

# The Book of Lehi

## An Abridgment Taken From the Plates of Nephi

*The life and ministry of Lehi, the son of Jeshron, who lived and preached in Jerusalem. An account of his miraculous conversion and his many persecutions and sufferings at the hands of the Jews because of the things that he both saw and heard of the Lord. An account also of his wanderings in the wilderness with his wife, Sariah, and his children, who consisted of his sons, Laman, Lemuel, Sam, Nephi, Jacob, and Joseph, and also his daughters, Lenrah and Sira. An account also of many of the visions of Lehi and his blessings and admonishings to his children. Also an account of his journey in the wilderness and his arrival at the great waters, which he crosses with his family and discovers the land of promise. Also an account of the rebellion of Laman and Lemuel and their separation from Nephi, thus forming two peoples called the Nephites and the Lamanites.*

### CHAPTER 1

*Mormon prepares the plates of gold by commandment of God and begins his abridgment of the Large Plates of Nephi. The genealogy of Lehi and his standing in the Jewish priesthood is explained. The prophets Zenos and Zenock are introduced. The preaching of Zenock is given.*

**I**, MORMON, according to the commandment of the Lord, have made these plates of ore according to the knowledge and understanding that the Lord hath given unto me. And I write the things that I have been instructed to write, having received this instruction from the Holy Spirit.

**2** For behold, the plates of Nephi are numerous and contain the entire history of Lehi and his life and mission. They also contain the writings of Nephi and other prophets of God who were given a strict commandment by the Lord that they should record their history and the history of their children. And this he hath commanded them to do so that the Lord might show unto future generations the many great and marvelous things that he hath done for the children of Lehi according to their faith and obedience towards him.

**3** And because the plates of Nephi are many, I, Mormon, have been instructed of the Lord to include only those things which will be beneficial unto future generations; yea, even unto those who shall receive these plates. And whosoever shall

receive these plates shall be given the commandments of God pertaining unto them.

**4** For behold, it is wisdom in the Lord that the world should not have these plates, so that the faith of all men can be tried and tested to see if they are willing to do all things in faith whatsoever the Lord shall command them. And if they keep the commandments of God as they shall be given unto them, even according to the commandments written upon these plates, then shall the greater things concerning the kingdom of God be made known unto them, until they know the mysteries of God in full.

**5** And the Lord hath shown unto me many of these mysteries of God and hath laid me under strict command to show them to no man. And because of this commandment I do not write all the things that I have been shown and which have been revealed unto me by the power of the Holy Spirit. But the things that the Spirit whispereth unto me, these things I shall write.

**6** And these are the generations of Lehi. And I take these things from the record that Nephi hath written upon plates of ore, and which are found among the records that I received from Ammoron.

**7** And Lehi was the son of Jeshron, a High Priest among the Jews, who lived in Jerusalem. And Lehi was also a High Priest like his father before him. And they were High Priests after the order of Aaron, who received instructions of the Lord from the mouth of Moses at the time the Israelites wandered in the wilderness.

**8** And Jeshron was the son of Emrish. And Emrish was the son of Nathaniel. And Nathaniel was the son of Chemish. And Chemish was the son of Alabash. And Alabash was the son of Minorech, a High Priest who was much beloved of the people in the land of the Israelites.

**9** And Minorech was the son of Libnah. And Libnah was the son of Joshua. And Joshua was the son of Gilead. And Gilead was the son of Shechem, who was also a great High Priest and was known throughout the lands of Israel as a righteous man of God.

**10** And Shechem was the son of Shiloh. And Shiloh was the son of Abinadi. And Abinadi was the son of Benjamin. And Benjamin was the son of Ebal. And Ebal was the son of Joshua. And Joshua was the son of Kolesh. And Kolesh was the son of Tershis. And Tershis was the son of Gerizim. And Gerizim was the son of Malachi. And Malachi was the son of Saresh.

**11** And Saresh was the son of Judah, who was the son of Ephraim, who was the son of Joseph.

**12** And it was this same Joseph who was sold into Egypt by his brothers, the sons of Israel. And the genealogy of Joseph to Adam, a son of God, is found upon the plates of brass which shall be preserved among the Jews. Therefore, I, Mormon, do not include the rest of the lineage of Lehi upon these plates.

**13** And Lehi lived in Jerusalem all of his days. And he was the son of Jeshron, a High Priest. And Lehi followed in the footsteps of his father and was called and anointed according to the priesthood of Aaron that was taught and accepted among the Jews who belonged to the church of God at Jerusalem.

**14** And it came to pass that during the time that Lehi was a High Priest, the Lord sent many prophets to the people of Jerusalem to persuade them to repent of their sins and to obey the commandments of God.

**15** And many of these prophets were bound by the Jews and carried forth unto the High Priests to see what should be done with them. For the people of Jerusalem mocked the prophets and ridiculed their authority to preach the word of God. For behold, the Jews were not familiar with these prophets, as they had not been acknowledged by the proper authority of the

priesthood of Aaron, which the people believed resided only in the High Priests who were called to serve in the church at Jerusalem by lineage of the priesthood, and also by the laying on of hands by those who were in authority.

**16** For the people had been taught that there were none, save he who had been chosen and set apart by a sacred anointing, who could administer the word of God unto the people. And the prophets who were sent by the Lord to Jerusalem were not members of this priesthood that was accepted by the people of the church at Jerusalem, nor were they recognized as one having authority to preach the word of God to the people.

**17** And it came to pass that it fell upon Lehi and others of the High Priests to try and test those who professed to be prophets of God. And this they did that they might catch those who professed to be prophets in a lie and prove to the people that they were not men sent by God, but that they were servants of Satan, who had sent them to deceive the people of God and pervert the right ways of the priesthood and authority of Aaron.

**18** And there were many prophets sent forth by the Lord to bring the people of Jerusalem unto repentance. And when these prophets were bound and set before the chief priests of the people they were chastised and commanded to recant their prophecies and their testimonies and their preachings against the people.

**19** For behold, the prophets did truly testify of the iniquities of the church at Jerusalem. For the people of the church were corrupted by the examples of their leaders who had the priesthood of God but lacked the power thereof, which power can only be exercised through the Holy Spirit; and this Spirit can only be controlled upon the principles of righteousness of him who was anointed to this priesthood. For the leaders were rich and popular men among the people, and had set themselves up above the people, even unto the envying of their positions by the people. And the leaders chose other leaders who were also rich and popular men among them. And in this way, the leaders of the Jewish people assured that all men who were chosen to the Priesthood would be like unto themselves.

**20** And the people justified their own wicked state because of the examples of their leaders. Nevertheless, the leaders did not think of themselves as wicked, but as men whom God had blessed with riches and wisdom. And since the people believed that their leaders were indeed men of God, they were deceived into believing that riches and power and worldly glory were blessings of God. And in this way did Satan deceive the leaders; and the leaders did deceive the people.

**21** And because the leaders did not believe that they were wicked, they taught the people that God would not speak to the people unless He did so through the channels of the priesthood of Aaron, which was established for this purpose. And the leaders taught the people that no High Priest belonging to the order of Aaron would be allowed by God to deceive the people. And in this way the High Priests assured themselves that the people would not be swayed by a doctrine outside of the church at Jerusalem, nor by other preaching that was not approved by them.

**22** And the leaders of the people taught them the sacraments and the offerings and the ordinances of the church, which was established among the people according to the laws of Moses and according to the traditions of the Jews.

**23** And it came to pass that there were two prophets that were bound and carried up before the High Priests to be judged for their crimes. And their names were Zenos and Zenock.

**24** And they stood forth boldly in their chains before the counsel of High Priests that had assembled to judge them. And Lehi was among these priests who were assigned by the church to judge anyone professing to be a prophet of God.

**25** And it came to pass that Zenock stood before the priests and began to speak unto them, being filled with the Spirit of God. And he spake boldly unto them saying:

**26** Oh ye wicked and perverse generation. Why have ye polluted and corrupted the holy church of God? Why have ye led this people in such a way that the wrath of God will soon visit them even unto their own destruction? Behold, I say unto you, that their blood will be required at your hands because of your example and the things that ye have taught them. Nevertheless,

their sins will be their own and they will also suffer because of them. But ye shall also suffer with them because ye have set yourselves up as the mouthpiece of God and have lied unto them by telling them that the Lord will not allow you to mislead them.

**27** Behold, ye know not the words of God, but speak vanity and foolishness unto this people. Ye have taught this people that they should worship the church and the ordinances and the traditions thereof, and yet they deny the Spirit of God that will only dwell with the children of men in righteousness.

**28** Do ye not remember the words of the prophet, Isaiah? Ye have them before you, yet ye understand them not. Ye hear them, but ye do not hear their true meaning. Ye read them, but ye do not understand that which ye have read, but ye have changed the doctrine of God to conform to your own selfish interests and desires.

**29** Behold, did not Isaiah say unto this church: Thus saith the Lord, To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? Saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.

**30** When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

**31** Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot abide them; away with them; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

**32** Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them.

**33** And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

**34** Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

**35** Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

**36** Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall

be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

**37** If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land;

**38** But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

**39** And it came to pass that as Lehi heard the words of Zenock, he was filled with great anguish, for he knew that Zenock spoke the truth unto them. For Lehi had known previously that the things that he was doing as a leader of the people were not the things of God. Nevertheless, he did the things that were expected of him by the people, and also those things that the church had instructed him to do.

**40** And Lehi was a rich man who had acquired many riches by business among the Jews at Jerusalem. And he saved many of his riches and imparted them not unto those who were poor and needy. Neither did he impart of all his substance unto the widows and the orphans and those that were oppressed. For he had been taught that his riches were a blessing from God because of his own righteousness.

**41** And it had been a tradition among the Jews, or rather, a commandment of the church, that each member pay a tithe to the church of all their increase. And this tithing was great, and was only used for the purposes of the church. And also, it was required of the members of the church to give regularly to the benefit of the poor and the needy. Yet, this offering, which the people made to the poor, was only a small part of their increase; the majority of their increase the people kept for themselves and their families, thus being taught by the words and the examples of their leaders.

**42** And it did not matter if one man had an increase of a much greater worth than another, for the same offerings were required of them all. Thus the rich were allowed to keep their riches and set themselves up above those who had less than they.

**43** And the poor and needy were also required to give a tithe and an offering to others who were poorer than they. This they had been taught was the commandment of God pertaining to the people of His church.

**44** And in this manner the church of God

justified the division of the rich and the poor—the inequality between those that had much and those that had little.

**45** And Lehi knew of himself how the members of the church had submitted unto the teachings of the church and its doctrines and ordinances and denied the true doctrine of God of which Zenock spoke.

**46** For Zenock said unto the priests: Know ye not that the ordinances and sacraments, and offerings, and institutions, and traditions of this church are not the gospel of the Lord, but were intended to point a man towards this gospel? And that this gospel was given to us in its pure form by the mouth of the prophet, Moses? Yet, the children of Israel could not abide by this pure gospel, but required signs and symbols, and ordinances, and endowments, to teach them and keep them in remembrance.

**47** And the Lord in his frustration with the children of Israel gave the children of Israel the things which they desired, and commanded Moses to set up the ordinances and endowments of the church, so that the children of Israel would remember him and keep his commandments.

**48** Nevertheless, these ordinances and traditions of this church are not the things that the Lord requireth of his people. But he requireth of them righteousness and humility before him.

**49** Behold, it mattereth not unto the Lord whether or not a man belongeth to this church, or hath the priesthood of Aaron as ye claim that ye have; for the Lord judgeth a man by his works—the desires of his heart. And if his works are good, then the Lord will accept this man. But if his works are evil, then he shall have no part of the Spirit of God.

**50** And your works are evil before the Lord. For behold, ye do teach this people to respect and worship the church, and the requirements of the church, and teach them not the pure gospel and commandments of God; and the church was established to teach these things symbolically through its ordinances and services. Thus ye deceive this people and have opened the door to their destruction.

**51** Behold, I am not a member of your church, nor do I have the priesthood that ye claim giveth you the power and authority to act in the name of

God, so that a man can teach this people His words. Nevertheless, God hath called me through the administrations of His holy angels, and also by the Spirit of God that dwells within me. And by these things ye shall know me, and by my works ye shall judge.

**52** Behold, because of the mercy and goodness of the Lord, I was snatched from the bitterness that awaited me if I would have continued to follow the course of life that I was following before I was called to come unto you and testify of your wickedness.

**53** For behold, I was rich and popular, like unto yourselves, among those that resided in the city in which I lived. And I was a man who many looked up to and praised for the great things that I had accomplished among them. But all this praise and glory was the praise and glory of men. And the things for which I was praised were the things of this world.

**54** And God sent his servant, Zenos, unto me and he met me in my house and spoke unto me about the things of God. And while he spoke to me, I was filled with the Spirit of the Lord, even so much, that I wept bitterly because of my many iniquities and my sins.

**55** And after experiencing a bitterness of soul that I had never before felt, I called upon God for a remission of my sins, even upon the Son of God who is to come into the world to save the righteous from the corruptness thereof.

**56** And as I called upon the Lord in my agony, I was visited with a gentle and quiet spirit that took away my pain and my anguish and filled my soul with an unspeakable joy that I cannot describe with my own words. And it is this joy that turned my sins from crimson into wool as the prophet Isaiah hath written.

**57** And it is because of the Son of God that this mercy was given unto me. For I beheld a vision while in the Spirit that showed unto me the condescension of God, or in other words, the coming of His Son into this world.

**58** And I have seen the coming of the Son of God in vision and have witnessed the mission of the Lord. And he shall come unto this people and show unto them the things that they must do in order to be saved in the kingdom of God. And he shall live among them and preach the word of

God unto the Jews who are here at Jerusalem.

