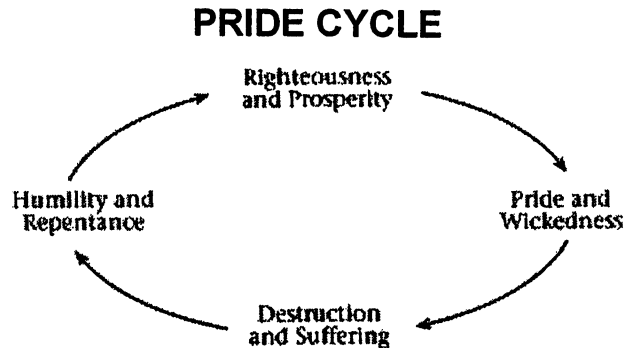


Gospel Doctrine Lesson 34: "How Could You Have Forgotten Your God?" (Helaman 6-12)

LESSON GOAL: To help us recognize the cycle that leads from righteousness to wickedness and back to righteousness.



Although we can choose our actions, we are not free to choose the results.
Once we have made the choice, the consequence is unalterable.

Light and darkness cannot exist in the human soul simultaneously.

W. Jeffrey Marsh: "Even the **smallest candle** in the corner of a room **dispels darkness** throughout the entire room. **The closer we draw to the light of the Spirit, the more power we have over darkness.** . . . The Lord is willing to pour out his Spirit on any group or individual "because of their easiness and willingness to believe in his words" (Helaman 6:35-36). But if an individual or group turns away from the light, they will begin to:

- **deny revelation** from the Holy Spirit (Helaman 6:2)
- **show ingratitude to God** for blessings and set their hearts upon their riches (6:17)
- **commit sins and crimes** because of their covetous desires (6:17-31)
- **become "exceedingly wicked"** (6:31)
- **and turn away from God** (6:31)

President J. Reuben Clark: "Every human being is born with **the light of faith** kindled in his heart as on an altar, and that light burns and the Lord sees that it burns, during the period before we are accountable. When accountability comes, then each of us determines **how we shall feed and care for that light. If we shall live righteously, that light will glow** until it suffuses the whole body, giving to it health and strength and spiritual light as well as bodily health. **If we shall live unrighteously, that light will dwindle** and finally almost flicker out. Yet it is my hope and my belief that the Lord never permits the light of faith wholly to be extinguished in any human heart, however faint the light may glow. The Lord has provided that there shall still be there a spark which, with **teaching**, with the spirit of **righteousness**, with **love**, with **tenderness**, with **example**, with **living the gospel** shall brighten and glow again, however darkened the mind may have been. **And if we shall fail so to reach those among us of our own whose faith has dwindled low, we shall fail in one of the main things which the Lord expects at our hands.**" (Conference Report, Oct. 1936, 114).

1. The people are righteous and are blessed with peace and prosperity.

NEPHITES -- Helaman 6	LAMANITES -- Helaman 6
Dwindled in unbelief (v 34)	Grew in the knowledge of God (v 34)
Grew in wickedness and abominations (sin) (v 34)	Grew in knowledge of God and walked in truth, righteousness before God (v 34)
Lost guidance of the Lord's Spirit (v35)	Received the Spirit (v 36)
Built up and supported the Gadianton robbers (v 38)	Preached the word of God to the Gadianton robbers (v 37)

2. The Nephites become proud and wicked. Nephi calls them to repentance.

Dr. Hugh W. Nibley: "What we read about in the Book of Mormon is the 'Nephite Disease' --and we have it!... We can be most grateful, therefore, regardless of how sick others may be, **that God in the Book of Mormon has diagnosed our sickness** for our special benefit, and **prescribed a cure for us**.... Plainly it is meant for us, as it reminds us many times; it is the story of what happened to the Nephites--and we are the Nephites: '...it must needs be that the riches of the earth are mine to give; but **beware of pride**, lest ye become as the Nephites of old.' (DC 38:39). There it is in a nutshell; it is the fate of the Nephites, not of the Lamanites, Greeks, or Chinese, that concerns us; and **that doom was brought on them by pride** which in turn was engendered by the riches of this earth." (*Since Cumorah*, 1967, 390-91).

