

Lesson 43: “How Could Ye Have Departed from the Ways of the Lord?” ([Mormon 1 – 6](#); [Moroni 9](#))

Purpose: To help us see the importance of living according to gospel principles despite the increasing wickedness in the world.

Gospel Art: [Mormon Bids Farewell to a Once Great Nation](#) (62043; or GAPKit 319)

Book of Mormon Video: “[O Ye Fair Ones](#)” 5-minutes

If you were sailing a boat, what equipment would you want it to have? Read Mormon 5:16-18.

1. Mormon is given responsibility for the sacred records. ([Mormon 1](#))

• Mormon 1:1-4 “(I being about ten years of age ...)

What characteristics did young Mormon possess that prepared him to preserve and abridge the records?

• Mormon 1:15 “I, being fifteen years of age and ... of a sober mind ... there I was visited of the Lord and tasted”.

†1. The Prophet Joseph Smith †2. President Gordon B. Hinckley

How might we come to taste and know the goodness of Jesus?

• Mormon 1:13-14; 16-18

What losses might we experience if we harden our hearts against the Lord and His servants?

2. Mormon becomes the leader of the Nephite armies.

The Nephites suffer in battle because of their wickedness. ([Mormon 2](#); [3:1-16](#))

• Mor. 1:19; 2:1, 8, 10, 18 “upon these plates I did forbear to make a full account of their wickedness”.

Though we too live in a time of much wickedness, what can we do to maintain our faith and righteousness?

†3. Elder Dean L. Larsen †4. President James E. Faust (See Alma 17:2-3; Helaman 3:35; D&C 121:45-46.)

• Mor. 2:10-14 “they did not come unto Jesus with broken hearts and contrite spirits, but they did curse God”.

What does it mean to “come unto Jesus with broken hearts and contrite spirits”?

How can we maintain hope and peace amid the wickedness of the world today?

• Mor. 3:3 “they did not realize that it was the Lord that had spared them, and granted them a chance for repentance”.

What are some things we can do to increase our capacity and desire to see the Lord’s blessings in life?

• Mor. 3:9-15 “When they had sworn ... they would ... avenge themselves ... behold the voice of the Lord came”.

†5. Ted Gibbons

What are the consequences when we seek vengeance? How can we repent of vengeful desires?

What can we learn from Mormon about responding to people who are hard-hearted? (See Mormon 3:12)

Why must we continue to love and pray for the hard-hearted?

3. Mormon explains the purposes for the records he has abridged and written. ([3:17-22](#); [5:8-24](#))

• Mor. 3:16-19 “Therefore I write unto you, Gentiles, and also unto you, house of Israel”. (See Mor. 5:9-10, 12, 14)

For whom was Mormon’s record intended?

• Mor. 3:20-22; 5:14-15 “That ye may know that ye must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ ...”

For what purposes was the record kept and preserved?

How have Mormon’s writings helped fulfill these purposes in your life?

4. In a final great battle, all but 24 of the Nephites are killed. ([Mormon 4](#); [5:1-7](#); [6](#); [Moroni 9](#))

• Mor. 4:5 “It is by the wicked that the wicked are punished”.

• Mor. 5:1-2 “But behold, I was without hope ... for they repented not ... but did struggle ... without” prayer.

• Mor. 4:23 “I, Mormon, seeing that the Lamanites were about to overthrow the land”. (See Mor. 1:3-4)

• Mor. 6:6 Why did Mormon hide them in the Hill Cumorah?

Why was it important to protect the plates?

• Mor. 6:7-15 “even all my people, save it were those twenty and four who were with me”.

• Mor. 6:16-22 “O ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord!”

†6. Elder Neal A. Maxwell †7. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

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

Next Week: Lesson 42: “This Is My Gospel”; 3 Nephi 27-30; 4 Nephi; † •

†1. **The Prophet Joseph Smith** taught, “The word Mormon, means literally, more good” (*History of the Church*, 5:400). (*Book of Mormon Student Manual: Religion 121-122*)

†2. **President Gordon B. Hinckley:** “May I remind you for a moment of the greatness and of the goodness of this man Mormon. He lived on this American continent in the fourth century after Christ. When Mormon was a boy of ten, the historian of the people, whose name was Ammaron, described him as ‘a sober child, and . . . quick to observe’ (Mormon 1:2). Ammaron gave him a charge that when he reached the age of twenty-four, he was to take custody of the records of the generations who had preceded him.

