

**October 28–November 3: Mormon 1–6, “I Would That I Could Persuade All... to Repent”**

Mormon Receives the Plates

Ammaron hides the plates of Nephi and instructs Mormon concerning them

Mormon 1:2-4

2 And about the time that Ammaron hid up the records unto the Lord, he came unto me, (I being about ten years of age, and I began to be learned somewhat after the manner of the learning of my people) and Ammaron said unto me: I perceive that thou art a sober child, and art quick to observe;

3 Therefore, when ye are about twenty and four years old I would that ye should remember the things that ye have observed concerning this people; and when ye are of that age go to the land Antum, unto a hill which shall be called Shim; and there have I deposited unto the Lord all the sacred engravings concerning this people.

4 And behold, ye shall take the plates of Nephi unto yourself, and the remainder shall ye leave in the place where they are; and ye shall engrave on the plates of Nephi all the things that ye have observed concerning this people.

What characteristics did young Mormon possess that prepared him for his role in preserving and abridging the sacred records?

(learned, sober child, quick to observe)

James J. Hamula

"It was Mormon who was entrusted with the sacred records of the Nephite nation at only 10 years of age because he was a 'sober child' and 'quick to observe.' And it was Mormon who, at age 15, was 'visited of the Lord' and 'knew of the goodness of Jesus' because he was of a 'sober mind.'" (CR, Oct. 2008)

Willfully Rebelled

At age 11 he went with his father to live in Zarahemla. Here he describes the first of many wars in his day. In this one the Nephites stop the Lamanites from taking Zarahemla. He also describes the wickedness of the Nephites

Mormon 1:13-17

13 But wickedness did prevail upon the face of the whole land, insomuch that the Lord did take away his beloved disciples, and the work of miracles and of healing did cease because of the iniquity of the people.

14 And there were no gifts from the Lord, and the Holy Ghost did not come upon any, because of their wickedness and unbelief.

15 And I, being fifteen years of age and being somewhat of a sober mind, therefore I was visited of the Lord, and tasted and knew of the goodness of Jesus.

16 And I did endeavor to preach unto this people, but my mouth was shut, and I was

forbidden that I should preach unto them; for behold they had wilfully rebelled against their God; and the beloved disciples were taken away out of the land, because of their iniquity.

17 But I did remain among them, but I was forbidden to preach unto them, because of the hardness of their hearts; and because of the hardness of their hearts the land was cursed for their sake.

Why were the “beloved disciples” taken away from the Nephites?

(wickedness did prevail upon the face of the whole land)

Why was Mormon forbidden to preach repentance to the Nephites at this time?

(but my mouth was shut... they had wilfully rebelled because of the hardness of their hearts)

Harold B. Lee

“Mormon described some people, his people, from whom the Spirit of the Lord had departed, and when I read that... it seems clear to me that what he was talking about was not merely the inability to have the companionship of or *the gift of the Holy Ghost*, but he was talking of that light of truth to which every one born into the world is entitled and which will never cease to strive with the individual unless he loses it through his own sinning.”  
(CR, April 1956)

Not only did they not receive the Holy Ghost, but they also lost the Light of Christ (given to all who enter this world)

But Mormon's righteousness is clear. He was able to enjoy the presence of the Lord.

At the age of 16 Mormon becomes general of the whole Nephite army. In part because he was 'large in stature', and generals went at the head of their armies. He was not very successful at first. His people were driven from Zarahemla and they suffered great losses. Mormon describes the effect this loss had on his people

Mormon 2:11-15

11 Thus there began to be a mourning and a lamentation in all the land because of these things, and more especially among the people of Nephi.

12 And it came to pass that when I, Mormon, saw their lamentation and their mourning and their sorrow before the Lord, my heart did begin to rejoice within me, knowing the mercies and the long-suffering of the Lord, therefore supposing that he would be merciful unto them that they would again become a righteous people.

13 But behold this my joy was vain, for their sorrowing was not unto repentance, because of the goodness of God; but it was rather the sorrowing of the damned, because the Lord would not always suffer them to take happiness in sin.