**59** And he shall further witness against this church and its leaders. And the leaders of the church shall rise up against him and turn the people from him, contriving all types of lies and falsehoods in order to keep the people from accepting the gospel that he shall teach unto them.

**60** For the church at Jerusalem will deny that even the Son of God doth not have the authority to preach the word of God, because he doth not have the permission of the church or its authority to do so. Nor will he be given this authority by the laying on of hands by the High Priest of this church. And for this reason shall he be rejected by the Jews.

**61** And the Lord shall go forth among the people and establish his own truth. And his church shall be established according to the Spirit of God and not according to the commandments and traditions of men.

**62** And he shall call others to a ministry, or to preach the gospel that he shall give unto them, both by his own mouth and by the mouth of his spirit which he shall leave with them.

**63** And the gospel that they shall teach shall be the words that they shall hear the Son speak while he dwelleth among them. And they shall add nothing to, nor shall they take anything away from this gospel. For it is an everlasting gospel, yea, a gospel that was preached before this world was created.

**64** And because of the things that they shall teach, they shall be persecuted and rejected by the Jews at Jerusalem. And they shall be cast out and slain. Behold, even the Son of God shall be taken up by the leaders of this people and crucified before them.

**65** And the leaders of this church shall mock the Lord and spit upon him in the presence of the people. And the people shall also deny their Lord because of the example of their leaders.

**66** And it came to pass that Zenock stood forth boldly before the High Priests of the church. And Lehi was astonished at what Zenock had testified concerning the Son of God and also concerning the wickedness of the church.

## CHAPTER 2

*The preaching of Zenos—Laban rejects the preaching of Zenos and Zenock and demands their death—Lehi stands forth and pleads with Laban, the chief High Priest, and testifies against the church of God.*

AND it came to pass that after Zenock had ended his exhortation and preaching unto the leaders of the Jews, Zenos stood forth and began to expound further upon the things which Zenock had said concerning the coming of the Son of God to the world and the destruction of the Jews.

2 And I, Mormon, cannot write all the words that the prophets Zenock and Zenos preached unto the Jews at Jerusalem, for they did truly speak many things unto the Jews; and many things did they also speak unto the leaders of the Jews. And Nephi hath recorded upon his record all of the words that Zenos and Zenock spake according to the memory of his father Lehi, who was present when they stood before the High Priests at Jerusalem.

3 And the words of these two prophets are great and wonderful and have been preserved for the generations of the sons and daughters of Lehi and their descendants, and also for all those who shall receive this record in the last days. But a portion of their words I have been commanded by the Lord to include in my abridgment of the plates of Nephi, which plates I have before me.

4 And of all the words and prophecies that are recorded upon these plates of Nephi, none are as great as those that were spoken by Zenock and Zenos.

5 And it came to pass that Zenos also stood forth boldly and spake unto the High Priests, which were assembled before him. And Zenos expounded unto them a parable of an olive tree and likened the house of Israel unto this olive tree.

6 And this he did that he might show unto the Jews that which was to befall them if they continued in their wicked ways and continued to deny the gospel of the Son of God.

7 And it came to pass that Zenos likened the children of Israel unto a tame olive tree that the Lord nourished in his vineyard, or in other words, in the land of promise. And this he meant so that

it might be understood that the Lord had blessed the house of Israel and had given them the land in which they dwelt, and had driven out their enemies and sent his Spirit to dwell among them.

8 And the tree became corrupt and began to decay. And the Lord commanded his servants, who were the prophets of God, to go into the vineyard and attempt to nourish the olive tree and bring back the good fruit thereof.

9 And he commanded his servants to prune it, and dig about it, and nourish it for a time to see if it would once again bring forth its natural fruit.

10 And Zenos prophesied in the parable about the destruction of the Jews; and that the Lord shall withdraw the righteous from among them and send them to other parts of the world where they would not be destroyed. This he would do to preserve unto himself the roots of the tree, or in other words, the true gospel of the Son of God.

11 And these things had reference to the children of Lehi and other people whom the Lord would lead out of the land of Israel before its destruction by its enemies.

12 And the parable spoke of the restoration of the gospel among the Jews at the time of the coming of the Lord into the world. Nevertheless, because the trees of the vineyard are so corrupt, the Lord commands his servants to graft in the wild olive branches in hopes that he might preserve the good fruit of the tree unto himself. And the wild olive branches are the Gentiles who shall have the gospel preached unto them by the servants of God.

13 And it came to pass that after the gospel is preached unto the Gentiles, there shall be peace for a time among them. And after a space of a time the trees of the vineyard shall once again bring forth corrupted fruit.

14 And Zenos spoke of this land, which is a promised land unto the Nephites and also unto the Lamanites and unto others whom the Lord shall bring into this land. And the gospel shall be given to the people on this continent as well as it was given unto the Jews at Jerusalem.

15 And there shall be all manner of trees throughout the vineyard of the Lord, in other words, there shall be many people upon all the continents of the world that shall hear the gospel of the Son of God and repent of their

sins. And there shall be many churches that shall claim to be the pure olive tree that the Lord grew in his vineyard.

**16** And in the latter days before God once again sendeth His Son among the people, yea, even in all his glory like unto the glory that he showed unto the Nephites and the Lamanites in the land of Bountiful, God shall once again bring the knowledge of His gospel unto the Gentiles and then unto the Jews, that the last may be first, and the first may be last.

**17** And it shall come to pass that the gospel shall be established in all the parts of the world; in other words, the Lord shall graft in the wild branches into the natural olive trees and the natural branches into the wild trees, that he might once again obtain fruit that is pleasing unto him.

**18** And after this gospel shall be preached in all the parts of the world, yea, even after the voice of Jesus Christ shall be heard among all men; then still shall the Lord of the vineyard weep and say unto his servants: What could I have done more for my vineyard?

**19** For behold, all the trees of the vineyard shall be corrupt. And the Lord shall ask of his servants what was the cause of the corruptness of his vineyard.

**20** Then shall the servant of the Lord say unto his master: Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard—have not the branches thereof overcome the roots which are good? And because the branches have overcome the roots thereof, behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots, taking strength unto themselves.

**21** And it came to pass that Zenos expounded the meaning of the parable unto the High Priests, saying: Behold, in the latter days the church of God shall be like unto this church at Jerusalem. For the Lord will give unto them the pureness of his everlasting gospel and provide for them a way whereby they might be saved in the kingdom of God at the last day.

**22** Nevertheless, because of the branches, or in other words, because of the church of God and its supposed greatness, the roots of the tree, which is the pure gospel of God, shall be overcome. The leaders and members of the church of God shall become lofty and prideful, and their desires shall be towards the church and not set upon the

gospel, which is the root of the tree, thus the branches overcoming the roots that are good.

**23** And they shall be like unto you, and also like unto those who will be at Jerusalem when God sendeth His Son among them. For behold, they shall not understand the gospel that the Son of God, shall preach unto them. And because of the examples of the leaders of the church of God the people shall harden their hearts towards the gospel and turn their hearts towards the church for their salvation, thus denying the power of the Holy Spirit and its righteousness.

**24** And their hearts and their minds shall be set upon the things of this world and the honors and glories of men. Then shall the words of Isaiah again be fulfilled among them when he spoke unto the house of Israel, saying:

**25** Woe unto the wicked for it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

**26** As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. Oh, my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

**27** The Lord standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

**28** The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses.

**29** What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts.

**30** Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet;

**31** Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their private parts.

**32** In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon,

**33** The chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers.

**34** The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings,

**35** The rings, and nose jewels,

**36** The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins,

**37** The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

**38** And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle, a rent; and instead of well set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.

**39** Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war.

**40** And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

**41** And it came to pass that Zenos continued his prophecies in front of the High Priests. And he prophesied concerning the second coming of the Son of God, even when he shall appear in his power and his glory to prune his vineyard for the last time.

**42** And the Lord shall once again set his hand for the last time to prune his vineyard and attempt to bring forth good fruit from the trees thereof.

**43** And he shall call his servants to work at his side. And he will allow the good and the bad to continue to grow together. Nevertheless, he shall clear away the bad as the good groweth, making sure that the branches will never again overrun the strength of the roots.

**44** And it shall come to pass that the trees of his vineyard shall once again bring forth good fruit for the space of many seasons. And when evil fruit shall once again come into the vineyard, then will the Lord cause to be gathered all of the fruit of his trees. And the good he shall preserve unto himself, and the bad he will cast away in its own place. And then the end of the world shall come; and the Lord will cause his vineyard to be burned with fire—and all these things according to the parable and prophecy of Zenos.

**45** And it came to pass that after Zenos had testified of the end of the world and the destruction of the wicked, Laban, the chief high priest, stood forth and commanded that Zenos be struck down for his blasphemy against the church of God. For behold, Laban denied that the church of God was corrupt and that the leaders thereof were misleading the people. And Laban stood forth and testified of the righteousness of the church and its leaders.

**45** And upon his command one of the guards who had carried Zenock and Zenos into the chamber of the High Priests put forth his sword to silence Zenos.

**47** And Lehi sprang forth from his seat, which was set high above the assembly of the people and was among those of the other High Priests. And Lehi stood between the sword of the guard and Zenos.

**48** And Lehi pleaded with the other High Priests that no harm should come to these two prophets of God. And he pleaded unto them, saying: What cause have we against these two men? Do they not speak the truth concerning us? Do they not speak unto us of our iniquities and corruption? Know we not that they have been sent by God to preach repentance unto us that we might not experience the pain and anguish of the wrath of God because of our sins?

**49** Behold, my soul hath been burdened much because of the ways of this church and those things which we teach unto the people. And have we not set ourselves up above the people, even so much that when we walk by them on the street or in the synagogue that they do worship us and bow down before us? How can we not see that these things are an abomination before God and that we are misleading this people to trust more in the church and its leaders than in the gospel that we are supposed to be teaching unto them?

**50** And have we not taken the money that hath been given to the church, because of the commandment of the Lord regarding the tithing of his people, and have we not used this money to build great synagogues and great temples, yet we suffer that there remain the poor and needy among us? Doth this not bear testimony that we do love our money and our substance, and our fine apparel, and the adorning of our churches, more than we love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted?

**51** And in our solemn assemblies do we not justify our actions and doings because of the praise of the world? Do we not make concessions to the word of God because we believe that we will be mocked and ridiculed by the pride and ignorance of the world? In fine, do we not change the precepts and doctrines of God, and even the pure ordinances that were given unto us



by the prophet, Moses; do we not change them to suit our whims and satisfy the desires of the world that we may be accepted by it?

**52** Behold, my soul is racked with anguish because I know that these things are true, and I also know that these two men are prophets of God who have been sent unto this church to bring us unto repentance so that we might not be destroyed.

**53** And it came to pass that Lehi did have success with some of the other High Priests who were present in the chambers, and also with many of the people who attended the inquisition of Zenos and Zenock.

**54** Nevertheless, Laban, who was the Chief High Priest, did stand forth to confound Lehi; and he commanded that Lehi should be bound also and judged for his testimony against the church of God and its leaders.

**55** But Lehi was beloved by the people and there were none who wanted to see him cast out from among them.

**56** And there was another High Priest who knew that the things that Lehi had spoken were true. And his name was Ishmael; and he had for a long time known Lehi and his family. And they were friends who had shared many times together united with their families. But Ishmael dared not to say anything in the defense of Lehi; for Ishmael feared Laban.

**57** And it was Laban who also had the loyalty and the trust of the captain of the guard and the soldiers who were assigned to administer the law in that part of the land of Israel.

**58** And it came to pass that Lehi could see the hardness of the heart of Laban, and he also could see that the people began to be swayed by the words of Laban.

**59** And Lehi left the chamber and went out into the street and knelt down and prayed unto the Lord in behalf of his people. And he prayed with all the energy of his soul, yea, even with all of his heart; for great was his anguish for the sins of the people.

## CHAPTER 3

*The conversion and calling of Lehi—he preaches to and is rejected by the Jews. Lehi is commanded to leave Jerusalem with his family and flee into the wilderness.*

**AND** it came to pass that as Lehi prayed unto the Lord, he was visited by the Spirit of God and was shown a marvelous vision in which appeared before him a pillar of fire. And the pillar of fire was seen by those who were around the place where Lehi had fallen to the ground.

**2** And it came to pass that a voice spoke unto Lehi from within the pillar of fire. Nevertheless, those who were around Lehi, even those that beheld the pillar of fire, could hear no voice from within.

**3** And I, Mormon, have been commanded by the Lord not to write the things which Lehi heard from the voice within the pillar of fire. For the things which he heard are many things that the Lord hath commanded to be sealed up and kept from the eyes of the world until the time that these things shall come forth unto the children of men at the appointed time of the Lord.

**4** But because of the things that Lehi did see and hear, he did fear exceedingly for his people and for all the world.

**5** And it came to pass that Lehi, being overcome by the Spirit because of the things that he had both seen and heard in the vision, returned to his home and laid himself upon his bed.

**6** And Lehi cried unto the Lord that he might be forgiven for his many sins and that he might understand further what the Lord would require of him.

**7** And it came to pass that he was once again carried away in a vision in which he saw many of the things of which Zenock and Zenos had testified.

**8** For he truly beheld the coming of the Son of God to the earth. And he saw the Lord go out among the people at Jerusalem and begin to preach his gospel unto them. And he saw others who the Lord had called to help him teach the people his gospel.

**9** And one of the servants of the Lord came and stood before Lehi and gave unto him a book and

commanded him that he should read the book. And as Lehi read the book he was filled with the Spirit of the Lord and rejoiced exceedingly.

**10** And Lehi was called of God to go unto the people of Jerusalem and teach unto them the things which he had read in the book.

**11** And it came to pass that Lehi went forth again unto the people of Jerusalem and began to expound on the things which had been testified of by Zenos and Zenock, and also on the things which he had read in the book that was given unto him in his vision.

