

---

# HELAMAN 1-6

---

Book of Mormon, Adult Institute Class, Monday, 8 February 2010

---

David A. LeFevre

---

## INTRODUCTION

---

These chapters see a dramatic turn away from God in the Nephite culture in a fairly short time. This is especially tragic given all the work and success during the time of Alma<sub>2</sub> and his son Helaman<sub>1</sub> and Chief Commander Moroni to solidify the Church among the Nephites. But this new generation largely rejected that and turned to pride and other sins. Wars and contentions continued to be a problem. Amazingly, where generals and battles failed, two missionaries succeeded. In the end, Lamanites are sending missionaries to the Nephites, reversing the successes of the sons of Mosiah.

---

## HELAMAN 1 MURDER IN THE JUDGMENT SEAT

---

**1 fortieth year.** In 16 chapters (38 pages), the Book of Helaman begins in 40 RoJ and covers 50 years, to 90 RoJ—as the heading from the plates says, “even down to the coming of Christ.” In contrast, the Book of Alma provides 63 chapters (or 161 pages) that just cover 40 years (1 – 40 RoJ).

**2 Pahoran had died.** Pahoran was the third chief judge among the Nephites. He was the son of Nephiah, the second chief judge, and served in that position from 24 to 40 RoJ (see Alma 50:37-40). He had some years of peace but also years of serious war and turmoil, including losing his position to kingmen until Moroni and the army restored him. He showed himself a great man in many ways, including his generous reply to Moroni in Alma 61.

Pahoran was the third chief judge after Alma and Nephiah. This table of the chief judges is helpful, adapted from (Largey 2003, 474):

RoJ	BC/AD*	Judge	Notes
1-9	91-83 BC	Alma <sub>2</sub>	Retired to preach
9-24	83-68 BC	Nephiah	
24-40	68-52 BC	Pahoran <sub>1</sub>	
40	52 BC	Pahoran <sub>2</sub>	Murdered by Kishkumen
40-41	52-51 BC	Pacumeni	Killed by Coriantumr
41-42	51-50 BC	[vacant]	Due to wars
42-53	50-39 BC	Helaman <sub>3</sub>	
53-62	39-30 BC	Nephi <sub>2</sub>	Retired to preach
62-66	30-26 BC	Cezoram	Murdered
66	26 BC	Son of Cezoram	Murdered
66-69	26-23 BC	Seezoram	Murdered
69-92	23 BC – AD 1	[unknown]	

AD 1-30	Lachoneus <sub>1</sub>	
AD 30	Lachoneus <sub>2</sub>	Murdered, government collapsed

\* According to the BoM footnotes.

**3 Pahoran, Paanchi, and Pacumeni.** Pahoran's three sons mentioned (and he had many others; v. 4) all have names starting with Pa-. Hugh Nibley (1988, 282-284) noted that these are good Egyptian names from before the time of Lehi, meaning that either Lehi or Mulek's group could have brought them over:

There is in the Book of Mormon, within one important family, a group of names beginning with Pa-. They are peculiar names and can be matched exactly in Egyptian. Names beginning with Pa- are by far the most common type in late Egyptian history, but what ties Pahoran's family most closely to Egypt is not the names but the activities in which the bearers of those names are engaged; for they sponsor the same institutions and engineer the same intrigues as their Egyptian namesakes did centuries before—and in so doing they give us to understand they are quite aware of the resemblance!...

Paanchi, the son of Pahoran, and pretender to the chief-judgeship, has the same name as one of the best-known kings in Egyptian history, a contemporary of Isaiah and chief actor in the drama of Egyptian history at a time in which that history was intimately involved in the affairs of Palestine.<sup>3</sup> Yet his name, not mentioned in the Bible, remained unknown to scholars until the end of the nineteenth century.