...
“He wrote to our generation with words of warning and pleading, proclaiming with eloquence his testimony of the resurrected Christ. He warned of calamities to come if we should forsake the ways of the Lord as his own people had done.

...
“Such was the goodness, the strength, the power, the faith, the prophetic heart of the prophet-leader Mormon” (“[Mormon Should Mean “More Good”](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 52).

†3. **Elder Dean L. Larsen:** “Historically, the drifting away from the course of life marked out by the Lord has occurred as individuals begin to make compromises with the Lord’s standard. This is particularly true when the transgression is willful and no repentance occurs. Remember Mormon’s description of those who turned away from the true path in his day. They did not sin in ignorance. They willfully rebelled against God. It did not occur as a universal movement. It began as individual members of the Church knowingly began to make compromises with the Lord’s standard. They sought justification for their diversions in the knowledge that others were compromising as well. Those who willfully sin soon seek to establish a standard of their own with which they can feel more comfortable and which justifies their misconduct. They also seek the association of those who are willing to drift with them along this path of self-delusion.

“As the number of drifting individuals increases, their influence becomes more powerful. It might be described as the ‘great and spacious building syndrome.’ The drifting is the more dangerous when its adherents continue to overtly identify with and participate with the group that conforms to the Lord’s way. Values and standards that were once clear become clouded and uncertain. The norm of behavior begins to reflect this beclouding of true principles. Conduct that would once have caused revulsion and alarm now becomes somewhat commonplace” (“Likening the Scriptures unto Us,” in Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr., eds., *Alma, the Testimony of the Word* [1992], 8). (Cited in *Book of Mormon Student Manual: Religion 121-122*, 349.)

†4. **President James E. Faust:** “It is not good practice to become intrigued by Satan and his mysteries. No good can come from getting close to evil. Like playing with fire, it is too easy to get burned. . . . The only safe course is to keep well distanced from him and any of his wicked activities or nefarious practices. The mischief of devil worship, sorcery, casting spells, witchcraft, voodooism, black magic, and all other forms of demonism should be avoided like the plague” (“[The Great Imitator](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 33).

†5. **Ted Gibbons:** “The Sermon on the Mount shows how to stop the escalation of war and hatred. We are commanded to love our enemies, and do good to them and pray for them. The alternative, which is to hate as we are hated, and to return evil for evil and pain for pain, is to escalate the influence of misery in the world, and support Satan’s plan for all mankind (see 2 Nephi 2:18, 27). One of the responses of the ‘natural man’ (see Mosiah 3:19) to injury or insult is to say, ‘I will do worse to you than you did to me.’ That course, if pursued, leads to the awful scenes described in Mormon’s letter to his son (see Moroni 9:8-9). Mormon says of the hatred of the Nephites,

“For so exceedingly do they anger that it seemeth me that they have no fear of death; and they have lost their love, one towards another; and they thirst after blood and revenge continually.” (Moroni 9:5)

“When you discover a fire in your garage, you do not try to douse it with gasoline.” (Ted L. Gibbons, [Book of Mormon Lesson #43](#))

†6. **Elder Neal A. Maxwell:** “Only reform and self-restraint, institutional and individual, can finally rescue society! Only a sufficient number of sin-resistant souls can change the marketplace. As Church members we should be part of that sin-resistant counterculture” (“[Behold, the Enemy Is Combined \(D&C 38:12\)](#),” *Ensign*, May 1993, 77).