**12** And Lehi preached many things unto the people of Jerusalem, and to his friends, and to his relatives, and to his family, which consisted of his wife, Sariah, and his sons and his daughters.

**13** And it came to pass that the people of Jerusalem rejected the words of Lehi and cast him out from among them and mocked him. For behold, the people at Jerusalem were hardened by their pride, and also by the pride that they had in the church of God to which they belonged.

**14** And they mocked Lehi, saying: How can thee, being one man alone, claim that the church of God is corrupt? Dost thou not believe that the Lord hath prospered this church and sanctified it because of its righteousness? Do we not attend regularly to the ordinances and traditions that Moses handed down to us? And we know that Moses was a prophet of God and that he showed us all things that we must do in order to be saved in the kingdom of God at the last day. And do we not do all the things that he hath commanded us?

**15** And Lehi rebuked them, saying: Know ye not that the Lord suffered Moses to give unto you a lower law because of your wickedness? And this lower law is the law that this church teacheth unto the people.

**16** For behold, the sacraments and the ordinances and all the rituals thereof are symbols and representations of the pure gospel of the Lord. And the commandments that ye have been given have been given unto you because of your inability to live the higher law, which law is this gospel of which the prophets of old have spoken.

**17** And if there was no law given unto the children of Israel at the time they rebelled against the Lord in the wilderness, then they would have been left unto themselves and they

would have never had the opportunity to inherit the promised land.

**18** And it was this law that brought peace among them and suffered them to live one with another without violence and without all manner of wickedness that would surely have led to their destruction.

**19** But behold, this law that was given unto the children of Israel was a law of ordinances and sacrifice that they might not forget the Lord their God who had led them forth to the land of promise.

**20** And these laws and ordinances were types and portents of those things that would come to pass in eternity. And it is this eternal law that ye cannot understand. Yea, I say unto you, that this eternal law is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, even he who shall come into the world, and the only way whereby man might be saved in the eternal kingdom of God. And ye do not understand this gospel because ye have hardened your hearts against the Spirit of the Lord, which teacheth this pure gospel.

**21** And this church and all churches that the Lord suffereth to be built up on this earth to turn the hearts of the children of men towards him, are not this gospel, nor do they represent this gospel. But they are set up among men to point them towards this eternal gospel, which is the only gospel of eternal salvation.

**22** And it shall come to pass that the Lord himself shall come down amongst his people in the flesh and teach this eternal gospel unto them. And they shall reject him and kill him because they do not understand his gospel, and this they do because they do not have the Holy Spirit with them.

**23** And the Lord hath sent many prophets unto us to preach repentance and prepare us to meet the Lord and hear his gospel, whether in this flesh, or as a spirit when we die.

**24** And we have cast out these holy men of God because we could not understand the things that they have preached unto us. And the blood of these men shall be upon our hands. And we shall suffer the wrath of God because of them.

**25** And it came to pass that the people were angry with Lehi and sought from that time forth to take him and bind him and carry him up unto

the chamber of the High Priests, so that he, too, might be tried for heresy and blasphemy before the church.

**26** And they sought to take away his life as they did the lives of Zenos and Zenock. For behold, Laban had delivered up Zenos and Zenock to be killed by the hands of the people. And the people took Zenos and Zenock, and after they had stoned them, they hung them by the neck until they were dead.

**27** And there were many of the people who loved Lehi and his family and did not desire that he be destroyed or cast out from among them. But the greater part of the people wanted Lehi cast out from among them or bound and taken before the other High Priests where he would surely be sentenced to death.

**28** And it came to pass that Lehi fled from before the people and went unto his family and told them all the things that had befallen him.

**29** And it came to pass that Lehi gathered up his family and some provisions and fled with them into the wilderness before the more wicked part of the people could alert the High Priests of his plans to flee Jerusalem.

**30** For behold, the Lord had warned Lehi in a dream that he should take his family and flee into the wilderness. And Lehi was promised that if he would keep the commandments of God in all things, he would be blessed; and also his wife and his children would be saved.

**31** And it came to pass that Lehi left his gold and his silver and all of his material possessions and fled with his family into the wilderness.

**32** And he traveled many days in the wilderness until he came down unto the borders of the Red Sea.

**33** And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel, the elder sons of Lehi, began to mock their father and murmur against him. For they did not want to leave the land of their inheritance and their gold and their silver and all their precious things. And they murmured and complained that their father was a visionary man who had dreams and visions that they did not understand.

**34** And Laman and Lemuel spoke to their father, saying: Why hast thou judged the people of the church at Jerusalem? Thou also were a great leader among them and also a priest after

the order of Aaron. And did not the Lord promise his people that he would never allow them to be led astray by those who lead his church? And we know that the leaders of the people are righteous men because they have been called of God by the laying on of hands, and also by the Spirit of God.

**35** And thou hast judged them and pronounced evil upon their heads because of the foolish dreams and visions which thou hast had, which we believe are the imaginations of thy heart.

**36** For behold, how could it be possible that they be wicked men when the Lord hath shown his acceptance of them by granting them with prosperity and happiness? And they teach the people the words that are written, which are the words of the Lord which were written by the hand of Moses for the salvation of all Israel.

**37** And thus Laman and Lemuel did murmur against Lehi and desired to return again to the Land of Jerusalem. For behold, the family of Lehi did indeed suffer many things in the wilderness; and because of these sufferings, Laman and Lemuel did rise up and murmur against their father.

**38** And it came to pass that Lehi stood forth before his sons and rebuked them, being filled with the power and Spirit of God. And he confounded them, evensomuch that they did shake and tremble before their father, even that they dared not speak nor murmur anymore against him.

**39** And it came to pass that the two younger sons of Lehi, yea, even Sam and Nephi, did give heed unto the counsel of their father and believed the things that he said unto them.

**40** For behold, the Lord had chosen Nephi, the youngest, to lead his elder brothers. And for this purpose the Lord sent his Spirit unto Nephi and blessed him with wisdom and understanding that far exceeded that of his older brethren.

**41** And the Lord promised Nephi that he and his posterity would be a great blessing unto his father Lehi and unto all of the children of Lehi, even unto the generations of Laman and Lemuel, if it so be that he keepeth the commandments of the Lord.

**42** And it came to pass that Lehi commanded his sons to return to Jerusalem and seek the plates of brass which contained the genealogy of his

forefathers and also a record of the Jews. And he commanded his sons to go unto Laban and ask him for the plates of brass.

**43** And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel once again murmured against their father and called him a fool for sending them to the house of Laban to obtain the record of the Jews. For the plates of brass were most precious unto the Jews, and they did not believe that Laban would give the plates unto them.

**44** Nevertheless, they remembered the things that their father had said unto them. And they also remembered the power of the Spirit that they felt that had caused their frames to shake before him. And Laman and Lemuel kept their murmurings to themselves and gathered up provisions and their younger brothers, Sam and Nephi, and went back into the wilderness towards Jerusalem.

**45** And it came to pass that the lot fell to Laman, the eldest, to go into the house of Laban and ask of him the plates of brass, which contained the record of the Jews and the genealogy of Lehi.

**46** And it came to pass that Laban mocked Laman and sought to take away his life. For Laban had hardened his heart against Lehi because he had taken his family and fled into the wilderness. Nevertheless, Laban feared the part of the people that loved Lehi and those that listened to what Lehi had said about the wickedness of the church and its leaders.

**47** And Laban called to his servants that they might take Laman away and imprison him according to the laws of the land. For Laban had lied to his servants, convincing them that Laman had tried to steal the plates from him. And Laban convinced his servants that Laman would steal the plates of brass that were of great worth unto the people of Jerusalem, telling his servants that Laman asked for the records without payment.

**48** And Laman fled from before Laban and went unto his brethren who were hiding outside the city of Jerusalem in the wilderness and told unto them all that had happened in the house of Laban.

**49** And it came to pass that the sons of Lehi returned again to the land of their inheritance and gathered together all their gold and their silver, and everything that they had owned

before they had fled into the wilderness. And there was much substance because of the riches that Lehi had acquired while he served as a Priest in the church at Jerusalem.

**50** And they returned to the house of Laban and desired of him that they might buy the plates of brass for the amount of all their possessions.

**51** And it came to pass that Laban saw the riches that the sons of Lehi presented before him. And he desired to have the riches, but had no desire to give unto them the plates of brass as they had requested.

**52** And Laban sent his servants to slay the sons of Lehi. But behold, the sons of Lehi fled again into the wilderness leaving behind in the possession of Laban all their gold and all their silver and all their precious things.

**53** And it came to pass that the sons of Lehi became exceedingly sorrowful and desired to return to the tent of their father.

**54** And it came to pass that Nephi, the youngest of the sons of Lehi, stood forth and pleaded with his brothers that they should not return to the tent of their father without the plates of brass which the Lord had commanded them to obtain from Laban.

**55** And Laman and Lemuel became exceedingly angry with Nephi and began to beat him with a rod and cause him great pain. And Sam stood forth against his elder brothers and pleaded with them to cease from smiting their younger brother.

**56** And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel would not heed the words of Sam and continued to smite their brother, and also they did smite Sam with a rod.

**57** And it came to pass that the Lord sent an angel unto the sons of Lehi and rebuked Laman and Lemuel. Behold, the angel did speak many things unto them about their younger brother Nephi who one day would rule over them. And the angel of the Lord did also tell them that the Lord would deliver Laban and the plates of brass into their hands. And after all these things, the angel of the Lord departed.

## CHAPTER 4

*Nephi returns to Jerusalem and slays Laban to obtain the plates of brass. The Lord prepares Zoram to be a scapegoat for the sons of Lehi—they are, therefore, able to return to Jerusalem and bring Ishmael and his family with them into the wilderness.*

AND it came to pass that when the sons of Lehi returned again outside the walls that surrounded Jerusalem, they were sore afraid. And Laman and Lemuel once again doubted the promise of the angel of the Lord when it was promised that Laban and the plates of brass would be delivered unto them.

2 But Nephi did not doubt the words of the angel and rebuked his brothers, saying: How can ye deny the power of the Lord when it hath been demonstrated to you time and time again? Yea, ye have seen an angel, and the angel hath rebuked you and caused your frames to shake before him? How can ye continually deny the power of God when it hath been made known unto you in such great and marvelous ways? Why should ye suffer that I, your younger brother, rule over you because of your lack of faith and your iniquities?

3 Know ye not that the Lord can command his angels and they will come to our aid, if it so be that we demonstrate our faith and our worthiness in keeping his commandments? Ye know that this is true; and ye also know that an angel hath spoken it unto you; therefore, how can ye doubt?

4 And Nephi spake many words of encouragement unto his older brothers. Nevertheless, they were still afraid and would not go into Jerusalem again.

5 And Nephi became angry with his brothers; yea, even a righteous indignation came over him and he stood forth and rebuked his brothers being wrought upon by the Holy Spirit.

6 And it came to pass that Nephi went forth to Jerusalem at night; and his brother, Sam, also wanted to go with Nephi unto Jerusalem. For behold, Sam did truly love his brother and wanted to protect him from any harm that might befall him.

7 But Nephi did not desire that Sam should accompany him into the city at night. And Nephi

told Sam that he should stay with his elder brothers, Laman and Lemuel, and ensure that they did not go into the city and alert the Jews that he was going again unto the house of Laban. This Nephi did because his older brothers had threatened to confess to the Jews that their father was foolish, and also because of their desire to once again be part of the people at Jerusalem.

8 And Sam heeded the words of Nephi and stayed outside the walls of Jerusalem with his older brothers, Laman and Lemuel.

9 And it came to pass that Nephi went forth unto the house of Laban, and he found Laban drunk with wine outside his house.

10 And the Spirit commanded Nephi to kill Laban and dress in his clothes that he might gain entrance into the house of Laban, in disguise, without the guards of Laban knowing that it was not their master.

11 And Nephi fought the promptings of the Spirit, for he had never so much as harmed another person, or another living creature, without just cause at any time in his life. And Nephi doubted the promptings that the Spirit of the Lord gave unto him.

12 But after continual promptings from the Spirit, and after his own reflections on the treatment that he and his brothers had received at the hand of Laban, and also remembering the threats of Laban towards his father, Nephi realized that the Lord had delivered Laban into his hands, and that it would be better that Laban perish than for the commandment of the Lord to go unfulfilled.

13 And Nephi also knew that the Jews would wake up the morning of the next day and find Laban slain. And the Jews would know that the sons of Lehi had killed Laban, for they had visited Laban the previous day and had requested the plates of brass from him.

14 And the Jews would know that it was the sons of Lehi who had done this unto Laban, because the plates of brass would be gone and Laban would be found dead. And because of this, Nephi did again doubt the Spirit, and he began to shrink from the commandment that he had been given.

15 And it came to pass that the Spirit of the Lord once again came unto Nephi and told him to

slay Laban and keep the commandments of God, or his family would not prosper and that they would be destroyed in the wilderness. And the Spirit told Nephi that the Lord had prepared a way whereby the sons of Lehi would not be blamed by the Jews for the death of Laban, or for stealing the plates of brass.

**16** And Nephi believed the words of the Spirit, he having had many such manifestations in his youth and many presently, therefore he could feel the sanctification of the Spirit of that which he was about to do.

**17** And Nephi took the sword of Laban and smote off his head with his own sword.

**18** And it came to pass that Nephi put on the clothes of Laban and went into the house of Laban. And the guards of Laban were also drunken with wine and knew not that Nephi was not their master returning home, because Nephi was dressed in the clothes and in the robes of Laban.

**19** And it came to pass that Nephi entered the inner chambers of the house of Laban and commanded the servant of Laban to take up the plates and carry them forth outside the walls of the city to his brethren.

**20** And Nephi spoke in the voice of Laban. And the servant of Laban thought that Nephi was speaking of the brethren of the church, among whom Laban had been with that night.