This Egyptian Paanchi, whose name means "He (namely Ammon) is my life," was the son of one Kherihor (the vowels are guesses!), the High Priest of Ammon, who in a priestly plot set himself up as a rival of Pharaoh himself, while his son Paanchi actually claimed the throne. This was four hundred years before Lehi left Jerusalem, and it had historic repercussions of great importance; not only did it establish a new dynasty, but it inaugurated the rule of priestcraft in Egypt; from that time on, "the High-priest of Amon . . . could and constantly did reduce the king to a position of subservience."<sup>4</sup>

Now in the Book of Mormon both Paanchi and Korihor are involved in such plots and intrigues of priestcraft. The former, to gain the chief judgeship for himself, tried to achieve the assassination of his two elder brothers, who bore the good Egyptian names of Pahoran (meaning "man of Syria or Palestine"—a Horite) and Pacumeni (cf. Egyptian Pakamen), while the latter charged the judges with trying to introduce into the New World the abuses of priestcraft which the people knew had been practiced in the Old, "ordinances and performances which are laid down by ancient priests, to usurp power and authority" (Alma 30:23).

It is apparent that with their Old World names and culture, Lehi's people brought over many Old World memories and ideas with them, as was only to be expected.

**8 condemned unto death.** After the years of war triggered by Nephite dissenters, there seemed to be very little tolerance for anti-government activities, especially calling for a rebellion and an overthrow of the chief judge.

**9 Kishkumen.** This murderer of Pahoran<sub>2</sub> is first mentioned here. He continued to conspire against leadership for self-gain, but in the end was himself killed for his crimes. The one who followed in his

footsteps, Gadianton, is the one for whom we name the robbers. Perhaps if Kishkumen had not died so quickly, we would call them the Kishkumen robbers today instead.

11 ***they all entered into a covenant.*** Alma tried in vain to keep the secret combinations out of Nephite society (Alma 37:27-30). In the end, though, it wasn't the Jaredite records that taught them how to do it, but Satan himself (see 6:26 below; see also Moses 5:28-31).

13 ***Pacumeni was appointed.*** The people determined that with Pahoran's death, Pacumeni, who had sided with his brother Pahoran once the voice of the people was made clear in the earlier controversy, was to be the new chief judge.

14 ***an innumerable army of men.*** The Lamanites came again with a huge army, this time having learned the lessons from how Moroni protected his men, and were sporting the same protection—shields, breastplates, helmets, etc.

15 ***Coriantumr.*** This man was a Nephite dissenter, like so many before him. He is called out as a descendent of Zarahemla, which points to a reason why so many of the dissenters rebelled against the judges, seeing themselves of the royal line going back further than Nephi (since the people of Zarahemla could trace their kingly line back to Jerusalem and even to David and Solomon).

16 ***the king of the Lamanites, whose name was Tubaloth.*** The king of the Lamanites was the son of Ammoron, the nephew of Amalickiah, both Nephite dissenters as well. His goal was to conquer the Nephites, so he sent Coriantumr to do the deed, and he nearly achieved the desired result.

20 ***they did take possession of the whole city.*** Never before had the Lamanites invaded the capital city of Zarahemla. But in a bold move, Coriantumr cut straight through the Nephite heartland, attacked a city distracted by politics, and captured the city, killing anyone who resisted him. This had to be one of the Nephites' darkest hours in their history.

21 ***thus ended the days of Pacumeni.*** Attempting to flee before the invading Lamanite army, Pacumeni was somehow trapped by the city walls, where Coriantumr killed him. That made two chief judges killed in two years.

23 ***towards the city of Bountiful.*** Relishing his victory in Zarahemla, Coriantumr pressed on, heading for Bountiful, the large Nephite on the border leading to the land northward.

25 ***gave Moronihah great advantage.*** Coriantumr's army was stretched through the center of the Nephite lands and left him vulnerable to Nephite troops. Since Moronihah had been defending the borders, all his troops were there. Thus Coriantumr was surrounded by Moronihah's armies.

