

CHAPTER SIX

Second Gathering of the House of Israel

The first gathering through Moses eventually concluded with the Lord scattering the children of Israel abroad because of their rebellion against him. Yet this scattered condition was not to be permanent: "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." (3 Ne. 22:8; Isa. 54:8.) The restoration of the House of Israel in the latter days has been anticipated by all the holy prophets. Surely every blessing promised to Abraham's seed will come to fruition. However, the promised restoration is not an event, it is a process. Book of Mormon history appears to contain many comparisons to important elements of that process, including the chief role that the United States of America has played and will yet play.

The prophets foretold that the gospel would be restored first among the Gentiles; and then, after it had gone forth among the Gentiles, it would be taken to the House of Israel. (Appendix H briefly discusses the feasible modern identity of the Gentiles and the House of Israel.) We live at a time when the first half of this process has already taken place: the gospel has been restored and has spread in large measure among the Gentile nations. The segment of Book of Mormon history that seems to parallel this modern era is the period described between the books of Omni and Helaman.

During this episode, the Nephites are closely comparable to the modern Gentiles, and the city of Zarahemla parallels the United States of America. Some of the major events mirrored are the Pilgrims' colonization of America, the Revolutionary War, the establishment of the Constitution, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the rise of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the early Saints' persecution, the Civil War, the birth of Communism, World Wars I and II, and the coming of the Space Age.

The fact that these latter-day events appear to be paralleled in Book of Mormon history suggests their far-reaching impact. By applying the scriptures' commentary on ancient events, we can obtain a more divine perspective regarding their modern counterparts. As we make these sometimes sobering associations, we begin to see more clearly why the modern prophets of God have admonished us the way they have.

Establishment of a Free Land

The Restoration did not begin with Joseph Smith's first vision. That paramount event could not have happened if the way had not been prepared. Jesus Christ taught that it was "wisdom in the Father that [the Gentiles] should be established in this land, and be *set up as a free people* by the power of the Father, *that these things might come forth*." (3 Ne. 21:4.) The Renaissance and the establishment of the United States of America with its guarantees of freedom were essential precursors. As such they were a part of the restoration.³¹

Led by the Lord to a New Land

Looking at the history recorded in the book of Omni, we see a marked concentration of parallels to the birth of our nation. The record states that king Mosiah took "as many as would hearken unto the voice of the Lord," departed out of the land of Nephi, and was led by the Lord to the land of Zarahemla. (Omni 1:12,13.) This resembles the way Columbus was moved upon by the Spirit of the Lord,³² sailed to America, and inaugurated a flow of people seeking religious freedom in this new land of opportunity. (1 Ne. 13:12,13.)

Interestingly, the parallel between the destiny of the city or land of Zarahemla and that of the United States of America generally holds true not only in this instance, but throughout the remaining Nephite history.

When they journeyed to Zarahemla, king Mosiah's people carried with them the plates of brass "which contained a record of the Jews." (Omni 1:14.) This reflects the way the early colonizers of America carried the Bible with them from the Old World. (1 Ne. 13:20,23.) Both groups of settlers were also religiously inclined--being "admonished continually by the word of God...." (Omni 1:13.)

Upon arriving in Zarahemla, king Mosiah's people discovered previous inhabitants who had experience "many wars and serious contentions..., had fallen by the sword from time to time," and "had dwindled in unbelief." (Omni 1:17-19; 1 Ne. 12:21,22.) This description also matches the American Indians at the time the Pilgrims arrived.

Then "in the days of king Benjamin, a serious war [broke out] between the Nephites and the Lamanites...." (Omni 1:24.) In our Revolutionary war, we also had to wrench our independence from those who supposed the right to govern belonged to them. (2 Ne. 5:3.) Both assaults, modern and ancient, came from a motherland and were successfully

³¹Joseph Fielding Smith, *Progress of Man*, pp. 196-237.

³²Columbus declared, "Our Lord unlocked my mind, sent me upon the sea, and gave me fire for the deed. Those who heard of my enterprise called it foolish, mocked me, and laughed. But who can doubt but that the Holy Ghost inspired me?" (Jacob Wasserman, *Columbus, Don Quixote of the Seas*, pp. 19-20.)

repelled because the power of God was with those fighting for their independence. (W Mm 1:13,14; compare 1 Ne. 13:17,18,19.)³³

Renaissance

During the reign of king Benjamin, another paramount event took place. Through his instrumentality, the people of Nephi experienced a "mighty change of heart." (Mosiah 5:2.) They became desirous to follow God's every word. (5:5.) This transformation signaled an exodus from the relative period of darkness through which they had recently passed.

The latter-day Renaissance produced this same sort of transition. The world, once shrouded in the darkness of ignorance, was illuminated by the light of truth as the Spirit of the Lord began to be poured out upon all men. (Joel 2:28.) Many people's hearts were turned to God, and a generation primed to receive the restored gospel was prepared. As the changed Nephites had "great views of that which [was to] come" (Mosiah 5:3),³⁴ so did many latter-day Reformers look forward with great anticipation to the promised "restitution of all things" (Acts 3:21).³⁵

Establishment of the Constitution

We now come to one of the most important comparisons for our time: the abundant similarities between the Constitution of the United States and the laws set up by king Mosiah. These similarities provide another witness that the Constitution is based on eternal principles. They also provide us with an important warning as we consider what happened to the Nephites when they began to alter and trample these laws under their feet.³⁶

Comparing what the Book of Mormon says about the laws of Mosiah and what the Doctrine and Covenants says about the Constitution reveals profound likenesses between the two. First and foremost, both were given of God through the instrumentality of wise

³³Charles Pinckney, South Carolina delegate to the Constitutional Conventions, acknowledged, "...The super-intending Hand of Providence...miraculously carried us through the war...." (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, p. 5.)

³⁴The things that they had great views of could have included such prophesies as the coming of Jesus Christ to their people. Nevertheless, there is a possibility that they were also looking forward to the time that Christ's church would be formally organized among them. There was no mention in the record of a church among the Nephites until Alma established the Church of God.

³⁵Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Roger Williams, for example, were three prominent Reformers. Roger Williams, paster of the oldest Baptist Church in America, resigned his position because, said he, "There is no regularly constituted church on the earth, nor any person authorized to administer any church ordinance; nor can there be until new apostles are sent by the Great Head of the Church, for *whose coming I am seeking*." (David O. McKay, CR, Oct. 1966, p. 86.)

