

## Lesson Highlights

- Samuel warns the Nephites that they will be destroyed unless they repent.
- Samuel prophesies of the signs that will precede the birth and death of the Savior. He continues to call the people to repentance.
- Some believe Samuel and are baptized. Others harden their hearts and try to kill Samuel.

A study of this lesson will remind us of the importance of repenting, turning to the Lord, and following the prophets.

## Next Week:

Lesson 36:

"On the Morrow Come I into the World",  
3 Nephi 1-7

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## Introduction



Imagine a salesman who has only one product to sell: misery. What could this salesman do to sell his product? Well, he could make misery look appealing or he could trick people into thinking that his product will bring happiness instead of misery. Satan has nothing to offer but misery (2 Nephi 2:17-18, 27). So how does Satan make misery and sin look desirable? How does he try to persuade people that happiness and righteousness are undesirable?

This lesson will discuss the prophecies of Samuel, a Lamanite prophet. Samuel preached to a group of Nephites who had allowed themselves to be overcome by Satan's temptations. They had "sought for happiness in doing iniquity," which is contrary to the nature of God (Helaman 13:38).

**Samuel warned the Nephites that they would be destroyed unless they repented.**

A Lamanite prophet named Samuel went to preach in Zarahemla, but the Nephites cast him out of the land. The Lord commanded Samuel to return to Zarahemla and prophesy. We find in Helaman 13:1-4 that when the Nephites did not allow Samuel to enter the city, he stood on the city wall and prophesied to them.

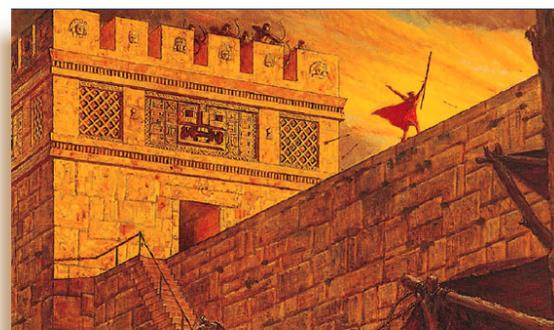
**Helaman 13:8** Samuel warned the people that because of the hardness of their hearts, the Lord would take His word from them and withdraw His Spirit from them.

**Mosiah 2:36-37** These consequences, withdrawal of inspired counsel and the Spirit, come to people who harden their hearts because they withdraw themselves from the Spirit and openly rebel against God—who will not dwell in unholy temples. Therefore, it behooves us to pause a moment and consider what we might do to soften our hearts.

**Helaman 13:11** Through the prophet Samuel, the Lord said, "*Blessed are they who will repent and turn unto me*". Some people attempt to repent without turning to the Lord, but that doesn't work. Why is turning to the Lord an essential part of repentance?

**President Ezra Taft Benson** taught: "*Repentance means more than simply a reformation of behavior. Many men and women in the world demonstrate great will-power and self-discipline in overcoming bad habits and the weaknesses of the flesh. Yet at the same time they give no thought to the Master, sometimes even openly rejecting Him. Such changes of behavior, even if in a positive direction, do not constitute true repentance. ... True repentance is based on and flows from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way. True repentance involves a change of heart and not just a change of behavior (see Alma 5:13)*" (The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson [1988], 71).

**Helaman 13:20-21** The Nephites had "set their hearts upon riches". In addition, they had not hearkened to the words of the Lord, who had given them their riches.



**Helaman 13:17-22** Because of this, the Nephites and their riches were cursed. Ways in which people give more time and attention to worldly concerns than to spiritual concerns include participating in sports, entertainment, or money-making activities instead of fulfilling Church callings in service to others. Ponder how you can assess whether you are giving enough attention to your spiritual welfare.

**Helaman 13:22** Samuel said that the Nephites always remembered their riches but did not remember to thank the Lord for them. Think about why it is difficult for some people to remain grateful when they are blessed with abundance. (Could it be pride?) Gratitude counteracts pride. Think about ways you can show gratitude to the Lord.

