

# Morm. 1–6, 9: Mormon and wickedness

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## Quotes

- Life is a sexually transmitted terminal disease.
- Do not judge or condemn others who choose to sin differently than you do.
- God commanded us to love our neighbors and to love our enemies. Usually they are the same people!
- One nice thing about egotists: they don't talk about other people.

Age	Year	Events in Mormon's Life	Ref
10	321	Called by Ammaron	1:2-4
11	322	Zarahemla, wars; 3 disciples taken away	1:6-13
15	326	"visited of the Lord"; forbidden to preach; became general, armies fear and retreat	1:15-16; 2:2-3
19	330	First victory, sorrowing of the damned	2:9, 13
24	335	Removed plates of Nephi from hill, but left most the records in place	2:17
34	345	Fights battle near hill, says he had been making a full account on the Large Plates	2:17-18
39-49	350-360	Treaty, prepare for war; Lord told him to cry repentance; people harden hearts	2:28; 3:1-3
51	362	Nephites win battle, boast, swear vengeance; Mormon refused to lead	3:8-16
64	375	Removed all records from hill Shim; Mormon leads army as they fight for lives	4:23; 5:1
69	380	Spirit ceased to strive with them	5:6, 16
74	385	Abridges Book of Mormon; hid almost all plates in hill Cumorah (Ramah) before their final battle just like the Jaredites	6:6; WofM 1:6-9; Eth. 15:11
79	400	Lamanites kill fleeing Nephites & Mormon	8:2-3, 6
	421	Moroni added to record and buried it.	Moro. 10:1

## 1. Mormon's "call" [AD 321] (Morm. 1:2-3)

<sup>2</sup> (I being about ten years of age, and I began to be learned somewhat after the manner of the learning of my people) and Ammaron said unto me: I perceive that thou art a sober child, and art quick to observe; <sup>3</sup> Therefore, when ye are about [24] years old ... go ... unto a hill ... called Shim; and there have I deposited ... all the sacred engravings ... and ye shall engrave on the plates of Nephi all the things that ye have observed concerning this people. And I, Mormon, being a descendant of Nephi, (and my father's name was Mormon) I remembered [these] things.

Learning of my people (student of Ammaron?) Read/write

OED *sober* a. II.4.a. grave, serious, solemn; indicating or implying a serious mind or purpose.

OED *observe* I.2.a. To obey, abide by, or adhere to (a law, command, custom, covenant, promise, etc.); ... **5. trans.** To take care (*to do something*); to give heed to (a point); to ensure (*that something be done*). *Obs.* III.2. To regard with attention; to watch

Shim was near Cumorah (Eth. 9:3)

**Hugh Nibley**: Shim means north or the land northward (TBM, Lecture 104, p. 192).

## 2. Wickedness did prevail (Morm. 1:12-16)

<sup>13</sup> Wickedness did prevail ... insomuch that the Lord did take away his beloved disciples, and the work of miracles and of healing did cease. ... <sup>14</sup> And there were no gifts from the Lord, and the Holy Ghost did not come upon any, because of their wickedness and unbelief.

<sup>15</sup> And I, being fifteen years of age and being somewhat of a sober mind, therefore I was visited of the Lord, and tasted and knew of the goodness of Jesus. <sup>16</sup> And I did endeavor to preach unto this people, but ... I was forbidden that I should preach unto them; for behold they had wilfully rebelled against their God.

<sup>39</sup> I [Moroni] have seen Jesus, and ... he hath talked with me face to face. (Eth. 12:39)

**Joseph Smith**: age 14=first vision; age 21=gold plates

## 3. Gadianton robbers (Morm. 1:18-19)

<sup>18</sup> These Gadianton robbers ... did infest the land, insomuch that the inhabitants thereof began to hide up their treasures in the earth; and they became slippery, because the Lord had cursed the land, that they could not hold them, nor retain them again. <sup>19</sup> ... There were sorceries, and witchcrafts, and magics; and the power of the evil one was wrought upon all ... the land, ... fulfilling of all the words of Abinadi, and also Samuel the Lamanite.