27 ***slaying the people with a great slaughter.*** Though Moronihah had the strategic advantage, Coriantumr had almost no opposition as he went from Nephite city to city, and killed many.

28 ***he immediately sent forth Lehi.*** Lehi was a veteran of many Lamanite battles, a trusted and tested leader. Having partnered with Moroni many times, Lehi was certainly Moronihah's superior in terms of age and experience, and Moronihah knew he could rely on him.

30 ***Coriantumr was also found.*** With Lehi cutting off his northern march, Coriantumr turned back south to Zarahemla. But Moronihah's army was waiting, and a two-pronged battle ensued. It was "an exceedingly bloody battle," including the death of Coriantumr.

33 **took possession of the city of Zarahemla again.** Though Moronihah and Lehi were victorious this time, the Lamanites had learned how to cut through the Nephite center. They would remember that lesson and use it again shortly.

---

## HELANAN 2 GADIANTON

---

2 **Helaman, who was the son of Helaman.** Helaman<sup>3</sup> became chief judge in 42 RoJ and remained in office until he died in 53 RoJ, amazing considering that the two chief judges before him were murdered and the murderers were still running loose. But that doesn't mean there wasn't an attempt to kill, as we will see. He is probably best remembered for what he taught his two sons, Nephi and Lehi.

4 **Gadianton, who was exceedingly expert in many words.** Though Kishkumen had started the secret society, Gadianton had become the "leader of the band" because of his flattery and expertise in murder and robbery. So now Kishkumen was working for Gadianton.

6 **one of the servants of Helaman.** The bravery of this man is unquestioned. He infiltrated the group in disguise, in order to discover their plans. Then he played along with Kishkumen until he could find the right time to take care of him. What seems odd is that he apparently didn't tell Helaman about their plans until he had already disposed of Kishkumen. Why didn't he warn him? Perhaps everything happened too fast, or perhaps he only knew that something was happening but no details (what vv. 7-8 indicate). In the end, he saved Helaman and stopped Kishkumen from killing yet another judge.

7 **he gave unto him a sign.** This servant had been in Kishkumen's (or Gadianton's) organization long enough to know secret signs that would convince Kishkumen that he could be trusted.

9 **did stab Kishkumen even to the heart.** Pretending to lead him to Helaman, the servant turned the tables on Kishkumen and killed him instantly with an expert thrust of his dagger. Then he ran and revealed all to Helaman.

11 **they took their flight.** When Kishkumen did not return at the pre-arranged time, Gadianton led his followers into the wilderness and escaped the soldiers Helaman had sent after them.

13 **Gadianton did prove the overthrow.** Mormon's point is emphatic—Gadianton and his secret robbers were almost the cause of the overthrow of the Nephite nation—not just here in the Book of Helaman, but at "the end of the book of Nephi" (v. 14), which ends with our book 4 Nephi.

---

## HELANAN 3 NORTHWARD MIGRATION, CEMENT, AND NEPHI

---

3 **much contention and many dissensions.** With the departure of Gadianton and his band, the Nephites enjoyed three years of peace. But finally, pride (v. 1) and other disagreements overcame many, and a large group departed to the land northward to live there.

4 **large bodies of water and many rivers.** This area was linked with the Aztec centers of Teotihuacan and Tenochtitlan by John Sorenson, main proponent of the Mesoamerican placement of the Book of Mormon story (Sorenson 1985, 266-267). He notes that at the time of this notation in

the record (mid-first century B.C.), those areas were beginning to experience accelerated growth, which could have been spurred by the arrival of foreigners with new ideas and technologies.



Figure 1: Map of Tenochtitlan by L. Covarrubias, Painting from the Museo del Templo Mayor, Mexico City.

**7 expert in the working of cement.** For many years, critics of the Book of Mormon pointed to this mention of cement as a glaring mistake. But now scholars have noted that the working of cement appears suddenly in the Mesoamerican archeological record at this very time in the area around Teotihuacan, and then is used extensively throughout the Mayan empire (Welch, Concrete Evidence).

