mercy to them, they consider His counsel to be worthless, and they will not **let** Him be their guide.

Oh how great is the nothingness of people, who are **less obedient** than the **dust** of the earth. For the **dust moves** when the everlasting God commands it. At **His voice** the hills and mountains tremble and quake. By the power of **His voice** they are broken up and become a smooth valley. By the power of **His voice** the whole earth shakes, even to the center.

If He says to the earth, "**Move,**" it moves. And if He says, "**Stop, and make this day longer,**" the **earth obeys**.

It stops and the sun **appears** to stand still --

. . . for it is really the earth that moves, not the sun.

If the everlasting God commands the ocean to dry up, it is done. If He says to a mountain, "Rise up, fall over here and bury this city," then it is done.

If a sinful man hides his treasure in the earth, and the Lord curses it, then that

treasure is cursed. If the Lord says, "**You are cursed, and nobody will ever find you,**" then it is so. If the Lord says to a man, "**Because of your sins you will be cursed forever,**" then that man is cursed forever.

If He says, "**Because of your sins you will be cut off from my presence,**" then he will be cut off. And the Lord will say this to the sinful — those who will not repent and who cannot be saved.

People are told to repent, that they may be saved and **return** to God's **presence**.

This is the salvation and blessing of those who **listen** to His voice.

May God grant, in His great fullness, the chance for His children to repent and do good works, that they may be restored by grace, because of their gracious works.

Mormon would hope everyone will be saved. But we read that at the great and last day, some will be cast off from the Lord's presence. Some will be consigned to a state of endless misery, fulfilling these words: "**Those who have done good will progress forever, and those who have done evil will be damned.**"

*Samuel warns the Nephites
See Helaman, Chapter 13*

The Nephites were still wicked in 6 BC, while the Lamanites obeyed God's commands according to the law of Moses.

During that year, a Lamanite named Samuel came into the land of Zarahemla and began to preach to the people.

For many days he preached repentance, but the people threw him out. Because he had been rejected, Samuel was about to return to his own land, but the Lord's voice told him to go back and prophesy the things that would come into his heart.

The people would not let Samuel come back into the city, so he climbed atop the city wall, held out his arm, and shouted,

"I Samuel, a Lamanite, speak the Lord's words He puts into my heart.

His words are:

'The sword of justice hangs over the Nephite people. In less than 400 years this sword will fall upon them. Heavy destruction will surely come upon them, and **nothing can stop it unless they repent** and show faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who will surely come into the world and suffer many things, and will be slain for His people.'

An angel of the Lord told me this. He brought glad news to my soul and I was sent to bring it to you, but you would not receive me. This is why the Lord has told me to tell you:

'Because you Nephites are so hard in your hearts, if you do not repent, I will take my word and my Spirit away from you. I will not protect you any longer,

and I will turn the hearts of your brethren against you.

In less than 400 years you will be extinct, for I will visit you with the sword, drought and pestilence. I will visit you in my fierce anger, and four generations from now your enemies will witness the **entire destruction of your people**. This will surely happen unless you repent.'

I, Samuel, tell you that if you will repent and return to the Lord your God, He will turn away His anger. For He said,

'Whoever repents and turns to me is blessed, but whoever does not repent will be cursed. This great city of Zarahemla has already been cursed. It has **only been spared because of the righteous who live here**. I, the Lord, see that most of the people in Zarahemla will harden their hearts against me.

I, the Lord, will save those who repent. If it were not for the righteous people in this great city, I would have already rained down fire from heaven and destroyed it. But for the sake of the righteous this city has been spared.

When the times comes that you drive the righteous out, then your city will be ready for destruction. The city of Gideon is also cursed because of its wickedness and great sins. All the Nephite cities in this region are cursed for their great wickedness.

Because of their wickedness, a curse will come upon the land, and when you bury treasure in the earth, you will not find it again.

Only the righteous, who hide their treasure unto me, will be able to find it again. **It is my will that people consecrate their treasure for my purposes.** Anyone who does not do this is not righteous, but is cursed along with his treasure.

The Nephites will hide their treasures **before** running from their invading enemies. They will do this because their hearts are set upon riches. But because they do not hide their treasures unto me, they and their treasure will be cursed, and they will be killed by their enemies."

Samuel continued, "The Lord says **you are cursed along with your riches** because you have **set your hearts upon them**, and because you have ignored the words of Him who gave them to you.

