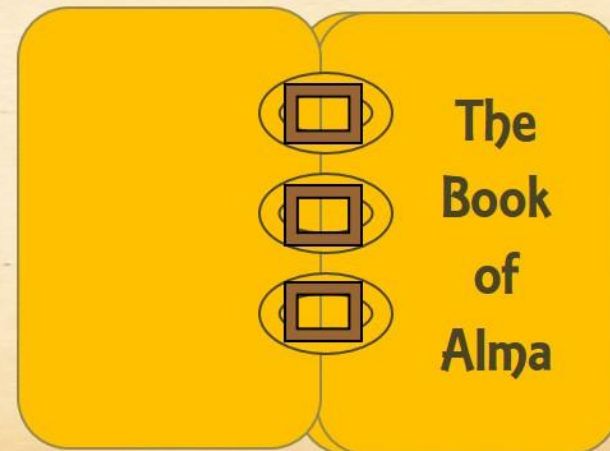
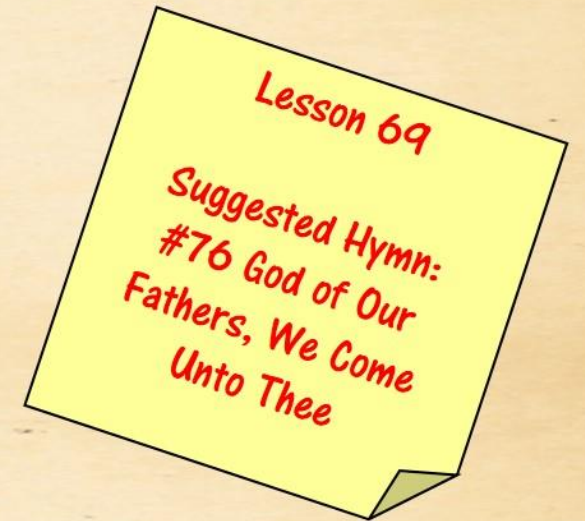


# “Following What is Popular”

Alma 1-2



# Alma

He was the son of Alma the Elder

He was 'numbered among the unbelievers' (Mosiah 27:8)

He was visited by a heavenly messenger about 100-92 BC

He had a spiritual transformation and redirected his life to the service of God

He was appointed chief judge of the land around 91 BC

He defeated a conspirator Amlici

He was consecrated high priest of the Church by his father (Alma 4:4; 5:3)

He later delegated his office to another to serve on a mission

He reformed the church in Zarahemla

He was rejected by the city of Ammonihah around 82 BC but stayed with Amulek and eventually converted Zeezrom

He made a safe haven for the Anti-Levi-Nephites

He went to the land of Melek, but was never heard of again...presumable being translated like Moses (Alma 45:18-19)



# Book of Alma

Mormon compiled and abridged records from the large plates of Nephi to create the book of Alma.

The book is named for Alma, who, as the son of Alma, is often called Alma the Younger.

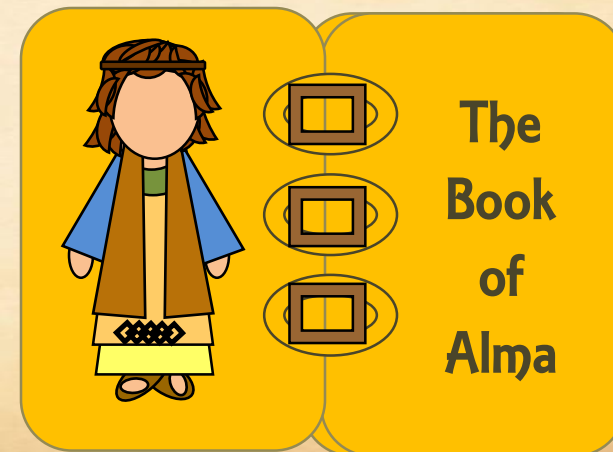
When King Mosiah instituted the reign of the judges among the Nephites, Alma the Younger became the first chief judge and succeeded his father as high priest over the Church (see Mosiah 29:42).