**21** And it came to pass that the servant of Laban followed Nephi out of the city of Jerusalem, and Nephi led the servant to where his older brothers were hiding.

**22** And when Laman and Lemuel and Sam saw Nephi, who was clothed in the robes of Laban, coming with the servant of Laban, they were afraid and fled from before them.

**23** But Nephi took off the headdress of Laban and called to his brethren.

**24** And when the servant of Laban saw that Nephi was not his master, he also attempted to flee. But Nephi grabbed hold of the servant of Laban and held him tight and would not allow him to flee from before him. And the servant of Laban began to call out loud for help that others inside the city walls might hear his cries.

**25** And Nephi drew the sword of Laban and told the servant of Laban that he would slay him if he

did not give unto them the plates and return with them to the tent of their father in the wilderness.

**26** And Nephi pleaded with the servant of Laban that they would not harm him, and that he would no longer be a servant to any man as long as he abided with them in the wilderness.

**27** And the Spirit of the Lord came over the servant of Laban. And his name was Zoram. And Zoram fell at the feet of Nephi and covenanted with him that he would be his servant from that time forth, if he would spare his life.

**28** And Nephi lifted Zoram up and embraced him and said unto him: My brother, knowest thou not that thou art my brother and that we are all children of the same God? Knowest thou not that the same creator who gave me power to slay your master and obtain these plates hath spared thy life and hath from this day forth set thee free? Thou shalt be my brother and my friend.

**29** And Zoram believed Nephi and was wrought upon by the Spirit of God so exceedingly that he wept on the shoulder of Nephi and promised to obey all the commandments of God from that time forth.

**30** And it was in this way that the Lord prepared a means whereby the sons of Lehi would not be blamed for the murder of Laban, or for stealing the plates of brass, as the people of Jerusalem would believe.

**31** For behold, the next morning the Jews did find the body of Laban; and they did also discover that the plates of brass were missing and had been taken from his house. Nevertheless, they knew also that Zoram was missing from among them. And it came to pass that the Jews believed that Zoram had stolen the plates of brass from Laban after he had killed his master. And the Jews attributed no blame to Lehi or to his sons.

**32** And it came to pass that the sons of Lehi did return to the tent of their father in the wilderness.

**33** And after they had returned to their father in the wilderness, their mother Sariah did rejoice exceedingly. And this she did because of the anguish that she was caused by the commandment of the Lord in sending her sons back to the city of Jerusalem to obtain the plates of brass from Laban.

**34** For Sariah had complained considerably to

her husband Lehi, saying: I know that thou art a man of God, and that thou hast served the Lord all the days of thy life. And I know that thou believest that we have been led out of the land of our inheritance because of thy dreams and thy visions. Yea, I know that the things which thou speaketh about the church at Jerusalem are true, for I have felt these things many times during my own life.

**35** And I also know that the people of Jerusalem did seek thy life, and that thy life would have been in their hands if we had not fled into the wilderness.

**36** Nevertheless, how canst thou say that the Lord hath commanded thee to send our sons to their deaths? And my daughters do suffer day and night because of the loss of their brothers, and also because of their hunger and their thirst which we have suffered these many days in the wilderness.

**37** Knowest thou not that I am even at this time ripe with child and that I will deliver this child in the wilderness? And my daughters; what shall they do when they are grown and have no man to choose from to be a husband? Shall they be single and barren all the days of their lives and perish in the wilderness?

**38** And Sira, one of the daughters of Lehi, rebuked her mother and embraced her father Lehi, who also was depressed in spirit because of the things that were required of his sons by the Lord.

**39** And Sira spoke consoling words unto her father and rebuked her mother for the things that she had said. For behold, Sira was greatly blessed by the Spirit of the Lord and understood many things which she kept secret and unto herself because of her respect for her father and his authority in the priesthood. For Sira truly understood many of the mysteries and things of God.

**40** And Sira brought great joy and refreshment unto her father, and he embraced her and rebuked his wife Sariah for her lack of faith and doubts.

**41** And it came to pass that when the sons of Lehi returned to the tent of their father, their mother and sisters did rejoice exceedingly. And Sariah did humble herself before the Lord, and also before her husband; and she begged forgiveness for her doubts and offered thanks and sacrifice unto the Lord for the safe return of her sons.

**42** And now I, Mormon, having been wrought upon by the Spirit, include in my abridgment an explanation of the importance of the plates of brass that Nephi and his brethren obtained from Laban.

**43** Behold, it is not the intent or purpose of the Lord to destroy any man to accomplish his purposes. And after Nephi had taken the life of Laban, he was promised by the Spirit of the Lord that the blood of Laban would not be required at his hand. Also, that no man shall shed the blood of another from that time forth, except it shall be in the defense of his life, or the life of his family.

**44** Behold, the Spirit hath shown unto me the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of the people into foreign lands. And had the plates of brass been allowed to remain in the possession of Laban, they would have been destroyed.

**45** And also, the plates of brass are a record of the Jews, and also a record of the laws of Moses that were established among the Jews for the sake of righteousness, and for the guidance of the church that was established among the children of Israel. And they also contain many of the prophecies and the words of the great prophets who preached unto the Jews. And these things were necessary that Lehi might teach his children the things that were taught to the children of Israel so that they could be more correctly taught in the ways of the Lord.

**46** And Jerusalem was destroyed, thus fulfilling the word of the Lord as was prophesied by the mouth of his holy prophets.

**47** And when Jerusalem was destroyed, many of the pure records and the scriptures of the Jews were also destroyed. Nevertheless, because the plates of brass were preserved by the hand of the Lord by way of the sons of Lehi, a more perfect record of the words of the prophets and also of the commandments of God were preserved for future generations.

**48** And thus doth the Lord preserve the words that he giveth unto the children of men in all dispensations of time. And one day shall all the books which have been written by the commandment of the Lord be opened, and all the children of men shall see that the Lord hath been just and merciful unto his children by giving unto them, in every generation, his words and his

commandments by way of scripture, and also by the mouths of his holy prophets.

**49** And in this way he shall judge all men according to the same laws and the same commandments that they received from Him in their own dispensation of time. And if these commandments were not preserved from one generation to the next, then the children of the future generations would have cause for contention when they stand before the Lord to be judged of their works in the flesh. For the children could claim innocence from the strict commandments of God that were given unto their fathers but not given unto them. And in this way doth the Lord turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, that they may all be judged by the same laws and by the same commandments.

**50** For behold, the Lord judges all of his children according to the same laws, which are the eternal laws decreed from before the foundation of the world as the only laws of salvation whereby the children of men shall be saved in the kingdom of God.

**51** And this is the importance and significance of the plates of brass that Nephi obtained from Laban.

**52** And it was the wisdom of the Lord in the placement of Zoram as the servant of Laban, and also the way in which Zoram was used to procure the plates of brass without the blame being put upon the sons of Lehi by the Jews at Jerusalem.

**53** For behold, the Lord commanded Lehi to once again send his sons to Jerusalem to convince Ishmael and his family to join them in the wilderness. And had the sons of Lehi returned unto the land of Jerusalem they would have been bound and brought before the judge of the land to be tried for the murder of Laban. But the Jews were convinced of the guilt of Zoram, because he had the keys to the vaults of Laban and was the only one who could obtain the plates. And in this way the Lord prepared a way that the sons of Lehi could once again return to Jerusalem.

**54** And it came to pass that the sons of Lehi returned again unto Jerusalem to the house of Ishmael. But Zoram did not return with them again to Jerusalem and remained hidden in the tent of Lehi in the wilderness.

**55** And it came to pass that the sons of Lehi persuaded Ishmael to leave the land of Jerusalem and join them in the wilderness. And Ishmael had also been affected by the words that were spoken by Zenos and Zenock. And he also knew of the wickedness and hypocrisy of the leaders of the church. And because of these things Ishmael had left the priesthood and was cast out of the church, and also his family was cast out with him.

**56** And it came to pass that Ishmael and his family journeyed with the sons of Lehi down into the wilderness. And the family of Ishmael consisted of Ishmael, his wife, his two sons, and his five daughters. And this was again the wisdom and providence of the Lord in preparing a way whereby the family of Lehi would have spouses and families in the Promised Land. For behold, the sons of Lehi were four, and with Zoram, there were five men who had no spouse. And the daughters of Lehi were two, and there were two sons of Ishmael who did not have spouses. And in this way the Lord assured the posterity of Lehi and Ishmael in the land of promise.

**57** And it came to pass that the sons and some of the daughters of Ishmael began to complain against their father for his foolishness in leaving Jerusalem and the comfort of their home and their riches. For behold, Ishmael was also a very rich man, yea his riches were even greater than those of Lehi.

**58** And these children of Ishmael begin to stir up the elder brothers of Nephi, even Laman and Lemuel, to harden their hearts and desire once again to return to the land of their inheritance. And the two daughters of Ishmael, who had been chosen by Laman and Lemuel to be their wives, stirred up the brothers of Nephi, even so much that they rebelled again against the commandments of God and would not return to the wilderness unto the tent of their father.

**59** And Nephi was exceedingly sorrowful for the continued rebellion of his brethren and stood forth and rebuked them for their rebellion. And the sons of Ishmael who were not present when an angel of the Lord rebuked Laman and Lemuel, stood before Nephi and derided him for desiring to be their leader. And these sons of Ishmael did inspire Laman and Lemuel to stand against their brother saying:

**60** How is it that God would choose your



younger brother to rule over us? How can ye be convinced that your younger brother is blessed and called by God to be your head, and also our head? Ye are the elder brothers and have the right of leadership according to the customs and traditions of our fathers, which we know to be just and true.

**61** And in this way were the sons of Ishmael and also two of his daughters swayed to harden the hearts of Laman and Lemuel to the point that they took Nephi and bound him with cords and were wont to leave him to be devoured by the beasts of the wilderness.

**62** And it came to pass that the power of the Spirit of the Lord was with Nephi and he broke the bands that held him prisoner before his brethren. And Nephi stood forth and began to rebuke his brethren again for their doubts and their rebellion.

**63** And Laman and Lemuel became even more hardened against Nephi and were desirous to murder him in the wilderness. And as they put forth their hands to take Nephi and put him to death, Rachael, one of the daughters of Ishmael, and also her mother, Habasha, pleaded with Laman and Lemuel that they would spare the life of Nephi. But Laman and Lemuel were past feeling and put forth their hands against Nephi.

**64** And it came to pass that one of the sons of Ishmael, being of great strength, even of a strength greater than that of many men, began to have compassion on Nephi, and also compassion on his mother who he loved with all of his heart. And also Ishmael, being bent over with great age, did plead with his son to help Nephi. And this son of Ishmael, and his name was Barhanas, did take a hold on the brothers of Nephi, and with his exceedingly great strength, restrained Laman and Lemuel from murdering their brother.

**65** And Barhanas became grieved because of his own wickedness and the hurt that he brought upon his mother and also upon his father. And the Spirit of the Lord was with Barhanas and he began to rebuke Laman and Lemuel, and also his other brother. And he knelt before Nephi and begged for his forgiveness and also for the forgiveness of the Lord. And seeing this enormous man kneeling before their brother, Laman and Lemuel knelt down before Nephi and

also begged for his forgiveness. And thus we can see the influence that other men have over Laman and Lemuel, who of themselves possess no strength in righteousness.

**66** And it came to pass that the sons of Lehi did continue their journey with the family of Ishmael down into the wilderness until they came to the tent of their father.

## CHAPTER 5

*Lehi and Ishmael continue their journey in the wilderness. Lehi continues to have visions and revelations. The Lord prepares a compass to guide them in the wilderness. Their sufferings and trials in the wilderness. Laman and Lemuel continue to rebel.*

AND it came to pass that Lehi and Ishmael went into a tent together to pray to the Lord and receive inspiration from the Spirit as to where they should go and how they should govern their families while they were traveling in the wilderness towards the land that the Lord had promised unto them.

**2** And the Spirit of the Lord spoke unto Ishmael that Lehi should lead their families down into the wilderness in the borders of the sea, which land was prepared with the many provisions that they would need. And Lehi was appointed as the leader of both his family and the family of Ishmael as they traveled in the wilderness.

**3** And Ishmael gathered his family together and commanded them to follow Lehi and keep the commandments that he would receive from the Lord concerning them. And he also spake of the righteousness of Nephi, and that Nephi was also chosen by the Lord to lead this people after the death of Lehi. And Ishmael assured his family that if they kept the commandments of the Lord in all things, they would inherit a land of promise that was set aside for their posterity.

**4** And Ishmael did these things because he knew that he would soon die and return to the God who gave him life. And he blessed each of his children and admonished them to be faithful to Lehi and also to Nephi. And it came to pass

that the children of Ishmael covenanted with their father that they would keep the commandments of the Lord and follow Lehi and Nephi wherever they would lead them.

**5** And Lehi received many dreams and visions. And many of them were great and marvelous. Nevertheless, I, Mormon, do not write in this record all of the dreams and visions of Lehi, for they are many. But of one dream I do write in this abridgment. And I write this dream because of its exquisite beauty and symbolic representation of the goodness and the greatness of the love of God. And also because of its prophetic meaning concerning all of the children of men from the beginning of time to the end thereof.

**6** For behold, Lehi saw in vision a large and spacious field that representeth the world and the vastness thereof. And Lehi wandered in a dark and dreary place for what seemed to him as the space of many hours—this representing the beginning of the life of Lehi and his transgression and ignorance as a High Priest appointed by the church at Jerusalem.

**7** And Lehi prayed for forgiveness in his vision, even that the Lord would forgive him for his many sins and transgressions. And it came to pass that Lehi was introduced into the large and spacious field.