## 4. Mormon leads an army [AD 326] (Morm. 2:2-3)

<sup>2</sup> In my [16th] year I did go forth at the head of an army of the Nephites. ... <sup>3</sup> And ... the Lamanites did come upon us with exceedingly great power, insomuch that they did frighten my armies; ... and they began to retreat towards the north countries.

## 5. Nephites began to repent [AD 330] (Morm. 2:10-14)

<sup>10</sup> The Nephites began to repent of their iniquity, and began to cry even as had been prophesied by Samuel the prophet ... <sup>12</sup> When I, Mormon, saw ... their mourning and their sorrow before the Lord, my heart did begin to rejoice ... knowing the mercies and the long-suffering of the Lord, therefore supposing that he would be merciful unto them that they would again become a righteous people. <sup>13</sup> But ... my joy was vain, for their sorrowing was not unto repentance, because of the goodness of God; but it was rather the sorrowing of the damned, because the Lord would not always suffer them to take happiness in sin. <sup>14</sup> And they did not come unto Jesus with broken hearts and contrite spirits, but they did curse God, and wish to die. Nevertheless they would struggle with the sword for their lives.

Godly sorrow → repentance/change/return, love God, follow promptings, "give away all my sins" (Al 22:18).

Prodigal son returned

**Neal A. Maxwell**: False remorse instead is like 'fondling our failings.' In ritual regret, we mourn our mistakes but without mending them. (Nov. 1991 *Ensign*, "Repentance")

Modern sinners want freedom from consequences! They want cures for STDs, not change of behavior, desires, or thinking.

Broken heart → hear (plant/nourish word);

Contrite spirit → obey promptings (do what God commands)

Adversity → in this case personal/national unrighteousness

**Pagan expectation**: Believing in and following God is a guarantee of shelter from the storms of life. This is an extension of the ancient practice of sacrifices to pagan gods, where the sacrifice was an exchange for services to be rendered in the future. For the pagan, the offering was to ensure some good outcome. If the god did not perform, then they promised they would withhold further sacrifices to the god. Bartering with the gods feeds our underlying attempts to see ourselves in a similar privileged position because of our attempts to follow God.

## 6. Mormon's response to wickedness (Morm. 2:18–19)

<sup>18</sup> A continual scene of wickedness and abominations has been before mine eyes ever since I have been sufficient to behold the ways of man. <sup>18</sup> And ... my heart has been filled with sorrow because of their wickedness...; nevertheless, I know that I shall be lifted up at the last day.

## 7. Mormon urges Nephites to stand boldly (2:23–26)

<sup>23</sup> The people of Nephi again were hunted and driven. ... And ... I did ... did urge them with great energy, that they would stand boldly before the Lamanites and fight for their wives, and their children, and their houses, and their homes. <sup>24</sup> And my words did arouse them somewhat to vigor ... <sup>26</sup> And ... we ... did beat them; nevertheless the strength of the Lord was not with us; yea, we were left to ourselves, that the Spirit of the Lord did not abide in us; therefore we had become weak like unto our brethren.

## 8. Peace and cry repentance [AD 360] (Morm. 3:1–3)

<sup>1</sup> The Lamanites did not come to battle again until ten years more had passed away. <sup>2</sup> And ... I had employed my people... in preparing their lands and their arms against the time of battle. And ... the Lord did say unto me: Cry unto this people—Repent ye, and come unto me, and be ye baptized, and build up again my church, and ye shall be spared. <sup>3</sup> And I did cry unto this people, but it was in vain; and they did not realize that it was the Lord that had spared them, and granted unto them a chance for repentance. And behold they did harden their hearts against the Lord.

