

Purpose: To help us to build our testimonies on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

1. Internal strife develops among the Nephites. ([Helaman 1 - 2](#))

- Hel. 1:1-7 Pahoran, Paanchi, and Pacumeni contended for the judgment seat. Paanchi conspired to rebel.
- Hel. 1:8-1-13 He was caught and sentenced to death. His supporters sent Kishkumen to assassinate Pahoran.
- Hel. 1:13-17 After Pacumeni became chief judge, the Lamanites came to battle against the Nephites.

Why were the Nephites unprepared to defend themselves against an outside attack from the Lamanites? How does contention weaken nations and communities? wards and stakes? families and individuals?

†1. Pres. James E. Faust †2. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin †3. Pres. Henry B. Eyring

What can we do to avoid contention?

- Hel. 2:4-5 Gadianton, “exceedingly expert in many words” promised power to Kishkumen’s band and led them.
- Hel. 2:11-13 “in the end of this book ye shall see that this Gadianton did prove the overthrow” of the Nephites.

How are people sometimes influenced by flattery and the promise of power?

How can we deflect this influence? †4. Elder M. Russell Ballard

2. Thousands join the Church; some Church members are lifted up in pride. ([Helaman 3](#))

“Helaman 3 covers about 11 years of Nephite history. During those 11 years, the Nephites experienced periods of peace and periods of contention.” (*Lesson Manual*)

- Hel. 3:1, 33-34 “a little pride ... did cause some little dissensions among the people” “pride, even to ... persecution”

What can we do to guard against pride? (See [Hel. 3:27-30](#); [Deut. 8:11, 17-18](#); [Alma 62:48-51](#))

What does it mean to “lay hold upon the word of God” and how will it bless us?

†5. President Ezra Taft Benson †6. Sister Julie Szejnija

How did humble followers of Christ respond to persecution from proud Church members?

How can their example help us when we face affliction, criticism, or persecution?

- Hel. 3:35 “Nevertheless they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and ...” “Humble Church members were sanctified because they “[yielded] their hearts unto God... “Sanctification is “the process of becoming clean, pure, and free from sin through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. See [D&C 76:41](#); [88:74-75](#).” (*Lesson Manual*) What does it mean to yield our hearts to God?

3. Lamanites and Nephite dissenters defeat the Nephites. ([Helaman 4](#))

- Hel. 4:1-5 “many dissensions ... and a contention” “the rebellious part were ... driven out” to the Lamanites.
- Hel. 4:5-10 The Lamanites “succeeded in obtaining ... land of Zarahemla” and lands near to Bountiful. The Nephites “succeeded in regaining even the half of all their possessions”.
- Hel. 4:11-16, 19 This happened because of Nephites’ wickedness. They regained half because of their repentance.
- Hel. 4:18-26 “the Lord did cease to preserve them by his miraculous ... power” because of their unbelief.

What parallels exist between the Nephites’ and us? †7. Elder M. Russell Ballard

How can acknowledging our dependence on the Lord strengthen us?

What happened when the people began to repent?

4. Nephi and Lehi remember their father’s counsel. Miracles attend their ministry. ([Helaman 5](#))

- Hel. 5:1-4 “they who chose evil were more numerous than those who chose good ... ripening for destruction”
- Hel. 5:9-11 Christ “should come not to redeem them in their sins, but to redeem them from their sins.”
- Hel. 5:12 The “rock of our Redeemer, [Christ] ... is a sure foundation, ... whereon if men build they cannot fall.”

What does it mean to build on the rock of Christ? (See [3 Nephi 14:24-27](#))

†8. Elder D. Todd Christofferson †9. Elder Richard G. Scott

- Hel. 5:21-32 “there came a voice ... saying: Repent ye ... a voice of perfect mildness ... and it did pierce” the soul.
- Hel. 5:43-47 After they repented “the cloud of darkness was dispersed ... and they say were encircled “by fire.

([Book of Mormon Manual – LDS Institute](#) (*Religion 121-122*). (You can download a free PDF manual.)

Next Week: Lesson 34: “How Could You Have Forgotten Your God?”;

Helaman 6:1-14; 6:15—10:1; 10:2—11:6; 11:7-38; 12; † •

†1. **President James E. Faust:** “When there is contention, the Spirit of the Lord will depart, regardless of who is at fault” (“[What I Want My Son to Know before He Leaves on His Mission](#),” *Ensign*, May 1996, 41).