**8 sea south to the sea north.** This is the only mention of these seas in the Book of Mormon. Other references to seas only speak of them on the east and west. This single mention ties to the statement just preceding it: “they began to cover the face of the whole earth.” In ancient cultures, a description of the “whole earth” would then refer to four cardinal directions: north, south, east, and west. Such references are plentiful in the Old Testament (e.g., Genesis 13:14; 28:14; Numbers 35:5; 1 Chronicles 9:24; Psalm 107:3; Ezekiel 48:10, 16-17) and the New Testament (Luke 13:29; Revelation 21:13). Even in earlier chapters in the Book of Mormon, the references to the four cardinal directions are taken to mean something akin to ‘everywhere’ (2 Nephi 29:11; Mosiah 27:6) or in one case in the negative to mean ‘nowhere’ (Helaman 1:31). So rather than seeing this as a literal statement, the reference is more likely to be a figure of speech, meaning that the Nephites had spread over a great area.

**10 much by the way of shipping.** Going back to Hagoth (Alma 63:5-8), the Nephites showed their shipbuilding abilities. Here they used boats to carry wood from the land southward to the land northward, which could have been a very profitable business given the lack of trees in the north.

**14 a hundredth part...cannot be contained in this work.** Mormon the compiler has vast records at his disposal. He prefers Nephi’s record kept by the kings, high priests, and judges, but recognizes the value and details in the other records.

16 **even becoming Lamanites.** Mormon is editorializing on his own day, but seeing the trends in these years before the coming of Christ as leading up to the challenges he faces. Note that to become a Lamanite is to “wicked, and wild, and ferocious.” It says nothing about skin color or any other physical attribute, just behavior.

20 **Helaman...did walk after the ways of his father** In the midst of “contentions, and disturbances, and wards, and dissensions” (v. 17), Helaman remained faithful, serving the people as chief judge and as a righteous example.

21 **he had two sons...Nephi...Lehi.** Helaman’s two sons were raised in righteousness and choose obedience and faithfulness. In the end, they were responsible for the conversion of more people than perhaps any other Book of Mormon character.

23 **secret combinations which Gadianton the robber had established.** So far the Nephites had enjoyed 6-7 years of peace and prosperity. But all the while, Gadianton and his band was working in society—not sneaking in from the outside, but quietly working “in the more settled parts of the land.” Their secrecy was so complete, that they were poised to impact the government but no one knew they were even there.

24 **thousands who did join themselves unto the church.** In this case, with prosperity came many converts—“even tens of thousands” (v. 26)—something fairly rare in the history of the world. Acknowledging this, “the high priests and the teachers were themselves astonished beyond measure” (v. 25).

32 **peace and exceedingly great joy.** The lack of war and the general righteousness of the people allowed them to enjoy many years of peace and joy.

33 **save it were the pride.** The peace ended, though, when some began to be prideful, the downfall of the Nephites time after time. This pride led them to “the persecution of many of their brethren” (v. 34), who suffered persecutions and afflictions.

35 **sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God.** Those who remained faithful learned and lived this great lesson—surrendering our will to God, prayer often, and staying humble brings “joy and consolation,” which purifies and sanctifies—makes us into new people who are dedicated to serving God and receiving his blessings accordingly.

36 **exceedingly great pride.** The little pride in earlier verses is now a “great pride” that came because of their focus on “great riches and their prosperity.”

37 **Helaman died.** After a 12-year reign as chief judge, Helaman passed away, and his son Nephi filled his position. So by the end of Helaman 3, the man for whom the book is named is gone.

---

## HELANAN 4 DEFEAT AND WICKEDNESS

---

1 **much bloodshed.** Civil war again strikes the Nephites, with pride and contention at the heart of the conflict.

