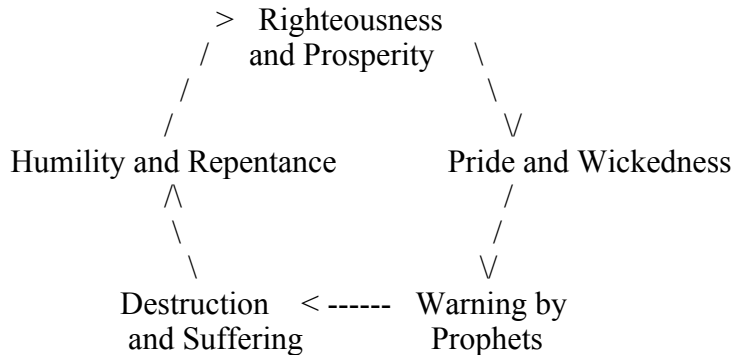


**August 26–September 1: Helaman 1–6, "The Rock of Our Redeemer"**

The Pride Cycle



Secret Combinations

Pahoran was elected chief judge after the death of his father. His brother, Paanchi, wanted to be chief judge and attempted to overthrow his brother. But Paanchi was arrested, tried, and condemned for seeking “to destroy the liberty of the people.”

Helaman 1:9-11

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

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

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

Next Helaman was appointed chief judge by the people and Kishkumen also tried to kill him. Let's read why

Helaman 2:4-5

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

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

What did those who were in secret compliance with Gadianton expect to gain by installing him as their chief judge?

(power and authority among the people)

Kishkumen was killed before he could get to Helaman

Helaman 2:11-14

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

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

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

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

What did Gadianton, his followers, and his successors do that proved to be so destructive to the Nephite nation?

Ether 8:23,25

23) Wherefore, O ye Gentiles... suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which are built up to get power and gain...

25) For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations, and countries; and it bringeth to pass the destruction of all people, for it is built up by the devil, who is the father of all lies; even that same liar who beguiled our first parents, yea, even that same liar who hath caused man to commit murder from the beginning; who hath hardened the hearts of men that they have murdered the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out from the beginning.

Mormon gives us more insights into the workings of these organizations

Helaman 6:21-24

21 But behold, Satan did stir up the hearts of the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those bands of robbers, and did enter into their covenants and their oaths, that they would protect and preserve one another in whatsoever difficult circumstances they should be placed, that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.

22 And it came to pass that they did have their signs, yea, their secret signs, and their secret words; and this that they might distinguish a brother who had entered into the covenant, that whatsoever wickedness his brother should do he should not be injured by his brother, nor by those who did belong to his band, who had taken this covenant.

23 And thus they might murder, and plunder, and steal, and commit whoredoms and all manner of wickedness, contrary to the laws of their country and also the laws of their God.

24 And whosoever of those who belonged to their band should reveal unto the world of their wickedness and their abominations, should be tried, not according to the laws

of their country, but according to the laws of their wickedness, which had been given by Gadianton and Kishkumen.

How were members of this band able to get away with committing “all manner of wickedness, contrary to the laws of their country”?

(they would protect and preserve one another... that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings)

### Righteousness and Prosperity

Mormon tells us about prosperity of the church and the bless poured out on the Nephites. Mormon makes it clear what we should learn with his “thus we see” comments

Helaman 3:24-30

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What reasons are given for the Lord pouring out His blessings upon the people?

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

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

we see that whosoever will may lay hold upon the word of God... land their souls... at the right hand of God)

### Pride and Wickedness

But it didn't take long until the prosperity turned into pride and wickedness

Helaman 3:33-36

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

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

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

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

What was a cause of wickedness among the people and dissension in the church?

(exceedingly great pride which had gotten into the hearts of the people; and it was because of their exceedingly great riches)

George Q. Cannon

"We read in the Book of Mormon that when the ancient Nephites began to increase in means and become rich, as we are now increasing, the Spirit of God began to decrease in their midst.... The wealthy could have... comforts and advantages which their poorer brethren and sisters could not have. In consequence of these things they became divided into classes. The rich were raised up in their feelings above the poor.... They became puffed up in pride, and the Lord suffered the Lamanites to come upon and scourge them....