†2. **Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin:** “The sins of corruption, dishonesty, strife, contention, and other evils in this world are not here by chance. They are evidences of the relentless campaign of Satan and those who follow him. He uses every tool and device available to him to deceive, confuse, and mislead” (“[Deep Roots](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 76).

†3. **President Henry B. Eyring:** “Where people have that Spirit with them, we may expect harmony. The Spirit puts the testimony of truth in our hearts, which unifies those who share that testimony. The Spirit of God never generates contention (see 3 Nephi 11:29). It never generates the feelings of distinctions between people which lead to strife (see Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 131). It leads to personal peace and a feeling of union with others. It unifies souls. A unified family, a unified Church, and a world at peace depend on unified souls” (“[That We May Be One](#),” *Ensign*, May 1998, 67).

†4. **Elder M. Russell Ballard:** “The Book of Mormon teaches that the devil is the ‘author of all sin’ and the founder of these secret combinations [Helaman 6:30; see 2 Nephi 26:22]. He uses secret combinations, including gangs, ‘from generation to generation according as he can get hold upon the hearts of the children of men’ [Helaman 6:30]. His purpose is to destroy individuals, families, communities, and nations [see 2 Nephi 9:9]. To a degree, he was successful during Book of Mormon times. And he is having far too much success today. That’s why it is so important for us as priesthood holders to take a firm stand for truth and right by doing what we can to help keep our communities safe” (“[Standing For Truth and Right](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 38).

†5. **President Ezra Taft Benson:** “Success in righteousness, the power to avoid deception and resist temptation, guidance in our daily lives, healing of the soul—these are but a few of the promises the Lord has given to those who will come to His word. Does the Lord promise and not fulfill? Surely if He tells us that these things will come to us if we lay hold upon His word, then the blessings can be ours. And if we do not, then the blessings may be lost. However diligent we may be in other areas, certain blessings are to be found only in the scriptures, only in coming to the word of the Lord and holding fast to it as we make our way through the mists of darkness to the tree of life” (“[The Power of the Word](#),” *Ensign*, May 1986, 82).

†6. **Sister Julie Ssjenja:** “I made it a point to push everything else aside in my life and truly study the scriptures... These past two weeks it has made an incredible difference.” Julie has three little girls so it was difficult, but can be done. (From my notes of our testimony meeting on August 5, 2012)

†7. **Elder M. Russell Ballard:** “You must be honest with yourself and remain true to the covenants you have made with God. Do not fall into the trap of thinking you can sin a little and it will not matter. Remember, ‘The Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance’ (D&C 1:31)... The idea of sinning a little is self-deception. Sin is sin! Sin weakens you spiritually, and it always places the sinner at eternal risk. Choosing to sin, even with the intent to repent, is simply turning away from God and violating covenants” (“[Keeping Covenants](#),” *Ensign*, May 1993, 7).

†8. **Elder D. Todd Christofferson:** “Personal persistence in the path of obedience is something different than achieving perfection in mortality. Perfection is not, as some suppose, a prerequisite for justification and sanctification. It is just the opposite: justification (being pardoned) and sanctification (being purified) are the prerequisites for perfection. We only become perfect ‘in Christ’ (see Moro. 10:32), not independently of Him. Thus, what is required of us in order to obtain mercy in the day of judgment is simple diligence” (“[Justification and Sanctification](#),” *Ensign*, June 2001, 24-25).

†9. **Elder Richard G. Scott:** “I testify that you will remove barriers to happiness and find greater peace as you make your first allegiance your membership in the Church of Jesus Christ, and His teachings the foundation of your life. Where family or national traditions or customs conflict with the teachings of God, set them aside. Where traditions and customs are in harmony with His teachings, they should be cherished and followed to preserve your culture and heritage. There is one heritage that you need never change. It is the heritage that comes from your being a daughter or son of Father in Heaven” (“[Removing Barriers to Happiness](#),” *Ensign*, May 1998, 87).

Recommended Reading:

“[Converted to His Gospel through His Church](#),” Elder Donald L. Hallstrom, *Ensign*, May 2012, 13-15.

“[The Doctrine of Christ](#),” Elder D. Todd Christofferson, *Ensign*, May 2012, 86-89)

“[Finding Power in the Scriptures](#),” Holly Van Woerkom Munson, *Ensign*, Aug. 2012, 54-57.