**8** And in the midst of this field Lehi beheld a tree whose beauty and wonder surpassed any that he had ever seen before. And the fruit of the tree was delicious and desirable to make one happy—this signifying the gospel of Jesus Christ and the great joy it giveth to him who partaketh of it. And Lehi describeth the fruit as being sweet and most desirable above any that he had before tasted. And the whiteness, or purity thereof, exceeded anything that he had seen before.

**9** And as he partook of the fruit of the tree, it brought him great joy, evensomuch that he called to his family that they might also partake of the delicious and desirable fruit. And his family stood at the head of a great river of water—which representeth the temptations and wickedness of the world. And Lehi was forced to cry aloud to his family that they might hear him above the sound of the mighty river running near unto the tree of which he spoke.

**10** And it came to pass that his family came

forth and partook of the fruit of the tree and rejoiced with him in the taste thereof. But Laman and Lemuel would not heed his voice, nor could they hear him above the roar of the turbulent water.

**11** And it came to pass that Lehi beheld a rod of iron that extended the entire length of the river and led to the tree. And along the rod of iron was a straight and narrow path that also led to the tree of which he spake—this signifying the word of God and the straight and narrow path that one must follow in keeping His commandments.

**12** And Lehi saw many other people pressing forward towards the path and the rod of iron that led to the tree whose fruit was desirable to make one happy. And many people grabbed hold of the rod of iron and pressed forth towards the tree. But as they pressed forward, mists of darkness arose and caused many to become afraid and lose their way.

**13** But others he saw pressing forward steadfastly until they came to the tree and partook of the fruit thereof. Nevertheless, after they had partaken of the fruit of the tree, they cast their eyes across the river and lowered their heads in shame.

**14** And Lehi beheld the cause of their shame. For behold, Lehi beheld across the river a large and spacious building that was filled with all manner of people, both young and old, male and female. And these people were dressed in fine clothes and accessories, and were pointing their fingers and mocking any who partook of the fruit of the tree.

**15** And those who had partaken of the fruit and lowered their heads in shame did cast the fruit that they were eating away from them and fell into forbidden paths and were lost from sight.

**16** And Lehi beheld many people pressing forth to gain entrance into the large and spacious building—which is a representation of the pride, and honor, and glory, and prestige of the world. And many others came forth and started out on the straight and narrow path, but were soon lost from sight because of the darkness caused by the mist that arose from the great river. And many were lost in the depths of the river, and also in a great fountain, that was filled by the river.

**17** And there were others who came forth and

held fast to the rod of iron and paid no attention to the mocking and ridicule of the many people in the large and spacious building. And they came through the dark mists that rose up from the river and also from the fountain. And they came forth and partook of the fruit of the tree and were happy, nevertheless, their numbers were very few.

**18** And now I, Mormon, write the things which I have learned from the vision of Lehi, and also from the Spirit who giveth understanding unto all those who obey the commandments of God and honor Him. And the Lord hath commanded me to write somewhat concerning the end of the world and the condition of the world as it hath been presented to Lehi in this glorious vision.

**19** For behold, I have seen the beginning and the end of the world, having been shown these things and having understood these things by the gift and power of the Holy Spirit. And there are many things that I am forbidden to write, because the Lord shall try the faith of men and give understanding only to those who keep his commandments and have faith in him.

**20** Behold, it is sad to report the situation of the children of men and their continued rebellion against the commandments of God and the gospel of His Son, which commandments are given for the happiness of His children. But because the pride and riches of the world entice many of the children of men to discount the commandments of God and deny the Holy Spirit, the whole world lieth in sin and groaneth under the burden of wickedness and unhappiness.

**21** Behold, I have seen the great wickedness of the last days in which the Lord will set again a rod of iron and establish the path of righteousness that will lead his children to happiness. I have seen the majority of the children of men pursue the wealth and pride of the world more than they seek the Lord and his righteousness.

**22** And because of the deceptions of Satan and his angels, the children of men know not that they are disobeying the commandments of God and wandering in forbidden paths. The mists of darkness are great and cause most of the children of men to lose their way. And those that come unto the tree of life and partake of the fruit thereof are misled by the precepts and pride of men, even until they discard the fruit that will assure them of their happiness.

**23** Behold, the Savior of the world came to the Jews, and also to my fathers, the Nephites, and gave unto them the rod of iron and this straight and narrow path that they should follow, which is His gospel. And this gospel will cause all those who eat thereof to rejoice exceedingly. Nevertheless, the church of God in the last days hath become corrupt; yea, the leaders thereof and the condition thereof are like unto the church at Jerusalem at the time that our father Lehi was commanded to leave that great city and go into the wilderness.

**24** And like the Jews of old, the members of the church of God put their trust in men and deny the literal gospel of Jesus Christ that he gave unto them in a like manner as he gave it unto the Jews and also unto the Nephites. In fine, the members think they are righteous because they are following the counsel of their leaders and performing the ordinances and commandments of the church.

**25** Oh, my beloved brothers and sisters, do ye not understand that it is because of your wickedness that ye have ordinances and commandments given unto you by the church? Do ye not see the turmoil and strife in your lives because ye follow not the gospel of Jesus Christ? Why do ye dress yourselves in costly apparel and mock and ridicule those who are really the humble followers of Christ? Why do ye think money and the pursuit thereof is more important than the gentle commands that the Savior hath given unto you by way of his gospel?

**26** My soul is burdened at this time because I know your fate. I have seen the frustration and turmoil in your hearts as ye try to live according to the commandments of God that are given unto you, which commandments are not of God, but of your church, or in other words, of the leaders of your church.

**27** Behold, ye have the record of the Jews, and ye will also have this record, which the Lord hath commanded to be written as a second testament of his gospel. And now that ye have these two testimonies of the words of Christ, why are ye so blind that ye will not see? Yea, what were the words that the Lord spake to my fathers, the Nephites? Were they not the same words that he spake unto the Jews at Jerusalem?

**28** Oh my beloved brothers and sisters, read his words. Ponder his gospel and pray for understanding. Your church meetings, your ordinances, your genealogies, your tithes, your offerings, your temples, your churches, your rituals, and your prayers are not sanctioned by the Lord or His Spirit, because all of these things cause you to reject and deny the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Read the words of Isaiah that the prophet Zenock spoke unto the Jews at Jerusalem and liken them unto yourselves, for your plight is much worse than theirs.

**29** And now, I, Mormon, do prophesy unto you in the name of the Lord, even Jesus Christ, that these things that I write to you at this time shall be withheld from you until there be found some who are righteous enough to read and understand them.

**30** For behold, the Lord hath shown me that these things shall be withheld from the children of men because of wickedness. Nevertheless, much of my abridgment of the plates of Nephi will be translated and given unto the world. But these words of prophecy will be taken because of wickedness, and will not be given unto the children of men until the church of God hath become like unto the large and spacious building of which Lehi hath spoken in his vision.

**31** And at that time, these things shall come forth as a testament against the church of God and its wickedness. And when these things that have been withheld come forth, the righteous of the church shall have these things and understand them and leave that great and spacious building and grasp to the rod of iron that will lead them to the fruit of the tree of happiness.

**32** Behold, it hath been shown unto me that there are many in the church of God that shall deny these things and claim that they are not the words of God, but the words of the devil to deceive the people of the church. And this they will say because these things shall not come by way of the church of the last days, but shall come by another way that the Lord shall prepare.

**33** And when ye receive these things, I would ask you to ponder them carefully and pray for the Spirit to bear witness of their truthfulness. Compare these words to the words of Jesus Christ, even those that He gave unto the Jews at

Jerusalem and also unto the Nephites, who are my ancestors, and who also have denied them and cast them aside causing their own destruction.

**34** Yea, compare the gospel of Jesus Christ to the gospel of your church. Where are the desires of your hearts placed, my beloved brothers and sisters? Doth not your church cause many to suffer because of your pride and your arrogance? Have ye truly tasted of the fruit of happiness of which Lehi speaketh by following the commandments of the church? I say unto you that ye cannot be happy.

**35** Yea, there are many of you who have riches and power and the glory of the world, and there are many more of you who pursue after these things. But are these things providing you the sweetness of the fruit of the gospel of Jesus Christ? And again, I say unto you, that these things are not blessings from God. Behold, the Lord doth not bless one of his children so that this child will be able to set him or herself above another, whether it is in riches, or in power, or in glory. But all are the same in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**36** The church of Jesus Christ should teach his gospel and only those things that he taught when he was ministering unto the people. Anything other than these things is not of his gospel, but is of the precepts and commandments of men.

**37** And now I, Mormon, will proceed with the account of Lehi and his family in the wilderness. Behold, it is my desire to continue to preach repentance to all of those who receive this record and read my writings. Nevertheless, I know the Lord hath prepared other means whereby he will prepare the righteous for His coming, yea, even for his arrival in all the power and glory of the Father. And I have been commanded to abridge the record of the Nephites, and so I continue:

**38** And it came to pass that when Lehi awoke in the morning he found a ball of curious workmanship outside the door of his tent. And Lehi took the ball in his hands and wondered on its creation and also on its exquisite beauty and craftsmanship, of such he had never before seen.

**39** And the ball had two pointers that pointed in a determined direction according to the design of the compass. Also, there were words that appeared on the ball that gave specific directions

to the person who held the ball. And when my father Lehi held the ball in his hands, the pointers began to move until they became stationary. And the Spirit of the Lord came to Lehi and commanded him to follow the course in the wilderness directed by the pointers in the ball.

**40** And Laman took interest in the curious ball and took it in his hands to examine its beauty and curious workmanship. And immediately the pointers began to spin and would not come to rest at any given direction. And when Laman gave the ball again to Lehi, the pointers once again pointed steadfastly in the direction that they should go.

**41** And it came to pass that Lehi led his company into the wilderness according to the directions of the ball. And they carried seeds of every kind so that they could plant the seeds when they came to the land where the Lord would lead them. Nevertheless, they were not able to stay in one place long enough for them to plant the seeds and partake of their harvest.

**42** And the Lord commanded Lehi not to make any fire in the wilderness; for he was warned by the Lord that there was an army of men sent from Jerusalem in search of Zoram and the brass plates, and any fire might lead the army to them. And Lehi and his family and Ishmael and his family ate their meat raw in the wilderness. And the Lord blessed their meat and made it sweet to the taste.

**43** And it came to pass that Sariah gave birth to a son. And they called his name Jacob. And Sariah gave birth to another son in the wilderness, and they called his name Joseph. And Sariah bore these two sons to Lehi in the wilderness without the comforts that she was accustomed to at her home in Jerusalem. And the Lord blessed Sariah and her daughters, and also the wife of Ishmael and her daughters with much strength and stamina, even so much that they were strong like unto the men with whom they journeyed, and this because of the raw meat that they did eat.

**44** And Nephi and his brothers took the daughters of Ishmael to wife. And Zoram was also married to a daughter of Ishmael. Thus were the families of Lehi and Ishmael divided. Yet, they had everything in common according to the commandments of the Lord. And they also followed the commandments and directions that

Lehi received from the Spirit, and also from the ball which directed them into the most fertile parts of the wilderness where they could find an abundance of food.

**45** And it came to pass that they traveled many days in the wilderness before they pitched their tents and rested for the space of a few days. Nevertheless, the Lord commanded Lehi to continue to travel until they came to a land bordering the seashore, which they called Bountiful.

**46** And there were many times when food was scarce. And during these times Laman and Lemuel and some of the children of Ishmael began to murmur because of the hardness of their travels and their afflictions in the wilderness.

**47** And Ishmael grew old and died in the wilderness. And the children of Ishmael began to complain against Lehi because of the loss of their father.

**48** And Lehi began to murmur against the Lord also. And when Lehi doubted the Lord, the pointers on the ball stopped working and no steady direction could be found. And the families wandered aimlessly for many days in the wilderness.

**49** And it came to pass that they had eaten all of the provisions that they had with them, and also the men were unsuccessful in their attempts to hunt wild game.

**50** And their murmurings became exceeding. And the murmurings of Lehi became more frequent before the Lord. But Nephi stayed faithful and full of trust in the Lord. And he stood forth and rebuked his father with the gentleness and respect that he was commanded to give unto his father. And Nephi asked his father to repent of his murmurings and take the ball again in his hand and ask the Lord to point the directors where he must go to hunt for food.

**51** And it came to pass that Lehi humbled himself before the Lord and repented of his murmurings. And Lehi took the ball into his hands and the pointers began to work and to point in a steady direction where Nephi was to go in search of food.

**52** And it came to pass that Nephi was successful in acquiring enough food for everyone. And this brought more faith and joy to the families of Lehi and Ishmael.

**53** And the Lord chastised Lehi for his murmurings and commanded him to look to the ball for directions always. And the Lord commanded Lehi to remain faithful always and keep his commandments in all things, and if he would do these things, his family would never again want for anything.

**54** And there appeared on the ball writing from time to time. And this writing gave instruction to Lehi in the ways of the Lord. Nevertheless, the pointers or the written directors would not work without faith and adherence to the commandments of the Lord.

**55** And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel and their wives and one of the sons of Ishmael did rebel and murmur exceedingly against Lehi and Nephi because of their afflictions in the wilderness. And they were desirous to return to the land of Jerusalem. But Nephi attempted to reason with them to no avail. And Laman and Lemuel began to stir up the hearts of the others to anger against Nephi and their father, evensomuch that they sought once again to take the life of Nephi and also the life of their father Lehi.

**56** And the Lord knew of the hardness of the hearts of Laman and Lemuel. And the Lord also knew that without his divine help, Laman and Lemuel would accomplish their design and kill their father and their brother.

**57** And the Lord spoke forth from the heaven and caused the earth to shake around where Laman and Lemuel stood. And they fell to the ground, and also many of the others who stood next to them.