"We are now exposed to precisely the same influences as they were. We are increasing in wealth, and if we allow our hearts to be placed upon it, we shall have to undergo or to pass through difficulties similar in character to those which they had to endure." (JD 16:115)

How did the faithful members of the church respond to “great persecutions and... afflictions” caused by those who “were lifted up in pride”?

(even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts)

Henry B. Eyring

"The scriptures teach us that among other things, we can be sanctified or become more holy when we exercise faith in Christ, demonstrate our obedience, repent, sacrifice for Him, receive sacred ordinances, and keep our covenants with Him. Qualifying for the gift of holiness requires

humility, and patience." (CR, Oct. 2019)

### Warning by Prophets

This is one of the most wicked times of the Nephites. The Nephites lost much of their land (including Zarahemla) to the Lamanites because they had lost the support of God and were left to their own strength

Helaman 4:13-15

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

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

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

What did the Nephite prophets (Moronihah, Nephi, and Lehi) do to convince the people to turn from their pride and wickedness?

(preach many things unto the people, yea, and did prophesy many things)

Joseph B. Wirthlin

"As people heed the words of the prophets, the Lord blesses them. When they disregard His word, however, distress and suffering often follow. Over and over, the Book of Mormon teaches this great lesson. In its pages we read of the ancient inhabitants of the American continent who, because of their righteousness, were blessed of the Lord and became prosperous. Yet often this prosperity turned into a curse in that it caused them to 'harden their hearts, and... forget the Lord their God' (Hel 12:2).

"There is something about prosperity that brings out the worst in some people. In the book of Helaman, we learn of one group of Nephites who experienced great loss and slaughter....

"This sorrow would not have afflicted them 'had it not been for their wickedness' (Hel 4:11). If only they had heeded the words of the prophets of their day and journeyed to higher ground, their lives would have been dramatically different." (CR, Oct. 2005)

Their pride and wickedness brought the Nephites to the brink of destruction.

Helaman 5:1-4

1 And it came to pass that in this same year, behold, Nephi delivered up the

judgment-seat to a man whose name was Cezoram.

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

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

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

Note that they were at a state where the majority of the people chose evil -  
Do you recall what Mosiah warned would happen if this were to happen?

Mosiah 29:27

And if the time comes that the voice of the people doth choose iniquity, then is the time that the judgments of God will come upon you; yea, then is the time he will visit you with great destruction even as he has hitherto visited this land.

Marion G. Romney

"While living under a government providing for the freest exercise of agency. 'Their laws and their governments,' says the record, 'were established by the voice of the people, and they who chose evil were more numerous than they who chose good.' Therefore, 'they could not be governed by the law nor justice, save it were to their destruction.' Under these circumstances, they chose as rulers wicked men, who would certainly destroy their political liberties, to replace righteous men who had in the past protected and preserved those liberties and would have continued to do so in the future." (CR, Oct. 1981)

After some success preaching to the Nephites, Nephi and Lehi started preaching to the Lamanites who had recently captured Zarahemla and other lands from the Nephites. Let's read why they were so successful with the Lamanites in Zarahemla

Helaman 5:17-20

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

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

19 Therefore they did speak unto the great astonishment of the Lamanites, to the convincing them, insomuch that there were eight thousand of the Lamanites who were in the land of Zarahemla and round about baptized unto repentance, and were

convinced of the wickedness of the traditions of their fathers.

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

What had Nephi and Lehi been blessed with that made it possible for them convince the dissenters and Lamanites of their wickedness?

(they had power and authority given unto them that they might speak, and they also had what they should speak given unto them)

The missionaries were cast into prison but miraculously freed. Those who witnessed this great event also heard a voice from heaven admonishing them to repent

Helaman 5:42,45-52

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What do you think Mormon is referring to when he talks about “the greatness of the evidences which they had received”?