“[Defending Against Evil](#),” Kathleen McConkie, *Ensign*, Jan. 1992, 19.

Visit www.stephenmbird.com/library/gospel-doctrine †

Further Enrichment Resources:

Secret Combinations

President Gordon B. Hinckley: “It is the terrorist organizations that must be ferreted out and brought down.

“We of this Church know something of such groups. The Book of Mormon speaks of the Gadianton robbers, a vicious, oath-bound, and secret organization bent on evil and destruction. In their day they did all in their power, by whatever means available, to bring down the Church, to woo the people with sophistry, and to take control of the society. We see the same thing in the present situation.

“We are people of peace. We are followers of Christ, who was and is the Prince of Peace. But there are times when we must stand up for right and decency, for freedom and civilization, just as Moroni rallied his people in his day to the defense of their wives, their children, and the cause of liberty (see Alma 48:10)” (“[The Times in Which We Live](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 72).

Helaman 3:20, 35 Sanctification. Helaman “did do that which was right in the sight of God continually”. [Note: The process of sanctification moves us toward the disposition to do good continually.]

Elder Spencer J. Condie: “Perhaps of all the evidence of true conversion and a remission of sins, this is the most significant: *the disposition to do evil no more, but to do good continually*....

“We can strengthen our disposition to do good each time we make and keep covenants. Each time we participate in priesthood ordinances, the power from on high reach downward and draw us nearer to the heavens. Those who partake of the sacrament and temple ordinances with pure hearts and who faithfully keep their covenants require no lengthy instructions regarding modest dress, the payment of generous fast offerings and tithing, observance of the Word of Wisdom, or keeping the Sabbath day holy. They need no stern reminders to share the gospel with others, to attend the temple frequently, to conduct family history research, or to do their home teaching or visiting teaching. Nor do they need nudges to visit the sick and to serve those in need.

“These are the faithful Saints of the Most High who keep the sacred covenants they have made in the house of the Lord, ‘having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by their works that they have received the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins’ (D&C 20:37). Covenant keepers ... live the law of consecration. Their time, talents, and financial resources all belong to the Lord.

“Keeping their covenants has caused them to develop a disposition to do good continually” (“[A Disposition to Do Good Continually](#),” *Ensign*, Aug. 2001, 14, 10).

President James E. Faust: “Christlike conduct flows from the deepest wellsprings of the human heart and soul. *It is guided by the Holy Spirit of the Lord*, which is promised in gospel ordinances. Our greatest hope should be to enjoy the sanctification which comes from this divine guidance; our greatest fear should be to forfeit these blessings” (“[Search Me, O God, and Know My Heart](#),” *Ensign*, May 1998, 20).

Helaman 3:27-30. “Lay Hold Upon the Word of God”

Nancy del Plain: “Many years ago, my husband and I struggled to put an end to the bickering and complaining among our young children,” says Nancy. “All of our efforts to prevent contention were failing.”

“Nancy says that when she listened to the words of President Benson in his memorable talk “The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion,” she knew she had found her answer.”

....

“Certainly, all was not rosy and perfect from then on, *but as the quality of our scripture reading improved, so did the quality of our relationships*. There was a decrease in contention in our home. When the family faced a challenge, we were united in working out solutions. I also noticed that our children had more confidence. The promises of increased love, harmony, and respect were fulfilled” (“[Finding Power in the Scriptures](#),” Holly Van Woerkom Munson, *Ensign*, Aug. 2012, 56)

Elder D. Todd Christofferson: “*Because they expound the doctrine of Christ, the scriptures are accompanied by the Holy Spirit* ...

“Study the scriptures carefully, deliberately. Ponder and pray over them. *Scriptures are revelation, and they will bring added revelation*.” (“[The Blessing of Scripture](#),” *Ensign*, May 2010, 35.)

Helaman 3:1, 33-34 Pride:

President Ezra Taft Benson: “Think of what pride has cost us in the past and what it is now costing us in our own lives, our families, and the Church.

“Think of the repentance that could take place with lives changed, marriages preserved, and homes strengthened, if pride did not keep us from confessing and forsaking them (see D&C 58:43).

“Think of the many who are less-active members of the Church because they were offended and their pride will not allow them to forgive or fully sup at the Lord’s table.

“Think of the tens of thousands of young men and couples who could be on missions except for the pride that keeps them from yielding their hearts unto God (see Alma 10:6; Helaman 3:34-35).