**58** And the Lord spoke unto them, saying: Laman and Lemuel why have ye cursed your brother and your father and sought to take away their lives? Know ye not that I chose these? And I have chosen them to lead this people to a land of promise which I have kept from the knowledge of the rest of my children that it might be a land of promise unto those who serve me and keep my commandments.

**59** Behold, I have sent an angel unto both of you and ye have heard the angel speak unto you. Behold, ye have felt the power of my Spirit that your younger brother doth possess. Yet, ye still doubt my commandments and ye seek to take away his life. Yea, I have chosen him to rule over thee, and this because of his righteousness.

**60** And now I say unto you, if ye put forth your hand to slay my servants, I will smite you even to the earth from whence ye were made, and ye shall be no more.

**61** And now ye have heard my voice, and a commandment I give unto you that ye shall follow the counsel of your father, and also of your younger brother, and ye shall be saved. But if ye continue to deny me and my power, which both of them have in abundance from me, ye shall be destroyed; and if your posterity shall deny me they shall be cursed throughout all generations of time and throughout all eternity. And thus have I commanded it.

**62** And it came to pass that when Laman and Lemuel received strength again that they might stand, they repented of the things that they had done and also of the things that were in their hearts. But they continued to deny the Spirit of the Lord and believe that Nephi had an evil power that they could not understand. Yet they feared Nephi and also their father. And their fear was for their own lives and not for the salvation of their souls.

**63** And now I, Mormon, being commanded by the Spirit, give an explanation of the compass that was given unto Lehi and his family to guide them in the wilderness.

**64** For behold, all of the mysteries of godliness are given unto those who worship him and obey his commandments. But to others are given signs and symbols and representations that are not easy to understand; and this the Lord hath done because of the hardness of their hearts and their lack of faith in understanding the promptings of the Holy Spirit, which are given to all of his children equally.

**65** And because of these signs and symbols and representations, many of his children stumble and fall, and many are led away by the enticings and the promptings of the devil, whose only desire is to confuse and deceive all that shall give heed unto him.

**66** For behold, the compass that was given unto Lehi is like unto the Spirit of God who giveth instruction to those who are faithful and heed his commandments and warnings. And those that do not heed the commandments of God, whether they are written commandments that can be read,

or commandments given unto them by the power of His Spirit, shall not receive directions from the Spirit during the course of their lives.

**67** Therefore, the compass is like unto the Holy Spirit that leadeth the faithful throughout their course in life. And this Spirit is always with them as long as they heed the commandments and warnings that it giveth unto them.

**68** And those who do not heed the promptings of the Holy Spirit will be left unto themselves. And these shall wander throughout their lives as Lehi and his family wandered—aimlessly and helplessly—when they had not the compass of the Lord to guide them.

**69** And now, I, Mormon, give unto all those who shall read these things some counsel and warning pertaining to those things that are received through the gift of the Holy Spirit, like unto those things which were written upon the compass that the Lord prepared for Lehi and his family.

**70** Behold, the Lord hath caused his gospel to be written so that there can be no confusion among men as to its meaning. Nevertheless, there shall be many, who, being deceived by the devil, shall prophesy and command those things that are not revelations from God, as if they were.

**71** For this reason the Lord hath commanded me and others, who were eyewitnesses to his life and ministry, to only record those things which are most pertinent to his gospel.

**72** And this gospel shall be written the same in this record as well as it is written in the record that shall come forth from the Jews.

**73** And with these two records shall all heresy and false doctrine be confounded. Behold, no revelation that cometh forth from the mouth of God by the power of His Spirit shall contradict or add to the words that Jesus spoke both to the Jews at Jerusalem, and also to the Nephites and Lamanites that were spared in the land of Bountiful.

**75** And again I say unto you, search these words and live by them. For behold, only in them shall be found the true commandments and counsel of God.

## CHAPTER 6

*Nephi is commanded to build a ship to cross the waters to the land of promise. Rebellion at sea. Their arrival in the promised land.*

AND it came to pass that Lehi and his family reached the great waters that separate the great lands that the Lord hath prepared for the inhabitants of the world, on which the sons and daughters of man reside.

**2** And now it is expedient for me to explain that there were many things written by the hand of Nephi upon plates of ore pertaining to the struggles and sufferings of his father Lehi and his family in the wilderness. Nevertheless, the plates that I have made to abridge the record of Nephi are few, and therefore, I cannot write even a small part of their experiences in the wilderness.

**3** And it came to pass that Nephi was commanded to build a ship to take Lehi and his children, and also the children of Ishmael, across the many waters into the land of promise.

**4** And it came to pass, that once again, Laman and Lemuel, and one of the sons of Ishmael, and some of the daughters of Ishmael, began to mock Nephi, and they were desirous to return to the land of their inheritance.

**5** And they were again desirous to take the life of Nephi and their father Lehi, and take their wives and their children and return to the land of Jerusalem.

**6** And it came to pass that Zoram stood forth and took up a staff against the enemies of Nephi. For behold, Zoram was a great and loyal friend to Nephi, and the Spirit of the Lord was with him as it was with Nephi.

**7** And Zoram fought with great strength and dexterity against Laman and Lemuel and one of the sons of Ishmael, Barhanas not being present at the time.

**8** And it came to pass that these enemies of Nephi were astounded and amazed at the strength of Zoram, who with the end of his staff defended every blow that they put forth against Nephi.

**9** And it came to pass that Zoram struck down the son of Ishmael and was about to strike down Laman and Lemuel, but Nephi stood forth and embraced his friend and begged for the safety of his brothers.

**10** Behold, never hath one man been more dedicated as a friend than Zoram was to Nephi. And Nephi loved Zoram as his own brother. And he did also love Sam, who had also stood against his enemies for his protection.

**11** And it came to pass that Nephi began to construct the ship according to the promptings of the Spirit.

**12** And it came to pass that as the ship began to take form, even a most curious form that had never before been seen among men, Laman and Lemuel were exceedingly amazed and gave up their plans to harm their brother, even so much that they did offer their hands to labor on its construction.

**13** And when the ship was completed, they were struck with awe by the craftsmanship and preciseness of its construction, and they praised their younger brother for what he had accomplished.

**14** And Lehi was pleased that his older sons were once again unified with Nephi, and he had great hope that the Lord would spare them from future wickedness.

**15** But in this Lehi was sorely disappointed. For behold, his sons did once again rebel against their brother and sought to take away his life after they had embarked on the great waters and journeyed towards the promised land.

**16** For it came to pass that they set out on the great waters not knowing which way that they should go, having faith in the Lord that he would lead them safely to the land of promise.

**17** And Nephi had constructed a platform that was affixed to the bow of the ship. And Nephi was commanded by the Spirit to place the compass thereon and secure it that it might not be removed until they reached dry land again.

**18** And Nephi did that which the Spirit had instructed him to do.

**19** And it came to pass that once again Laman and Lemuel and one of the sons and some of the daughters of Ishmael rebelled against Lehi and Nephi and were desirous to kill him and take control of the ship.

**20** And they did confine Sam and Barhanas and Zoram below the deck of the ship so that they could not come to the aid of Nephi. And they bound Nephi and held him captive for many days.

**21** And because of their wickedness, the compass stopped working. And it came to pass that the Lord caused an exceedingly great storm to rise up and threaten the destruction of the ship and all of those on board.

**22** And Laman and Lemuel were desirous to throw Nephi into the great waters, believing him to be the cause of all of their problems.

**23** And it came to pass that as Laman and Lemuel were about to throw Nephi into the depths of the water, Lehi stood forth on the deck of the ship and held strong to the coat of his son Nephi.

**24** And in a loud voice he cried through the fierce wind that he would not be a witness to the death of his beloved son, and that if Laman and Lemuel would throw Nephi into the depths of the great waters, then he also would go with him.

**25** And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel would not hearken unto their father, but took hold upon him that they might throw him also into the waters.

**26** And Sira, the daughter of Lehi, and the younger sister of Laman and Lemuel, forced her way onto the deck of the ship from the place where she was being held and guarded by a son of Ishmael. And she took hold of the bosom of her father and would not let him go. And she threatened to throw herself into the water if Laman and Lemuel did not let go of her father and her brother.

**27** And Sira was the wife of Barhanas, one of the sons of Ishmael. And she was exceedingly beautiful, insomuch that her husband loved her with all of his soul, and he was also a friend to Nephi.

**28** And it came to pass that upon hearing the desperate pleas of his wife, Barhanas broke forth from the place where he was being held and took hold of Laman and Lemuel and was about to throw them into the depths of the ocean.

**29** And the hearts of Laman and Lemuel were filled with fear and they pleaded for their lives. But Nephi was bound and could not stop Barhanas from doing to them what they had wanted to do unto him. Nevertheless, Sira pleaded with her husband for the lives of her brothers. And Barhanas did listen to the pleas of his wife and released Laman and Lemuel.



**30** And Sira lifted her father off the deck of the ship and tended to his bruises, which were great due to the harsh treatment that he had received from Laman and Lemuel, and also because of his old age.

**31** And Barhanas broke the bonds that held Nephi. And as soon as Nephi was released from his bonds, the compass once again began to work. And it came to pass that Nephi prayed that the Lord would forgive the actions of his brothers, and that they might reach the land of promise safely.

**32** And it came to pass that the Lord had mercy upon the brothers of Nephi, but not because of their own righteousness, but because of his love of Nephi. And also that his words might be fulfilled which were promised to Lehi, that all of his children would inherit a land of promise.

**33** And it came to pass that after many days and much suffering at sea because of the wickedness of Laman and Lemuel, they reached the promised land.

**34** And now I, Mormon, cannot write the words to describe the exceeding joy that Lehi and his family felt when they reached the promised land. For it was a beautiful land, full of many plants, and there were many animals in the forest that were of great use to Lehi and those that were with him.

**35** And it came to pass that they found gold and silver and all manner of precious stones and ores that were beneficial to them.

**36** And there could not be found any other land upon the earth that could compare to the wondrous beauty and exceedingly abundant food and raiment that was found in the land that the Lord had set aside for those who heeded him and obeyed his commandments.

## CHAPTER 7

*The death of Lehi. Laman and Lemuel continue their rebellion against Nephi. The formation of two groups of people: the Nephites and the Lamanites. Wars and contention begin among them. Nephi is commanded to hand down the record of his people to his brother, Jacob. The succession of the plates is set forth.*

AND it came to pass that Nephi and his brethren began to plant the seeds that they had brought with them from the land of Jerusalem. And they began to till the earth and harvest the fruit thereof, insomuch that there began to be an abundance of all things throughout the land.

**2** And Lehi began to weaken; and before his death, he called all of his children together, and even those children of Ishmael did gather to hear the words of Lehi, their father Ishmael having died during their journeys in the wilderness.

**3** Behold, Ishmael was a loyal friend to Lehi until his last day. And Lehi had many visions concerning Ishmael that warned him of the consequences if he or his children failed to follow the counsel and guidance of Lehi and his son, Nephi.

**4** And Sariah had taken Habasha, the wife of Ishmael, and given her unto Lehi that he might care for her for the remainder of her days.

**5** Therefore, Lehi was considered as a father to the sons and daughters of Ishmael, especially by those who had not rebelled against Nephi during their journeys through the wilderness.

**6** And Nephi took Rachael, the daughter of Habasha and Ishmael, as his wife; and she bore four daughters unto him. And they were all beautiful like unto their mother and wise like unto their father. And the daughters of Nephi were greatly desired by many of the sons of Laman, Lemuel, and also by the grandsons of Ishmael. Nevertheless, they were very wise in their youth and wanted no man until they were old enough to choose for themselves by their own wisdom.

**7** And it came to pass that the daughters of Nephi chose the sons of Zoram, and also one of the sons of Barhanas. And this they did because of their great love and respect for their father—Zoram and Barhanas having been lifelong friends and protectors of their father, Nephi.

**8** And it came to pass that the sons of Laman and Lemuel were angry with the daughters of Nephi, for they were exceedingly desirous to have them as their wives. And Laman and Lemuel complained against Nephi, that he had put himself above them, insomuch that his daughters thought themselves above their sons.

**9** And this was a source of much contention during the last days of Lehi, he being very weak and near unto death.

**10** And it came to pass that Lehi called all of his children to come before him; and when they had come before him, he spoke to each one and prophesied many things concerning them.

**11** And it came to pass that Lehi left his blessing on Nephi, that he should be the leader of the people, and that Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael should honor him and obey him in all things whatsoever the Lord should command him.

**12** And it came to pass that after the death of Lehi, Laman and Lemuel rebelled against their brother for the last time. For behold, the Lord will suffer the wicked to dwell among the righteous that the righteous might be an example and an influence unto them. Nevertheless, he will not suffer the righteous to be destroyed completely because of the actions of the wicked.

**13** And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel began to separate themselves from the people of Nephi; and they called themselves Lamanites. And the people of Nephi were called Nephites.

**14** And the Nephites were an industrious people who engaged in all manner of commerce and industry for the benefit of all the people.

**15** And the Lamanites became lazy and adulterous and would not wear clothes to cover their naked bodies, thus allowing the sun to change their skin to a darkness that was passed on to their children. And after each generation, the skin of the Lamanites and their children became darker, evensomuch that there began to be a great distinction between the Nephites and the Lamanites.

**16** For behold, the Nephites wore clothing that protected their bodies from the light of the sun, therefore, they were a white and delightful people.

**17** But because of their wickedness, the

Lamanites developed a tolerance to the light of the sun and in this way darkened their own bodies. And thus were they fulfilling the words of Lehi that he prophesied against them saying: Oh, my pain is great because of the visions I have had concerning Laman and Lemuel. For the Lord hath shown me the curse that shall come upon them, even that they shall become a dark and loathsome people, except they repent and obey the commandments of the Lord.

**18** And it came to pass that the Nephites began to hire guards to watch the Lamanites and keep them from stealing the fruits of their industry and labor.