You only remember your riches. Your hearts are **not grateful** to the Lord. They swell with **great pride** as you boast, envy, argue, plot, persecute, murder and commit all types of sins.

This is why the Lord God curses the land **and** your riches. You are cursed even now because you have thrown out the prophets. You have mocked them, thrown rocks at them, and killed them, just as wicked people did anciently.

You tell one another that if you had lived long ago, you would not have killed the prophets like the ancients did. But **you are worse** than those who lived long ago!

For as the Lord lives, if a prophet comes among you and tells you the Lord's words which testify of your sins, then you are angry with him. You throw him out and plot his death. You say he is a false prophet, a sinner, and of the devil. You do this because **he testifies of your evil acts.**

But you only listen to those who say, '**What you are doing is not wrong. You will not suffer. Be proud of yourselves. Do whatever you like.**' You make these men famous and give them money. They begin to wear expensive clothes and tell you how wonderful you are, and how great your future will be, and so you find no fault in them.

Oh you wicked, perverse generation! You hard, stubborn people! How long do you think the Lord will tolerate what you do? How long will you be led by foolish and blind guides, choosing darkness rather than light?

The Lord is already angry with you, and has **cursed the land** because of your sinfulness. Soon your riches **will be cursed**. When you are poor, you will **not be able to find them**. In your poverty, you will cry to the Lord. But '**Your cries will be in vain, for it will be too late, and nothing can stop your destruction,**' says the Lord of Hosts.

You will cry and moan, saying, 'If **only we had repented and had not killed the prophets. If only we had remembered the Lord our God when He gave us our riches, then we would not have lost them.**

Now when we put down a tool, **the next day it is gone.** When we need our swords for battle, **they are taken** from us. Our buried treasures have **eluded us** because of the curse on the land. If only we had repented when the Lord warned us, for now the land is cursed and we **cannot keep anything.'**

In days ahead, you will also say, 'We are surrounded by demons--by the angels of him who has sought to destroy our souls, and our sins are great. Oh Lord, can Thou not turn Thine anger away from us?'

But in those days, your days of probation will be over. You will have put off the day of your salvation until it is **everlastingly too late**, and your destruction will be **certain.**

All your lives you have been trying to get what you can never have - **happiness in doing wrong.** You can never be happy while being wicked because this goes **against the nature of righteousness.** If only you people would listen to my words!

I pray that the Lord's anger will be turned away from you--that you will repent and be saved."

***Samuel prophecies
of signs of Christ***

See Helaman, Chapter 14

This Lamanite prophet, Samuel, said many other things to the people, but not all his words can be written in this book. Here are more of his words:

"I will give you a sign, which will happen in five years, when the Son of God comes to redeem all who believe in Him. There will be great lights in heaven during the night before He comes. That night there will be no darkness, for it will seem like day.

This will be your sign:



You will see the sun set and rise as usual, but the night before His birth will not be dark. You will have one day, one night, and one day without darkness.

You will also see a new star in the sky. This is not all, for you will see many signs and wonders in the sky and be so

amazed that you will fall to the earth.
And everyone who believes in the Son
of God will have everlasting life.

This is what the Lord's angel told me to
tell you. The angel commanded me to
prophesy these things to you. He told
me to cry to this people,

*'Repent and prepare
the way of the Lord!'*

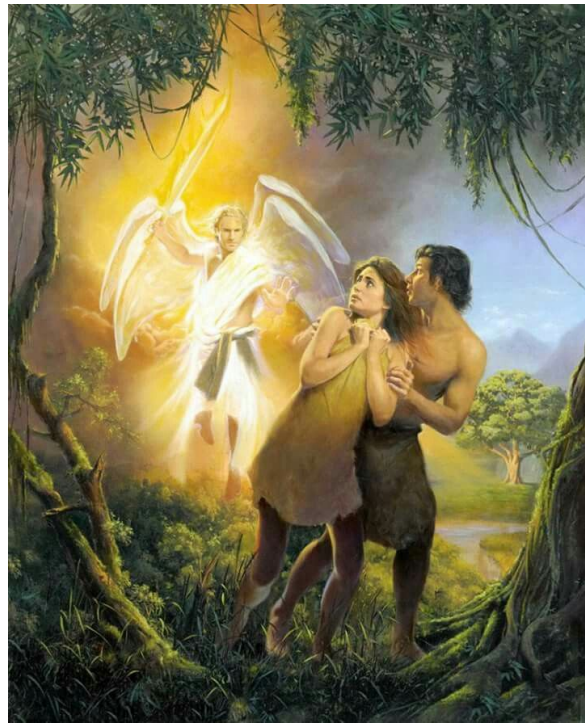
Because I am a Lamanite, and because
I told you the Lord's harsh words, you
threw me out of your city. Now you are
angry with me again and want to kill
me.

