

Helaman 10

Helaman 10: 1-3

1 *Pondering*

To ponder is to give serious reflection and thought to something; it is to weigh that which is ponderous in our minds. Such an attitude of spiritual searching has consistently proven to be the seedbed of revelation.

Revelation Received Because of Pondering

1 Nephi 11:1	Vision of the Condescension of God
D&C 76:19	The Vision
D&C 138:1-4	Vision of Spirit World
JSH 1:12 (James 1:5)	Vision of Father and Son
3 Nephi 17:3	Received “Most Sacred Chapter”

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 3:384-85.

2 By pondering, we give the Spirit an opportunity to impress and direct. Pondering is a powerful link between the heart and the mind. As we read the scriptures, our hearts and minds are touched. If we use the gift to ponder, we can take these eternal truths and realize how we can incorporate them into our daily actions.

Marvin J. Ashton, *Ensign*, November 1987, 20.

3 I have spent many hours poring over and pondering the scriptures. In seeking to learn the doctrines of salvation I have studied, weighed, and compared what the various prophets have said about the same subjects. Time and again, after much praying and pondering about a given point, new and added concepts have burst upon me showing deep and hidden truths that I had never before known. It can be so with all of us if we will read, ponder, and pray about the holy word.

Bruce R. McConkie, “Come Hear the Voice of the Lord,” *New Era*, December 1985, p. 13.

4 M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “All of us would benefit from time to ponder and meditate. In the quiet moments of personal introspection, the Spirit can teach us much.

Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 4; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 6.

5 As you ponder and pray about doctrinal principles, the Holy Ghost will speak to your mind and your heart [see D&C 8:2]. From events portrayed in the scriptures, new insights will come and principles relevant to your situation will distill upon your heart.

Russell M. Nelson, Conference Report, Oct. 2000, 19; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 18.

Helaman 10: 1-4**6** *You are not alone*

One on God's side is a majority.

Wendell Phillips, quoted in *Civil War*, Burns, Burns, & Ward, p. 399

7

While President [James E.] has spent so much of his life serving others... he has also known what it is like to be alone.... Though the only Church member on a transport ship in the South Pacific in World War II... he nevertheless worshipped alone on Sundays. Searching out places where he could sing alone from a pocket-sized hymnal, he would read the scriptures, meditate, and pray in private. Often this meant going up to the front of the ship, where the waves would drown out his singing.

Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, Aug. 1995, p. 14.

8

Valiant servants of the Lord [are] ... not entirely alone... if [they] ... are worthy of His companionship and the companionship of the Holy Spirit.... Sarah Ann Meeks...stood alone on the doorstep of her home in far-off England nearly a century and a half ago. Her father met her there with a small bundle containing a few of her belongings and with these words, "You join that church and you must never set foot in my home again." Unfortunately that was the last she saw of her family. Alone? Very much alone! But...she loved the Lord. She had been touched by the Spirit and knew that the gospel of Jesus Christ had been restored to the earth in its fullness.... From that one stalwart woman has sprung a progeny of faithful Latter-day Saints difficult to number.... One of those descendants now stands here as an especial witness of the Savior Jesus Christ....

Wm. Rolfe Kerr, *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, pp. 80-81.

9

When the pathway of life takes a cruel turn, there is the temptation to ask the question, "Why me?".... At times there appears to be no light at the tunnel's end, no dawn to break the night's darkness. We feel surrounded by the pain of broken hearts, the disappointment of shattered dreams, and the despair of vanished hopes... We feel abandoned, heartbroken, alone.... Our problem is that we often expect instantaneous solutions, forgetting that frequently the heavenly virtue of patience is required. Do any of the following challenges sound familiar to you?

- Handicapped children
- The passing of a loved one
- Employment downsizing
- Obsolescence of one's skills
- A wayward son or daughter
- Mental and emotional illness
- Accidents
- Divorce
- Abuse
- Excessive

...In the world of today there is at times a tendency to feel detached—even isolated—from the Giver of every good gift. We worry that we walk alone.... Rarely is the assurance [from God] communicated by a flashing sign or a loud voice. Rather, the language of the Spirit is gentle, quiet, uplifting to the heart, and soothing to the soul.

