

# Samuel and His Nephite Sources

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Samuel the Lamanite is a unique and powerful individual in the Book of Mormon. Dennis Largey described him as “one of the most colorful figures in the Book of Mormon,” stating that “few readers can forget the image of this fearless servant of God announcing the dramatic signs of Christ’s birth and death, crying repentance from the walls of Zarahemla.”<sup>1</sup>

The only Lamanite specifically cited by name as being a prophet, Samuel taught doctrine and prophesied to the Nephites in approximately 6 BC. Samuel demonstrated extreme boldness; even after the Nephites “would not suffer that he should enter into the city . . . [Samuel] went and got upon the wall thereof, and stretched forth his hand and cried with a loud voice, and prophesied unto the people whatsoever things the Lord put into his heart” (Hel. 13:4).

Samuel’s prophecies were specific and were remembered. For instance, Samuel provided a precise date of the Savior’s coming, announcing that “five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God” (Hel. 14:2). His words were taken seriously; even unbelievers carefully monitored his prophecies to see if they would come to pass (see 3 Ne. 1:5). They were so important that the Savior instructed Nephi<sub>3</sub> to add their fulfillment to the official scriptural record (3 Ne. 23:7–13). Hundreds of years later, Mormon still referred to Samuel’s words, indicating that they had been both written and remembered (see Morm. 1:19).

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1. Dennis L. Largey, “Samuel the Lamanite,” in *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*, ed. Dennis L. Largey (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003) 697.

Much has already been written regarding Samuel's powerful discourse. Some have commented on the importance of Samuel's words to the Savior himself.<sup>2</sup> Others, such as Wayne Shute and Wayne Brickey, emphasize that the unusual circumstances surrounding Samuel's message (for example, it being delivered from a city wall) may have been viewed as both spectacular and perplexing by the people, perhaps specifically to inspire them to repent.<sup>3</sup> Joseph M. Spencer provides a theological reading of the first portion of Samuel's speech by analyzing Samuel's interest in time.<sup>4</sup>

Samuel the Lamanite's speech has been shown to represent many aspects of prophetic sermons recorded in scripture. Don Parry demonstrates how Samuel uses several prophetic forms of speech common to the Bible that "are indicative of prophetic authority and prerogative," which would have provided a strong foundation of authority for his speech.<sup>5</sup> Kent Brown focuses on illustrating how Samuel gives two poetic prophetic laments reminiscent of the laments recorded in the Psalms. Brown argues that although Samuel's laments resemble these biblical laments in structure, composition, and style, they are unique in that they contain prophecies that would later be fulfilled.<sup>6</sup> Edgar Snow's narrative analysis of Helaman 13–16 reveals a sense of irony

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2. Sidney B. Sperry, "The Lamanites Portrayed in the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4, no. 1 (1995): 253. It should be noted that some scholars argue that the record kept by Nephi<sub>2</sub> may not have originally contained the record of Samuel's speech at all, but that it was recorded after this request by the Savior and later included chronologically in Mormon's abridgement. See Brant A. Gardner, "Helaman 13," in *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Helaman–Third Nephi* (Draper, Utah: Greg Kofford Books, 2007), 172–73.

3. R. Wayne Shute and Wayne E. Brickey, "Prophets and Perplexity: The Book of Helaman as a Case Study," in *The Book of Mormon: Helaman through 3 Nephi 8, According to Thy Word*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1992), 186, 188.

4. Joseph M. Spencer, "The Time of Sin," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 9 (2014): 87–110.

5. Donald N. Parry, "'Thus Saith the Lord': Prophetic Language in Samuel's Speech," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 1, no. 1 (1992): 181–83.

6. S. Kent Brown, "The Prophetic Laments of Samuel the Lamanite," in *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla: Literary and Historical Studies of the Book of Mormon*, ed. S. Kent Brown (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1998): 128–45.

at the ministry of a righteous Lamanite to the historically righteous Nephites through Mormon's narrative juxtaposition of Samuel's speech with Nephi<sub>2</sub>'s ongoing preaching and baptism.<sup>7</sup> These studies and other literature<sup>8</sup> show that Samuel the Lamanite's discourse is a rich example of a prophetic sermon in the Book of Mormon.