Alma eventually resigned his position as chief judge to dedicate himself “wholly to the high priesthood” and “to deliver the word of God unto the people” throughout the land of the Nephites (Alma 4:20;5:1).

Mormon used the records of Alma’s ministry (see Alma 1–44) and the writings of Alma’s sons Helaman (see Alma 45–62) and Shiblon (see Alma 63) to compose the book of Alma.

The original records used as sources for the book of Alma were likely written between 91 B.C. and 52 B.C. Mormon abridged those records sometime between A.D. 345 and A.D. 385.

Mormon did not record where he was when he compiled this book.



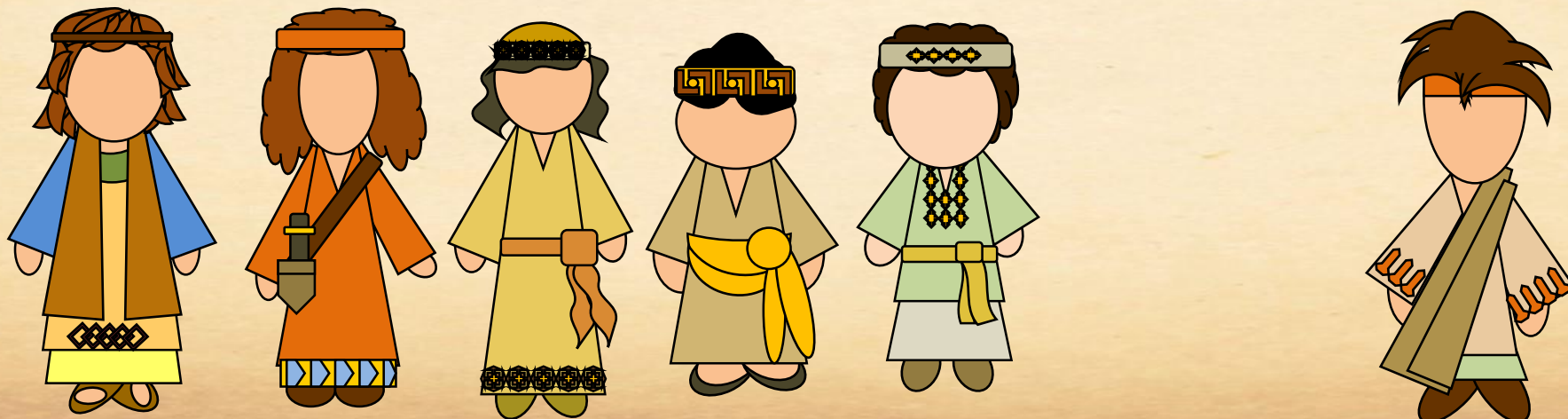
# Mission Statement

Although the book of Alma is the longest in the Book of Mormon, it covers a period of only 39 years—approximately 91 B.C. to 52 B.C. The book recounts the first instance of successful missionary labors among the Lamanites. It also highlights the faithfulness of the converted Lamanites in keeping their covenants

The book of Alma includes teachings about the doctrine of foreordination and the ministry of Melchizedek, the power of the word of God, how to develop faith in Jesus Christ, the severity of breaking the law of chastity ,the state of our spirits following death, the doctrines of resurrection and restoration, and the roles of justice and mercy in Heavenly Father’s plan of redemption

This book also contains the Lord’s instructions concerning self-defense and the justification for war

The book’s numerous teachings on the redeeming mission of Jesus Christ contribute to a central purpose of the Book of Mormon, which is to testify “that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God”



# Nehor

He was brought before Alma during Alma's first year as chief judge about 91 BC—He was a large man of strength

He tried to persuade the people in Zarahemla that the ministry should be professional, supported out of public coffers (stored money)

He testified that all mankind should be saved, they should not fear, and rejoice in the Lord that had created all men.

He wanted all to be redeemed and all men have eternal life

He began to build his own church

He met with resistance from the faithful including Gideon—from the colony of Limhi

He killed Gideon

He was condemned for priestcraft and murder

He confessed later of his wrongful preaching

He suffered an "ignominious" death.



# Popular

What are some dangers of seeking popularity?