Thomas S. Monson, *Ensign*, May 1998, pp. 52-53

10 Be sure you understand that God will not allow you to be tempted beyond your ability to resist. (See 1 Cor. 10:13). He does not give you challenges that you cannot surmount. He will not ask more than you can do, but may ask right up to your limits so you can prove yourselves. The Lord will never forsake or abandon anyone. You may abandon him, but he will not abandon you. You never need to feel that you are alone.

Joseph B. Wirthlin, *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, p.75.

11 One young mother wrote: “When I was 13 I knew my life was not worth living. I was living in an abusive home where there never seemed to be lasting happiness. My two best friends told me they didn’t want to be friends with me anymore because I thought I was too good for them, which made no sense but left me feeling completely alone. As the battles in my house continued to rage, I went to my bedroom. I was so scared. I knelt down and called to the one person I still knew I had. I pleaded to my Father in Heaven to somehow take me home. I said, ‘Father, I need to be with you. I need to feel your arms around me.’ As I sat crying and quietly waiting in that desperate moment for Heavenly Father’s arms to reach down, I heard a voice, ‘Put your arms around yourself, and I will be with you.’ As I followed that prompting, I felt Heavenly Father’s love assure me that I could go on, and I would go on and I was not alone.”

Janette Hales Beckham, *Ensign*, Nov. 1997 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1997], 76.

12 Many years ago, Joseph Smith, a mere boy between fourteen and fifteen years of age, declared that, in answer to prayer, he received a revelation from God.... The result of this declaration was his immediate ostracism from the religious world. In a very short time he found himself standing alone.

Alone--and unacquainted with the learning and philosophy of his day!

Alone—and unschooled in the arts and sciences!

Alone—with no philosopher to instruct him, no minister to guide him!

Thus he was left alone to embark upon the ocean of religious thought....

It would appear, then, that though he seemed alone, he was alone only as was Moses on Sinai; as Jesus on the Mount of Olives. As with the Master, so with the prophet, his instructions came not through man-made channels but direct from God, the source of all intelligence. He says: “I am a rough stone. The sound of the hammer and chisel were never heard on me until the Lord took me in hand. I desire the learning and wisdom of heaven alone” (*History of the Church*, 5:423).

Teachings of Presidents of the Church—David O. McKay [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003], 96-97.

I testify that we do not walk alone.

13 Stan, a dear friend of mine, was taken seriously ill and rendered partially paralyzed. He had been robust in health, athletic in build, and active in many pursuits. Now he was unable to walk or to stand. His wheelchair was his home. The finest of physicians had cared for him, and prayers of family and friends had been offered in a spirit of hope and trust. Yet Stan continued to lie in the confinement of his bed at the university hospital. He despaired.

Late one afternoon I was swimming at the Deseret Gym, gazing at the ceiling while backstroking width after width. Silently, but ever so clearly, there came to my mind the thought: “Here you swim almost effortlessly, while your friend Stan languishes in his hospital bed, unable to move.” I felt the prompting: “Get to the hospital and give him a blessing.”

I ceased my swimming, dressed, and hurried to Stan’s room at the hospital. His bed was empty. A nurse said he was in his wheelchair at the swimming pool, preparing for therapy. I hurried to the area, and there was Stan, all alone, at the edge of the deeper portion of the pool. We greeted one another and returned to his room, where a priesthood blessing was provided.

Slowly but surely, strength and movement returned to Stan’s legs. First he could stand on faltering feet. Then he learned once again to walk—step by step. Today one would not know that Stan had lain so close to death and with no hope of recovery.

Frequently Stan speaks in Church meetings and tells of the goodness of the Lord to him. To some he reveals the dark thoughts of depression which engulfed him that afternoon as he sat in his wheelchair at the edge of the pool, sentenced, it seemed, to a life of despair. He tells how he pondered the alternative. It would be so easy to propel the hated wheelchair into the silent water of the deep pool. Life would then be over. But at that precise moment he saw me, his friend. That day Stan learned literally that we do not walk alone. I, too, learned a lesson that day: Never, never, never postpone following a prompting.

Thomas S. Monson, in Conference Report, Apr. 1985 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985], 87.