Dallin H. Oaks: "Pride must be a special challenge in this dispensation, because the Book of Mormon, which was written to the people of our day, contains the most **intensive and repetitive** teachings about the evils of pride. It identifies **pride as the cause of the spiritual and temporal downfall** of the people of God" (*Pure in Heart*, 104).

President Brigham Young (less than two years after their arrival in the valley of the Great Salt Lake): "**The worst fear that I have about this people is that they will get rich in this country, forget God and His people, wax fat, and kick themselves out of the Church and go to hell.** This people will stand mobbing, robbing, poverty, and all manner of persecution, and be true. But **my greater fear for them is that they cannot stand wealth**; and yet they have to be tried with riches, for they will become the richest people on this earth."

3. The Lord gives Nephi the sealing power. The unrepentant Nephites face warfare and famine.

Boyd K. Packer: "In the Church we hold sufficient authority to perform all of the ordinances necessary to redeem and to exalt the whole human family. And, because we have the keys to the sealing power, **what we bind in proper order here will be bound in heaven.** Those keys—the keys to seal and bind on earth, and have it bound in heaven—represent the consummate gift from our God. With that authority we can baptize and bless, we can endow and seal, and **the Lord will honor our commitments**" (*Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 32).

M. Russell Ballard: "The Book of Mormon teaches that secret combinations engaged in crime present a serious challenge, not just to individuals and families but to entire civilizations. Among today's secret combinations are gangs, drug cartels, and organized crime families. **The secret combinations of our day function much like the Gadanton robbers** of the Book of Mormon times... Among their purposes are to "murder, and plunder, and steal, and commit whoredoms and all manner of wickedness, contrary to the law of their country and also the law of their God."

"**If we are not careful, today's secret combinations can obtain power and influence just as quickly and just as completely as they did in Book of Mormon times**" (*Ensign*, Oct. 2011, 50).

4. The Nephites humble themselves and repent.

Neal A. Maxwell: "Nephi had not selfishly sought his 'own life,' but rather had sought to do God's will. This gave him the extra and undivided energy which made his striving with unwearied diligence possible. **Nephi knew in which direction he faced: toward God.**"

In contrast, and to be pitied, are the ambivalent, forever pivoting as between looking toward God or man. With all the incessant pivoting, no wonder some grow so weary! Instead, if we let our own wills be swallowed up in the will of the Lord, there is a more holistic deployment of our talents (see Mosiah 15:7). **Like Nephi, we are not to pursue our own wills.**" (*If Thou Endure It Well*, 116).

Neal A. Maxwell: "So very much of pure prayer seems to be **the process of first discovering, rather than requesting, the will of our Father in heaven** and then aligning ourselves therewith... When we do conform to His will, God will pour forth **special blessings from heaven** upon us, as was the case with Nephi, the son of Helaman" (*All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience*, 94).

Dallin H. Oaks: "It is noteworthy that the Savior did not limit his teaching about disputations and contention to those who had wrong ideas about doctrine or procedure. **He forbade disputations and contention by everyone. The commandment to avoid contention applies to those who are right as well as to those who are wrong.**" (*Book of Mormon Symposium Series, 4 Nephi – Moroni*, p. 177)

Joseph F. Smith: "You find the spirit of contention **only among apostates** and those who have denied the faith, those who have turned away from the truth and have become enemies to God and his work. There you will find the spirit of contention, the spirit of strife. There you will find them wanting to 'argue the question,' and to dispute with you all the time. Their food, their meat, and their drink is contention which is abominable in the sight of the Lord. **We do not contend. We are not contentious**, for if we were we would grieve the Spirit of the Lord from us, just as apostates do and have always done." (*Book of Mormon Symposium Series, 4 Nephi*, 177).