³⁶This is addressed in Chapter Seven in the "Corruption of the Government; Rise of Secret Combinations" section.

men. (Hel. 4:22; Mosiah 29:25; compare D&C 101:77,80.)³⁷ Second, both were based not on evolving but on eternal, unchanging laws or principles, such as the fact that all men are created equal. (Mosiah 29:25,32; compare D&C 101:77.) Third, each was given to protect the inalienable rights of every man, that they might be free. (Mosiah 29:32; compare D&C 101:77; 98:5; 134:5.) Fourth, both were designed to safeguard the moral agency of man, that each individual might be accountable for his own sins and not place responsibility on anyone else for his iniquity. (Mosiah 29:30,31; compare D&C 101:78.) Fifth, each governmental system was based on the *law* being supreme, not a ruling few or even the majority. The representatives were chosen by the voice of the people, but those leaders were to rule according to the law. This is a republican form of government--not strictly democratic. (Mosiah 29:25,26,39; Alma 4:16; Hel. 5:3; compare D&C 98:6; 101:77; 134:3.) Fifth, in both instances the people were admonished to choose honest and wise men to be their leaders. (Mosiah 23:14; compare D&C 98:10; 134:3.)

Besides correlating with principles set forth in the Doctrine and Covenants, the laws of Mosiah also reflect the five major provisions of the Constitution as set forth by President Ezra Taft Benson.³⁸

The first provision is that sovereignty lies in the people themselves; the powers that the government holds are derived from the consent of the governed. Similarly, under the reign of the judges--the system Mosiah set up--the people did "appoint judges, to judge them according to [their] law." (Mosiah 29:39.)

Dividing the powers of government between separate branches (the legislative, the executive, and the judicial) whereby each might be checked and balanced is the second provision of the Constitution. The system set up by Mosiah also called for the separation of powers with a check on each. There were higher and lower judges. The lower judges were to keep the higher judges under proper restraint, and vice versa. (Mosiah 29:28,29.)

The third provision is that the powers of any single branch of government should be specifically limited. This was designed to control man's tendency to exercise unrighteous dominion when given authority. (D&C 121:39)³⁹ Mosiah also suggested that this was why he restructured the Nephite government. He said, "...Because all men are not just it is not expedient that ye should have a king or kings to rule over you." (Mosiah 29:16.)

The principle of representation, in which an official is elected by the people to represent them, is the fourth provision of the Constitution. Similarly, under the reign of the judges, the judges were chosen by the voice of the people. (Mosiah 29:11; compare D&C 134:3.)

³⁷After the Constitution was framed, James Madison acknowledged, "It is impossible for the man of pious reflection not to perceive in it a finger of that Almighty hand which has been so frequently and signally extended to our relief in the critical stages of the revolution." (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, p. 5.)

³⁸*The Constitution: A Heavenly Banner*, Deseret Book, Salt Lake City, 1986, pp. 18-23.

³⁹Thomas Jefferson said, "What has destroyed liberty and the rights of man in every government which has ever existed under the sun? The generalizing and concentrating all cares and powers into one body." (Ezra Taft Benson, *Banner*, p. 21.)

The fifth provision is that the Constitution is designed to work only with "a moral and religious people."⁴⁰ "It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other," declared the first vice president, John Adams.⁴¹ Mormon commented that an iniquitous people "[can] not be governed by the law nor justice, save it [be] to their destruction." (Hel. 5:3.) Anciently, Mosiah set forth this stipulation in the government established. He cautioned his people, "If the time comes that the voice of the people doth chose iniquity, then is the time that the judgments of God will come upon you; yea, then is the time he will visit you with great destruction even as he has hitherto visited this land." (Mosiah 29:27.) Moroni extended this warning to us: "And this [record] cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God--that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fullness come, that ye may not bring down the fullness of the wrath of God upon you as the inhabitants of the land have hitherto done." (Ether 2:11.)

Unfortunately, we have arrived at a day when the Constitution and the freedoms it shelters are in great jeopardy.⁴² Knowing the sanctity of the Constitution, we have an important obligation to mankind. "...The God of heaven sent some of His choicest spirits to lay the foundation of this government," said President Benson.⁴³ Then passing the hallowed responsibility on to us, he continued, "He has now sent other choice spirits to help preserve it."⁴⁴ President David O. McKay said, "Next to being one in worshiping God, there is nothing in this world upon which this Church should be more united than in upholding and defending the Constitution of the United States."⁴⁵

As we presently see our freedom being chipped away,⁴⁶ we are encouraged by the recollection that God sustains those who fight for freedom. It was so with the birth of our nation. George Washington said, "No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men, more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation

⁴⁰John Adams, as quoted in Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, p. 6.

⁴¹*Ibid.*

⁴²President Benson recently said, "We are fast approaching that moment prophesied by Joseph Smith when he said: 'Even this nation will be on the very verge of crumbling to pieces and tumbling to the ground, and when the Constitution is upon the brink of ruin, this people will be the staff upon which the nation shall lean, and they shall bear the Constitution away from the very verge of destruction.'" (*Banner*, p. 28.)

⁴³*Ensign*, Nov. 1987, p. 7. Orson Pratt {Hyde?}, clarifying this oft-quoted statement, stated, "I believe he said something like this--that the time would come when the Constitution and the country would be in danger of an overthrow; and said he, If the Constitution be saved at all, it will be by the Elders of this Church." (JD 6:151.)

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵Ezra Taft Benson, CR, Oct., 2, 1966, p. 124.

⁴⁶See "Corruption of Government; Rise of Secret Combinations" section in Chapter Seven.

seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency."⁴⁷ The correlating scenes in Book of Mormon history, in which the Nephites discovered and established Zarahemla as a free land, also evidenced the hand of Providence.

The coming forth of the Founding Fathers and their inspired form of government was, as President Benson said, "the necessary great prologue leading to the restoration of the gospel."⁴⁸ A precursor relationship of sorts can also be found in Book of Mormon history. King Mosiah (the architect of the Nephites' inspired laws of government) was the one who "granted unto Alma [who is comparable to Joseph Smith] that he might establish churches throughout all the land of Zarahemla...." (Mosiah 25:19.)⁴⁹

As the land of Zarahemla was a beacon in ancient times (Mosiah 29:44), the United States of America "is a nation with a great mission for the benefit and blessing of liberty-loving people everywhere."⁵⁰ We, like the Nephites, have "exceedingly rejoiced because of the liberty which [has] been granted unto [us]...." (Mosiah 29:39.)

Restoration of the Church

With the Lord having prepared the way, Joseph Smith was able to restore His church. Looking to Book of Mormon history for a possible parallel to the events surrounding the gospel's restoration, we find that the account toward the end of the book of Mosiah contains important resemblances. The coming forth of the Jaredite records mirrors the coming forth of the Book of Mormon in the latter days. The establishment of the church of Christ by Alma reflects the restoration of Christ's Church in the latter days by Joseph Smith. The subsequent persecutions and missionary labors of both eras are another similarity.

Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon

On closer inspection, we find several significant comparisons between the description of the Jaredite records--which came forth among the Nephites--and the Book of Mormon. Both records were written upon "plates of gold" (Mosiah 28:11; compare JS-H 1:34) and translated by a seer (Mosiah 28:16; compare 2 Ne. 3:7) through the means of the Urim and Thummim (Mosiah 28:13,14; compare JS-H 1:35) by the gift and power of God (Mosiah 8:13,16; compare Mormon 8:14,16). Furthermore, both were a record of the former inhabitants of the land who had fallen because of transgression. (Omni 1:21,22; compare JS-H 1:34; D&C 20:9.) Similar to the

⁴⁷Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, p. 5,6.

⁴⁸Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, p. 4.

⁴⁹King Mosiah had not yet created the new form of government when Alma established the church. But the record indicates that he was a righteous monarch, devoted to protecting the God-given rights of those whom he governed. He epitomized the principles of virtuous government that he later framed.

⁵⁰Ezra Taft Benson, CR, Oct. 12, 1958, p. 102.

Book of Mormon, these records that came among the Nephites were not of little significance. Indeed, "it is expedient that all people should know the things which are written" in both of them. (Mosiah 28:19; compare 2 Ne. 33:13,14; Moro. 10:27,28.) We cannot "learn to be more wise" than those who inhabited the land before us unless we know the reason for their fall. (Morm. 9:31.)

Interestingly, just as Book of Mormon history seems to parallel our day, Jaredite history apparently paralleled the Nephites' day. The sort of comparisons which we are now making between Book of Mormon history and our history (and prophecy) can be made between Jaredite and Nephite history. (Appendix D briefly enumerates many of these.)

The Nephites were not ignorant of the repetitive nature of history. "They were desirous beyond measure to know concerning those people who had been destroyed." (Mosiah 28:12.) More particularly, they were "desirous to know the *cause* of their destruction." (Mosiah 8:12.) Like them we study these ancient records and derive every lesson we can to avoid the pitfalls of the past and emulate their successes. No wonder Limhi considered that a seer who brings forth such ancient records "is greater than a prophet," and Ammon remarked that a seer "becometh a *great benefit* to his fellow beings." (8:15,18; compare 2 Ne. 3:7.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith

Mosiah translated the Jaredite records for the Nephites, reminding us of Joseph Smith, who translated the Book of Mormon. However, an even stronger parallel for Joseph Smith--who also restored the Church of Jesus Christ in the latter days--seems to lie with Alma. Alma was eulogized by the Nephites as "the founder of their church [of Christ]." (Mosiah 29:47.) This pivotal role is not ascribed to anyone else in Book of Mormon history. They were also both the high priest of their respective churches--a rare title in the scriptures. (Mosiah 23:16; compare D&C 107:65,66.)

Joseph Smith and Alma were alike in other less peculiar but still notable ways. They both began their prophet-labors as young men. (Mosiah 16:2.) When they first expressed their beliefs to some of their former acquaintances, they were treated with contempt and were persecuted. (Mosiah 16:2,3; compare JS-H 1:21,22.) Later, while still in mortality, their exaltation was sealed upon them. (Mosiah 26:20; compare D&C 132:49.)

One of Joseph Smith's more distinctive accomplishments was to receive revelations now found in the Doctrine and Covenants. He followed a certain pattern when he obtained most of these oracles. When he had a difficult question, he would inquire of the Lord, receive an answer, and write it down so that it could be preserved for the benefit of others.

This same process was illustrated by Alma. Once when a perplexing problem was brought before him, he "*was troubled*; and he went and *inquired of the Lord* what he should do concerning this matter....and it came to pass that after he had poured out his whole soul to God, the *voice of the Lord came* unto Alma. When Alma had heard these words he *wrote them down that he might have them, and that he might judge the people of that church*

according to the commandments of God." (Mosiah 26:13,14,33.) This process is not spelled out with so much detail in any other place in Book of Mormon history. Thus we might conclude that it is another of Mormon's hints to help us recognize the parallels.

The Church of Jesus Christ

Looking at several aspects of the respective churches that Joseph Smith and Alma established also reveals prominent similarities (in addition to fundamental doctrines being the same).

One obvious but important similarity between the ancient and modern church is that they were both named "the church of Christ." (Mosiah 18:17; compare D&C 10:1.) Furthermore, the name of "Mormon," which has become a common nickname of the latter-day Church, was also associated with the birth of the church under Alma. The record states that the church was organized "in ⁽¹⁾Mormon, yea, by the waters of ⁽²⁾Mormon, in the forest that was near the waters of ⁽³⁾Mormon; yea, the place of ⁽⁴⁾Mormon, the waters of ⁽⁵⁾Mormon, the forest of ⁽⁶⁾Mormon...." (Mosiah 18:30; compare Isa. 52:7; D&C 128:19.) We might ask ourselves if six references to the word Mormon in one verse is negligent redundancy or designed emphasis, to serve as an intentional hint.

This verse continues, "...^aHow beautiful are they [the forest, waters, etc... of Mormon] to the eyes of them who there came to the ^bknowledge of their Redeemer; yea, and how blessed are they, for they shall sing to his praise forever." (Mosiah 18:29.) The tone here is amazingly similar to Isaiah's prophetic statement regarding the restoration: "^aHow beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth...good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, ^bThy God reigneth!" (Isa. 52:7; D&C 128:19.)

Mormon was located "in the borders of the land of Nephi...." (Mosiah 18:4.) The land of Nephi was referred to by the Nephites as "the land of [their] father's first inheritance." (9:1.) Perhaps this parallels the Latter-day Saint's early settlements in Jackson County. It was referred to as their land of inheritance.

The wicked king Noah claimed that "Alma was stirring up the people to rebellion against him; therefore he sent his army to destroy them." (Mosiah 18:33,34.) This resembles the way the natives of Jackson County considered the new Mormon settlers a threat, formed a mob, and drove them out.

Next Alma's group settled in the land of Helam and "began to till the ground, and began to build buildings; yea they were industrious, and did labor exceedingly..., [and] they began to prosper exceedingly in the land..., and they built a city, which they called the city of Helam." (Mosiah 23: 5,19,20.) In this context, we cannot help but think of the magnificent city of Nauvoo that the Latter-day Saints built out of the swamplands of the Mississippi River, after the mobs drove them from Missouri.

The tranquility of Alma's people was soon shattered, when the Lamanites came upon them and appointed Amulon to be their leader. He caused the people of Alma to be persecuted and afflicted. (Mosiah 24:1,8-11.) Eventually Alma's people were delivered and

were brought to a land where they could practice their religion without hindrance. (Mosiah 24:21; 25:19.) This reflects the period when the Latter-day Saints were persecuted in Nauvoo and then journeyed to the Salt Lake Valley. In both cases, the persecutions served the Lord's purposes by chastening his people and trying "their patience and their faith." (Mosiah 23:21; compare D&C 101:1-5.)