“Think how temple work would increase if the time spend in this godly service were more important than the many prideful pursuits that compete for our time” (“[Beware of Pride](#),” *Ensign*, May 1989, 6).

Elder D. Todd Christofferson: “How can you make the gospel of Jesus Christ not just an influence in your life but the controlling influence and, indeed, the very core of what you are? ...

“As a first step, you must lay aside any feeling of pride that is so common in the world today. By this I mean the attitude that rejects the authority of God to rule in our lives.... You hear it expressed today in phrases such as ‘Do your own thing’ or ‘Right and wrong depend on what I feel is right for me.’ That attitude is a rebellion against God” (“[When Thou Art Converted](#),” *Ensign*, May 2004, 11).

Mary Ellen Edmunds: “Pride is like a pop-up on the screen of our lives. Do you know what I mean? It sometimes gets through our filters; it sneaks through our barriers. We might catch ourselves in a meeting or lesson thinking something like ‘Boring ...’ Or ‘Hello!...’ Or ‘Duh!...’ Or how about ‘Boy, that was a waste of my time!’ Or even, ‘Honey, don’t ever try out for *American Idol*.’

“One of the biggest steps to avoiding and overcoming pride is the first step—Recognizing it.” (“The Deadly Sin of Pride,” Address given May 2, 2003 at BYU Women’s Conference)

C. S. Lewis: “The vice I am talking of is Pride or Self-Conceit: and the virtue opposite to it, in Christian morals, is called Humility. You may want to remember, when I was talking about sexual morality, I warned you that the centre of Christian morals did not lie there. Well, now we have come to the centre. According to Christian teachers, the essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride. Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere fleabites in comparison: it was through Pride that the devil became the devil: Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind.

“... **Now what you want to get clear is that Pride is essentially competitive—is competitive by its very nature**—while the other vices are competitive only, so to speak, by accident. Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. We say that people are proud of being rich, or clever, or good-looking, but they are not. They are proud of being richer, or cleverer, or better-looking than others. If every one else became equally rich, or clever, or good-looking there would be nothing to be proud about. It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition has gone, pride has gone... Greed may drive men into competition if there is not enough to go round; but the proud man, even when he has got more than he can possibly want, will try to get still more just to assert his power. Nearly all those evils in the world which people put down to greed or selfishness are really far more the result of Pride.

“... For, of course, power is what Pride really enjoys: there is nothing makes a man feel so superior to others as being able to move them about like toy soldiers...

“The Christians are right: it is **Pride** which **has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began**. Other vices may sometimes bring people together: you may find good fellowship and jokes and friendliness among drunken people or unchaste people. **But pride always means enmity—it is enmity. And not only enmity between man and man, but enmity to God.**

“**In God you come up against something which is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. Unless you know God as that—and, therefore, know yourself as nothing in comparison—you do not know God at all. As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you.**” (*Mere Christianity*, Book III. Christian Behaviour: Ch.8: The Great Sin)

President Ezra Taft Benson: “**Pride does not look up to God and care about what is right. It looks sideways to man and argues who is right. Pride is manifest in the spirit of contention.**” (“[Cleansing the Inner Vessel](#),” *Ensign*, May 1986, 6)

President Ezra Taft Benson: “Pride is a very misunderstood sin, and many are sinning in ignorance. (See Mosiah 3:11; 3 Ne. 6:18.) In the scriptures there is no such thing as righteous pride—it is always considered a sin. Therefore, no matter how the world uses the term, we must understand how God uses the term so we can understand the language of holy writ and profit thereby. (See 2 Ne. 4:15; Mosiah 1:3-7; Alma 5:61.)

“Most of us think of pride as self-centeredness, conceit, boastfulness, arrogance, or haughtiness. All of these are elements of the sin, but the heart, or core, is still missing.

“The central feature of pride is enmity—enmity toward God and enmity toward our fellowmen. *Enmity* means “hatred toward, hostility to, or a state of opposition.” It is the power by which Satan wishes to reign over us.

“Pride is essentially competitive in nature. We pit our will against God’s. When we direct our pride toward God, it is the spirit of ‘my will and not thine be done.’ As Paul said, they ‘seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.’ (Philip. 2:21.) ...

“**Another major portion to this very prevalent sin of pride is enmity toward our fellowmen. We are tempted daily to elevate ourselves above others and diminish them.** (See Hel. 6:17; D&C 58:41.)