5. Conclusion

"The Lord in his great infinite goodness doeth bless and prosper those who put their trust in Him" Hel. 12:1

"They do harden their hearts . . . and do trample under their feet the Holy One." Hel. 12:2

The Obedient Keep God's Commandments—Hel. 12:2-3

- God prospers his people
- increases their fields, flocks and herds
- increases gold, silver, precious things, art
- spares their lives
- delivers them from their enemies
- softens their enemies' hearts
- does all for their welfare and happiness

The Weaknesses of Fallen Humanity—Hel. 12:4-6

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| •Foolish and vain | •quick to be lifted up in pride |
| •evil and devilish | •quick to boast, do iniquity |
| •quick to do iniquity | •slow to remember God |
| •slow to do good | •slow to hear to God's counsel |
| •quick to hear Lucifer | •slow to gain wisdom |
| •quick to desire worldly things | •do not desire God to guide them |

Quinn G. McKay: "It seems to be a fact of human nature that those engaged in pursuing 'the good life' also spend much energy, time, and money seeking association with the wealthy, powerful, and famous. They live where there are no poor, socialize in private clubs where there are no poor, travel first class, and otherwise isolate themselves from regular exposure to the needy except for occasional giving on the street or to the seasonal charities. **Such benign neglect can often be as devastating as a deliberate reviling of the poor. This is in contrast to Him whom we claim to follow, who deliberately lived with and, for the most part, regularly sought out the poor and needy**" (*Ensign*, June 1987, 20).

Neal A. Maxwell: "Like Alma, who wished for a trumpet-like voice of an angel (Alma 29:1), we too need to understand our motivations and limitations. Even so, let us use well the season in which we serve. "Nephi wished, nostalgically, he'd lived in a different time, yet finally concluded, 'But behold, I am consigned that these are my days' (Helaman 7:9). Like Alma, he no doubt realized that he should not 'desire more than to perform the work to which [he had] been called' (Alma 29:6). **Faith in God includes faith in His wisdom in placing us in our particular time and place, 'those years wherein we are set'**" (*That Ye May Believe*, 156).

Gordon B. Hinckley: "We all do a lot of studying, but **most of us don't do much meditation. We don't take time to think.** I'd like to suggest that next fast day . . . everybody in this hall set aside an hour or two. Sit by yourself. Go in the bedroom and lock the door. Go out in the yard under a tree. Go in your study if you have one and shut the door, and think about yourself and your worthiness. Read from this great book [Book of Mormon]... There's a great word that's used, 'ponder.'
"Ponder.' What do we mean by 'ponder'? Well, I think it simply means kind of quietly thinking things through. **Ponder what you have read. Ponder your life. Are you worthy, are you living the commandments...?"** (*Church News*, 01/06/96)

Mary Ellen Edmunds: "The story goes that someone once asked Michelangelo how he could transform ordinary rock into his marvelous statues. Reportedly, the artist replied that **he just chiseled until everything that wasn't the statue wasn't there.** To be spiritual means to have a sense of who we truly are and then to be that person.

"Eventually, spirituality becomes such an integral part of our being that we can follow our heart's true desires without doing anything wrong. Nephi, the son of Helaman, reached that point where there was no conflict between what he wanted and what was right... This kind of spirituality requires that we consciously move away from all that is unkind, unholy, impure, or unchristian. It requires that we let go of anger and revenge. And it yields a peace of heart and soul. It makes us able to find good things to do without constantly being asked, pushed, or reminded" (*Ensign*, Oct. 1985, 14).

Stephen D. Naudal: "The **age-old problem** described so well by prophets in the Book of Mormon and reiterated by modern prophets seems to be one of **pride**. Pride in its many forms is the great challenge from within. Mormon expressed it so well when he said, 'Behold, they do not desire that the Lord their God, who hath created them, should rule and reign over them' (Hel. 12:6). Once rooted in a person's heart, **pride sets the stage for spiritual downfall: unrighteous thoughts** that spring up from within can lead to an unwillingness to be submissive or to follow counsel. For some, **personal prosperity** reinforces the notion that they are doing fine on their own. Others begin to feel that **rules can be tailored a little to meet their personal desires**. Sound teachings become old-fashioned, and leaders start to seem out of touch, unfeeling, or too old. None of these thoughts happen overnight but **come gradually as humility and meekness are eroded** by possessions, status, and prosperity. **Pride causes a hardened heart and spiritual deafness**, both of which can ultimately lead to a host of more serious sins. In the worst case, **a person may go beyond self-destructive behavior and become an enemy to God, desiring to fight openly against His teachings"** (*Ensign*, July 1996, 16).