**19** And Nephi pleaded with his brethren to repent and turn again to the Lord that he might have mercy on them and save them from their own destruction.

**20** But Laman and Lemuel refused to listen to their younger brother and wanted nothing more to do with him. And the Lamanites rose up against Nephi and his people and began to slay the guards that were set to keep the Lamanites from stealing from the Nephites.

**21** And Nephi knew in his heart that his brethren were past feeling, and that the Spirit of the Lord no longer dwelt among them. And in his anguish, Nephi cried unto the Lord:

**22** Oh, my Eternal Father, how can I make the choice to take the lives of my brethren that I might preserve my own life and the lives of my own children? How can the devil have so much power over the hearts of men that they cannot seek to live in peace and harmony one with the other? Why is it my burden to take the lives of the wicked that the lives of the righteous might be preserved? How many times must Thy great mercy be bestowed upon my brethren before they will repent and work righteousness before Thee? Please, my Father, give me the strength to do what I know must be done.

**23** And it came to pass that Nephi commanded his best foundry men and his strongest guards to take the sword of Laban and construct other swords like unto it that they might protect themselves from the Lamanites.

**24** And the Nephites did arm themselves and began to kill any Lamanite that attempted to rob and steal from them.

**25** And the Lamanites were sore afraid of the weapons of the Nephites, and they fled into the wilderness.

**26** Now, I, Mormon, do not know what happened among the Lamanites from the time that they fled from before the Nephites and went into the wilderness, to the time that Ammon traveled among them in the land of Lehi-Nephi. For behold, they did not keep records according to the commandment that Nephi had received from the Lord.

**27** Nevertheless, I know they became a wild and ferocious people who despised the Nephites and tried many times to war against them only to be driven back and slain. And they were taught by their fathers that Nephi had stolen their authority and had driven them out of the land of their inheritance, which was the most choice land in all the land roundabout, and was promised to their fathers, the elder brothers of Nephi. And thus did they harbor an exceeding hatred for the Nephites.

**28** And instead of becoming an industrious, hardworking people, the Lamanites hunted wild beasts in the wilderness and depended on plunder to support them in their needs.

**29** And it came to pass that the Nephites began to prosper exceedingly throughout the land. And they began to build machines and all manner of devices to help them produce their food, and manufacture their clothes, and provide them with many precious things. And their armies grew and became strong in their weaponry, insomuch that there was no threat from the Lamanites again.

**30** And Nephi instructed his people to build a house of God like unto the temples of old. And this he did that he might keep the people in remembrance of the law of Moses, which they had covenanted to honor and obey.

**31** And Nephi was the High Priest having been ordained by his father, Lehi, who had received his authority from the church at Jerusalem at the time when he was a member of the High Priesthood. And according to the law of Moses, this priesthood was passed down from generation to generation by way of a sacred anointing, which is the ordination that Lehi received from his father Jeshron.

**32** And according to this law of Moses, only

the Lord can give or take away the authority of this priesthood; the authority of which can be bestowed upon men whether they are righteous or wicked. Nevertheless, this power can only be controlled and granted to the bearer upon the principles of righteousness. Behold, though there have been many wicked men who have had the authority of the priesthood bestowed upon them, none of these had the power associated with this authority, which power can only come from God.

**33** And only by the authority of tradition, or in other words, the lineage of the priesthood, can the ordinances of the law of Moses be performed and sanctioned by the church of God.

**34** Nevertheless, in many instances the Lord will call prophets and ordain them by his own hand. And these prophets have all the authority to act with the power of God, having not been sanctioned by the church and the law of Moses, but being sanctified by the Holy Spirit, which sanctification is binding on all those who call themselves children of God.

**35** For behold, the church of God will not always be righteous. Yea, it will not always follow the commandments of God and will suffer itself to become corrupt through the craftiness and wickedness of men.

**36** For this reason the Lord calleth prophets who are not members of the church of God, who are sent to preach repentance unto the church. Nevertheless, these prophets have no authority from God to lead the church, which hath been set up according to the lower law of Moses, which Jesus Christ fulfilled during his earthly ministry among the Jews.

**37** Yea, the lower law is necessary for the perfection of the children of God, to teach them the things that they need to know in order to prepare themselves to receive the higher laws, which are the laws of heaven.

**38** And Moses taught the children of Israel the higher law of God, but they could not abide therein; and therefore, they were given a lower law that they could abide by until they were ready to receive the higher laws of salvation.

**39** And in the condescension of God was the lower law fulfilled and the higher law given unto the children of men.

40 Nevertheless, this higher law was rejected by the people; and the lower laws were once again established for the edification and purification of the children of God until they are worthy enough to accept and live the higher laws of heaven.

41 And now, I, Mormon, am desirous that ye know the whole law and the other mysteries that relate to it. But behold, the Spirit hath constrained me from writing more than what I have just written. And if the children of men have the desire to know the mysteries pertaining to the priesthood and the higher laws of heaven, then I would beseech you to ask God, in faith, living by every word and commandment that he hath given you through his Son, Jesus Christ.

42 And it came to pass that Nephi was not allowed to teach the people the higher laws of heaven. Yea, he was commanded to construct temples and churches among them so that the people could go and partake of the sacrifices and ordinances that pertain to the lower law of Moses.

43 And it came to pass that the people wanted Nephi to be their king and their lawgiver, and this because of the tremendous love that they had for Nephi. And it became customary among them to make the High Priest their king also. And thus was Nephi their king and their High Priest.

44 And Nephi taught many things unto his people and established righteous laws that brought equality to every man and woman throughout his kingdom.

45 And Nephi had many visions and dreams like unto his father, Lehi, and he prophesied much concerning the Jews and the Nephites and also concerning the Lamanites.

46 And again, I, Mormon, am constrained by the Spirit to write all the prophecies of Nephi, wanting to save these plates for the more secular part of the history of the children of Lehi, in an attempt to demonstrate how easily the children of God are led to destruction because they will not heed the counsel and commandments of God.

47 For it came to pass that Nephi grew old and was about to die, and not having any sons to confer the kingdom upon, he was desirous to confer the kingdom upon his brother Jacob.

48 But Jacob refused to become a king among the Nephites; for behold, Jacob began to see great

wickedness swell up in the hearts of the Nephites because of their exceedingly great riches and prosperity, and therefore, he wanted to dedicate his time to the preservation of the bounteous spiritual blessings that were bestowed upon the Nephite people. And Jacob knew that the only way the people were going to have continual peace and prosperity was for them to keep the commandments of God in all things.

49 And it was the desire of Jacob to spend the rest of his life working in the church as a High Priest, continually bringing the people to a remembrance of their sins and iniquities that they might repent and be saved.

50 And it came to pass that both Jacob and Joseph were anointed and consecrated by the hand of Nephi as High Priests and teachers of the people.

51 And the people elected another leader to be their king. And this king was also called Nephi in honor of their beloved first king, who was Nephi, the son of Lehi. And from that time forth were the kings of the Nephites called by the title of Nephi.

## CHAPTER 8

*The Nephite kings keep the record of the people. The Nephites become corrupt, and wars with the Lamanites increase. Many prophets are sent to preach repentance to the people—they are rejected by the Nephites. The Lamanites begin to take the possessions and lands of the Nephites.*

AND it came to pass that the records of the people of Nephi and their history were entrusted into the hands of the kings of the Nephites who handed them down to the next king that was called to reign by the voice of the people. And there were many records which were written upon plates of ore. And I, Mormon, have been entrusted with these records, which have been given unto me by Ammaron.

2 And I have read them all and have taken my abridgment from them. Nevertheless, my abridgment is a very small part of all the records of the Nephites. And under the direction of the Spirit and through Its inspiration I know what

things I should write upon these plates, which I have made with my own hands. And these plates are made of gold mixed with another ore that we are familiar with, and therefore these plates are of great worth. Nevertheless, I did not choose these ores because of their worth, but because of their lightness and the easiness of writing upon them, and also that they might last forever.

**3** Behold, I am an old man and cannot transport all of the plates of Nephi wherever I should go to hide myself from the Lamanites who are continually pursuing me.

**4** And I have hidden the plates in a large crevasse of a rock, and it is in this crevasse that I am writing this abridgment. And I have spent many days searching through all the plates of Nephi and other plates that have fallen into my hands that I might know what I should abridge and what I should not.

**5** And I do not leave this rock except when I am hungry or thirsty and am in need of sustenance. Nevertheless, Moroni, my son, knoweth where I am hiding and he visiteth me from time to time bringing me food and news about the war with the Lamanites.

**6** And now I will continue with the abridgment of the history of the people of Nephi: For behold, many years passed in peace and happiness among the Nephites. And all of their enemies were swept away from among them.

**7** And it came to pass that the people began to spend their days in pursuit of gold and silver, and other precious ores that gave no sustenance to their lives, except to their pride and to their arrogance.

**8** For behold, the people began to believe that their gold and their silver, and their precious things were gifts from God because of their righteousness. And the church of God was becoming like unto the church that was at Jerusalem when Lehi was commanded to leave.

**9** And it came to pass that the people began to separate themselves into groups according to the amount of gold and silver and precious things that they had accumulated.

**10** Now this would not have been such a gross sin in the eyes of the Lord had it been an accumulation that was made through their own industry and hard work. But their accumulation

of wealth was from the sweat and work of others who were the less fortunate and had not the ability to accumulate wealth due to the scarcity of the gold, and the silver, and the precious ores; and also because they were the more ignorant part of the people. Nevertheless, these more ignorant ones were more righteous in keeping the commandments of God—their ignorance coming in worldly affairs only.

**11** And it came to pass that a small group of Nephites had accumulated most of the wealth among them, and the other Nephites were forced to labor continuously for this minority who owned the machinery and the tools and the businesses and the crafts on which they were all dependent for their survival.

**12** And thus did the Nephites divide themselves into a rich class and a poor class, thus denying the commandments of God in which they were commanded to be equal in all things.

**13** And the rich class refused to do manual labor, but hired out all manner of work that required sweat to those who were poor and in need of that which the rich provided for them.

**14** And the rich controlled the guards that kept watch at the borders of the city. And the leaders of the people began to become rich, leading the people to believe that because they were leaders, they deserved more sustenance than others.

**15** And it came to pass that the guards began to exercise authority over the Nephites under the direction of the rich. And any Nephite who complained against the rich was arrested by the guards and brought forth to be judged according to the Nephite system of justice, which was set up and controlled by the rich.

**16** Nevertheless, the guards had no authority over the church, nor did they have any authority over the High Priests, who had also set themselves up as leaders of the people and convinced the people that they deserved more sustenance than the average Nephite, like unto the rich class. And in this way did the leaders of the church of God begin to separate themselves from the people.

**17** And in this way did pride and envying enter into the hearts of the Nephites. And this pride began to threaten and destroy the very foundation of truth and righteousness, which foundation was set up in the beginning by Nephi and his brothers Jacob and Joseph, and which was based upon the commandments of God.

**18** For behold, because the church was not accountable to the laws of justice established by the Nephites and enforced by the guards, the leaders of the church began to become the most wicked of all the leaders of the people. Yea, because these leaders were not accountable to the people, they were left to do whatever their hearts desired. And the church became more wicked than the church at Jerusalem at the time of Lehi and his ministry unto the Jews.

**19** And it came to pass that the Lord sent prophets to the Nephite people to preach repentance unto them and turn the hearts of the people back to righteousness.

**20** And the prophets were rejected and cast out from among the people. And those prophets that would not leave their preaching were arrested and brought before the judges of the land. And the judges found no just cause to hold the prophets, nevertheless, these judges held the prophets bound and commanded their guards to carry them forth to the High Priests of the church to see what the church would do with them.

**21** And it came to pass that the prophets were mocked by the leaders of the church and were commanded by these leaders to repent of their sins—the High Priests believing that the prophets were sinning by preaching against the church, and that they were pretending to be prophets of God to stir up the people to anger. And the High Priests ridiculed the prophets for condemning the people for living in sin when the people were enjoying many years of peace and happiness.

**22** And it came to pass that the people rejected the prophets and would not listen to their words. And the Nephites hardened their hearts against the prophets because their leaders told them to pay no attention to anyone who was not ordained and sustained by the church.

**23** And in this way did the devil gain control over the hearts and blind the minds of the Nephites to the truth; in other words, the people were led by the precepts of men, which denied the power of the priesthood of the Son of God that can only be controlled upon the principles of righteousness.

**24** And they were all deceived, save a few only, who humbly followed the law of Moses and kept the commandments of God. Nevertheless, many

of these humble ones were led that they did err because they did listen to the precepts of men and follow the dictates of the leaders of the church who had convinced them that they were righteous, instead of listening to the peaceful words that were given unto these humble ones by the Spirit of God.

**25** And it came to pass that there was a man living among the Nephites and his name was Mosiah. And Mosiah was a direct descendent of Zoram, the servant of Laban who delivered the brass plates unto Nephi and his brethren.

**26** And Mosiah listened to the voice of the prophets and recognized the wickedness of the pride and envying of his people because of their exceeding possessions, and their gold, and their silver and the classes in to which they had divided themselves.

**27** And it came to pass that the Lord sent an angel unto the house of Mosiah to speak with him in a dream. And Mosiah became heavy of heart and his countenance fell because of the things that he both saw and heard in his dream.

**28** For behold, Mosiah beheld the downfall of the Nephite nation and its captivity by the Lamanites who were living just outside the borders of the Nephite land and were readying their armies to come up with their numerous hosts to destroy the Nephites.

**29** And the Nephites were unaware that the Lamanites were amassing forces just outside the borders of their land. For behold, their time was spent in continual pursuit of riches. Yea, even every day did the Nephites count their riches and spend the majority of their time devising ways and means that they might gain more riches. And thus were they engaged while their enemies were planning their destruction.