“**The proud make every man their adversary by pitting their intellects, opinions, works, wealth, talents, or any other worldly measuring device against others.** In the words of C. S. Lewis: ‘Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man.... It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition has gone, pride has gone.’ (*Mere Christianity*, New York: Macmillan, 1952, pp. 109-10.)” (“[Beware of Pride](#),” *Ensign*, May 1989, 4)

Helaman 3:35, Humility:

• The development of humility is a strengthening factor that leads to greater faith and joy in the lives of faithful Church members then and now.

“To be humble is to recognize gratefully your dependence on the Lord—to understand that you have constant need for His support. Humility is an acknowledgement that your talents and abilities are gifts from God. It is not a sign of weakness, timidity, or fear; it is an indication that you know where your true strength lies. You can be both humble and fearless. You can be both humble and courageous....

“The Lord will strengthen you as you humble yourself before Him” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 86). (Cited in *Book of Mormon Student Manual: Religion 121-122*, 266.)

Helaman 5:1-4 “Ripening for Destruction:

Introduction: “At this crucial point in Nephite history, the wicked outnumbered the righteous. Their laws became so corrupted that they had little effect for good. Like his great-grandfather Alma, Nephi gave up his position as chief judge and devoted himself full-time to the Lord’s work (see Alma 4:15-20). During this period of spiritual darkness, the people were “ripening for destruction” (Helaman 5:2). Nephi and his brother and Lehi worked diligently to stem the tide of iniquity and turned many back to the Lord.” (*Book of Mormon Student Manual: Religion 121-122*, 268)

Helaman 5:9 “No Other Way Nor Means Whereby Man Can Be Saved”

Elder Richard G. Scott: “Full repentance is absolutely essential for the Atonement to work its complete miracle in your life. By understanding the Atonement, you will see that God is not a jealous being who delights in persecuting those who misstep. He is an absolutely perfect, compassionate, understanding, patient, and forgiving Father. He is willing to entreat, counsel, strengthen, lift, and fortify. He so loves each of us that he was willing to have His perfect, sinless, absolutely obedient, totally righteous Son experience indescribable agony and pain and give Himself in sacrifice for all [see Helaman 5:9]. Through that atonement we can live in a world where absolute justice reigns in its sphere so the world will have order. But that justice is tempered through mercy attainable by obedience to the teachings of Jesus Christ.”

“Which of us is not in need of the miracle of repentance? Whether your life is lightly blemished or heavily disfigured from mistakes, the principles of recovery are the same. The length and severity of the treatments are conditioned to fit the circumstances. Our goal surely must be forgiveness. The only possible path to that goal is repentance, for it is written:

“ ‘There is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ’ ” (“[Finding Forgiveness](#),” *Ensign*, May 1995, 75).

Helaman 5:9-14, Remember:

President Spencer W. Kimball: “When you look in the dictionary for the most important word, do you know what it is? It could be *remember*. Because all of you have made covenants—you know what to do and you know how to do it—our greatest need is to remember. That is why everyone goes to sacrament meeting every Sabbath day—to take the sacrament and listen to the priests pray that they ‘may always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them.’ Nobody should ever forget to go to sacrament meeting. *Remember* is the word. *Remember* is the program” (“Circles of Exaltation” [address to the Church Educational System religious characters, June 28, 1968], 5. Cited in *Book of Mormon Student Manual: Religion 121-122*, 269).

Helaman 5:12. “A Sure Foundation”:

Ted L. Gibbons: “When I lived in Arizona, I had a home in a community with substantial clay content in the soil. This uncertain foundation from time to time caused a shifting in the ground with the result that houses sometimes cracked like dropped eggs.

“I lived near the brow of a hill at the east end of town. Across the street on the edge of the hill, two families built homes at about the same time. Because of the questionable composition of the soil of the hill, one of the families, before building, spent much extra time and money driving huge cement pylons into the ground through the hill to the bedrock below. It was on the certain security of those stone pillars that they built their lovely and unusual home. The other family, just a few rods down the road, scraped away the top soil, poured a foundation and built their home.

“Two years later, when the rains came and came again and then again, the soil became saturated with moisture. The house built on the clay shifted and cracked, I saw two inch gaps between the bricks on the front wall as I drove by. The other house remained steady and unaffected, for it was built on a rock.” (Ted L. Gibbons, [Book of Mormon Lesson #33 “A Sure Foundation”](#).)