Another landmark in this era of latter-day history was the martyrdom of Joseph Smith. Alma was not martyred. Nevertheless, the birth of the ancient church was initiated by a martyrdom. Abinadi, who bore the message that converted Alma, suffered himself to fall into the hands of king Noah's men, who slew him because he would not deny his words. (Mosiah 17:9,10; compare D&C 135:4.) Thus he became a testator that the message he proclaimed was true.

Notwithstanding great persecutions, both the ancient and modern churches of Christ came forth triumphant. Concerning the church that Alma organized, the Lord promised, "This is my church, and I will establish it; and *nothing shall overthrow it*, save it is the transgression of my people." (Mosiah 27:13.) This carries the same triumphant peal as Joseph Smith's declaration: "...The standard of truth has been erected; *no unhallowed hand can stop this work from progressing....*"

Mother Country Missionary Success

Turning now to the book of Alma, we detect a definite emphasis on missionary work (this underscoring actually begins in the latter part of the book of Mosiah). One story that receives particular attention is that of the sons of Mosiah when they returned to the land of Nephi (the land of their father's first inheritance) in an attempt to reclaim their unbelieving brethren, the Lamanites. (Mosiah 28:1.) This seems to parallel the early missionary labors of the Latter-day Saints to the British Isles. In both instances, missionaries converted prominent leaders along with many under their jurisdiction, bringing thousands into the fold. (Alma 17-26; 26:4,5.)⁵¹ Furthermore, in each case, even though churches were organized in the converts' country, after a relatively short time the majority of them were urged to immigrate to the church center. (Alma 23:4; 27:5.)⁵²

Civil War

The early part of the book of Alma tells of a vicious Nephite civil war, fomented by presumptuous Amlici. Considering possible parallels to our day, our minds turn to the

⁵¹Douglas F. Tobler, "Truth Prevailing," *Ensign*, July 1987, p. 33.

⁵²"...These British Saints...obeyed the counsel to gather to Zion. Before the end of the century, some 55,000 had crossed the ocean and the continental U.S. to make their homes in the West." (Douglas F. Tobler, "Truth Prevailing," *Ensign*, July 1987, p. 35.)

United States' Civil War.⁵³ The emphasis so far has been on events in this nation. Looking deeper at the cause and the course of the war, we discover that many details bear marked similarities.

Two major identifying causes of the Civil War were the disagreements over the human rights issue of slavery and the political question of whether or not a state had the right to nullify an act of Congress it deemed undesirable. The Northerners (generally speaking) were upset because the Southern states had defiantly annulled an act of Congress.⁵⁴ Likewise, the Nephites "who had *not* been drawn away after the persuasions of Amlici" were alarmed, for "they knew that according to their law [alterations in government] must be established by the voice of the people." (Alma 2:3.) Also, like the Southerners, who favored slavery, Amlici would have deprived people "of their rights." (Alma 2:4.)

Amlici was "after the order of" Nehor, who instigated priestcraft among the Nephites. (Alma 2:1; 1:12.) As such he fit the description of one "who *loved the vain things of the world*, and [who] went forth *preaching false doctrines*; and this...*for the sake of riches and honor*." (Alma 1:16.) Similarly, many times the Southern slave owners put the best face they could on slavery, often (mis)quoting freely from the Bible to justify their practice.⁵⁵ They vehemently defended this corrupt institution because it was an essential source of income for them.⁵⁶

In both histories, the issue finally culminated in a deciding vote. When the Nephite controversy was put to a vote, the voice of the people sided against Amlici. (Alma 2:6,7.) The American controversy climaxed with the election of Abraham Lincoln, which signaled the nation's overall disapproval of the views held by the South.⁵⁷

The Nephite record then informs us that the angered supporters of Amlici consecrated him to be their king, and he commanded them to "take up arms against their brethren." (Alma 2:8,9.) Similarly the outraged Southerners seceded from the Union, formed a confederacy, and initiated the war.

In the course of the ancient war, the Amlicites rallied the Lamanites from the land of Nephi (the Nephite motherland). In like fashion, during the Civil War, the Southern States called on Great Britain (our nation's motherland) to help them. (Alma 2:24; compare D&C 87:3.)

⁵³Zarahemla serves frequently as a metaphor for the United States of America. This Nephite conflict appears to have been confined to the inhabitants of Zarahemla. (Alma 2:26.)

⁵⁴Daniel Webster, in his famous speech in reaction to this issue of nullification, reminded the South that amendments to the Constitution must be indicative of the "sovereign pleasure." (The Works of Daniel Webster (20th ed., 1890), III, Jan. 26, 1830, pp. 340-342.)

⁵⁵The American Spirit, p. 352.

⁵⁶A. C. McLaughlin et al., eds., Source Problems in United States History, 1918, pp. 419-424.

⁵⁷Springfield Republican, Aug. 25, 1860.

Meanwhile, as the wars tread their dreary course, in both cases a great many were slain. The misery inflicted because of awful circumstances was incalculable. (Alma 3:1; 2:37,38; compare D&C 87:1.)

Finally, in both instances the Lord strengthened the hand of those defending human rights and Constitutional principles. He enabled them to win the conflict against the forces of intrigue. (Alma 2:28)⁵⁸

Monroe Doctrine

In chapter 22 of the book of Alma we find a few noteworthy verses for this study. They recount that in peacetime the Nephites "had *taken possession of all the northern parts of the land....* And [they] had *hemmed in the Lamanites on the south*, that thereby they should have *no more possession* on the north, that they might *not overrun the land northward.*" (Alma 22:29,33.)

This reminds us of the situation on the American continent, just shortly before the United States' Civil War, when the Monroe Doctrine came into effect. It was designed to prevent aggressive European powers from overthrowing the independent governments in Latin America. The Doctrine states, "...The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for the future colonization by any European powers...."⁵⁹ Those sovereigns in Europe who were seeking to enforce the "divine right of kings"⁶⁰ resemble the Lamanites who claimed by their tradition that the "right to the government" over all the people belonged to them. (Alma 54:17.)

President Monroe explained that the primary reason for this doctrine was that "the political system of the Allied Powers [was] essentially different...from that of America." History has seen several enemies of the United States arise in Europe and elsewhere in the world whose effectiveness against our nation has been impeded through this doctrine.⁶¹ Similarly, the Nephite record continues, "Now this was wisdom in the Nephites--as *the Lamanites were an enemy to them....*" (Alma 22:34.)