**Helaman 13:24-25**; compare with **Matthew 23:29-39** The Nephites persecuted and killed the prophets of their day, but they said, "*If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets*".

**Helaman 13:26** People sometimes praise past prophets and reject living prophets because the living prophets leave no doubt of the people's guilt as they warn them and urge their repentance.

**Helaman 13:27-29** Some people allow themselves to "*be led by foolish and blind guides*" when they succumb to flattery and follow those who find no fault with them but actually encourage them in their pride.

President Ezra Taft Benson:

*"In the Book of Mormon we find a pattern for preparing for the Second Coming. A major portion of the book centers on the few decades just prior to Christ's coming to America. By careful study of that time period we can determine why some were destroyed in the terrible judgments that preceded His coming and what brought others to stand at the temple in the land of Bountiful and thrust their hands into the wounds of His hands and feet....*

*"Can anyone doubt that this book was meant for us and that in it we find great power, great comfort, and great protection?" (Ensign, Nov 1986, p6-7)*

**Helaman 13:38** According to Samuel, the Nephites had *"sought for happiness in doing iniquity"*.

**Helaman 13:38**; see also **Alma 41:10-11** It is impossible to find true happiness in sin because it is contrary to the nature and commandments of God.

We can find true happiness and help others to find true happiness if we follow this counsel.

***Samuel prophesied of the signs that would precede the birth and death of the Savior. He continued to call the people to repentance.***

**Helaman 14:2, 15** Samuel prophesied of the Savior's birth--to come as the Redeemer of those who would believe in Him; and Samuel spoke of the Savior's death as a necessary step to bring about the salvation of men.

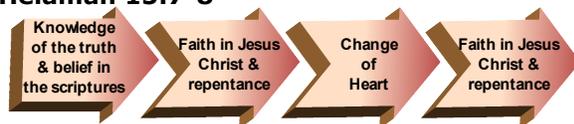
**Helaman 14:3-7, 20-28** Signs Samuel said would attend the Savior's birth and death included great lights in the heaven, a night with no darkness, the rise of a new star, and many unspecified signs and wonders in heaven at the time of his birth; and at his death the sun would be darkened along with the moon and stars for three days, thunderings and lightnings occur for many hours, the earth would tremble with earthquakes, solid rock masses above and beneath the earth's surface would be broken up and remain so ever after, great tempests would arise, mountains would collapse into valleys while valleys would become mountains, highways would be destroyed and cities devastated, graves open to yield up their dead and saints would appear.

**Helaman 14:13** Samuel said that if the people would repent, they would receive a remission of their sins through the merits of Christ. Merits are qualities or actions that entitle a person to claim rewards.

***Some believe Samuel and were baptized. Others hardened their hearts and tried to kill Samuel.***

**Helaman 15:3**; see also **Hebrews 12:6** The Lord chastened the Nephites because of his love for them. The Lord's chastening shows His love for us because it demonstrates that he does give us opportunities to choose, make mistakes, and then have an opportunity to learn and then repent and make a better choice. We learn from the Lord's chastening that we are loved and that he wants us to have ample opportunity to choose the right and be blessed for our choices.

**Helaman 15:7-8**



Knowledge of the truth and belief in the scriptures lead to faith and repentance because they help us understand the benefits of becoming like the Savior and they help us trust in his promises.

The **Prophet Joseph Smith** said, *"Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God"* (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 255-56).

**2 Nephi 2:7-9; Alma 22:14** Because He was the only one who could answer the ends of the law; and because fallen man could have no merit on his own, it is only through the Savior's merits, gained through His suffering and death, that we can be forgiven of our sins.

**President Ezra Taft Benson** taught, *"Even the most just and upright man cannot save himself solely on his own merits"* (The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, 71).

**Helaman 14:15-18** According to Samuel, Jesus had to die that men may be brought into the presence of the Lord.

Consider how knowing of the Savior's sacrifice affects you.