Henry B. Eyring: "You and I need to be patient, and for a reason. A quick reading of the Book of Mormon, a few prayers, a shallow attempt at repentance, a casual regard for the covenants we've made—of course, that is not enough. The scriptures use over and over again the word 'steadiness' to describe faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. When faith and repentance and diligent efforts to live the commandments have gone on long enough that virtue garnishes our thoughts unceasingly, then the doctrine of the priesthood, the truthful answers to the questions that really matter, will distill upon us as the dews from heaven.

"That's been my experience with seeking the confirmation of truth by the Spirit of God. I have at times sought it by singular effort, in times of great need, and it has come. Investigators have that experience when **they reach the point where they must know if the Book of Mormon is true.**

"But far more often for me, I notice **the Spirit's presence** in quiet confirmations at times when all I seem to have done is **plod on in diligence, doing the simple things—searching the scriptures** with a prayer in my heart and with **more concern for others**, and therefore less time for pursuits that let Satan, the father of lies, entice me. It's in periods of that **steadiness that I notice the Holy Ghost**, almost in the way you're surprised to discover that your shoes are wet from the dew formed on the grass overnight, and I look up and realize that my mind has been enlightened and **my heart has been enlarged**" (*To Draw Closer to God*, 120).

Joseph Fielding Smith: "Now [Mormon] did not mean to say that the Lord has greater concern for and loves the dust of the earth more than he does his children. He did not mean to say that we, the children of the Lord, in his sight are considered less than the dust of the earth. **The point he is making is that the dust of the earth is obedient. It moveth hither and thither at the command of the Lord.** All things are in, harmony with his laws. Everything in the universe obeys the law given unto it, so far as I know, except man. Everywhere you look you find law and order, the elements obeying the law given to them, true to, their calling. **But man rebels**, and in this thing man is less than the dust of the earth because he **rejects the counsels of the Lord**, and the greater the blessings he receives, (this because of his agency), the more willingly does he turn from the source of those blessings, feeling self-sufficient, and **puts his faith and his trust in the arm of flesh rather than in God**" (*Conference Report*, Apr. 1929, 55).

We need to remember the reason why this story was recorded. It was so that we could ask the more pertinent question, which is always, AM I LIKE THEM?

- Do I forget God when life is going great?
- Do I think I earned these material blessings myself?
- Do I wish I had more things?
- Is it hard for me to pay tithing?
- Is my fast offering measly?
- Does the prophet's counsel ever disagree with me?
- Are my prayers better when I have afflictions than they are when I only have things to be grateful for?
- Do I realize how happy I am when I am living close to the Lord?

SUGGESTIONS: (WAYS TO FIND THE HIDDEN TREASURE WITHIN SCRIPTURE)

1. **Circle:** Pay attention to the verbs, or action words, and strong nouns in the passage.
2. **Ponder:** Closely examine the images invoked by the passage. How does this help us unearth the meaning behind the verses?
2. **Step Back:** Look at the passage like a formula (If then...).
3. **Ask:** Why would Mormon include (or write) this passage? What about his experiences or the visions he has seen of our time that would make him think this was important for us to know?
4. **Ask:** What does this passage tell us about how God works? How does this passage teach us about the character of God as our father?
5. **Ask:** What type of people is God talking about here? Are these people who have had the truth or just people in general? (Helaman 12)
6. **Cross Reference:** What events could Mormon be referencing? What additional insights can you find by cross referencing these verses?
7. **Ask:** What does this really mean to us? Is there a principle or a pattern that shows us how to live *now*?