What are some dangers of following people just because they are popular?



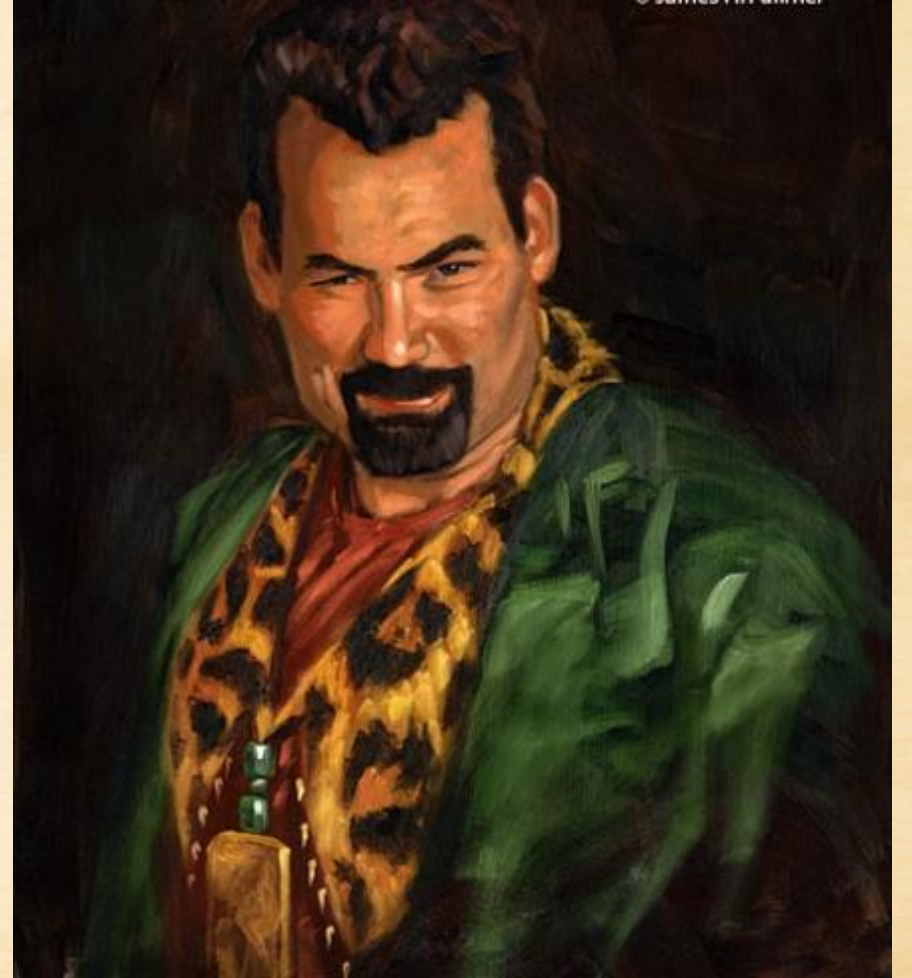
# 1<sup>st</sup> Year of the Reign of the Judges

Nehor became popular with some people in Zarahemla.