<sup>3</sup> Remember how merciful the Lord hath been (Moro 10:3)

## 9. Victory and boasting [AD 362] (Morm. 3:8–9)

<sup>8</sup> They did come down again to battle. And we did beat them again, and did slay a great number of them. ... <sup>9</sup> And now, because of this great thing which my people ... had done, they began to boast in their own strength, and began to swear before the heavens that they would avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren who had been slain by their enemies. And they did swear by the heavens ... that they would go up to battle against their enemies, and would cut them off from the face of the land.

This sounds like the plot of many movies and TV shows.

**Joseph F. Smith:** Men are not called upon to curse mankind; that is not our mission; it is our mission to preach righteousness to them. It is our business to love and to bless them, and to redeem them from the fall and from the wickedness of the world. This is our mission and our special calling. God will curse and will exercise his judgment in those matters.

‘Vengeance is mine,’ saith the Lord, ‘and I will repay.’ We are perfectly willing to leave vengeance in the hands of God and let him judge between us and our enemies, and let him reward them according to his own wisdom and mercy. (CR, Oct 1904, 5)

**Joseph Smith:** Brethren, bear and forbear one with another, for so the Lord does with us. Pray for your enemies in the Church and curse not your foes without: for vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay. To every ordained member, and to all, we say, be merciful and you shall find mercy. Seek to help save souls, not to destroy them. (TPJS 77)

## 10. Mormon's response (Morm. 3:11–16)

<sup>11</sup> I, Mormon, did utterly refuse from this time forth to be ... a leader of this people, because of their wickedness. ... <sup>12</sup> I had led them many times to battle, and had loved them, according to the love of God which was in me, with all my heart; and my soul had been poured out in prayer unto my God all the day long for them; nevertheless, it was without faith, because of the hardness of their hearts. <sup>13</sup> And thrice have I delivered them ... and they have

repented not of their sins. <sup>14</sup> And when they had sworn by all that had been forbidden them by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that they would ... avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren, behold the voice of the Lord came unto me, saying: <sup>15</sup> Vengeance is mine, and I will repay; and because this people repented not after I had delivered them, behold, they shall be cut off from the face of the earth. ... <sup>16</sup> I utterly refused to go up against mine enemies; and I did even as the Lord had commanded me; and I did stand as an idle witness.

## 11. Purpose of Mormon's writings (Morm. 3:20–22)

<sup>20</sup> For this cause I write unto you, that ye may know that ye must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ ... to be judged of your works ...; <sup>21</sup> And also that ye may believe the gospel of Jesus Christ ...; and also that the Jews, the covenant people of the Lord, shall have other witness besides him whom they saw and heard, that Jesus, whom they slew, was the very Christ and the very God. <sup>22</sup> And I would that I could persuade all ... to repent and prepare to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

## 12. Nephites go up to battle [AD 363] (Morm. 4:4–5)

<sup>4</sup> It was because the armies of the Nephites went up unto the Lamanites that they began to be smitten; for were it not for that, the Lamanites could have had no power over them. <sup>5</sup> But, behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished; for it is the wicked that stir up the hearts of the children of men unto bloodshed.

Many years earlier, the Nephites wanted to go into mountains to destroy the Gadianton robbers “in their own lands.” Their leader said, “if we should go up against them the Lord would deliver us into their hands; therefore ... we will wait till they shall come against us; ... [and] he will deliver them into our hands. (3 Ne 3:20–21)

## 13. Wickedness of Nephites and Lamanites (4:11–14)

<sup>11</sup> Every heart was hardened, so that they delighted in the shedding of blood continually. ... <sup>13</sup> The Lamanites ... <sup>14</sup> did take many prisoners both women and children, and did offer them up as sacrifices unto their idol gods.