But you will hear me now, for I have
climbed on top of this wall to tell you
of God's judgments that await you
because of your sins, and how you may
yet repent of them.

I came to tell you of the coming of
Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father
of heaven and earth, the Creator of all
things from the beginning, and also of
the signs of His coming so that perhaps
you will believe in Him.

**If you believe in Him, you will repent
of all your sins** and have them taken
from you through **His merits**.

I give you another sign --the sign of His
death, for He must surely die so that
salvation and the resurrection may
come. After men and women are
resurrected, they will again be brought
into the presence of the Lord. His death
and resurrection will redeem all people
from the first death of their spirit and
body.



The first death came upon Adam and
Eve and upon all their descendants
when they were sent out from the
Lord's presence, out of the garden into
a world in which their bodies had to
die. Because they were no longer in the
Lord's presence, they were considered
to be dead to spiritual things. This
condition for them, and now for us, is
called **the first death**.

The resurrection of Christ redeems all
people from this first death of the body
and spirit by bringing them back into
the Lord's presence. The resurrection of
Christ also allows us to repent and **not
suffer a second death**, or a spiritual
death, which is to be **cut off** from the
Lord's presence again after we are
judged.

Therefore, I call upon all of you to
repent! Otherwise, you will suffer a
second death for **knowing** these things
and **not doing** them.

On the day that Christ dies, the sun will be darkened and refuse to give its light. The moon and the stars will do the same, so that no light will be upon the face of this land. This complete darkness will continue for three days, beginning from the time Christ dies and continuing until He rises again.

And when His spirit **leaves** His body, there will be thunder and lightning for many hours as the earth shakes and trembles. Massive rocks, both **on the surface** of the earth **and** below it, will be broken up.

The **entire face** of the earth will be broken up, above and below. There will be great storms, and many mountains will become valleys, while many valleys will become very high mountains. Many highways will be broken up, and many cities will become desolate. Graves will be opened, and resurrected saints will appear to many.

The angel told me that this thunder and lightning will last for many hours. He said that after these great destructions, darkness will cover the whole earth for three days.

The angel told me that before Christ is born, many people will see even greater signs than these. This will prepare them to believe in Christ when the signs of His birth are given — so that whoever believes might be saved, and whoever will not believe will be given a righteous judgment.

If the unbelievers receive condemnation, **they will have brought it upon themselves.**

And now, remember my brothers and sisters, that those who die in their sins can **only blame themselves**, for God has given you the knowledge and the freedom to act for yourselves — the knowledge to know good from evil, and the freedom to **choose life or death**. You may do good and have good restored to you, or you may choose evil and be restored to evil.”

***Nephites cursed,
Lamanites blessed
See Helaman, Chapter 15***

"My brothers and sisters, unless you repent, your houses will be destroyed. Your nursing women with small children will have a great reason to mourn, for there will be no place for them to hide. Your pregnant women will not be able to run, and will be trampled and left to die.

You, the Nephites, will be cursed unless you repent when you see all these signs and wonders. For you have been the chosen people of the Lord, and He has chastised you because He loves you. The Lord hated what the Lamanites did according to their false traditions. But salvation has come to them through the preaching of your people.

The Lord has spared them so they would have time to be converted to the truth. Most of the Lamanites are now righteous, and they obey God's

commands, statutes and judgments according to the law of Moses. Most of them are doing everything they can to **help their brethren** know the truth.

And because of their efforts many of their brethren are converted each day. You have seen that after coming to know the truth, the testimonies of the Lamanites are firm.

After realizing their false traditions, they believe the prophecies written in the holy scriptures. You have seen change come upon their hearts as they have been led by the prophecies, repenting with faith in the Lord. You know those Lamanites are firm in their faith in Christ, who made them free.

You know they buried their weapons, being afraid to sin again by fighting. They would rather be killed than fight, because of their faith in Christ.