He preached his own gospel

Created his own set of values contrary to the teachings of King Mosiah

He preached salvation for all no matter what



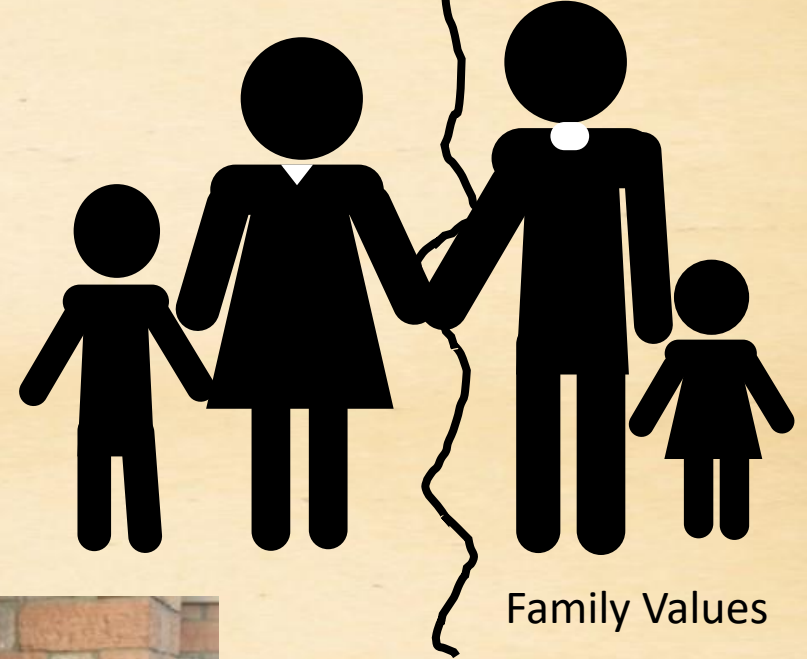
James H. Fullmer

# An Object of Ridicule

The Church is in constant attack of the public and ridiculed for many things



Signs held up during Conference



Family Values



Prop "8"



Women and the priesthood sessions



# Priestcraft—Labor for Money

The Book of Mormon says, "Priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the Welfare of Zion... But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish".

Inherent in this definition is the concern that Church leaders must labor to build Zion into the hearts of the people, and not for their personal aggrandizement or reward. When leaders "make merchandise" of men's souls, they turn religion into a business, and pride, materialism, and unrighteous dominion follow.

Bible Dictionary



Those:

Eager to get gain

Eager to receive applause of the crowd

Eager for recognition and reward

# Priestcraft VS Priesthood

## Those who practice priestcraft

Alma 1:3

Seek popularity

Alma 1:6

Wear costly apparel

Alma 1:16

Teach false doctrines to gain  
riches and honor

Alma 1:19-20

Persecute the righteous

Those who did not belong  
to the Church

## Those who exercise the priesthood

Alma 1:20

Live with humility and share the  
gospel without seeking personal gain

Alma 1:26

View others as equal to  
themselves

Alma 1:27

Do not wear costly apparel but  
dress neatly (and within their means)

Alma 1:30

Treat all people kindly and  
compassionately

Those who practiced their  
faith

# Salvation to All

“Nehor’s doctrine would be very popular among many of our own day.



Nehor preached against guilt and shame

People in Ammonihah:

“But as to the people that were in the land of Ammonihah, they yet remained a hard-hearted and a stiffnecked people; and they repented not of their sins, ascribing all the power of Alma and Amulek to the devil; for they were of the profession of Nehor, and did not believe in the repentance of their sins.”





**"Satan is the great deceiver,  
the father of lies."**

This is not because Satan tells only lies. His most effective lies are half-truths or lies accompanied by the truth."

# “Pleasing to the Carnal Mind”

Why would people believe him?



Perhaps it was his system of salvation was so easy, his promise of eternal reward was so attractive, his demands so few.

He denied prophecy and revelation and thus found no place for absolute values or absolute truth.

What consequences could come to a person who believes this doctrine?

How did Nehor's success affect him?



# Consequences

Lifted up in Pride

Wear costly apparel—symbol of submission to the world's standards



In the true Church, doctrines and beliefs and practices are based not upon the whims and ways of the congregants, or even of its leaders, but rather upon prophecy and revelation, upon truth, upon things as they were and are and are to come D&C 93:24

False Churches are built upon false principles and false practices

# Gideon

He was strong military leader in the army of King Noah

He rose to take action against evil

He came with King Limhi and his people to the Land of Zarahemla

He became a teacher of the people in the Church of God

Around 91 BC he challenged arrogant zealot Nehor “with the words of God” (Alma 1:9)

Nehor slew Gideon with the sword

He gave his life in defending the truth



# Defenders of the Truth

Gideon defends truth and righteousness

## **B.H. Roberts**

A Great Defender of the Book of Mormon

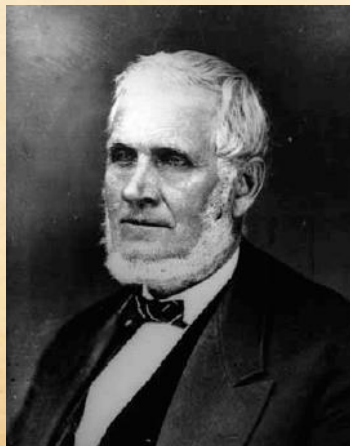
Born in 1857— Wolverhampton, England

At age 5 his covenant mother left him in foster care and immigrated to the states

At age 10 he too reached Utah and moved from one mining camp to another, remaining illiterate until his mid-teens.