While this literature has done much to help readers more fully appreciate the grandeur of Samuel's sermon, there is an important facet of this discourse that has received scant attention, namely, the possible intertextuality between the words of Samuel the Lamanite and other scriptural sources. To date, limited work has been done that explicitly focuses on this aspect of Samuel's words. Quinten Barney explores a series of textual connections between Samuel the Lamanite and Christ's teachings in Matthew 23–24 and speculates that the parallels between the texts could be attributed to Zenos.<sup>9</sup> Shon Hopkin and John Hilton III examine a series of Old Testament phrases that are utilized by Samuel the Lamanite.<sup>10</sup> However, to date, there has been no focused examination of textual connections between Samuel the Lamanite and his Nephite predecessors who preached in the Book of Mormon.

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that he extensively utilized words from multiple Book of Mormon prophets<sup>11</sup> as he taught the Nephites from a wall in Zarahemla. In terms of examining connections between Samuel and other Book of Mormon prophets, the

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7. Edgar C. Snow Jr., "Narrative Criticism and the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4, no. 2 (1995): 93–106.

8. See also Mae Blanch, "Samuel the Lamanite," in *Studies in Scripture: Volume Eight, Alma 30 to Moroni*, ed. Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 114–24; Gardner, "Helaman 13," 172–215; Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 182–89; and Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1991), 3:398–421.

9. Quinten Barney, "Samuel the Lamanite, Christ, and Zenos: A Study of Intertextuality," *Interpreter* 18 (2016): 159–70.

10. Shon Hopkin and John Hilton III, "Samuel's Reliance on Biblical Language," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 24 (2015): 31–52.

11. It is clear that in addition to alluding to the words of Book of Mormon prophets, Samuel's words have multiple biblical textual connections. The present study focuses on how Nephite prophets may have influenced Samuel; we hope future articles will deeply explore biblical connections with Samuel's words and compare them with those discussed in the present study.

most significant work today is John W. Welch's observation that Samuel appears to have referenced the words of King Benjamin, as evidenced in table 1.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 1. Samuel Referencing King Benjamin**

King Benjamin's Words	Samuel's Words
And he shall be called <i>Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of<sup>*</sup> earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning</i> ; and his mother shall be called Mary. (Mosiah 3:8)	And also that ye might know of the coming of <i>Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning</i> ; and that ye might know of the signs of his coming, to the intent that ye might believe on his name. (Hel. 14:12)

\* The “of” in “of earth” has been omitted in later editions of the Book of Mormon, but is present in Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

When working with intertextuality, care must be utilized in order to differentiate between coincidental connections and instances where one author genuinely appears to be borrowing from another. Welch's above example is a twenty-one-word phrase that appears only in these two verses, indicating a purposeful connection. In a previous *BYU Studies Quarterly* article by one of the authors of the present study,<sup>13</sup> basic principles of intertextuality were discussed, including the concepts that lengthy and unique parallels, as well as multiple connections in quick succession, increase the likelihood that two passages are related to each other.<sup>14</sup> In the present study, we demonstrate that in addition to textual

12. John W. Welch, “Textual Consistency,” in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1992), 21–23. Richard Rust also hints at a possible allusion from Samuel to Zenos in *Feasting on the Word* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1997), 167.

13. John Hilton III, “Textual Similarities in the Words of Abinadi and Alma’s Counsel to Corianton,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (2012): 39–60.

14. More recently, Nicholas J. Frederick has proposed criteria for evaluating the significance of proposed textual connections. While his article focuses on the New Testament and Book of Mormon, many of the principles are relevant to the present study. See Nicholas J. Frederick, “Evaluating the Interaction between the New Testament and the Book of Mormon: A Proposed Methodology,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 24, no. 1 (2015): 1–30.

connections with King Benjamin,<sup>15</sup> Samuel's words have important relationships with the words of Nephi<sub>1</sub>, Jacob, Alma<sub>2</sub>, Amulek, and Nephi<sub>2</sub>.<sup>16</sup>

In this paper, we discuss textual connections between Samuel and Nephite prophets by looking at some of those that fall into two overarching themes.<sup>17</sup> First, we examine how Samuel uses the words of previous Nephite prophets to directly indict the Nephites. (For listings of Samuel's borrowings from Book of Mormon prophets, see tables 2a and 2b.) Second, we show how Samuel takes the words spoken regarding various members of the house of Israel and employs them to specifically refer to the Lamanites. Throughout this paper, we consider Helaman 13–15 to consist Samuel's actual words, or at least an approximation of those words as recorded by Nephi<sub>2</sub> or others who heard them. An alternate possibility is explored at the end of this article.