<sup>8</sup> They feed the women upon the flesh of their husbands, and the children upon the flesh of their fathers; and no water, save a little, do they give unto them. (Moro. 9:8)

<sup>3</sup> My son, I fear lest the Lamanites shall destroy this people; for they do not repent, and Satan stirreth them up continually to anger one with another. <sup>4</sup> Behold, I am laboring with them continually; and ... I fear lest the Spirit of the Lord hath ceased striving with them. <sup>5</sup> For so exceedingly do they anger that it seemeth me that they have no fear of death; and they have lost their love, one towards another; and they thirst after blood and revenge continually. (Moro. 9:3–5)

<sup>9</sup> Many of the daughters of the Lamanites have they taken prisoners; and after depriving them of that which was most dear and precious above all things, which is chastity and virtue— <sup>10</sup> And ... they did murder them in a most cruel manner, torturing their bodies even unto death; and ... they devour their flesh like unto wild beasts, because of the hardness of their hearts; and they do it for a token of bravery. (Moro. 9:9–10)

#### 14. Mormon's counsel to Moroni (Moro. 9:6, 22–25)

<sup>6</sup> My beloved son, notwithstanding their hardness, let us labor diligently; for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation; for we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God. ... <sup>22</sup> I recommend thee unto God, ... and I pray ... that he will spare thy life, to witness the return of his people unto him, or their utter destruction. ... <sup>24</sup> Many of our brethren have deserted over unto the Lamanites, and many more will also desert. ... <sup>25</sup> My son, be faithful in Christ; and may not the things which I have written grieve thee, to weigh thee down unto death; but may Christ lift thee up, and may his sufferings and death, and the showing his body unto our fathers, and his mercy and long-suffering, and the hope of his glory and of eternal life, rest in your mind forever.

#### 15. Mormon repented of his oath [AD 375] (Morm. 4:23–5:2)

<sup>23</sup> The Lamanites were about to overthrow the land. ... <sup>5:1</sup> I ... did repent of the oath which I had made that I would no more assist [the Nephites]; and they gave me command again of their armies, for they looked upon me as though I could deliver them from their afflictions. <sup>2</sup> But ... I was without hope, for I knew the judgments of the Lord which should come upon them; for they repented not of their iniquities, but did struggle for their lives without calling upon that Being who created them.

#### 16. Mormon's description of the Nephites (Morm. 5:16–22)

<sup>16</sup> The Spirit of the Lord hath already ceased to strive with [them]; and they are without Christ and God in the world. ... <sup>17</sup> They were once a delightful people, and they had Christ for their shepherd; yea, they were led even by God the Father. <sup>18</sup> But now ... they are led about by Satan, even as chaff is driven before the wind, or as a vessel is tossed about upon the waves, without sail or anchor, or without anything wherewith to steer her. ... <sup>19</sup> And ... the Lord hath reserved their blessings, which they might have received in the land, for the Gentiles who shall possess the land. ... <sup>20</sup> And after they have been driven and scattered by the Gentiles, ... then will the Lord remember the covenant which he made unto Abraham and unto all the house of Israel. ... <sup>22</sup> And then, O ye Gentiles, how can ye stand before the power of God, except ye shall repent and turn from your evil ways?

#### 17. Final battle at Cumorah [AD 384] (Morm. 6:4, 7–15)

<sup>4</sup> We did pitch our tents around about the hill Cumorah; and it was in a land of many waters, rivers, and fountains; and here we had hope to gain advantage over the Lamanites. ... Knowing it to be the last struggle of my people, ... therefore I made this record out of the plates of Nephi, and hid up in the hill Cumorah all the records which had been entrusted to me ..., save it were these few plates which I gave unto my son Moroni. ...

The battles in Ether 14:6–13 are in Moron by the narrow neck of land (cf. Ether 7:6; Alma 63:5).

<sup>11</sup> The army of Coriantumr did pitch their tents by the hill Ramah; and it was that same hill where my father Mormon did hide up the records unto the Lord. (Ether 15:11)

<sup>7</sup> My people, with their wives and their children, did now behold the armies of the Lamanites marching towards them; and with that awful fear of death which fills the breasts of all the wicked, did they await to receive them. ... <sup>11</sup> And when they had gone through and hewn down all my people save it were [24] of us, (among whom was my son Moroni) and we ... did behold on the morrow ... from the top of the hill Cumorah, the ten thousand of my people who were hewn down, being led in the front by me. ... <sup>15</sup> Yea, even all my people [230,000], save it were those [24] who

were with me, and also a few who had escaped into the south countries, and a few who had deserted over unto the Lamanites.