**30** And it came to pass that Mosiah went forth among those of his own family in faith that he could convince them of their wickedness before the Lord. And his family rejected the words of Mosiah and mocked and chastised him saying:

**31** Behold, thou art envious of our riches and the success that we have had because thy own riches have not come to thee as ours have. For behold, thy struggles and efforts are barely sufficient to bring food to thy family and to thy wife, who even at this time is desirous to find

another husband who can support her with the fine things with which the Lord hath blessed us.

**32** And is it not a blessing from the Lord that we have acquired these things? Is it not that we have paid our offerings and tithing to the church, that the Lord hath promised us these riches? And thou art poor of thy own will and choosing; for behold, thou spendest thy time in what thou perceiveth are the problems of others, when thy own problems are not attended to. Is this not the reason that thy wife desireth to leave thee? Doth she not pay her tithes and offerings to the church in faith, believing that the Lord will bless her with the things that we have been blessed with?

**33** And it came to pass that Mosiah did not give heed unto the words of the people, for he knew that they were deceived by their own pride and also by their associations with the church and its leaders.

**34** And it came to pass that Mosiah departed into the wilderness taking with him all those who were humble and contrite, yea, even all those who believed the words of the prophets and were convinced of the sins of the church and also of their own sins.

**35** And it came to pass that Mosiah and his followers traveled deep into the wilderness not knowing where they should go, being led by the Spirit of God, which was a constant companion of Mosiah, he being a righteous man of God.

**36** And another record of the people of Nephi was recorded upon plates of ore, and this record I have in my possession. And this particular record was made by the hand of Nephi and handed down from father to son according to the commandment that Nephi had received from the Lord. Nevertheless, the majority of the history of the Nephite people was written on other plates of ore and handed down through the lineage of Nephite kings that had received this commandment from Nephi.

**37** And Abinadom, who was named after his father, and who was a direct descendant of Lehi, took his family and fled into the wilderness with Mosiah. And Abinadom had many of the records of the Nephites in his possession.

**38** Behold, Abinadom was one of the captains of the guards and had great authority among the Nephites. Nevertheless, he was a humble man

who gave much to the poor and needy of his people and he found no place among the rich class to which those in similar positions of authority belonged.

**39** And it came to pass that the Nephite king had placed Abinadom in charge of the records of the Nephites that he might protect them. And Abinadom took these records also with him into the wilderness.

**40** And it came to pass that Abinadom organized a small army of guards from among those who had fled with Mosiah to protect them in their journeys in the wilderness.

**41** And it came to pass that the people of Mosiah, for that is what they called themselves in order to separate themselves from the Nephites who stayed in the land of Nephi, traveled many days in the wilderness.

## CHAPTER 9

*Mosiah discovers the people of Zarahemla. He teaches them and discovers that they are descendants of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah. Mosiah is made king over the people and confers the kingdom upon his son Benjamin.*

AND it came to pass that after many days of wandering in the wilderness, the people of Mosiah came into a land that was inhabited by other people who were strangers to them.

**2** For behold, the Lamanites who had separated themselves from the Nephites were becoming a dark skinned people because of the effects of the sun on their nakedness. But these strange inhabitants of the land northward were white and delightful like unto the Nephites.

**3** And it came to pass that Mosiah sent Abinadom with a group of armed guards in among the people to attempt to talk to their leader and see if they were at peace, and also if they were friendly towards them.

**4** And it came to pass that Abinadom returned to Mosiah and reported that he and his guards could not understand the language of this people, and that they had a leader among them who was called Zarahemla, and that they were a very friendly people.

**5** And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla rejoiced exceedingly at the arrival of the people of Mosiah, even though they could not communicate with each other. And their rejoicing was caused by the physical similarities that they shared—both groups being a white and delightsome people.

**6** And it came to pass that Mosiah taught Zarahemla and his people in the language of the Nephites, and they began to understand each other from that time forth.

**7** And Mosiah learned that Zarahemla was a descendant of Mulek, one of the sons of Zedekiah, king of Judah, who was carried away by his nephew, the king of Babylon, shortly after Lehi had left the city of Jerusalem.

**8** Behold, Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon and began to believe in a creator and the things that the prophets were preaching unto the Jews at Jerusalem. And Zedekiah took compassion upon the Jews and was wont to protect them from the king of Babylon.

**9** And because of his righteousness, the Lord came to him in a dream and showed unto him the destruction of Jerusalem and also that his sons would all be slain if he stayed in the land of Jerusalem.

**10** And it came to pass that Mulek, the son of Zedekiah, heeded the words of his father and took many of his riches and gathered up all those who would listen to him and fled into the wilderness before the king of Babylon could destroy him.

**11** And it came to pass that the spirit of God led Mulek to the same waters that Lehi and his family had crossed. And Mulek built ships that carried his people across the many waters until they came to the promised land.

**12** And Mulek had a son and called his name Mattaniah after the name of his father. And Mattaniah begot Timrah.

**13** And Timrah begot Sandesh, and Sandesh begot Helekiah. And Helekiah had a son whom he called Joshua, who was the father of Jerosham. And Jerosham was the father of Zarahemla.

**14** And behold, it was the wisdom of the Lord that he should send Mulek out of Jerusalem. For behold, the people of Mosiah learned from the descendants of Mulek that all of the prophecies that were prophesied concerning the destruction of Jerusalem had come to pass.

**15** And Zarahemla did rejoice exceedingly for he had no record of his ancestors with him. And because they had no written record, the people of Zarahemla could not read or write. And in this manner did their language become corrupt.

**16** And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla did unite with the people of Mosiah and they did make Mosiah their king and ruler over them.

**17** And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla brought forth some old records that had been written upon stone and gave them unto Mosiah that he might know the meaning thereof.

**18** And it came to pass that Mosiah was given the gift of translation by the power of the Holy Spirit that was in him.

**19** And the record contained a history of some other inhabitants of the promised land who had come over across the many waters many years before the people of Mulek, or before the people of Lehi had reached the promised land.

**20** And the record was given unto the people of Zarahemla by Coriantumr, who was the last known descendant of the people who had been destroyed by wars and pestilence, and whose bones lay in the land northward.

**21** And this Coriantumr died among the people of Zarahemla during the time that Mattaniah, the son of Mulek, was the leader of the people.

**22** And Mattaniah could not understand the words of Coriantumr, but he did receive the record of the people of Coriantumr, which was engraven upon stone. And it was this same stone that Zarahemla gave unto Mosiah.

**23** And it came to pass that there were other records that were also discovered among the ruins in the land northward that were later given unto king Mosiah, who was the grandson of Mosiah, the first king of Zarahemla, so that he might translate them. And an account of these other records will I save for another part of this abridgment.

**24** For behold, I, Mormon, do not know beforehand what I am about to write in the abridgment that I am engraving upon these plates of ore. Nevertheless, this I do know: that the Spirit of God is within me and I write those things which God wants to preserve for those who will find these plates and bring forth the words which I have written.



**25** Behold, for this reason the interpreters have been passed down from generation to generation until they have fallen into my hands. And I will seal up this record along with these interpreters when I have finished what the Lord would have me write in this abridgment. And these are the same interpreters that king Mosiah had in his possession during his reign and ministry, which were given to him by the people of Limhi who had found them with the records of the people who had perished in the land northward, an account of which I will give in another part of my abridgment.

**26** And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla were taught the law of Moses and the gospel of the coming of the Son of God into the world to save his people.

**27** And the people of Zarahemla began to understand the words of Mosiah, their king. And they did repent of their sins and began to live in righteousness.

**28** And it came to pass that king Mosiah was loved by his people, and he spent all the days of his life teaching them to live at peace and with love one towards another.

**29** And he did teach the people of the coming of Christ to the world. And he did expound upon the scriptures that they had among them, explaining them to the people so that they could understand the meaning thereof.

**30** And it came to pass that the people in the land of Zarahemla began to increase exceedingly. Nevertheless, they were constantly taught the gospel of Christ and by the law of Moses, which pointed them towards the acceptance of the Son of God and his gospel message for them.

**31** And there arose some contention among the people as to why they could not return to the land of Nephi and reclaim the land of their inheritance. And many men in their pride went back into the wilderness against the counsel of king Mosiah, who had warned them that the time was not right for them to do so.

**32** And it came to pass that king Mosiah called the people together to speak with them one last time before his death.

**33** And when the people had gathered to hear their leader, Mosiah set his son Benjamin before them and consecrated and anointed him to reign in his stead.

**35** And king Mosiah stood forth and spoke unto his people, saying: My beloved brothers and sisters; Behold, ye are all truly my brothers and sisters, for in God our Father, we have our affiliation.

**36** Ye have made me your king and granted me the opportunity to serve you all the days of my life. And for this service I have taken nothing from you except it be to sustain my own life and the lives of my wife and my children.

**37** Many years ago I heeded the promptings of the Holy Spirit, which hath been my constant companion all the days of my life. Behold, it was this same spirit that led me out of the land of our fathers and into the wilderness.

**38** And it is the same spirit that led many of your fathers to follow me and leave the land of Nephi so that we would not be subjected to the same punishments as our brethren who stayed in the land of Nephi.

**39** Behold, we would not have had to leave the land of our inheritance if we had not fallen into sin and corruption. Yea, even the very church of God that was established by our father Nephi became corrupt in the eyes of the Lord.

**40** And do ye know the reason for the corruption of our people? Can you begin to see what causeth such great calamity to any society of the children of God that refuseth to live by His commandments? Even if I speak plainly unto you by the power of the spirit of God that engulfeth my soul at this time and giveth me great strength even, in my old age, will ye understand?

**41** Oh, my beloved brothers and sisters, know ye not that the devil is a deceiver and hath the cunningness to make us think that sin is righteousness and that righteousness is sin? Know ye not that he can present himself as a God and a savior of the world, and then present the true God and His Son as the devil? Know ye not that when ye least expect it the devil will take power over you and turn your minds and your hearts against the truth?

**42** I know this to be true, for behold, it hath happened in Jerusalem; it hath happened in the land of Nephi; and it will happen unto you if ye do not watch yourselves carefully and live by the precepts of truth and righteousness.

**43** Behold, how will ye know that the precepts that ye are taught by your leaders are precepts of

truth and righteousness? Yea, how will ye know if the God that ye are following is the true God and not the devil in disguise? How will ye know that ye are being misled by your leaders in whom ye trust to teach you these precepts of truth and righteousness?

**44** Alas, how shall ye keep this destruction and unhappiness from coming upon you like it hath come upon our brothers and sisters who stayed in Jerusalem and are in the land of Nephi at this time?

**45** The answer is simple. Oh, that ye would open your hearts to the simplicity of the answer. Oh, that ye would not look beyond the mark, which mark hath been set since the beginning of time to teach the children of God all things that they need to know in order to have peace and happiness forever.

**46** Behold, it is the standard of God and the only way that happiness and peace can be obtained. Yea, it was taught to you by all the holy prophets that have preached unto you. Behold, it shall be taught to the Jews at Jerusalem when the Son of God cometh unto them in the flesh and teacheth them this thing.

**47** Yea, it shall be taught to our descendants who shall witness the resurrected Savior of the world who shall come down among them after his resurrection.

**48** And my soul crieth in exceeding joy to know that it shall be taught when the Lord cometh in all his power and glory to set up his kingdom for the last time upon this earth. And this kingdom shall last forever.

**49** Behold, my soul is overpowered by the spirit at this time, evensomuch that I am wont to shout aloud the glorious message of this standard of God unto you, that ye might remember it and live by it always; that ye might always have peace and happiness among you, and that the Spirit of the Lord might abide with you forever.

**50** And these are the commandments of God, yea, even the only way unto salvation:

**51** Love your neighbor as yourself. And do unto others as you would have them do unto you—this is the mark, my brothers and sisters; this is the standard by which ye shall be judged and by which ye shall live in the eternities.

**52** This is the foundation of the law and

commandments of God. There is no other. All commandments, and laws, and ordinances, and sacrifices, and sacraments, and endowments, and duties should lead the children of God to this eternal standard.

**53** And if ye shall not live by this standard, ye shall be destroyed. Ye shall end up in bondage and suffer without peace and with no happiness.

**54** Do not let the pride and riches of the world keep you from reaching this simple mark. Do not let the devil deceive you into thinking that it is righteous to own more than another, or that ye deserve more than your neighbor. Do not think that ye are justified to set yourselves up above another class of people.

**55** For behold, when the Lord shall come in his glory and set this standard as the only standard that shall be followed, the poor in spirit shall rejoice, and they that mourn shall be comforted, and the meek shall be exalted, and the merciful shall obtain mercy, and there shall be no rich or poor among any of the people of the Lord.

**56** Listen to the words of my son, for he is a righteous man who hath the Spirit of the Lord within him.

**57** Live peacefully one with another and seek not to destroy your enemies, but to teach them the commandments of God and show them by your example the standard by which they can also find peace and happiness.

**58** May God be with you all, my beloved brothers and sisters.

**59** And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla were overcome by the words of king Mosiah and they wept exceedingly for their king. And king Mosiah died and was buried close to the burial place of his friend Zarahemla.

**60** And it came to pass that though the people of the land of Zarahemla loved their king, they loved their riches and their pride and their houses and their precious things more than they loved their fellowmen.

**61** And it came to pass that the Lamanites came into the land of Zarahemla and began to kill the Nephites and take their possessions. And the Nephites fought back with exceeding strength and drove the Lamanites out of their lands.

**62** And there arose much contention throughout the land of Zarahemla. Yea, everyone

blamed another for the wars with the Lamanites. Yea, every man accused his neighbor of sinning against God and bringing the wrath of God upon them, thus denying his own wickedness.

**63** And it came to pass that king Benjamin pleaded with the people to repent of their sins and remember the things that his father had spoken unto them.