WORDS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE IN HELAMAN 6-12 TO SHOW THE PRIDE CYCLE

Firmness and steadiness: 6:1
Great joy and peace: 6:3,7,13,14
Easiness and willingness to believe: 6:36

Hearts (mostly negative): 6:17,21,15,29,30,31
7:6,14,21,26 / 9:21,41 / 10:3,15 / 12:1-2

Dwindle: 6:34
Ripening for destruction: 6:40
Wickedness and hardness: 6:35
With Unwearyingness declared the Word: 10:4
Repented and humbled themselves: 11:9
Contentions: 10:18,11:22
Ripening for destruction: 11:37

Thoughts on Gospel Doctrine Lesson 34

by Hugh Nibley
August 26, 2004

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It is important to understand that Gadianton's phenomenal success was due to the fact that the majority of the whole Nephite nation submitted to his plan of operation and his philosophy "and did build up unto themselves idols of their gold and their silver. And it came to pass that all these iniquities did come unto them in the space of not many years" (Helaman 6:31- 32). But while the Nephites sank lower and lower in their cycle of producing and acquiring goods as the measure and purpose of man's existence, the Lamanites set about to exterminate the Gadianton society among their own nations, and succeeded in a most noteworthy fashion. What were their weapons? No strong-arm methods were employed; no knives and poison, tear-gas and sawed-off shot-guns, or the usual arsenal of crime-bursting futility: they simply "did preach the word of God among the more wicked part of them" (Helaman 6:37) and that ended the crime-wave! If that sounds a little too idealistic, we must remember that we are dealing here not with the small and peculiar band of professional or congenital criminals, but with the general public gone mad after money—people not really criminal at heart, but unable to resist the appeal of wealth and the things it could buy. Among the Nephites these things actually "seduced the more part of the *righteous* until they had come down to believe" in the system of the Gadiantons and "partake of their spoils" (Helaman 6:38). Why not? they said, everybody is doing it! And everybody was: soon Gadianton's Protective Association "did obtain the *sole management of the government*" (Helaman 6:39).

If the reader has imagined to himself the Gadianton band as abandoned wretches or street Arabs lurking in dark alleys and fleeing from the light of day in dingy and noisome hideouts, let him disabuse his mind of such a concept. They were a highly respected concern that made their handsome profits by operating strictly within the letter of the law, as they interpreted and controlled it. They were the government, the well-to-do, the respectable, and the law-abiding citizens. There was a dangerous and irresponsible element in the society, namely those improvident and negatively inclined fanatics who called themselves the "followers of God," whose leaders constantly predicted the worst for society; but public opinion and common sense were strongly against such characters and made things pretty hot for them. They were the anti-social prophets of doom and gloom, the real criminal element (Helaman 6:39).

"And thus we see," the record concludes, "that they were in an awful state, and ripening for an everlasting destruction" (Helaman 6:40). And thus we also see the meaning of the paradoxical statement that the disreputable Gadianton "did prove the overthrow, yea, almost the entire destruction of the people of Nephi" (Helaman 2:13). He did it not as a criminal and bandit but as one of the most able and successful men of his time, and entirely with the public's consent.

Being in control of the government, we find "those Gadianton robbers filling the judgment-seats" (Helaman 7:4) and employing their office very profitably indeed, "letting the guilty and the wicked go unpunished because of their money;" and using their positions "in office at the head of government, to . . . get gain and glory" (Helaman 7:5). When the righteous Nephi gave a sermon to a crowd of outraged citizens gathered in his garden (outraged against him, not the government!) he told them some home truths. "How could you have forgotten your God?" (Helaman 7:2) he asks, and gives the answer:

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... all manner of iniquity (Helaman 7:21).

Nephi too puts his finger on the spot: drugs, sex, gambling, anything that comes under the heading of iniquity are all the inevitable adjuncts of national depravity, but they are passed by every time—almost completely ignored—to put the spotlight on the real culprit of which they are but the faithful attendants, the seat of infection and the root of evil being the desire to be rich and successful: "to get gain, to be praised of men" (Helaman 7:21).