In principle, the Monroe Doctrine is still in effect today. Yet some leaders in our country have allowed our security to be breached by letting, for example, Cuba and

⁵⁸For example, the miracle at Gettysburg evidenced the Lord's hand in strengthening the Northerners.

⁵⁹Ezra Taft Benson, CR, Oct. 1962, p. 16.

⁶⁰Ezra Taft Benson, Teachings, p. 689; also CR, Oct. 1962, p. 16.

⁶¹President Joseph Fielding Smith said, "The greatest and most significant principle by which this land is fortified against the encroachments and invasions of European and Asiatic powers is found in the Monroe Doctrine...." (Ezra Taft Benson, CR, Oct 5, 1962, p. 16.)

Nicaragua to fall into the sphere of strong Communist hands.⁶² These countries have now become powerful Communist beachheads, into which the Kremlin has funneled billions of dollars of military supplies and equipment.⁶³

The Monroe Doctrine declares, "We...should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as *dangerous to our peace and safety*."⁶⁴ Common sense tells us that this doctrine has never been obsolete. The reason the Nephites restrained Lamanite occupation beyond certain boundaries was in order that "they would not suffer their *afflictions* on every hand...." (Alma 22:34.)

Birth of Communism

Further into the book of Alma, is an account of the infamous anti-Christ, Korihor. Several modern anti-Christ's may come to mind when we read his ideologies, for there have not been a shortage of secular humanists, materialists, and other godless philosophers in our day. Yet of all the pernicious think tanks--who pit man's wisdom against God's--Karl Marx has probably had the most widespread and lasting influence. Amazingly, Korihor and Karl Marx, both in their doctrine and as individuals, were quite similar.

One of the things Karl Marx is known for is his closing statement in the Communist Manifesto: "...Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have *nothing to lose but their chains*. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!" This is comparable to Korihor's statement: "*I do not teach this people to bind themselves down* under the foolish ordinances and performances which are laid down by ancient priests, to usurp power and authority over them, to keep them in ignorance, that they may not lift up their heads...." (Alma 30:23.)

Marx said "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."⁶⁵ He identified essentially two great classes of people that seem always to emerge: the bourgeoisie, or the oppressors, and the proletarians, or the oppressed.⁶⁶

⁶²Documented evidence has uncovered the fact that not only were key governmental leaders of our country in a position to block these takeovers, but that some were even involved in secretly assisting the Communist takeovers. (See, Anastasio Somoza, Nicaragua Betrayed, or Jane H. Ingraham, "The Fall of Nicaragua," *The New American*, July 17, 1989, pp. 23-29.)

⁶³In 1988, for example, Moscow poured military equipment valuing \$515 million into Nicaragua. (Jane H. Ingraham, "The Fall of Nicaragua," *The New American*, July 17, 1989, pp. 28.) The Soviets annually supply Castro with about \$5,000,000,000. (Joseph Ioffe, Ph.D., "Glasnost, a Conservative Opportunity," address given at NCCS Soviet Symposium, 1988.) See also Ezra Taft Benson, CR, Oct. 1962, p. 15.

⁶⁴Quoted in Ezra Taft Benson, CR, Oct. 1962, p. 16. Also quoted in J. D. Richardson, ed., Messages and Papers of the Presidents (1896), II, pp. 209, 218-219.

⁶⁵*Communist Manifesto*.

⁶⁶*Communist Manifesto*, Part I: "Bourgeois and Proletarians."

Korihor hinted at a similar grouping when he accused the religious leadership: "...Ye keep [this people] down, even as it were in bondage, that ye may glut yourselves with the labors of their hands...." (Alma 30:27.)

Marx also claimed that the proletariat are deprived of that which they have worked for, and that the capitalists unjustly milk the worker for profit.⁶⁷ Compare this with Korihor's assertion that the supposedly oppressed people "*durst not make use of that which is their own* lest they should offend their priests, who do *yoke them according to their desires.*" (Alma 30:28.)

Korihor's above statements also ring familiar with Marx's philosophy that religion is merely "the opium of the people."⁶⁸ Marx claimed that religion was merely a man-made tool used for exploitation.⁶⁹

Both Korihor and Karl Marx bluntly renounced belief in Christ, reducing it to "a foolish and a vain hope." (Alma 30:13.) Bruno Bauer, a close associate of Marx, reflected Marx's sentiments, calling the Gospels forgeries and saying that Jesus had never existed, and therefore Christianity was a fraud.⁷⁰ Korihor labeled the prophecies "foolish traditions" and said that the people's religious beliefs were "the effect of a frenzied mind" which lead them "away into a belief of things which are not so." (Alma 30:14,16.)

Both Korihor and Marx's reasoning was founded on certain false premises--perhaps because "the things of the Spirit...are foolishness" unto the natural man, for "they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14.) This is made quite clear in the Nephites' record. There, Alma asked Korihor, "...Believest thou that we deceive this people [with `oppressive' religion], that causes such joy in their hearts?" (Alma 30:35.)

Marx and his right-hand man, Friedrich Engels, held distorted views about morals. Some of these are also reflected in Korihor's doctrines. Korihor's statement, "Whatsoever a man [does is] no crime" (Alma 30:17), matches Engel's "We therefore reject every attempt to impose on us any moral dogma whatever...."⁷¹ Both Korihor and Marx taught that "when a man was dead, that was the end thereof." (Alma 30:18.)⁷² Furthermore, Marx felt that "self-preservation is the supreme instinct in man, and therefore his whole pattern of human conduct must [be] governed by an attempt to wrest the necessities of life from nature."⁷³

⁶⁷Skousen, Naked Communist, p. 54.

⁶⁸Selected Essays of Marx, p. 16.

⁶⁹W. Cleon Skousen, The Naked Communist, The Reviewer, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1962, pp. 69,70.

⁷⁰Historical Criticism of the Synoptic Gospels, 1840. Quoted in Skousen, Naked Communist, p. 12.]

⁷¹Handbook of Marxism, p. 249.

⁷²Skousen Naked Communist, p.36.

⁷³Skousen, Naked Communist, p. 44.

This resembles Korihor's philosophy that "every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and that every man conquered according to his strength." (Alma 30:17.)

The comparisons between Marx and Korihor can be taken even as far as certain characteristics of their personal lives. Marx was always in debt,⁷⁴ was plagued with terrible health problems, and his closing years were "sterile and lonely..., his words carrying little weight either at home or abroad."⁷⁵ Likewise, in the end, Korihor was cursed by God (he was struck dumb), "went about from house to house begging for his food," and finally "was run upon and trodden down, even until he was dead." (Alma 30:49,54,56,59.)⁷⁶ The concluding verse of this chapter about Korihor seems applicable to Karl Marx too: "And thus we see the end of him who perverteth the ways of the Lord; and thus we see that the devil will not support his children at the last day, but doth speedily drag them down to hell." (30:60.)

