

Helaman 7

Prelude to Helaman 7

1 Peace is the fruit of righteousness. It cannot be bought with money, and cannot be traded nor bartered. It must be earned. The wealthy often spend much of their gains in a bid for peace, only to find that it is not for sale. But the poorest as well as the richest may have it in abundance if the total price is paid. Those who abide the laws and live the Christ-like life may have peace and other kindred blessings, principal among which are exaltation and eternal life. They include also blessings for this life.

Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969], 363-64.

2 That men have enjoyed peace, happiness, and continual progress is, therefore, not because God has failed to make known the way by which these blessings could be had. It is because men have refused to obey the revealed laws upon which these blessings are predicated.

The burden of all the prophets, from Adam to our present prophet, has been to persuade men to look to God and live. Over and over again in every dispensation they have warned of calamities pending because of man's corrupt and sinful ways.

Cain's curse was brought on by his own willful rejection of the counsel of God. The antediluvians brought on the flood in which they perished by rejecting Noah, who taught and pleaded with them for one hundred twenty years. The Jaradites pursued their rebellious course to their utter destruction in defiance of the teachings and warnings of their prophets. Following the same course, the Nephites suffered great destruction at the time of Christ's crucifixion.

All of this endless tragedy, carnage, and sorrow could have been avoided. All of these peoples could have existed in peace and prosperity had they been willing to look to God.
Marion G. Romney, *Look to God and Live*, pp. 8-9.

3 Satan is the epitome of pride, and it is this fact that is at the core of what Lewis is trying to tell us: "It was through Pride that the devil became the devil" (Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p.110). Lewis has also pointed out that "the devil is a liar," just as the above passage in the book of Moses has stated. Thus the ugly truth is made plain: pride and dishonesty go together because those who possess pride are not being honest about their true standing before God and their fellowmen. As Terry Glaspey says in summarizing the views of Lewis: "Pride at its root, is self-centeredness. It is the desire that everything and everyone revolve around our own perceived needs and wants, the refusal to see things through the eyes of others. Pride is ...a purely spiritual sin, birthed in Hell itself. It is the sin that made Satan who he is, for he refused to bow to God's rightful authority as Creator. When we are proud, we cut ourselves off from God and the others" (Glaspey, *Not a Tame Lion*, pp. 210-11).

Andrew C. Skinner and Robert L. Millet, *C. S. Lewis, the Man and His Message: An LDS Perspective* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1999], 45-47.

Helaman 7:54 *Condemning righteousness*

Wickedness and righteousness have no tolerance for each other. Like light and darkness, they cannot share the same space at the same time. If light is to shine, darkness must flee; if darkness is to reign, the light must give way. Each seeks the victory over the other. Thus it is that the truly pure, honest, and righteous cannot avoid the bile, spleen, and gall of the wicked. To be above reproach is to assure that you will be reproached. Nephi son of Lehi, warned that in the last days men would “revile against that which is good,” saying that it was of “no worth.” The adversary, he warned, would “rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good.” (2 Nephi 28:16, 20.)

Millet and McConkie, *Doctrinal commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol 3, pp.367-368.

Helaman 7:6

5 Why does destruction occur so quickly? Because the people lose the Spirit and fail to teach their children the doctrine of righteousness and to worship Jesus Christ. The rising generation will not know the history and the doctrine unless they are taught. And if not taught the doctrine, children are unprepared to cope with life’s greatest problems. People need a reason not to commit sin; the gospel gives us that reason.

Robert J. Matthews

Helaman 7:86 *If my days could have been in those days*

Wishing one had lived in another age, though sometimes understandable, is not usually helpful. One person in Book of Mormon times wrote, “Yea, if my days could have been in those days, then would my soul have had joy.” (Hel. 7:8.) Yet that leader came to see how God’s call to serve in a particular period of time is as much a part of His call as to perform certain duties during our days. Thus, youth of the Church, by Divine appointment, these are your days! You will live in a time of prophecy in fulfillment, of history converging, of special promises, of stark contrasts, and of blessed reassurances.

Neal A Maxwell, “These Are Your Days,” *New Era*, January-February 1985, p. 4.

Helaman 7:10-117 *Pour out soul*

Prayer is made up of heart throbs and the righteous yearnings of the soul, of supplication based on the realization of need, of contrition and pure desire. If there lives a man who has never really prayed, that man is a being apart from the order of the divine in human nature, a stranger in the family of God’s children. Prayer is for the uplifting of the suppliant. God without our prayers would be God; but we without prayer cannot be admitted to the kingdom of God.

James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 238.