14 The Lord has been watching over us from the hour of our birth.
Journal of Discourses, 22:233, 26 June 1881; as quoted in *The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, ed. by G. Homer Durham [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946], 263.

Helaman 10:4-5

15 *Praying for personal desires*

The Lord once told me that what I asked for I should have. I have been afraid to ask God to kill my enemies, lest some of them should, peradventure, repent.

Joseph Smith, *Teachings*, 340.

16 When we pray unto the Father in the name of Jesus for specific personal things, we should feel in the very depths of our souls that we are willing to subject our petitions to the will of our Father in heaven. “Thy will, O God, thy will be done” should never be lip service only. “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (3 Nephi 13:10), is the pattern given by Jesus in the

Lord's prayer, and emphasized in Gethsemane when in blood-sweat and agony he prayed, "...Not my will, but thine be done." (Luke 22:42.)

This principle we learned in our home through a rather impressive experience. During the early years of our married life, my wife and I intensely desired what we considered to be a particular blessing. We set about through fasting and prayer to obtain it. We considered many of the scriptures which seemed to make a blanket promise that "...Whatever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matt.21:22.) We asked, we believed, we thought we had faith, but though we fasted often and prayed fervently, the years rolled by without bringing us the desired answer to our prayers. Finally we concluded that we had not fully understood; that we were not giving proper consideration to the will of the Lord. Rather were we concentrating our faith and prayers upon receiving the particular thing which by predetermination we had set our hearts upon. We had to reconsider the conditions of the promise. We found that Jesus had stated them in full to the Nephites as follows: "...Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, *which is right*, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you," (3 Nephi 18:20), and to this generation thus, "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name it shall be given unto you, *that is expedient for you*." (D&C 88:64.) We had to learn to be as earnest in praying, "If it be thy will" as we were when presenting our personal appeals.

We need have no fear that our well-being will not be served by such an approach. It is God's work and glory "... to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.) I think I am within the mark when I say that the obtaining of eternal life by each individual person, including specifically you and me, is part of the work of God and adds to his glory. His will concerning us and our affairs cannot be other than for our advancement toward immortality and eternal life. Submitting to his will in every instance will be for our own good. And this we must do in faith if we would have peace and happiness in our present state of imperfect living.

The time will come when we shall know the will of God before we ask. Then everything for which we pray will be "expedient." Everything for which we ask will be "right." That will be when as a result of righteous living, we shall so enjoy the companionship of the spirit that he will dictate what we ask. On this point the Lord has said, "He that asketh in the Spirit asketh according to the will of God; wherefore it is done even as he asketh" (D&C 46:30), and again, "And if ye are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done. But know this, it shall be given you what you shall ask." (D&C 50:29-30.) Nephi, the son of Helaman, so lived. He with unwearyingness declared the word of God. He sought not his life but the will of God, and to keep his commandments continually, and to him the Lord said, "... all things shall be done unto thee according to thy work, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will." (Helaman 10:5.)

Marion G. Romney, CR, Oct. 1944, pp.55-56.

17

In 1967 Sister Ida Romney suffered a serious stroke. The doctors told then-Elder Romney that the damage from the hemorrhage was severe. They offered to keep her alive by artificial means but did not recommend it. The family braced for the worst. Brother Romney confided to those closest to him that in spite of his anguished, personal yearning for Ida's restored health and

continued companionship, above all he wanted “the Lord’s will to be done and to take what he needed to take without whimpering.”

As the days wore, Sister Romney became less responsive. She had, of course, been administered to, but Elder Romney was “reluctant to counsel the Lord about the matter.” Because of his earlier unsuccessful experience of praying that he and Ida might have children, he knew that he could never ask in prayer for something that was not in harmony with the will of the Lord. He fasted that he might know how to show the Lord he had faith and would accept God’s will in their lives. He wanted to make sure he had done all he could do. But she continued to fail.

One evening in a particularly depressed state, with Ida unable to speak or recognize him, Brother Romney went home and turned, as he always had, to the scriptures in an effort to commune with the Lord. He picked up the Book of Mormon and continued where he had left off the night before. He had been reading in Helaman about the prophet Nephi, who had been falsely accused and unfairly charged with sedition. Following a miraculous deliverance from his accusers, Nephi returned home pondering the things he had experienced. As he did so he heard a voice.