2 **slain and driven out.** Many were killed and others left (it should probably say, ‘slain **or** driven out’ as you can’t be both). The survivors of the bloody battle left to join with the Lamanites—the



king of which had been a Nephite dissenter for many years before (the record doesn't say if he was at this time).

**5 *unto the land which was near the land Bountiful.*** Egged on by the Nephite dissenters, the Lamanite army pressed forward again, now in 58 RoJ as they had done in 41 RoJ, but this time with much great success and effectiveness.

**7 *a day's journey for a Nephite.*** It's not clear what this expression means. How far could "a Nephite" travel in a day? Note that this distance, whatever it is, is the length of the front line against the conquering Lamanites, not necessarily the distance from sea to sea, though the two can't be that different or the front would be very weak.

**9 *Moronihah did succeed with his armies.*** After three years of losses, in 60 RoJ, the Nephites finally began to take back some of their lost cities.

**10 *half of all their possessions.*** By 61 RoJ, the Nephites had regained about half of their former lands from the Lamanites. This is as far as warfare would get them.

**11 *their wickedness and their abominations.*** Mormon knows firsthand from his own experience that wickedness leads to military losses. Pride, a love of riches, oppressing the poor, mocking the sacred, denying the prophets and the revelations of God, and committing all kinds of sins, such as murder, lying, stealing, and adultery, were the reasons the Nephite civilization lost their lands and were unable to regain them.

**15 *they did repent.*** Spurred on by the teachings of Moronihah, Nephi, and Lehi, some of the people began to repent, for which the Lord blessed them, giving them a great prosperity and victory in battle, even to the regaining of one-half of their lands (compare v. 10).

**19 *so numerous were the Lamanites.*** After two years of progress, they could gain no more, and so dug in and determined to hold what they had won back. Lamanites poured into the land, most likely settlers from the south and east supported by a huge army, making it impossible for them to take back any more cities.

**21 *the prophecies of Alma, and also the words of Mosiah.*** The footnotes give the relevant references: Alma 5:53 and Mosiah 29:27, which condemned the pride and selfishness and taught that "if the time comes that the voice of the people doth choose iniquity, then is the time that the judgments of God will come upon you." Seeing those words fulfilled cause them to see themselves for what they were. Sadly, this acknowledgement did not drive them to repentance. In fact, just the opposite happened: they were driven to leave the church (v. 23).

**26 *in the space of not many years.*** In less than 20 years, they went from a state of "peace and exceedingly great joy" (3:32) to a state of "great transgression."

---

## HELAMAN 5 NEPHI AND LEHI

---

**1 *Nephi delivered up the judgment seat to...Cezoram.*** Nephi had been the chief judge for about 10 years when he decided to follow Alma's example and return his full attention away from governing and to the ministry.

**2 *they were ripening for destruction.*** Because the majority of the people were choosing evil rather than good (Mosiah 29:27), Nephi realized that he could do much more good teaching the gospel. This proved to be amazingly true as he went out with his brother, Lehi. Note that what motivated him was not a direct call from God or a command to do so, but the words of his father (in the next verses).

**5 *they remembered the words which their father Helaman spake.*** Helaman had long since passed away (53 RoJ, 9-10 years previously), but his words echoed down through the years to his two sons. They are recorded in verses 6-12.

**6 *remember them.*** Helaman named his sons after their famous ancestors because he wanted his sons to be reminded of their example each time they said their names and be motivated by that example to be like them.

**9 *the words which king Benjamin spake.*** This is less of a quote than a paraphrase from Benjamin's address, at least as we have it recorded in Mosiah. Benjamin's words were, "there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, this Lord Omnipotent...salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ" (Mosiah 3:17-18). Alma 38:9 says something similar, from the words of Alma to his son, Shiblon (the uncle of the Helaman speaking here).

**10 *the words which Amulek spake.*** Again, not a quote but a paraphrase of Amulek's words to Zeezrom, from Alma 11:30-37.