His only formal schooling was one year at the University of Deseret.

He became the author of the 3,400-page



## **John Taylor**

Defender of the principles of the gospel

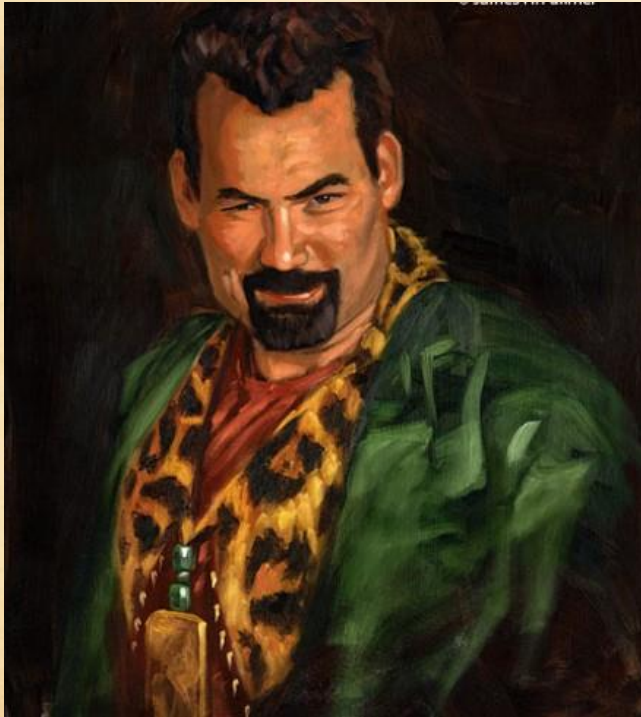
He became known as ‘Defender of the Faith’ and also as the ‘Champion of Liberty’”

In his courage and faithfulness we learn how to respond, how to be faithful, and we find how to become defenders of the faith and champions of righteousness ourselves.



# Gideon Defends the Truth

“...he [Nehor] met a man who belonged to the church of God, yea, even one of their teachers; and he began to contend with him sharply, that he might lead away the people of the church; but the man withstood him, admonishing him with the words of God.



James H. Fullmer



James H. Fullmer

Now the name of the man was Gideon; and it was he who was an instrument in the hands of God in delivering the people of Limhi out of bondage.

Now, because Gideon withstood him with the words of God he was wroth with Gideon, and drew his sword and began to smite him. Now Gideon being stricken with many years, therefore he was not able to withstand his blows, therefore he was slain by the sword.”

# Punishment for Murder

Nehor was taken for murder to stand in judgment to Alma

Alma had said that this was the first time that priestcraft had been introduced to the people



Alma condemns Nehor to die according to the laws—he suffered an “ignominious” death.

# Capital Punishment

In 1889 the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles published an official declaration on capital punishment:

“We solemnly make the following declarations, viz.:

“That this Church views the shedding of human blood with the utmost abhorrence. That we regard the killing of human beings, except in conformity with the civil law, as a capital crime which should be punished by shedding the blood of the criminal, after a public trial before a legally constituted court of the land. ...