Although Marion Romney had read that story many times before, it now struck him this night as a personal revelation. The words of the scripture so touch his heart that for the first time in weeks he felt he had tangible peace. It seemed as if the Lord were speaking directly to him. The scripture read: “Blessed art thou, ... for those things which thou hast done; ... thou hast not... sought thine own life, but hast sought my will, and to keep my commandments. And now, because thou hast done this with such unweariness, behold, I will bless thee forever; and I will make thee mighty in word and in deed, in faith and in works; yea, even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will.” (Helaman 10:4-5.)

There was the answer. He had sought only to know and obey the will of the Lord, and the Lord had spoken. He fell to his knees and poured out his heart, and as he concluded his prayer with the phrase “Thy will be done,” he either felt or actually heard a voice that said, “It is not contrary to my will that Ida be healed.”

Brother Romney rose to his feet quickly. It was past two o’clock in the morning, but he knew what he must do. Quickly he put on his tie and coat, then went out into the night to visit Ida in the hospital. He arrived shortly before three o’clock. His wife’s condition was unchanged. She did not stir as he placed his hands upon her pale forehead. With undeviating faith, he invoked the power of the priesthood in her behalf. He pronounced a simple blessing and then uttered the incredible promise that she would recover her health and her mental powers and would yet perform “a great mission” upon the earth.

Even though he did not doubt, Elder Romney was astonished to see Ida’s eyes open as he concluded the blessing. Somewhat stunned by all that had happened, he sat down on the edge of the bed only to hear his wife’s frail voice for the first time in months. She said, “For goodness sake, Marion, what are you doing here?” He didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. He said, “Ida,

how are you?” With that flash of humor so characteristic of both of them, she replied, “Compared to what, Marion? Compared to what?”

Ida Romney began her recovery from that very moment, soon left her hospital bed, and lived to see her husband sustained as a member of the First Presidency of the Church, “a great mission upon the earth” indeed.

F. Burton Howard, *Marion G. Romney: His Life and Faith* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988], pp.137-42.; Jeffrey R. Holland and Patricia T. Holland, *On Earth As It Is in Heaven* [1989], 133-135.

Helaman 10:7

18 *Sealing power*

The power of Elijah is the sealing power of the priesthood by which things that are bound or loosed on earth are bound or loosed in heaven. (D&C 128:8-18).

Guide to the Scriptures, “Elijah”.

19 Whenever the fulness of the gospel is on the earth, the Lord has agents to whom he gives power to bind on earth and seal eternally in the heavens. (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; Hela. 10:3; D&C 132:46-49.) This *sealing power* [was] restored in this dispensation by Elijah the Prophet (D&C 2:1-3; 110:13-16)

Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 683.

20 The Lord conferred authority on some of his chosen servants and gave them exceptional powers.... In this manner Elijah obtained the keys of power in the priesthood to raise the dead, heal the sick, close the heavens that it did not rain only by his word, and for more than three years there was no rain, and moreover he had the power to call down fire from heaven to destroy the enemies of the Church....

The Lord gave similar authority to Nephi, son of Helaman, who likewise had authority to close the heavens and perform other mighty works, simply by his faith and the commandments from the Lord [see Helaman 10:7]. This wonderful power has been bestowed on but a few of the servants of the Lord.

Answers to Gospel Questions, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith jr., 5 vols. [1957-66], 4:95.

21 Peter was to hold the sealing power, that authority which carried the power to bind or seal on earth or loose on earth and it would be so in the heavens. Those keys belong to the President of the Church—to the prophet, seer, and revelator. That sacred sealing power is with the Church now. Nothing is regarded with more sacred contemplation by those who know the significance of this authority. Nothing is more closely held. There are relatively few men who have been delegated this sealing power upon the earth at any given time—in each temple are brethren who have been given the sealing power. No one can get it except from the prophet, seer and revelator and President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Boyd K. Packer, “The Holy Temple,” *Ensign*, February 1995, p. 36.