14 And they did not come unto Jesus with broken hearts and contrite spirits, but they

did curse God, and wish to die. Nevertheless they would struggle with the sword for their lives.

15 And it came to pass that my sorrow did return unto me again, and I saw that the day of grace was passed with them, both temporally and spiritually; for I saw thousands of them hewn down in open rebellion against their God, and heaped up as dung upon the face of the land. And thus three hundred and forty and four years had passed away.

In the pride cycle, what does sorrow and suffering lead the people to do?

Repent

Ezra Taft Benson

“I would like to stress... what the scriptures term ‘godly sorrow’ for our sins....

“Godly sorrow is a gift of the Spirit. It is a deep realization that our actions have offended our Father and our God. It is the sharp and keen awareness that our behavior caused the Savior, He who knew no sin, even the greatest of all, to endure agony and suffering. Our sins caused Him to bleed at every pore. This very real mental and spiritual anguish is what the scriptures refer to as having ‘a broken heart and a contrite spirit.’ Such a spirit is the absolute prerequisite for true repentance.” (“First Presidency Message”, Ensign, Oct. 1989)

What do you think Mormon means when he said that the Nephites were experiencing “the sorrowing of the damned”?

Neal A. Maxwell

“The natural man never picks up the cross. His is the ‘sorrowing of the damned,’ which involves regret but not necessarily over the sin itself. Instead, it is because these sorrowers can no longer take pleasure in sin. Quite a difference, for the natural man still clings, not to the cross, but to his old ways” (That Ye May Believe, pg. 48)

What do you think Mormon means when he states that “the day of grace was passed with them”?

Brigham Young

"Though the inhabitants of the earth are in darkness and blindness, yet they are not so ignorant as they represent themselves to be. There is a spirit in them that reproves them continually when they do wrong, until they have sinned away the day of grace, and a mantle of darkness is thrown around them to shut out forever the light of God. Until then, they are checked continually, are taught, and chastened or justified as the case may be." (JD, 9:101)

They are driven even further North to Shem. Where Mormon regathers his army and stirs them up in remembrance of their wives, children and homes. This invigorated them to the point where they able to drive the Lamanites from their lands. They made a treaty with the Lamanites where the Nephites had all land North of narrow neck. Lamanites south, including Zarahemla. At this time of relative peace the Lord again gave them a chance to repent

Mormon 3:2-3

2 And it came to pass that the Lord did say unto me: Cry unto this people—Repent ye, and come unto me, and be ye baptized, and build up again my church, and ye shall be spared.

3 And I did cry unto this people, but it was in vain; and they did not realize that it was the Lord that had spared them, and granted unto them a chance for repentance. And behold they did harden their hearts against the Lord their God.

Even though they openly rebelled against God, why do you think that He gives them another chance to repent?

The Lord shows His long suffering.

After 10 years the Lamanites attack them again. Twice the Nephites, with Mormon at their lead, they are able to drive them back.

Mormon 3:9-16

9 And now, because of this great thing which my people, the Nephites, had done, they began to boast in their own strength, and began to swear before the heavens that they would avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren who had been slain by their enemies.

10 And they did swear by the heavens, and also by the throne of God, that they would go up to battle against their enemies, and would cut them off from the face of the land.

11 And it came to pass that I, Mormon, did utterly refuse from this time forth to be a commander and a leader of this people, because of their wickedness and abomination.

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

13 And thrice have I delivered them out of the hands of their enemies, and they have repented not of their sins.

14 And when they had sworn by all that had been forbidden them by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that they would go up unto their enemies to battle, and avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren, behold the voice of the Lord came unto me, saying:

15 Vengeance is mine, and I will repay; and because this people repented not after I had delivered them, behold, they shall be cut off from the face of the earth.

16 And it came to pass that I utterly refused to go up against mine enemies; and I did even as the Lord had commanded me; and I did stand as an idle witness to manifest unto the world the things which I saw and heard, according to the manifestations of the Spirit which had testified of things to come.

Of all their sins, what was the one that caused Mormon to refuse to lead them?