**Helaman 14:29** Samuel said, *"If [people] are condemned they bring upon themselves their own condemnation"*.

**Helaman 14:30-31** This is so because God gave us a knowledge of good and evil and the power to choose between the two by using our free moral agency. It is essential that we be *"permitted to act for [our]selves"* so that we can freely choose what will be restored to us in the eternities.

Faith and repentance lead to a change of heart because they allow us to have the companionship of the Spirit that cleanses us of worldly desires and causes us to abhor sin.

**Helaman 15:8** The Lamanites who experienced a change of heart remained *"firm and steadfast in the faith"*.

**2 Nephi 31:19-20** When we experience a change of heart, we must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, have a perfect brightness of hope, develop a love of God and all men, feast upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end in following the example of the Savior to ensure that the change is lasting.

## Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings and prophecies of Samuel.

- What principles taught by Samuel can you more fully implement in your life?
- What is the most important thing you can do to help our nation?
- How can we assess whether we are giving enough attention to our spiritual welfare?
- How can we help our children learn that they cannot find happiness in iniquity?
- What can we learn from God's chastenings?

**Helaman 16:1-7** Some Nephites responded to Samuel's prophecies and warning by believing and seeking out Nephi to baptize them; others became angered and sought to kill Samuel with stones and arrows. When many of them saw that Samuel was protected by the Lord, they humbled themselves and sought baptism; while others remained extremely angry and sought to have Samuel bound and taken away.

### Conclusion

The clarion words of Samuel surely ring true. If we do not repent we must suffer and even be destroyed. The governing principle is to recognize the Savior in our lives. He has taught us through His prophets to be believing and not harden our hearts. A hardened heart is the sure way to lose the blessings of the Lord in our lives, and Samuel's words are needed today just as they were thousands of years ago. Will we hearken to the words of the prophets of God? They speak His words, and they are the words that, when followed, can lead us to eternal life.

### Additional Teaching

#### Preparing for the Second Coming

**President Ezra Taft Benson:** *"The record of the Nephite history just prior to the Savior's visit reveals many parallels to our own day as we anticipate the Savior's second coming"* (Ensign, May 1987, 4).

In this statement, the *"record of the Nephite history"* referred to by President Benson was the book of 3 Nephi--the account of the Nephites before they were visited by the resurrected Lord. That statement could also apply to the book of Helaman--the account of the Nephites before they saw the signs of the Savior's birth.

Helaman 13-16 contains accounts of prophecies and events that parallel signs and events that will precede the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Prophecies and Events Recorded in Helaman 13-16	Prophecy or Event	Signs and Events that Will Precede the Second Coming	Prophecies and Events Recorded in Helaman 13-16	Prophecy or Event	Signs and Events that Will Precede the Second Coming
Helaman 16:1, 3, 6, 10	Strong righteous minority	1 Nephi 14:12; Jacob 5:70	Helaman 14:3-4	Prophecy of a night with no darkness	Zechariah 14:7; see also Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 287
Helaman 16:13-14	Spiritual outpourings and miracles	Joel 2:28-30; D&C 45:39-42	Helaman 14:5-6, 20	Prophecies of signs and wonders in the heavens	Joel 2:30-31; D&C 45:40
Helaman 13:22; 16:12, 22-23	Great wickedness	2 Timothy 3:1-5; D&C 45:27	Helaman 16:13-18	Denial of signs, wonders, and Christ's coming	2 Peter 3:3-4; D&C 45:26
Helaman 13:2, 6, 8, 10-11; 14:9, 11; 15:1-3, 17; 16:2	Rejection of the Lord's prophets and their call to repentance	D&C 1:14-16	Helaman 14:21, 23, 26	Prophecies of great storms and other natural destruction	Revelation 16:18, 21; D&C 88:88-90
Helaman 15:4-11	Conversion of many Lamanites	D&C 49:24	Helaman 14:24; 15:1	Prophecy of the destruction of the wicked	Isaiah 26:21; Malachi 4:1; D&C 1:9; 133:41

Review Samuel's prophecies and consider how a study of these prophecies can help you prepare for the Savior's Second Coming.