“... Offenders against life and property [should] be delivered up to and tried by the laws of the land”

The Church has recently published the following official statement on capital punishment: “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints regards the question of whether and in what circumstances the state should impose capital punishment as a matter to be decided solely by the prescribed processes of civil law. We neither promote nor oppose capital punishment” July 23, 2012

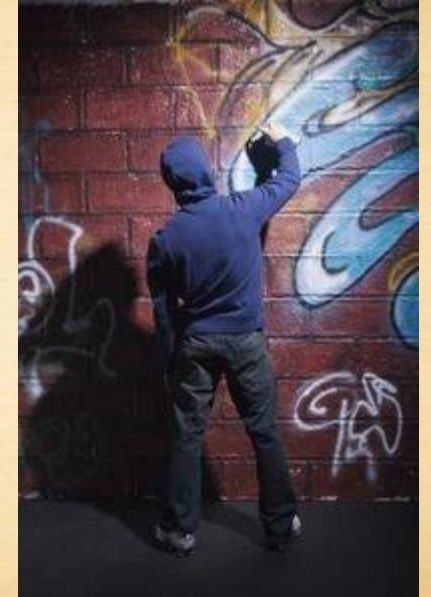


(“Official Declaration,” *Millennial Star*, Jan. 20, 1890, 33–34).

# Separate

The law could have no power on any man for his belief...

Although one could believe as one pleased, it appears that when one's false teachings were translated into actions that violated the laws of society, such a person was liable to prosecution.



# Contention and Persecution

When have you seen people tease, mock, or persecute those who keep the commandments of God?



Have you ever felt teased, mocked, or persecuted for keeping the commandments? If so, how did you respond?



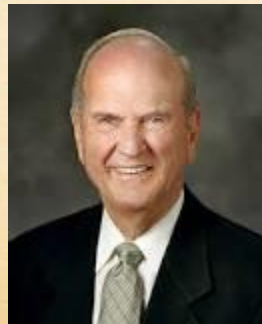
Those who did not belong to the Church began to persecute those that belonged to the Church by their words



“To be persecuted for righteousness sake in a great cause where truth and virtue and honor are at stake is god-like. ... The great harm that may come from persecution is not from the persecution itself but from the possible effect it may have upon the persecuted who may thereby be deterred in their zeal for the righteousness of their cause. Much of that persecution comes from lack of understanding, for men are prone to oppose that which they do not comprehend. Some of it comes from men intent upon evil. But from whatever cause, persecution seems to be so universal against those engaged in a righteous cause. ...

“... If you stand firmly for the right despite the jeers of the crowd or even physical violence, you shall be crowned with the blessedness of eternal joy. Who knows but that again in our day some of the saints or even apostles, as in former days, may be required to give their lives in defense of the truth? If that time should come, God grant they would not fail!”

Harold B. Lee



“Difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. The Apostle Paul warned that in the latter days, those who diligently follow the Lord ‘shall suffer persecution’ [2 Timothy 3:12]. That very persecution can either crush you into silent weakness or motivate you to be more exemplary and courageous in your daily lives”

Russell M. Nelson

# Truth Stands on it's Own

Saints are not called to malign or attack the faith and religious persuasions of others.



“We have no time for contention. We only have time to be about our Father’s business”

Marvin J. Ashton

*“Therefore, strengthen your brethren in all your conversation, in all your prayers, in all your exhortations, and in all your doings.”*

*D&C 108:7*

## Hand in Hand

We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.

We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.

or persecute those who keep the commandments of God?  
Articles of Faith 1:11-12

# For Arguments Sake?

It is the spirit of pride that motivates some of the Saints to contend warmly with nonmembers

To argue and debate the meaning of scriptures, to fight and quarrel with those of our Father's children who might choose not to affiliate with the true Church...

Such a spirit is not of God but is indeed of the devil, who stirs up people to contend one with another.



Even though our message to the world is true; even though what we declare will sanctify and save all who accept and follow it; even though the Lord himself is in this work—notwithstanding all this, the spirit cannot and will not abide with those who seek by argument or heated discussion to establish the truth of spiritual matters.



# What Can We Do?

We teach and we testify.

We bear witness.

We speak with sincerity.

We plead with our listeners to give heed to our words, to ponder them, and to petitions the heavens...the truth,

...but we do not...argue endlessly and quarrel... these lose the Spirit of God and become an easy prey to the arch-deceiver. Before they are aware, they lose their souls.