**11 *sent his angels.*** See Alma 13:22-25.

**12 *upon the rock of our Redeemer.*** As a good friend pointed out just yesterday, the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 focuses on our behavior, but at the end, calls upon us to build upon the rock, the solid foundation, rather than on the shifting sands of the world and Satan's influence. So Helaman, in this famous scripture, calls on his sons to build on the rock of Christ, "a sure foundation," that we can survive Satan's storms and trials.

**14 *beginning at the city Bountiful.*** With Zarahemla in Lamanite hands, the Nephite government had shifted north to Bountiful, so Nephi and Lehi started their preaching 'at home.'

**16 *among all the people of Nephi.*** The brothers went from city to city among the Nephites. The record doesn't state how successful their efforts were, but they don't seem to have had much impact among their own people, at least initially.

***into the land of Zarahemla, among the Lamanites.*** Like the sons of Mosiah, these two brothers moved boldly to the heart of the Lamanite conquests. They had grown up in Zarahemla with their father and had lived there until just three years previous, and so their arrival there must have been a bit bitter-sweet. Did they go to their old homes and find Lamanites living in them? It does not say anything about those feelings. They focused on their purpose and went to work teaching their enemies about Christ.

**17 *did confound many of those dissenters.*** Their first outreach was to the Nephite dissenters living among the Lamanites, and they were very effective, convincing many to return to God and be baptized. Many of these dissenters went north to live among the Nephites again "to repair unto



them the wrongs which they had done.” Given the situation they put the Nephites in, this was an act of pure bravery and selflessness.

19 ***eight thousand of the Lamanites***. After working with the Nephite dissenters, the brothers turned to the Lamanites themselves, and again had great success, baptizing thousands.

20 ***to the land of Nephi***. Having succeeded at Zarahemla to convert many, the pair moved further south, right into the heart of the Lamanite capital city.

21 ***cast into prison***. The reception in Nephi was not so good as in Zarahemla. Mormon notes the irony that the prison Nephi and Lehi were put in was the same one that Limhi’s people used to hold Ammon and those with him when they arrived (see Mosiah 7:7).

23 ***encircled about as if by fire***. When the Lamanite leaders had starved them for “many days,” they decided it was time to kill these two trouble-making Nephites. But arriving at the prison, they find the brothers encircled with flames so that they could not touch them.

24 ***their hearts did take courage***. Nephi and Lehi seem just as surprised as the Lamanites to find themselves in the middle of a fire and not being burned up. Their discouragement from days of suffering and starvation turned to courage with this sign of God’s intervention in their behalf.

27 ***when they had said these words, the earth shook***. As if the fire was not testimony enough, when Nephi and Lehi told the Lamanites that it was the power of God that protected them, the very earth shook to confirm their words.

27 ***Lamanites and Nephites who were dissenters***. Nephite dissenters had been major players if not running the government for many years, so it is no surprise to find them here among those who planned to kill the missionaries.

28 ***a cloud of darkness, and an awful solemn fear***. First the brightness of fire to show the presence of God around Nephi and Lehi, now a terrible darkness around the Lamanites and Nephite dissenters to show their state as being the opposite of the prophets.

29 ***Repent ye, repent ye***. The manifestations continue, now with a voice from heaven declaring the need to repent.

30 ***a still voice of perfect mildness***. The voice of the Spirit is mild, but piercing (compare 1 Kings 19:11-12). It is like a whisper but still shakes the earth.

33 ***the third time the voice came***. As is often the case, three times the message was given, to reinforce the words and to declare their divine origin.

35 ***a Nephite***. V. 39 tells us that his name was Aminadab. He was somehow able to turn and see Nephi and Lehi, no longer surrounded by fire but whose faces were shining, “even as the faces of angels.” At his cry, others turned and looked, too, and saw the men praying and shining.

41 ***You must repent***. Aminadab called upon teachings from his youth—perhaps he remembered the words of Alma or Helaman—and taught the Lamanites and the Nephites (who were probably Zoramites, based on his next words) that they needed to have faith in Christ, just as Alma and Amulek and Zeezrom had taught them.