<sup>2</sup> After the ... battle at Cumorah, ... the Nephites who had escaped ... were hunted by the Lamanites, until they were all destroyed. <sup>3</sup> And my father ... was killed [AD 400] (Morm 8:2–3).

Moroni wrote his final words and buried the plates about 20 years later in AD 421. During these 20 years, Moroni hid from the Lamanites, finished the Nephite record, abridged the book of Ether (Moro 1:1), engraved the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon plates (Eth 4:4–5; 5:1), and concluded with his own words (Moro 1:4), and buried the plates.

During these 20 years, Moroni travelled to Manti, Utah on his way to bury the plates in a hill in New York. “At a conference held in Ephraim, Sanpete County, June 25th, 1875, nearly all the speakers expressed their feelings to have a temple built in Sanpete County. ... At 4 p.m. ... President Brigham Young said: ‘The Temple should be built on Manti stone quarry.’ Early on the morning of April 25, 1877, President Brigham Young asked Brother Warren S. Snow to go with him to the Temple hill. Brother Snow says: “We two were alone: President Young took me to the spot where the Temple was to stand; we went to the southeast corner, and President Young said: ‘Here is the spot where the prophet Moroni stood and dedicated this piece of land for a Temple site, and that is the reason why the location is made here, and we can’t move it from this spot; and if you and I are the only persons that come here at high noon today, we will dedicate this ground.’ (Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 436)” (H. Donl Peterson, “Moroni, the Last of the Nephite Prophets,” <http://rsc.byu.edu/archived/book-mormon-fourth-nephi-through-moroni-zion-destruction/18-moroni-last-nephite-prophets>)

In 1823, the angel Moroni told Joseph the hill and Joseph saw it in a vision (JS-H 1:34–42). At no time did Joseph or Moroni say that this hill was the hill Cumorah mentioned in the Book of Mormon. Joseph only mentioned Cumorah once in his writings in 1842 (D&C 128:20) where he is reviewing revelations and keys being restored. We don’t know when members began calling it the Hill Cumorah, but by 1835, the name Cumorah was well-known among the members. Most LDS scholars believe the hill in New York was a different hill than the one mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

#### 18. Mormon's response after last battle (Morm. 6:16–18)

<sup>16</sup> My soul was rent with anguish, because of the slain of my people, and I cried: <sup>17</sup> O ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord! O ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you! <sup>18</sup> Behold, if ye had not done this, ye would not have fallen. But behold, ye are fallen, and I mourn your loss.

#### 19. How do these chapters apply to us?

After the final battle of the Nephites, Moroni abridged the book of Ether. He also included his own comments and counsel.

<sup>8</sup> [The Lord] had sworn in his wrath unto the brother of Jared, that whoso should possess this land of promise ... should serve him ... or ... be swept off when the fulness of his wrath should come upon them. <sup>9</sup> ... And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity. ... <sup>11</sup> And this 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 fulness come, that ye may not bring down the fulness of the wrath of God upon you as the inhabitants of the land have hitherto done. (Eth 2:8–11)

<sup>31</sup> Give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been. (Morm 9:31)

<sup>3</sup> Remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men. (Moro 10:3)

## 20. Questions

- Could a 23 year old young man have written this book?
- How do these things apply to me now in my circumstances?
- As I read these chapters, how do I feel?
- Do they invite and entice me to love God, and do good?
- As I read, do I “remember how merciful the Lord hath been, and ponder it in [my] heart” and ask God if it is true?

## Conclusion

### Leave enough time for conclusion!

End with Items 18 and 19.

In Elder Maxwell’s first quote below, he refers to some of Mormon’s final words.

### Read Maxwell’s first quote below

May we learn from the experiences of the Jaredites and Nephites “may learn to be more wise than” they were.