Because of their strong faith, the Lord will bless them and extend their lives, even though they were once terrible sinners.

But even if they did not believe in the Lord, He would still let them live in the land **until they are converted in the latter days**.

Our forefathers, the prophet Zenos, and many other prophets spoke about this **latter-day Lamanite conversion**.

The Lord's promises are made to the Lamanites in the last days, because in spite of many difficulties they will have — being driven like cattle over the land, being hunted, killed and scattered

with no safe place to go — the Lord will **show mercy** on them.

According to prophecy, they will **once again** know their Redeemer, their Great and True Shepherd, and be numbered among His people.

It will be better for them than for you unless you repent, for if the Lamanites had seen the mighty works you have seen, they would not stay ignorant under the curse of their forefathers' false traditions, and they would never again falter in unbelief. The Lord says, *'I will not completely destroy the Lamanites, but in the day of my wisdom I will cause them to return to me again. Now if the Nephites will not repent and do my will, as surely as I live, I will completely destroy them. I will do this if they will not believe and obey me after I have done so many mighty works among them.'*

***Some Nephites repent
See Helaman, Chapter 16***

Many people heard Samuel, a Lamanite, as he spoke from the city walls. The ones who believed him went looking for Nephi. When they found him, they confessed their sins to him and asked him to baptize them unto the Lord.

But those who didn't believe Samuel threw rocks at him. Many shot arrows at him, but the Lord's Spirit was with Samuel, so they could not hit him.



When they realized they could not hit him, many **more** believed and went to Nephi to be baptized.

Nephi baptized, prophesied, preached and cried repentance to the people. He showed them signs and wonders and **performed miracles** among them so they would **know** that Christ would soon come.

Nephi told them about things that would soon happen, so that when they did happen, the people would believe, remembering that they had been prophesied. But most of the people did not believe Samuel.

After realizing that they could not kill him, they called out to their captains, "**Bind this man, for he is possessed with a devil. Because the devil's power is in him, we cannot hit him with rocks and arrows. So catch him, bind him, and take him away.**"

As the captains started to come after Samuel, he jumped off the wall and ran out of their lands. He went back to his

own country and began to preach and prophesy among his own people, and the Nephites never heard of him again.

This is how the year 6 BC ended. By the end of 5 BC, most of the Nephites were still full of pride and wickedness, while only a few repented and kept God's commandments.

This condition did not change throughout 4 BC, the eighty-eighth year of the judges' reign over the Nephites. The following year was the same, except that most of the people were even more hardened, doing things that were more and more contrary to God's commandments.

But in 2 BC, two years before Christ was to be born, great signs and wonders were given to the people, and the prophets' words began to be fulfilled. Angels appeared to wise men, bringing them glad news of great joy. In this way, the scriptures were beginning to be fulfilled.

But in spite of all these things, only the most believing Nephites and Lamanites were not hardened. Nearly all the people in the land depended on their own strength and wisdom.

They said, "**With so many predictions, of course they have guessed some things right. But we know that all the**

great and marvelous works that they have predicted cannot occur."

They began to reason and debate among themselves, saying, "It is not reasonable for such a being as a Christ to come. For if He will come as the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, as it has been spoken, then why will He not show Himself to us as well as to those in Jerusalem? Why will He not come into this land and show Himself, as they say He will in Jerusalem?"

We know this is only a wicked tradition, handed down to us by our forefathers to make us believe in some great and marvelous thing that will happen, not among us, but in some far away land we know nothing about.

This wicked tradition was designed to keep us in ignorance, for we cannot see with our own eyes if these traditions are true or not. Those who teach us, using these wicked traditions, do it by the cunning and mysterious arts of the evil one, working this great mystery that we cannot understand.

They do this to keep us down — to be servants to their words and to them, for we depend on them to teach us the word. If we let them, they would keep us in ignorance all our lives."

Now the people imagined in their hearts many other things like this, which were foolish and vain. They were very disturbed, for Satan stirred them up to sin constantly. Satan spread rumors and contentions all over the land to harden the people's hearts

against good and against that which was to come.

By the beginning of 1 BC, in spite of all the signs, wonders and miracles that the Lord's people had performed, Satan had taken a great hold upon the hearts of nearly all the people in the land. This is the end of Helaman's book, according to the record he and his sons made.