“Anything you or I do as instructors that knowingly and intentionally draws attention to self—in the messages we present, in the methods we use, or in our personal demeanor—is a form of priestcraft that inhibits the teaching effectiveness of the Holy Ghost”

David A. Bednar



# Where Can You Teach and Testify?



Seminary  
Quorums and classes  
Family Home Evening  
Sacrament talks  
Home teaching  
Share the gospel with friends



# Individual Agency of Others

It is not easy to stand by and watch friends and loved ones, former members of the household of faith, lose the Spirit and eventually forsake the faith.

It is painful to observe people as they spiritually self destruct, but after all efforts to plead and persuade have failed we must allow for individual agency.

We must bear with patience the persecutions and taunts of others.

JFM and RLM



**Even when people around us are being disobedient, we can be steadfast and immovable in keeping the commandments.**

**When we live the gospel, we can have peace in our lives, even if we are persecuted.**

**Choosing to contend with those who are not members of the Church can bring afflictions and trials upon the Church**



**If we are humble during persecution, our hearts will not be hardened by our experiences**



**Even when people around us are being disobedient, we can be steadfast and immovable in keeping the commandments**



**We can choose to bear persecution with patience**

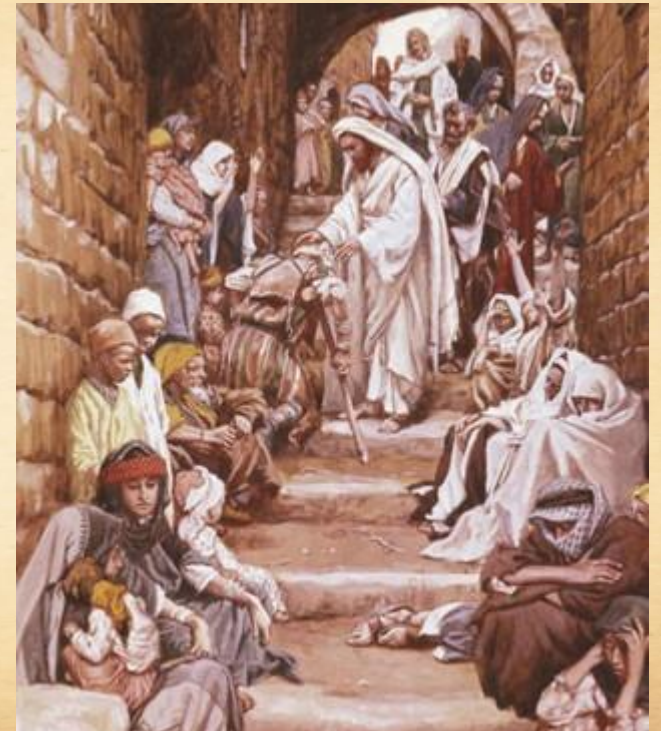


# The Priest's Labors

The people left their labors to hear the word of God



“And they did impart of their substance, every man according to that which he had, to the poor, and the needy, and the sick, and the afflicted; and they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely.”



And thus they did establish the affairs of the church; and thus they began to have continual peace again, notwithstanding all their persecutions.”

# Steadfastness of the Faithful

They began to prosper



“...they did not send away any who were naked, or that were hungry, or that were athirst, or that were sick, or that had not been nourished; and they did not set their hearts upon riches; therefore they were liberal to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, whether out of the church or in the church, having no respect to persons as to those who stood in need. And thus they did prosper and become far more wealthy than those who did not belong to their church.”

# Those Not of the Church

Indulged in:

Sorceries

Idolatry

Idleness

Babbling

Envyng

Strife

Wore costly apparel

Lifted up in pride

Persecuted

Lied

Stole

Committed whoredoms

Murdered

The Law was put into force:

Everyman suffered according to that which he had done...

Because of this the wicked became “more still, and durst not commit any wickedness if it were known”

--the unknown crime



There was much peace with the Nephites until the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of the judges

# Four Years of Peace

There was much peace with the Nephites until the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of the judges

However, after Nehor's death, the Nephites face another wicked man



“...for a certain man, being called Amlici, he being a very cunning man, yea, a wise man as to the wisdom of the world, he being after the order of the man that slew Gideon by the sword, who was executed according to the law—

Now this Amlici had, by his cunning, drawn away much people after him; even so much that they began to be very powerful; and they began to endeavor to establish Amlici to be a king over the people.”