Today, with all the Communist system's cosmetic make-overs, many have been inclined to believe that it is not the dangerous beast it used to be. The sheep's clothing has become so innocent-looking today that few are repulsed by it. The question we might ask ourselves, though, in this day of great paradoxes is how much has the hiding wolf underneath changed?⁷⁷ We know that when Karl Marx, the celebrated father of Communism, was asked what his objective in life was, he professed, "To *dethrone God...*"⁷⁸ Similarly, when the Nephite account introduced Korihor, it condensed his entire deceitful message into this one statement: "There should be *no Christ*." (Alma 30:12.) Perhaps this is what prompted the official Church statement: "The position of this Church on the subject of

⁷⁴Otto Ruhle, Karl Marx, pp. 383-384.

⁷⁵Skousen, Naked Communist, pp. 26,27.

⁷⁶The Zoramites were the ones who trod down Korihor. Quite a bit is told about the Zoramites in the book of Alma, most of which shows their hardheartedness. Eventually, the Zoramites, who had dissented from the Nephites (Alma 31:8) became Lamanites (Alma 43:4). Furthermore, so fixed had the Zoramites' hatred become towards the Nephites that Zarahemnah, the Lamanite leader, appointed many Zoramites to be chief captains over the Lamanite armies (Alma 43:6,7). The wars that followed, between the Nephites and the Lamanites, have many parallels to World Wars I and II. In these parallels, the Lamanites (headed by Zoramite leaders) are fairly similar to the aggressive powers in World Wars I and II. Thus another parallel might be drawn: ironic though it may seem, as the Zoramites trod down Korihor, so did Nazi Germany despise Marxism.

⁷⁷The recent euphoria about what an incredible transformation Mikhail Gorbachev is bringing about is misleading. Though communism is purportedly falling apart, socialism, which is the core of communism, has never been more solidly in place around the world. In his book, Perestroika, Gorbachev states, "To put an end to all the rumors and speculations that abound in the West about this [that the Soviet Union is giving up socialism], I would like to point out once again that we are conducting all our reforms in accordance with the socialist choice. We are looking within socialism, rather than outside it, for the answers to all the questions that arise.... Those who hope that we shall move away from the socialist path will be greatly disappointed." (Harper & Row, New York, 1988, pp. 22,23.)

⁷⁸Skousen, Naked Communist, p. 37.

Communism has never changed! We consider it the *greatest satanical threat* to peace, prosperity, and the spread of God's work among men that exists on the face of the earth!"⁷⁹

The Communist philosophy and the so-called improvements upon it are not restricted to Communist countries. Its abundant disciples may be found in many nations. Usually they are not considered Communists. Preferable titles seem to be: Marxist, socialist, leftist, and humanists--to name a few. Some of the most important work done for the Communist cause is accomplished by these non-Communist hands. Apparently, the main reason they cling to the Marxist line or variations thereof is that its teachings, like those of Korihor's, are "pleasing unto the *carnal mind*." (Alma 30:53.) Nephi warned us, "...Wo be unto him that *hearkeneth unto the precepts of men*, and denieth the power of God...." (2 Ne. 28:26.)

Seeing these correlations between Korihor's philosophy and Carl Marx's philosophy helps us to expose the true nature of this carnal ideology. In the end, Korihor acknowledged, "The *devil hath deceived me...*, and *he taught me* that which I should say." (Alma 30:53.) The Nephite record also braces us in our defense of truth so that we will not succumb to the sincerity of the modern advocates of this philosophy. Korihor, like many who embrace the leftist line, also "verily believed that [his teachings] were true; and for this cause [he] withstood the truth...." (Alma 30:53.)

World Wars I and II

In the latter portion of the book of Alma we discover a fairly lengthy and detailed account of some wars between the Nephites and the Lamanites. These conflicts seem to envelop the energies of both the Nephites and the Lamanites. The account tells of the aggressive Lamanite forces taking Nephite cities and the Nephites' valiant attempts to resist those assaults and retake enemy-possessed cities. Considering several key aspects of these ancient conflicts, we observe many profound parallels to the two world wars that ravaged our own century.

World War I

In the first major conflict, related in chapters 43 and 44, the Lamanites, whose intention it was to "establish a kingdom unto themselves over all the land" ended up reluctantly making a "covenant of peace." (Alma 43:29; 44:14.) The Nephites had brought them to a situation in which they had no other alternative but to be cut down to the earth. (43:19.) This was also the case in World War I. The Axis powers, headed by Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm (who was fighting for control over Europe) were finally forced to sign an armistice.

⁷⁹President David O. McKay, *Improvement Era*, June 1966, p. 477. Quoted by Ezra Taft Benson, CR, Oct. 1966, p. 123.

One of those contracts resulted in the disarmament of Germany⁸⁰--resembling the way Lamanites were required to "deliver up [their] weapons of war...." (44:14,20.)

Under a new leadership, the Lamanites later broke their promise "that they never would come to war again against [the Nephites]." (Alma 44:19,20.) Like an echo of the Lamanite's fickleness, Germany breached the many pacts of peace that were signed following the first World War,⁸¹ and they began sweeping the continent again under Hitler.

World War II

The next major conflict between the Nephites and Lamanites, described in Alma chapters 46 through 62, seems to correspond remarkably to World War II.⁸²

One characteristic likeness is that there were two major fronts in the Nephite-Lamanite conflicts,⁸³ just as there were two major fronts in World War II: the Pacific, where the Allies faced the Japanese, and Europe, where they stood against Hitler and Mussolini. In both cases these fronts formed and then faded somewhat independent of one another.

Looking at the Book of Mormon account in more detail reveals comparisons to certain characteristic military tactics used during World War II. For example, we see reflected a form of Hitler's *blitzkrieg* when the Lamanite armies swiftly took one Nephite city after another, "all of which were strongly fortified," before finally being checked by the Nephite armies. (Alma 51:23-32.)

A leading role in the World War II drama was played by Adolf Hitler. Finding a parallel for him in the Book of Mormon saga is not at all difficult. In fact, if we had to choose one character from the entire Nephite record that best matched this frenzied fanatic, we wouldn't have to audition long to come up with Amalickiah.

Amalickiah was a "man of many flattering words...." (Alma 46:10.)⁸⁴ "By his fraud and by the assistance of his cunning servants, he obtained the kingdom...of the Lamanites."

⁸⁰Thomas A. Bailey, The American Spirit, Fourth Edition, D.C. Heath and Company, Lexington, MA, 1978, p. 721.

⁸¹The Kellogg-Briand Pact, for example, which was signed by several nations including Germany, outlawed war except in self-defense, making aggressive war a crime. (Robert A. Divine, The Reluctant Belligerent, John Wiley & Sons, N.Y. 1965, p. 2,16.)