Nephi's little sermon received more than a cool reception. Some judges who happened to be card-holding members of the Protective Association were in the crowd and they immediately demanded that Nephi be brought into court and charged with the crime of "revil [ing] against this people and against our law" (Helaman 8:2). And indeed if contempt of institutions was a crime, Nephi was guilty, for he "had spoken unto them concerning the corruptness of their law" (Helaman 8:3). Still, the judges had to proceed with some care, since they were supposed to be administering justice

(Helaman 8:4), and could not be too crude and obvious in their attack, for even among the exceedingly wicked and depraved Nephites the feeling of civic virtue was perhaps as alive as it is in America today; instead of trying to lynch Nephi in fact, the crowd actually protected him from the treatment the judges would have liked to give him (Helaman 8:4). The latter therefore harangued the people on the monstrosity of Nephi's treasonable behavior in telling them "that... our great cities shall be taken from us.... 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" (Helaman 8:5-6). Still, even among the wicked Nephites, there were those in the crowd who had the courage and fairness to cry out: "Let this man alone, for he is a good man,... for... he has testified aright unto us concerning our iniquities" (Helaman 8:7-8). Fair play prevailed, and Nephi continued his preaching and revealed by inspiration that destruction was at the doors and that even at that moment the chief judge had been murdered, "and he lieth in his blood" (Helaman 8:27).

At the big public funeral that took place the next day, the judges who had tried to stir the crowd up against Nephi declared that his knowledge of the murder showed he was in on it, and though there were protests he was bound and brought to formal trial. The trial was held publicly, "before the multitude" (in the absence of television), and the judges were at their best, questioning Nephi "in divers ways that they might cross him," slyly offering him bribes and immunity if he would tell about the murder and his connection with it (Helaman 9:19-20). Nephi told them more than they bargained for, advising them to question the brother of the murdered judge, taking care to inspect the skirts of his cloak and to accuse him of the murder. Under such treatment the culprit confessed and in so doing cleared Nephi, who next went about on a preaching tour through the whole country, going "from multitude to multitude," while his assistants did the same (Helaman 10:17). This alarmed the Protective Association, the "secret band of robbers" who sat in high places and whose real motives and methods were concealed from the public, and to counteract the effect of Nephi's preaching they systematically stirred up contentions everywhere (Helaman 10:18; 11:2 make this clear). Nephi's message was rejected everywhere, but the fighting that had been stirred up got entirely out of hand and developed into a civil war, or rather a series of "wars throughout all the land among all the people" (Helaman 11:1).

Now the Lord had promised Nephi that he would grant him whatsoever he asked of him, for he knew that Nephi could be trusted to ask for the right things (Helaman 10:5). So to put an end to the terrible state of strife in the nation after it had gone on for two years Nephi prayed for a famine to afflict the land. The prayer was heard and the ensuing famine was so severe that in the end the people gave up fighting and went down on their knees (Helaman 11:3-7). By the time the famine ended, at the request of Nephi, the Gadianton band had become extinct (Helaman 11:10).

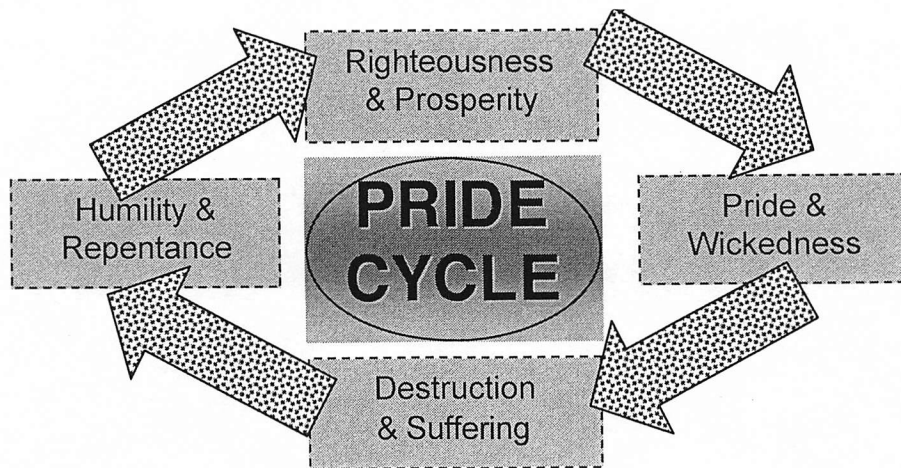
The end of the famine saw a great improvement in spiritual matters, the more part of the people, both the Lamanites and Nephites, belonging to the church (Helaman 11:18-21). A period of economic expansion and much building also followed, and yet within a scant three years "there began to be much strife" again, certain groups of dissenters taking to murder and plunder in the old style, building up great strength in the mountains and the wilderness by "receiving daily an addition to their numbers." As they had learned nothing these people "did search out all the secret plans of Gadianton; and thus they became robbers of Gadianton" (Helaman 11:23-26). Within a year the mountains and the wilderness became so infested with the robbers as to be closed entirely to Nephite occupation (Helaman 11:31). The bands were well organized and defied both Nephite and Lamanite military power, making themselves an object of terror to the whole land by their raids and onslaughts (Helaman 11:32-33). Still the people continued to forget the Lord and to ripen again for destruction for another five years (Helaman 11:36-37).