# Amlici

He was a Nephite dissenter during Alma the Younger's time

He was a man after the "order of Nehor"

He was cunning and wise of the wisdom of the world

He attracted a powerful group who wanted to make him their king

The voice of the Nephites rose up against him

He rose up arms against them, but Alma's army, after many prayers, were "strengthen"

He made an alliance with the Lamanites

His people who followed him were called "Amlicites"

The Amlicites and Lamanites battled against the Nephites

He was killed by the sword of Alma



# Zeram, Amnor, Manti, and Limher



They were the watchmen (spies) sent by Alma to discover the location of Amlici in about 87 BC

They all returned to inform Alma that Amlici had united with the Lamanites who were descending with a massive army upon the Nephites

# The Daily News

87 BC

## *Persecutions Arise*

### Church Alarmed

People of the church express their opinions in a much heated debate about the persecutions of Amlici and his followers.

The people express their rights as a voice of the people according to the law. They fear if Amlici gains favor of many he and his followers will deprive them of their rights and privileges of the church, and they fear that Amlici would destroy the church of God.



### Amlici Gains Followers—Wants to Be King

Amlici, he being after the order of Nehor, who had killed Gideon by the sword, has gained followers and they, the followers, want Amlici to be their king.

The people who follow Amlici want to be known as the Amlicites instead of Nephites.

The Amlicites went before the judge, Alma, to be a voice concerning this matter. The Nephites also went before the judge to petition Alma to not have Amlici as their king. Despite the outcome, the Amlicites consecrated Amlici to be their king.



### Alma Takes Action

Due to the uprising of the Amlicites preparing for war with the Nephites, Alma also prepares for battle.

Since the Amlicites moved themselves to Hill Annihu to prepare for war the Nephites with the “strength of God” killed 12,532 Amlicites, while 6,562 men were killed from the Nephite army.

Alma sends Zeram, Amnor, Manti, and Limher to spy on the Amlicites. They discover the people have joined with the Lamanites.

### Alma Kills Amlici

Alma fought with Amlici with the sword, face to face. After a long battle, Alma prays, “O Lord, have mercy and spare my life, that I may be an instrument in they hands to save and preserve this people.” With strength Alma kills Amlici. His prayers are heard and he and his people were able to drive back the army of the Lamanites and the Amlicites. They fled into the wilderness where the bodies of the dead were devoured by beasts, and vultures of the air. There were many bones found in heaps on the earth.

# Calling on the Lord for Strength

**When we call upon God to help us stand against wickedness, He will strengthen us**

Why do you think it is important to receive strength from God to stand against wickedness rather than having wicked influences removed completely from our lives?

How can you follow Alma's example when you stand against wickedness?

How has the Lord strengthened you as you have faced wickedness?

What is one way you can stand against wickedness now?

# Test of Strength

“Knowing why we are tested and what the test is tells us how to get help. We have to go to God. He gives us the commandments. And we will need more than our own strength to keep them.

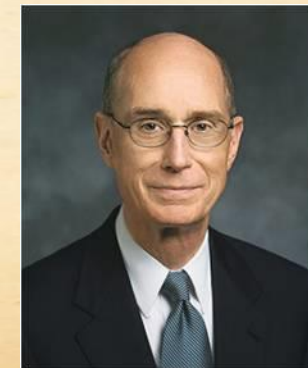
...The first, the middle, and the last thing to do is to pray.

...Another simple thing to do, which allows God to give us strength, is to feast on the word of God: read and ponder the standard works of the Church and the words of living prophets.

There is a promise of help from God that comes with that daily practice. Faithful study of scriptures brings the Holy Ghost to us. The promise is given in the Book of Mormon, but it applies as well to all the words of God that He has given and will give us through His prophets.

...There is another simple thing to do. The Lord’s Church has been restored, and so any call to serve in it is a call to serve Him.”

Henry B. Eyring



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# The Daily News

Page 1

87 BC