43 **they were encircled about.** With prayer and an exercise of nascent faith, the darkness dispersed and the fire now surrounded them, with Nephi and Lehi in the middle of the group.

44 **filled with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.** Though they had come to kill the brothers, now they joined them in God's presence, and it filled them with joy beyond their imagination.

45 **filled as if with fire.** The fire was all around them, but the presence of the Holy Ghost took the fire right into their hearts—God was now within them. The result was peace (v. 47) and the ministering of angels (v. 48).

49 **three hundred souls.** It must have been a big prison! This experience was so compelling, that they did go out among the people and teach everyone, resulting in many more thousands of converts.

52 **yield up unto the Nephites the lands of their possession.** What war could not accomplish, two men and the Spirit of God did.

---

## HELANAN 6 TABLES TURNED

---

1 **the Lamanites had become...a righteous people.** Reversing years of history, with these mass conversions in the south, the Lamanites became the people of God, while the Nephites continued to choose wickedness, becoming "hardened and impenitent and grossly wicked" (v. 2).

4 **Lamanites did come down.** Another reversal—the Lamanites were busy sending missionaries to the wicked Nephites to teach them and call them to repentance! (It is in this situation that we will next class learn about Samuel the Lamanite.)

6 **go into the land northward.** Teaching, not invading, Lamanites went north, with Nephi and Lehi, to teach the Nephites who had gone to settle there.

7 **go into whatsoever part of the land they would.** With these conversions and this spirit of peace, commerce and communication was open from the land northward all the way to the lands of first inheritance—Nephites and Lamanites freely moving back and forth for the first time in their history.

10 **land south was called Lehi, and the land north was called Mulek.** Referring to the landing places of these two founders, they determined to call the lands after these two men.

14 **great joy and peace.** Another period of time when all seemed well, with prosperity and riches freely available to many.

15 **Cezoram was murdered.** What a shock this must have been—in the midst of their successes, the chief judge is suddenly found dead.

**his son...was also murdered.** On the judgment seat so short of a time that we are not even given his name, he was also killed like his father.

16 **exceedingly wicked again.** How short-lived is the general righteousness of the people. With just a few years of prosperity, pride and wickedness again enter in. But another factor was at work—the

men of Kishkumen and Gadianton, who had been lying low all these years, now make their move (v. 18). They murdered the judges (v. 19) and used secret signs and words (v. 22) to demonstrate their covenant, and conspired to “murder, and plunder, and steal, and commit whoredoms” (v. 23)

26 ***put into the heart of Gadianton by that same being***. Satan was the author of their secret works. They didn’t need the Jaredite records, as Alma had feared.

34 ***thus we see***. Mormon gives us four ‘thus we see’s in these next verses. First, the Nephites and Lamanites have reversed their typical, historical roles, and the Lamanites are the more righteous. Second, the Spirit has withdrawn from the Nephites, but (third) poured out on the Lamanites, who would not tolerate the Gadiantons among them, but hunted them down and drove them out. And fourth, the Nephites were “in an awful state, and ripening for an everlasting destruction” (v. 40). In that environment, two powerful preachers will try to save the people—Nephi and Samuel—and prepare them for the coming of Christ.

---

## WORKS CONSULTED

---

Intellectual Reserve, Inc. *Book of Mormon Student Manual, Religion 121-122*. Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2009.

Largey, Dennis L., ed. *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2003.

McConkie, Joseph Fielding and Millet, Robert L. *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*. 4 vols. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1991.

Nibley, Hugh. *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*. 3rd. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1988.

Skousen, Royal. *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon*. 4 vols. Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 2005-2008.

Sorenson, John L. *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1985.

Welch, John W., and Wells, Matthew G. *Concrete Evidence for the Book of Mormon*.

<http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/books/?bookid=71&chapid=827> (accessed February 7, 2010).