## Quotes

**Neal A. Maxwell:** He is ‘the keeper of the gate ... and He employeth no servant there.’ (2 Ne 9:41) Those who reject Him will miss out on a special personal moment, because, as He laments, He has ‘stood with open arms to receive you.’ (Morm 6:17) The unfaithful-along with the faithful-might have been ‘clasped in the arms of Jesus’ (Morm 5:11). The imagery of the holy temples and holy scriptures thus blend so beautifully, including things pertaining to sacred moments. This is the grand moment toward which we point and from which we should not be deflected. Hence, those who pass through their fiery trials and still acknowledge but trust His hand now will feel the clasp of His arms later! (Cory H. Maxwell, *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*, 137)

**Neal A. Maxwell:** Only reform and self-restraint, institutional and individual, can finally rescue society! Only a sufficient number of sin-resistant souls can change the marketplace. As Church members we should be part of that sin-resistant counterculture (*Ensign*, May 1993, 77).

**Neal A. Maxwell:** False remorse instead is like ‘fondling our failings.’ In ritual regret, we mourn our mistakes but without mending them. (Nov. 1991 *Ensign*, “Repentance”)

**NOTE:** The yellow shading shows what is NOT on the handout that I use in class. The handout makes it possible to share information while only briefly referring to it in class. The handout and any other supplements for the lesson are at [www.sviewp.com](http://www.sviewp.com).

## Sources:

- Odds* = Alonzo L. Gaskill, *Odds Are, You're Going to Be Exalted: Evidence That the Plan of Salvation Works*
- MEE = Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes*

## GENERAL

- BMRC = Dennis Largey, *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*
- TBM = Hugh Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols.
- OM = Original Manuscript
- PM = Printer’s Manuscript
- CR = Conference Report
- LDS View* = This computer program with the scriptures in 11 languages was sold in the Church Distribution Center as *Scriptures on CDM*. It can now be downloaded with the scriptures in up to 30 languages (<http://ldsview.byu.edu>). At <http://WordCruncher.com>, you can download WordCruncher and Webster’s 1844 Dictionary (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). If LDS View was downloaded first, WordCruncher will let you see the English scriptures and when you click on an English word, you can see Webster’s 1844 definition.
- Other Bible Translations are at [www.blueletterbible.org/](http://www.blueletterbible.org/)

## BAJA model

- Baja = [www.achoiceiland.com](http://www.achoiceiland.com)

## MESOAMERICAN model

- Sorenson = John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*.
- Reexploring* = John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, <http://mi.byu.edu>
- Poulsen = [bomgeography.poulsenll.org/bomdirections.html](http://bomgeography.poulsenll.org/bomdirections.html)

## Hebraisms

- Par-Heb = Donald W. Parry, “Hebraisms and Other Ancient Peculiarities,” <http://mi.byu.edu>
- Tved-Heb = John Tvedtnes, “The Hebrew Background of the Book of Mormon,” chapter 8 in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*; <http://mi.byu.edu>

## Other sources

- BD = *Bible Dictionary* (in English LDS Scriptures).
- GS = *Guide to the Scriptures* (in electronic LDS Scriptures)
- I-BofM = New Testament Institute manual, *The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles*, [institute.lds.org](http://institute.lds.org)
- KJV King James Version of the Bible.
- NIV = New International Version of the Bible
- TPJS = *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*
- SOED = Shorter Oxford English Dictionary
- OED = Oxford English Dictionary
- BDB = *Brown, Driver, Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
- Bauer = Walter Bauer, *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*
- EJ = *Encyclopedia Judaica*
- Rona = Daniel Rona, [www.israelrevealed.com/comp-sup-r.htm](http://www.israelrevealed.com/comp-sup-r.htm).
- MM = Meridian Magazine, Gospel Doctrine, [www.ldsMag.com](http://www.ldsMag.com)
- [beardall2000.com/gospdoct.shtml](http://beardall2000.com/gospdoct.shtml);
- [www.gospeldoctrine.com](http://www.gospeldoctrine.com)