(when they had sworn... that they would go up unto their enemies to battle and avenge themselves

I utterly refused to go up against mine enemies)

But despite all their wickedness Mormon never stops loving them

The Nephites were not successful in their vengeful attack, lost Desolation and were driven back to Teancum. There they held and drove the Lamanites out of Desolation. But the Lamanites came back and conquered again. The Lamanites sacrifice the Nephite women and children to their idols. This made the Nephites very angry and they again retake Desolation.

Lets read how Mormon describes the wickedness of this time

Mormon 4:5,11-12

5 But, behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished; for it is the wicked that stir up the hearts of the children of men unto bloodshed.

11 And it is impossible for the tongue to describe, or for man to write a perfect description of the horrible scene of the blood and carnage which was among the people, both of the Nephites and of the Lamanites; and every heart was hardened, so that they delighted in the shedding of blood continually.

12 And there never had been so great wickedness among all the children of Lehi, nor even among all the house of Israel, according to the words of the Lord, as was among this people.

Note that their hearts were so hardened that they delighted in all this bloodshed

What do you think Mormon means when he said “it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished”?

(it is the wicked that stir up the hearts of the children of men unto bloodshed)

Now, in his late 60’s, Mormon decides to again be their general. But he knows it is without hope because the Nephites have rejected the Lord and they rely on their own strength.

Mormon 5:1-2

1 And it came to pass that I did go forth among the Nephites, and did repent of the oath which I had made that I would no more assist them; and they gave me command again of their armies, for they looked upon me as though I could deliver them from their afflictions.

2 But behold, I was without hope, for I knew the judgments of the Lord which should come upon them; for they repented not of their iniquities, but did struggle for their lives without calling upon that Being who created them.

Why had Mormon lost all hope of victory for the Nephites?

(I knew the judgments of the Lord which should come upon them  
for they repented not of their iniquities)

Hugh W. Nibley

“However it might appeal to our own age of violence, Mormon found little consolation in the fact that his people were wonderfully tough and proud of it – ‘for so exceedingly do they anger that if seemeth to me that they have no fear of death’ (Moro 9:5). ‘... they repented not of their iniquities, but did struggle for their lives without calling upon that Being who created them’ (Morm 5:2). They could take care of themselves, thank you – and they did.”  
(Since Cumorah pg. 437-8)

The Nephites are only successful when they rely on God. When they thought they could take care of themselves they failed. The same is true for us.

They were so outnumbered by the Lamanites that they were continually driven back until they came to the land of Cumorah. Mormon sent an epistle to the king of the Lamanites asking that he might gather all his people together there. Here he also hid all the records of Nephi in the hill Cumorah except his abridgment which he gave to his son Moroni

Mormon 6-6

6 And it came to pass that when we had gathered in all our people in one to the land of Cumorah, behold I, Mormon, began to be old; and knowing it to be the last struggle of my people, and having been commanded of the Lord that I should not suffer the records which had been handed down by our fathers, which were sacred, to fall into the hands of the Lamanites, (for the Lamanites would destroy them) therefore I made this record out of the plates of Nephi, and hid up in the hill Cumorah all the records which had been entrusted to me by the hand of the Lord, save it were these few plates which I gave unto my son Moroni.

What are the “plates of Nephi” and what are “these few plates” that Mormon makes reference to?

WoM 1:1-2

1) And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have

been making into the hands of my son Moroni, behold I have witnessed almost all the destruction of my people, the Nephites.

2) And it is many hundred years after the coming of Christ that I deliver these records into the hands of my son; and it supposeth me that he will witness the entire destruction of my people. But may God grant that he may survive them, that he may write somewhat concerning them, and somewhat concerning Christ, that perhaps some day it may profit them.

Soon the Lamanites come again to battle against them and all of the Nephites are killed except 24, which include Mormon and Moroni. Mormon laments their death and the judgments that await them

Mormon 6:16-22

16 And my soul was rent with anguish, because of the slain of my people, and I cried:

17 O ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord! O ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you!

18 Behold, if ye had not done this, ye would not have fallen. But behold, ye are fallen, and I mourn your loss.

19 O ye fair sons and daughters, ye fathers and mothers, ye husbands and wives, ye fair ones, how is it that ye could have fallen!