Helaman 10:4-722 *Calling & Election Made Sure*

Here the Lord declared four important truths which indicate that this complex and sacred experience was the ultimate encounter with deity that both Peter and the Prophet Joseph Smith encouraged all the Saints to strive for:

1. Nephi was blessed forever because of his unwearrying loyalty and attention to the Lord's will without regard for personal desires.
2. All things which Nephi desired for himself would be brought to pass.
3. The Lord formally acknowledged His identity in direct relationship to Nephi's.
4. Nephi would receive the sealing powers of the priesthood including control over the elements and power "to bind and loose" on earth and in heaven (power to seal eternal relationship just as Elijah had).

Studies in Scripture, "Nephi's Ultimate Encounter with Deity: Thoughts on Helaman 10," p. 122 by Andres C. Skinner.

23 St. Paul exhorts us to make our calling and election sure... This principle ought (in its proper place) to be taught, for God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what he will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 149*

24 After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized for the remission of his sins and receives the Holy Ghost (by the laying on of hands), which is the first Comforter, then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and living by every word of God, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, thou shall be exalted. When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and election made sure, then it will be his privilege to receive the other comforter which the Lord hath promised the Saints. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 150.*

25 The Apostle Peter also implied the need for a constant, steady course of progressive righteousness when he encouraged all of us to make our calling and election sure:

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that he shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fail. (2 Peter 1:5-10).

26 ...The Lord explicitly stated: "thou are Nephi, and I am God" (Hel 10:6). Since it is reasonable to assume that Nephi knew who he was, and since we know that of the Lord speaks no words in idleness, such a statement must have profound meaning. It appears to be an acknowledgement, in the presence of diving witnesses (the text says "angels"), of a special

relationship of mutual love and respect between the Lord and Nephi. The Lord was claiming him as his servant and part of his spiritual posterity. It was also formal acknowledgement of a special covenant which the Lord was confirming with Nephi.

Studies in Scriptures, “Nephi’s Ultimate Encounter with Deity: Thoughts on Helaman 10,” p. 123 by Andrew Skinner.

27 ...Nephi also received the sealing powers of the Holy Priesthood. We know, therefore, that Nephi had entered into a state of sanctification since modern revelation confirms that those who are endowed with power and taught from on high are those who are first sanctified (D&C 43:16). This marvelous promise is made to all the Saints of God who become sanctified:

Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him, for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will. (D&C 88:68).

This verse undoubtedly has reference to the Second Comforter. It will be remembered that Joseph Smith taught the following concerning the Second Comforter:

Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and This is the sum and substance of the whole matter: that when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him, from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; and this is the state and place the ancient Saints arrived at when they had such glorious visions—Isaiah, Ezekiel, John upon the Isle of Patmos, St. Paul in the three heavens, and all the Saints who held communion with the general assembly and the Church of the Firstborn, (*TPJS* 150-151).

Ibid. p. 124.

Helaman 10:12

Is Prompt Obedience Important?

Abraham “rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took... Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering... and went unto the place of which God had told him” (Genesis 22:3).

How often do Church members arise early in the morning to do the will of the Lord? How often do we say, “Yes, I will have home evening with my family, but the children are so young now, I will start when they are older”?... “Yes, I will obey the commandment to store food and to help others, but just now I have neither the time nor the money to spare; I will obey later”? Oh, foolish people! While we procrastinate, the harvest will be over and we will not be saved. Now is the time to follow Abraham’s example; now is the time to repent; now is the time for prompt obedience.

Spencer W. Kimball, *Teachings*, 174.

Helaman 10:13-15*Not withstanding that great Miracle*

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “miracles are the fruits of faith” (*History of the Church*, 5:355). Some people seek faith through miracles; however, that is contrary to the order of heaven. Faith precedes the miracle—it does not follow it. Nephi’s miraculous identification of Seantum as the murderer of the chief judge came as a result of the prophet’s faith. Sadly, the majority of people who witnessed this miracle were living without faith. The miracle failed to convert them because “faith cometh not by signs [or miracles], but signs follow those that believe” (D&C 63:9). The necessary change in their lives had to begin with “faith unto repentance” (Alma 34:15-17). Unfortunately, these people who had witnessed a great miracle continued to harden their hearts, and instead of repenting, they persecuted Nephi.

BYU Book of Mormon Student Manual 2003, p. 276.