⁸²Alma 49 tells of a small battle, but this skirmish could be considered a part of the prolonged war that followed.

⁸³The first front began basically with Lamanite offensive described in Alma 51:26-28. The successful recapture by the Nephite forces of the cities taken during this offensive is described in Alma 52 and was performed by Moroni along with Teancum and Lehi. The second front involved the Lamanite offensive briefly summarized in Alma 56:13,14. The Nephite recapture of these lost cities was accomplished by Helaman along with Antipus, Gid, and Teomner, and the account of its culmination is in Alma 58.

⁸⁴Hitler developed an aptitude for "demagogic, almost hypnotic, oratory." (Peter Young, World War 1939-1945, C. Tinling & Co. Ltd., London, 1966, p. 9.)

(47:35.)⁸⁵ He "sought also to reign over all the land..., the Nephites as well as the Lamanites." (48:2.) He "*led away the hearts of many people to do wickedly; yea, and to seek to destroy the church of God,*⁸⁶ and to *destroy the foundation of liberty* which God had granted unto them...." (46:10.) Two chief Nephite military generals, Mormon and Teancum, considered that Amalickiah (and Ammoron, his successor/brother) "had been the cause of this great and lasting war...." (62:35; 54:5.)

Another important characteristic of the second World War was that victory over the Axis powers ultimately hinged on the strength contributed by the United States. Here we find a provocative parallel in Book of Mormon history. The pivotal factor which enabled the Nephites to triumph over the Lamanites was finally rallying the necessary support of men and provisions from the city of Zarahemla. (Alma 58:32,34; 59:12,13; 62:11-38.)

Until the city of Zarahemla was attacked⁸⁷ and the patriotic spirit reinstalled (Alma 62:7,9,10), those Nephites fighting for freedom in other locations "suffered exceedingly great sufferings; yea, even hunger, thirst, and fatigue, and all manner of afflictions of every kind" (60:3). Being "surrounded by security," those in Zarahemla "[sat] in idleness, while there [were] thousands round about in the borders of the land who [were] falling by the sword, yea, wounded and bleeding." (60:19,22.)⁸⁸ How applicable is this to the United States, who did not rally her full strength to the cause until after Pearl Harbor? And what about France and Great Britain who also did not readily render the requested assistance to the countries that called upon them for help until they themselves were caught in the crisis?

The Nephites who were on the battle fronts "looked up to [those in Zarahemla] for protection..., [and] placed [them] in a situation that [they] might have succored them, yea, [they] might have sent armies unto them, to have strengthened them, and have saved thousands of them from falling by the sword." (Alma 60:8.) This was a common theme during World War II. Nations in distress called almost in vain upon stronger nations for help. How applicable is Pahoran's rebuke to the modern nations who "withheld [their] provisions"? (60:9.) He said, "...Ye ought to have stirred yourselves more diligently for the welfare and the freedom of this people; but behold, ye have neglected them insomuch that the blood of thousands shall come upon your heads for vengeance." (60:10,12.) Unsettling though it may be, considering the degree of similarity between the ancient and the modern circumstances,

⁸⁵Hitler shrewdly transformed the German's views of his political system from repugnance to toleration and finally to endorsement.

⁸⁶Though Hitler did not fight against any particular religion, his massacre of the Jews and his corruption of many men in the process does bear resemblance to what Amalickiah did.

⁸⁷The attack itself is what is being compared, not the Japanese' involvement in the attack.

⁸⁸With the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean between the U.S. and the European and Asian fronts, respectively, the Americans were not too worried about either force threatening them on their own soil. As the war progressed, and this became a more real possibility, a common sentiment was to let the enemy incur the expense of transporting their forces across the ocean. (See Charles Lindbergh's speech in New York Times, April 24, 1941, p. 12. Quoted in American Spirit, p. 825-826.)

can we ignore what Pahoran said? Was our reluctant country also guilty of "this great iniquity"? (61:18.)

Intrigue

Looking closer, we find an even darker side of this Nephite-Lamanite war. The greatest and most destructive enemies of freedom did not come from the ranks of the Lamanites, but they were full-blooded Nephites "who had rebelled against their country and also their God." (Alma 62:2.)

At first the Lamanites "feared to go to battle against the Nephites lest they should lose their lives." (47:2.) It was Amalickiah, a *Nephite*, who turned "the hearts of the Lamanites against the people of Nephi." (48:1.)

Adding to the Nephites' problems with intrigue, certain Nephites arose who called themselves "king-men." They "were desirous that the law should be altered in a manner to overthrow the free government..., and they were supported by those who sought power and authority over the people." (51:5,8.) These king-men in Zarahemla were responsible for that city's withholding their provisions and for daunting their freemen. (61:4.)

Therefore, a traitorous Nephite started the war, and other treasonous Nephites withheld the city of Zarahemla's men and provisions essential for fighting that war once it was started.

Did modern history produce such sedition? Were American citizens of high status involved in planning or precipitating the war? Modern prophets have indicated that this was the case.⁸⁹ What about those charismatic orators who so effectively kept U.S. sentiment against helping the cause of freedom once the war began--were any of them involved in shadowy plots?⁹⁰ Did World War II unsheathe such a paradoxical double-edged sword?

Pahoran's summary of the Book of Mormon conflict seems to capsulize not only the ancient but the modern conflict as well. He said, "...Behold, now the Lamanites are coming upon us, taking possession of our land, and they are murdering our people with the sword, yea, our women and our children, and also carrying them away captive, causing them that they should suffer all manner of afflictions, and this *because of the great wickedness of those who are seeking for power and authority*, yea, even those king-men." (Alma 60:17.) He also made this sobering analysis: "...Were it not for the wickedness which *first commenced at our head*, we could have withstood our enemies that they could have gained no power over us." (60:15.)

⁸⁹David O. McKay, J. Reuben Clark, Ezra Taft Benson, along with other of the Brethren, have spoken firmly against what they called the Communist/Socialist conspiracy. Studying some of the books these prophets have recommended reveals that this conspiracy was heavily behind both World Wars. (See, for example, [None Dare Call it Conspiracy](#) by Gary Allen or [The Naked Communist](#) by Cleon Skousen.)

⁹⁰Whether they plotted to do so or not, such speakers played into the Axis' plans by keeping the U.S. out of the conflict as long as possible. (For an example of some of the rhetoric used, see the speech made by Charles Lindbergh in *New York Times*, April 24, 1941, p. 12.)

Fortunately, the war did finally come to an end. Notwithstanding "the murders, and contentions, and *dissensions*, and all manner of iniquity..., for the righteous' sake, yea, because of the prayers of the righteous, [the Nephites] were spared." (Alma 62:40.) Once the arsenal of freedom--in both the ancient and the modern instance--was rallied to the cause, the tyrants were overturned and "there was once more peace established...." (62:42.)