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

21 And the day soon cometh that your mortal must put on immortality, and these bodies which are now moldering in corruption must soon become incorruptible bodies; and then ye must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, to be judged according to your works; and if it so be that ye are righteous, then are ye blessed with your fathers who have gone before you.

22 O that ye had repented before this great destruction had come upon you. But behold, ye are gone, and the Father, yea, the Eternal Father of heaven, knoweth your state; and he doeth with you according to his justice and mercy.

As Mormon laments the destruction of his people, what lesson can we take away for us in the latter days?

(O that ye had repented before this great destruction had come upon you)

Mark E. Petersen

"Why were the Nephites destroyed? They had been told that it was a privilege for anyone to live on the American continent, for it is a promised land, and those who reside here must abide by the rules that God decreed pertaining to it.

"Only those who are willing to serve Jesus Christ, who is the God of this land, may remain here. Others will be swept off.

"The Nephites knew this, but with malice aforethought, they reveled in sin

and rejected the teachings of Christ." (CR, Oct. 1978)

### Purpose of the Book of Mormon

Mormon makes it clear that what happened to Mormon's people is a lesson and example for us today

Mormon 3:20-22

20 And these things doth the Spirit manifest unto me; therefore I write unto you all. And for this cause I write unto you, that ye may know that ye must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, yea, every soul who belongs to the whole human family of Adam; and ye must stand to be judged of your works, whether they be good or evil;

21 And also that ye may believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, which ye shall have among you; and also that the Jews, the covenant people of the Lord, shall have other witness besides him whom they saw and heard, that Jesus, whom they slew, was the very Christ and the very God.

22 And I would that I could persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent and prepare to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

What is the purpose of the Book of Mormon as listed in these verses?

(ye may know that ye must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ)  
(ye may believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, which ye shall have among you)  
(the Jews... shall have other witness... that Jesus... was the very Christ)  
(persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent)

Mormon 5:12-14

12 Now these things are written unto the remnant of the house of Jacob; and they are written after this manner, because it is known of God that wickedness will not bring them forth unto them; and they are to be hid up unto the Lord that they may come forth in his own due time.

13 And this is the commandment which I have received; and behold, they shall come forth according to the commandment of the Lord, when he shall see fit, in his wisdom.

14 And behold, they shall go unto the unbelieving of the Jews; and for this intent shall they go—that they may be persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that the Father may bring about, through his most Beloved, his great and eternal purpose, in restoring the Jews, or all the house of Israel, to the land of their inheritance, which the Lord their God hath given them, unto the fulfilling of his covenant;

What purpose of the Book of Mormon is emphasized in verse 14?

(that they may be persuaded that Jesus is the Christ)

What do you think Mormon means when he states that his writings “are written



after this manner”?

Hidden and translated by the power of God so there is no chance for intentional corruption

Mormon focuses on the descendants of Lehi

Mormon 5:15-18

15 And also that the seed of this people may more fully believe his gospel, which shall go forth unto them from the Gentiles; for this people shall be scattered, and shall become a dark, a filthy, and a loathsome people, beyond the description of that which ever hath been amongst us, yea, even that which hath been among the Lamanites, and this because of their unbelief and idolatry.

16 For behold, the Spirit of the Lord hath already ceased to strive with their fathers; and they are without Christ and God in the world; and they are driven about as chaff before the wind.

17 They were once a delightsome people, and they had Christ for their shepherd; yea, they were led even by God the Father.

18 But now, behold, they are led about by Satan, even as chaff is driven before the wind, or as a vessel is tossed about upon the waves, without sail or anchor, or without anything wherewith to steer her; and even as she is, so are they.

What happens to a boat that is missing essential equipment like a sail and anchor?

(tossed about upon the waves... without anything wherewith to steer her)

What were the Nephites missing that caused them to be destroyed?

(the Spirit of the Lord hath already ceased to strive with their fathers)

Spiritually speaking, what do we need in our lives to keep from being destroyed?

Neal A. Maxwell

“Only reform and self-restraint, institutional and individual, can finally rescue society! Only a sufficient number of sin-resistant souls can change the marketplace. As Church members we should be part of that sin-resistant counterculture” (CR, April 1993)