†7. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** “In one of the loneliest scenes in scriptural history, a silent, war-weary soldier looked out across time and the unspeakable tragedy his family and followers faced. Mormon, the man destined before the world was formed to abridge and summarize the Nephite story—and in so doing to have his name forever immortalized with this additional testament of Jesus Christ—surveyed the casualties of a nation that had turned from the Lord. As sobering as the account is, it does not give a full account of all the sin and sadness Mormon had seen. Indeed, such an account probably would have been impossible to record.” (*Christ and the New Covenant*, 317)

Recommended Reading:

Elder Neal A. Maxwell, “[Behold, the Enemy Is Combined \(D&C 38:12\)](#),” *Ensign*, May 1993, 77

Enrichment Resources:

Abraham Lincoln, Proclamation Setting Apart A National Day of Prayer:

“Whereas, the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the Supreme Authority and just Government of Almighty God, in all the affairs of men and of nations, has, by a resolution, requested the President to designate and set apart a day for National prayer and humiliation.

“And whereas it is the duty of nations as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions, in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord.

“And, in so much as we know that, by His divine law, nations like individuals are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war, which now desolates the land, may be but a punishment, inflicted upon us, for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole People? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!

“It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness. (from the Presidential proclamation setting apart, Thursday the 30th day of April, 1863 a day of National humiliation, fasting, and prayer) (in Bill Beardall’s [Lesson 43 Handout](#))

Mormon 3:21. “The very Christ and the very God.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland: “The principal and commanding figure in the Book of Mormon, from first chapter to last, is the Lord Jesus Christ. In its unparalleled focus on the Messianic message of the Savior of the world, the Book of Mormon is rightly referred to as God’s ‘new covenant’ with the house of Israel. It is literally a new testament or (to avoid confusion) ‘another testament’ of Jesus Christ... From the title page to the book’s final declaration, this testament reveals, examines, underscores, and illuminates the divine mission of Jesus Christ as recorded in the sacred accounts of two New World dispensations (Jaredite and Lehite) written for the benefit of a third dispensation, the dispensation of the fullness of times. The Book of Mormon has many purposes, but this one transcends all others. Written by prophets and preserved by angels, it was written for the fundamental and eternally essential purpose of ‘convincing’ ... the Jew and

Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations’ ... Thus the Book of Mormon is the preeminent statement of God’s covenant with and his love for his children here on earth. It is his definitive latter-day declaration regarding the atoning sacrifice of his Son. It is his great revelation of the greatest Revelation God has ever given us.” (*Christ and the New Covenant*, 4)

Mormon 4:23. “I did go to the hill Shim and did take up all the records which Ammaron had hid up”.

Brigham Young: “Oliver Cowdery went with the Prophet Joseph when he deposited these plates... When Joseph got the plates, the angel instructed him to carry them back to the hill Cumorah, which he did. Oliver says that when Joseph and Oliver went there, the hill opened, and they walked into a cave, in which there was a large and spacious room. He says he did not think, at the time, whether they had the light of the sun or artificial light; but that it was just as light as day. They laid the plates on a table; it was a large table that stood in the room. Under this table there was a pile of plates as much as two feet high, and there were altogether in this room more plates than probably many wagon loads; they were piled up in the corners and along the walls.” (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, vol. 19, p 40)

Mormon 6:15. 230,000 killed in the battle

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland: “Mormon himself fell wounded, but his life, for a time, was spared as the Lamanite armies swept on. Only he, Moroni, and twenty-two other Nephites remained; 230,000 of their nation had fallen. The scope and significance of that horrible slaughter may be seen more readily when we realize that the great American Civil War of the 1860s, the costliest war, in terms of human life, that the United States has ever known, took the lives of 140,000 men in a five-year period. Here, 230,000 fell in a single day.” (“[Mormon: The Man and the Book, Part 1](#),” *Ensign*, Mar. 1978)

Mormon 6:17. “O ye fair ones ... how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you!”

Elder Neal A. Maxwell: “He is ‘the keeper of the gate ... and He employeth no servant there.’ (2 Nephi 9:41.) Those who reject Him will miss out on a special personal moment, because, as He laments, He has ‘stood with open arms to receive you.’ (Mormon 6:17.) The unfaithful—along with the faithful—might have been ‘clasped in the arms of Jesus’ (Mormon 5:11). (Cory H. Maxwell, *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*, p. 137)

President James E. Faust: “The evil influence of Satan would destroy any hope we have in overcoming our mistakes. He would have us feel that we are lost and that there is no hope. In contrast, Jesus reaches down to us to lift us up. (“[The Atonement: Our Greatest Hope](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 20)