Post-War Conditions

Reading about the conditions following this extensive Nephite-Lamanite war, we see that these years also hold several parallels to the situation following the second World War. First, in both cases, "because of the exceedingly great length of the war...many [people] had become hardened, and many had become softened." (62:41.) Second, the record states, "They did establish again the church of God, throughout all the land." (Alma 62:46.) In like fashion, immediately following the War, Elder Ezra Taft Benson was directed by the First Presidency to administer relief to the battered Saints in the war-torn European countries and to set the Church in order there.⁹¹ Third, Moroni's fortification of "those parts of the land which were most vulnerable" seems to match the way since World War II, United States troops have been placed in allied countries world-wide, being augmented in areas that are most vulnerable. (62:42.) Fourth, the Nephite prosperity that followed the ancient war reflects that which followed World War II: they "began to *multiply* and to wax *exceedingly strong* again in the land; and they began to grow *exceedingly rich*." (62:48.)

Contemporary Conditions

The last chapter of Alma and the first chapter of the book of Helaman seem to reflect several events and conditions of our recent past.

Superpower Struggles

Alma 63:15 states, "The Lamanites came down with a *numerous army* to war against the people of Moronihah, or *against the army* of Moronihah, in the which they were beaten and driven back again to their own lands, *suffering great loss*." Though this might not be indicative of any specific conflict in our day, we can glean several possible insights from this verse. Reading "numerous army," and noting that the conflict was not so much between the people as between the armies, we may think of the Arms Race and the Cold War. Furthermore, the phrase, "suffering much loss" is an appropriate description of the several "limited combat" wars that scarred the involved nations, such as the Korean and Vietnam wars.

⁹¹(Sheri L. Dew, *Ezra Taft Benson: A Bibliography*, Deseret Book, 1987, p. 197.) We might also note that a similar restorative effort was made (but on a smaller scale) after the first World War. It is comparable to what followed the first Nephite-Lamanite conflict mentioned above. The record states, "It became expedient that the word of God should be declared among them, yea and that a regulation should be made throughout the church." (Alma 45:21,22.)

Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon

Verse 12 of this same chapter suggests another comparison. It states, "Now behold, all those *engravings* which were in the possession of Helaman were written and *sent forth* among the children of men *throughout all the land*." (Alma 63:12.) Here--unlike the discovery of the Jaredite records--already-existing records were sent forth throughout all the land. Likewise, President Benson has placed extraordinary emphasis on the Book of Mormon. He has called for a massive "flooding of the earth" with that book.⁹² "God is not pleased with our neglect of the Book of Mormon," has been his persistent cry.⁹³

Space Age Voyages

Another fascinating comparison emerges when we consider the account of the venturesome Hagoth in this same chapter. Reflecting upon the modern space program, we can almost replace the word "ship" with "space ship." More specifically, we could use the word "space shuttle." The record states, "Hagoth, he being an *exceedingly curious* man, therefore he went forth and built him an *exceedingly large ship...and launched* it forth. And...this man built other ships. And the first ship did also *return...*; and they *took much provisions*, and *set out again....*" (Alma 63:5-7.) Could this be Mormon's way of symbolically prophesying about what other prophets may have described merely as "signs in heaven"?⁹⁴

Crossroads Election

Turning the page to Helaman chapter 1, we next read about an election that took place among the Nephites. Evaluating the subsequent murder of the newly-elected chief judge, we might recall the scandalous assassination of President Kennedy. However, several possible hints suggest this Book of Mormon account might foreshadow an event yet to come.

One possible clue is found with the story of Hagoth and his ships. The narrative tells of a ship that was launched forth and "never heard of more." (Alma 63:8.) "And we suppose that they were drowned in the depths of the sea," it concluded. This resembles the *Challenger* disaster. The narrative continues, "And it came to pass that *one other ship* also did sail forth...." (63:8.) The wording here--"one other ship"--appears to be deliberate, for this was not the last ship to sail forth. (63:10.) Just one page later the Book of Mormon begins telling of the election that ended in assassination. Interestingly, between the *Challenger* disaster and the 1988 presidential election, *one* shuttle was launched: the *Discovery*. Might this correlation suggest that the election spoken of in Helaman chapter 1 parallels the 1988 election?

If this were the case, we would not have a hard time imagining how "much contention and...much difficulty [could arise] in the government" should our Vice President succeed "in

⁹²*Ensign*, Nov. 1988, pp. 4-6.

⁹³*Ensign*, Nov. 1984, p. 6.

⁹⁴The various flying machines which this generation has created are not the only thing to which the prophets referred when they prophesied of signs in heaven.

the stead" of the President, "according to his right" under the Constitution⁹⁵. (Hel. 1:18,13.)⁹⁶ This wording, taken from the Book of Mormon, seems to apply with precision to the situation that would unfold in the event of an assassination in our day.

An additional indicator that this ominous parallel may be valid comes from the Jaredite account. We discussed earlier how Jaredite history has many parallels to Nephite history and therefore that Jaredite history also probably contains parallels to our day. (Appendix D.) Both the Jaredite and Nephite accounts tell of a segment of their history in which a destructive secret combination came into full display. This is indicative of what we may very well be facing in days just ahead.⁹⁷ During that segment, both chronicles tell of either an assassination or assassination attempt of their chief leader in association with the ugly unveiling of the secret combination. (Hel. 1:9; 2:3; Ether 8:9,10.) Furthermore, in each account the compiler interrupts the story to warn us about the dangers of secret combinations: how they bring destruction to any nation that will uphold them. (Hel. 2:13,14 and Ether 8:18-26.) Might a similar assassination in our day serve as a sign that the flaxen cords of socialism, by which a modern secret combination has been leading us along, are about to be replaced by dictatorial chains? (2 Ne. 26:22.)⁹⁸ In Book of Mormon history, Nephi, son of Helaman, pointed to the assassination of their chief judge as a sign that destruction was imminent. (Hel. 8:27,28.)

⁹⁵See Article II, Section 1 and Amendment Twenty-Five.

⁹⁶Of course many other things could and do cause much difficulty and contention in our government.

⁹⁷See "Corruption of Government; Rise of Secret Combinations" section below.

⁹⁸Ezra Taft Benson's dislike of the Soviet system was underscored by his contact with Nikita Khrushchev in 1959. Khrushchev told him, "Americans are so gullible. They are in the process of being fed small bits of socialism and one day will awaken to find themselves living under a totalitarian order." (Sheri Dew, Ezra Taft Benson: A Biography, Deseret Book, 1987, p. 339.)