(Holy Spirit... did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire a pleasant voice, as if it were a whisper  
angels came down out of heaven and ministered unto them)

Ask yourself if you have experienced any of the great evidences

Michael T. Ringwood

"The quality of their conversion led these Lamanites to lay down their hatred for the Nephites and their weapons of war, they were firm and steadfast in their faith, they kept the commandments and walked in truth and uprightness, and they grew in their knowledge of God

"Yet most impressive to me was their easiness and willingness to believe in the word of God. This easiness and willingness to believe brought them the Spirit in great abundance and aided them to endure in faith to the end." (CR, Oct. 2009)

## Humility and Repentance

This great conversion among the Lamanites brought humility among the Nephite church members and they to repent of their sins

Helaman 6:1-5

1 And it came to pass that when the sixty and second year of the reign of the judges had ended, all these things had happened and the Lamanites had become, the more part of them, a righteous people, insomuch that their righteousness did exceed that of the Nephites, because of their firmness and their steadiness in the faith.

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

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

4 And it came to pass that many of the Lamanites did come down into the land of Zarahemla, and did declare unto the people of the Nephites the manner of their conversion, and did exhort them to faith and repentance.

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

How were the Lamanites able to teach “with exceedingly great power and authority” and what effect did that have on the Nephites?

(because of their firmness and their steadiness in the faith  
bringing down many of them into the depths of humility)

Barbara A. Lewis

“Having humility means that we present to our Heavenly Father and the Savior 'a broken heart and a contrite spirit'. We become meek and teachable like a child. We overcome pride and 'recognize gratefully our dependence on the Lord.' We repent when we need to repent. We understand that we need Heavenly Father's support and that our talents and our gifts come from



Him". ("What Is Humility, and How Do We Develop It?", Ensign, Sept 2016)

In the pride cycle, what comes after humility and repentance?

### Righteousness and Prosperity

Helaman 6:7-9

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

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

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

What happened when all the hatred stopped between the Nephites and Lamanites and they lived the principles of the gospel?

(they became exceedingly rich, both the Lamanites and the Nephites)

Dean L. Larsen

“The Lord has demonstrated throughout the generations that when the inhabitants of the earth remember him and are obedient to his direction, he will bless them not only with spiritual blessings, but with material abundance as well.

“The scriptures contain many evidences of the Lord’s willingness to prosper his people with the riches of the earth when they demonstrate that they will use this abundance prudently, with humility and charity, always acknowledging the source of their blessings.

“When the lives of the people are in harmony with the Lord’s will, all of the essential factors that produce the blessings God deigns to give to his children seem to come into line. Love and harmony prevail.” (CR, Oct. 1992)

In the pride cycle what follows righteousness and prosperity?

### Pride and Wickedness

Helaman 6:16-17

16 And in the commencement of the sixty and seventh year the people began to grow exceedingly wicked again.

17 For behold, the Lord had blessed them so long with the riches of the world that they had not been stirred up to anger, to wars, nor to bloodshed; therefore they began to set their hearts upon their riches; yea, they began to seek to get gain that they might be lifted up one above another; therefore they began to commit secret murders, and to rob and to plunder, that they might get gain.

Why is it common for righteousness and prosperity lead to pride and wickedness?

(they began to set their hearts upon their riches; yea, they began to seek to get gain that they might be lifted up one above another)

Hugh Nibley

“The sequence is a natural one: with easy wealth comes the feeling of superiority which makes people status-conscious; and with a feeling for status comes a desperate need to acquire the one thing that will give status; and with the recognition of the all-importance of that one thing, any scruples that may stand in the way of its acquisition are pushed aside.” (Since Cumorah, pg. 363)

Nephi describes the wickedness of the Nephites at this time

Helaman 6:32-35

32 And it came to pass that all these iniquities did come unto them in the space of not many years, insomuch that a more part of it had come unto them in the sixty and seventh year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

33 And they did grow in their iniquities in the sixty and eighth year also, to the great sorrow and lamentation of the righteous.

34 And thus we see that the Nephites did begin to dwindle in unbelief, and grow in wickedness and abominations, while the Lamanites began to grow exceedingly in the knowledge of their God; yea, they did begin to keep his statutes and commandments, and to walk in truth and uprightness before him.

35 And thus we see that the Spirit of the Lord began to withdraw from the Nephites, because of the wickedness and the hardness of their hearts.

Why do you think that the blessings of the worlds riches led the Nephites to great iniquities while the Lamanites continued in “uprightness before [God]”?