Commenting on this, Mormon observes that "we may see at the very time when he doth prosper his people, . . . then is the time that they do harden their hearts, . . . and this because of their ease, and their exceedingly great prosperity" (Helaman 12:2). It was at this time that Samuel the Lamanite "came into the land of Zarahemla, and began to preach unto the people" (Helaman 13:2), telling them that the only reason they had been spared so long was "for the righteous' sake," and when they should finally cast out the righteous it would be all over for them (Helaman 13:14). He discoursed on the futility of attempting to achieve security by hiding up one's treasures in the earth, a practice of those who "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 . . . cursed be they and also their treasures; . . . 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 . . . unto boasting, and unto great swelling, envyings, strifes, malice, persecutions, and murders, and all manner of iniquities" (Helaman 13:20-22). "All manner of iniquities" covers every type and variety of crime, but the cause for all of them is always the same.

Excerpted from Hugh Nibley, Approach to the Book of Mormon, 384- 389.

Lesson 34: "How Could You Have Forgotten Your God?"

Helaman 6-12



"No other written testament so clearly illustrates the fact that when men and nations walk in the fear of God and in obedience to his commandments, they prosper and grow, but when they disregard him and his word, there comes a decay that, unless arrested by righteousness, leads to impotence and death."
(Gordon B Hinckley October Conference 1979)

The Book of Mormon is unequalled in all literature in outlining both the path of good and evil, their consequences, and then inviting and leading people to Christ if they desire to follow him. Learn from these examples found in Helaman 6-12.

God doth prosper His people (Helaman 12:2):

- increases their fields, flocks, herds
- increases their gold, silver, precious things and art
- spares their lives
- delivers them from their enemies
- softens the hearts of their enemies
- doe all things for their welfare and happiness

Then men:

- harden their hearts
- forget the Lord
- trample the Holy One under their feet because of their ease and great prosperity

Helaman 12:3 And thus we see that except the Lord doth chaseneth His people with many afflictions—death, terror, famine, pestilence—they will not remember Him.

To ignore the light of Christ is fatal, and as an individual or group turns away from the light, they will begin to:

- deny revelation from the Holy Spirit (Helaman 6:2)
- show ingratitude to God for blessings; set their hearts upon riches (Helaman 6:17)
- commit sins and crimes because of their covetous desires (Helaman 6:17-31)
- turn away from God (Helaman 6:31)

Mormon describes the universal weaknesses in fallen humanity that are so offensive to the Lord. Fallen men and women are (Helaman 12:4-6):

- foolish
- vain
- evil and devilish
- quick to do iniquity
- slow to do good
- quick to hearken to the words of the evil one
 - not desirous that the Lord their God should rule and reign over them
- quick to set their hearts on the vain things of the world
- quick to be lifted up in pride
- quick to boast and do all manner of iniquity
- slow to remember the Lord their God
- slow to give ear to God's counsels
- slow to walk in wisdom's paths

Helaman's son Nephi exhibited the exact opposite of fallen tendencies:

- faithful obedience
- consistency
- unweariness in observing and declaring the word

A sign of spiritual maturity is the tendency to be consistent and steadfast in righteousness and service:

- spiritual courage displaces the fear of men
- seeking the Lord's will, not our own