Helaman 7:17

- 8 The two words “repent” and “turn” come from the same Hebrew word: “shuwb.” It means to turn, to go back home, to turn away.

See James Strong, *Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, 13.

Helaman 7:17

- 9 “*Why has he forsaken me?*”

God forsakes man in the sense that he removes his Holy Spirit and thus leaves him to himself, spiritually unattended.

Ibid, p. 369

Helaman 7:20

- 10 In this land, as well as in other lands, men have forgotten God. They are not worshiping him with all their might, mind, and strength. They are not worshiping him at all. I am speaking now of the general run of mankind. Instead of keeping his commandments they are violating them. More people disregard the commandments than keep them.... This rebellion against God—for that is what it is—is not confined to those who do not profess religion or even to belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, for the evil has crept within the borders of the Church itself, and there are many who call themselves Latter-day Saints who are guilty of these offenses.

Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols, Ed. Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 3:25.

Temporary success may be nothing more than postponed failure.

- 11 K. Douglas Bassett, *Latter Day Commentary on BOM*, p.381.

Helaman 7:21

- 12 When attention is shifted from the covenant to “get[ting] gain,” obtaining the “praise of men,” and acquiring ‘gold and silver,’ of necessity the covenant is sacrificed upon the altar of vanity, and the God of this world becomes the object of worship. Whereas previously the surrendering of self in the honoring of the covenant constantly brought a renewal of strength, now the insatiable appetite for self-aggrandizement not only robs the covenant breaker of strength but also destroys both his character and his soul. Such had become the plight of many within the nation of the Nephites.

Millet and McConkie, *Commentary of BOM*, Vol 3, p. 370.

Helaman 7:24

- 13 “*More righteous than you*”

Those who do not profess to know anything of the Lord are far better off than we are, unless we live our religion, for we who know the Master’s will and do it not, will be beaten with many stripes; while they who do not know the master’s will and do it not will be beaten with few stripes.

Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 16:111-12.

Heleman 7:24

14 **He will lengthen their days]** The children of Israel under Moses, like the seed of Lehi, witnessed many miracles in their behalf. God declared: “Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that he may be strong, and go and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it; and that ye may prolong your days in the land, which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land that floweth with milk and honey” (Deuteronomy 11:8-9). As obedience and possession go hand in hand, so the proverb declares: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of this life shall be increased.” (Proverbs 9:10-11.)

God is not without a purpose in choosing a people as his own and giving them a particular land of inheritance. They are to stand as a witness of his goodness and of his holiness. Should they choose to rebel against that purpose, they cannot expect to be strong nor to abide long upon that land he has given them. “Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many” (Proverbs 4:10).

Increase their seed] Righteous posterity has ever been the crowning blessing of the faithful. Because of his faithfulness Abraham received promises concerning his seed that were to continue both in the world and out of the world. Indeed, he was promised that they would be “as innumerable as the stars,” or if you were to count the “sand upon the seashore ye could not number them” (D&C 132:30). For those who enter into the new and everlasting covenant of marriage, “this promise is yours also, because ye are of Abraham” (D&C 132:31).

Millet & McConkie, *BOM Commentary*, p. 371 Vol 3.

Conclusion to Helaman 7

Frances J. Grund, a European by birth and a keen observer of American life in the nineteenth century, was impressed with the morality of early U.S. citizens, but also spoke of the danger that could come to our nation if the majority of the people departed from integrity, honesty, and morality:

I consider the domestic virtue of the Americans as the principal source of all their other qualities. It acts as a promoter of industry, as a stimulus to enterprise, and as the most powerful restrainer of public vice. It reduces life to its simplest elements, and makes happiness less dependent on precarious circumstances; it ensures the proper education of children, and acts, by the force of example, on the morals of the rising generation: in short, it does more for the preservation of peace and good order, than all the laws enacted for that purpose; and is a better guarantee for the permanency of the American government, than any written instrument, the constitution itself not excepted.

No government could be established on the same principle as that of the United States, with a different code or morals. The American Constitution is remarkable for its simplicity; but it can only suffice a people habitually correct in their actions, and would be utterly inadequate to the wants of a different nation. Change the domestic habits of the Americans, their religious devotion, and their high respect for morality, and it will not be necessary to change a single letter in the Constitution in order to vary the whole form of their government.

The circumstances being altered, the same causes would no longer produce the same effects; and it is more than probable, that the disparity which would then exist between the laws and the habits of those whom they are destined to govern, would not only make a different government desirable, but absolutely necessary, to preserve the nation from ruin. (Grund 72-72).

Robert J. Matthews, *Studies in Scripturers*, "Pattern of Apostasy in BOM," p. 74