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15. In addition to the example cited from Welch, consider the following potential textual connection between King Benjamin and Samuel. Benjamin taught, “Wo unto him who knoweth that he *rebelleth against* God! For salvation cometh to none such *except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ*” (Mosiah 3:12). Speaking to a people who had “*rebelled against* [their] holy God” (Hel. 8:25), Samuel echoed Benjamin’s words and prophesied, “Nothing can save this people *save it be repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ*” (Hel. 13:6). Outside of these two verses, the phrase “*repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ*” appears only in Alma 37:33. Throughout this article, we will italicize portions of verses to highlight phrases that show intertextuality.

16. Some might wonder how it is that Samuel, a Lamanite, would have access to the words of previous Nephite prophets. Approximately fifty years before Samuel preached in Zarahemla, “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). Such a sending forth of the prophetic word would surely have been made available to the many Lamanites who converted twenty years later (see Hel. 5). Indeed, while we do not have any record regarding Samuel’s conversion, Samuel’s sermon in Zarahemla transpired twenty-five years after the miraculous preaching of Nephi<sub>2</sub> and his brother in the land of Nephi. Perhaps Samuel was one of Nephi<sub>2</sub>’s converts that occurred at the prison in the land of Nephi (see Hel. 5:40–50). This possibility is suggested by Largey, “Samuel the Lamanite,” 697. If that were the case, one can imagine that Nephi<sub>2</sub>’s direct lineal connection to previous Book of Mormon record keepers would have only enhanced Samuel’s access to and interest in these records.

17. A third theme in how Samuel uses Nephite prophets that could be discussed is in his teachings related to the plan of salvation. For example, Jacob told the Nephites, “*Ye are free to act for yourselves—to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life*” (2 Ne. 10:23). Samuel echoes these words, stating, “*Ye are free; ye are permitted to act for yourselves. . . . [God] hath given*

**Table 2a. Samuel's Statements and Sources from Which He Quotes**

<i>Samuel</i>	<i>Sources Quoted</i>	<i>Discussed on</i>
Hel. 13:9	Alma 10:23	p. 125
Hel. 13:10	Alma 9:18	pp. 125–26
Hel. 13:14	Alma 10:19, 23	p. 124
Hel. 13:16, 17, 24, 26	Jacob 2:29, 31, 33, 35	p. 132
Hel. 13:21–23	Hel. 7:18, 20–22	p. 128
Hel. 13:24	2 Ne. 26:3	p. 122
Hel. 13:28	2 Ne. 28:21, 25	pp. 123–24
Hel. 13:29	2 Ne. 26:10; Alma 9:8, 10:17, 25; Hel. 9:21	p. 138
Hel. 13:30	2 Ne. 26:6	pp. 122–23
Hel. 13:32, 37	Hel. 11:8, 10–11	p. 129
Hel. 13:38	Alma 34:31, 33	p. 127
Hel. 14:10	Hel. 9:23–24	p. 129 n. 32
Hel. 14:12	Mosiah 3:8	p. 118
Hel. 14:16	Alma 42:9, 14	pp. 120–21 n. 17
Hel. 15:3	Alma 9:19–20	p. 126 n. 26
Hel. 15:5	2 Ne. 5:10	p. 130
Hel. 15:11, 13	2 Ne. 10:2	p. 132
Hel. 15:11–13, 15	Jacob 3:6–7; Mosiah 1:5; Alma 9:16–17; Hel. 7:24	p. 135
Hel. 15:12	2 Ne. 6:11	p. 131
Hel. 15:13	1 Ne. 22:25	p. 131
Hel. 15:14	Hel. 7:23	p. 133

unto you that ye might *choose life or death*” (Hel. 14:30–31). The phrase “ye are free” and the word “act” appear together only in these two verses. Across scripture, the words “choose,” “life,” and “death” appear in only six different verses. The fact that 2 Nephi 10:23 is closely related to 2 Nephi 2:26–27 does raise the possibility that Samuel is actually drawing upon Lehi’s words rather than Jacob’s. Samuel also appears to draw on Alma<sub>2</sub>’s teachings regarding spiritual death. One example of this pattern is found in the phrase “cut off from the presence of the Lord.” This phrase appears eleven times in the Book of Mormon, typically in the context of sin leading to a lack of prosperity (see for example 1 Ne. 2:21; 2 Ne. 5:20; Alma 50:20). Samuel and Alma<sub>2</sub> each use this expression in a unique way, equating it with death, particularly the spiritual death brought by the Fall. Alma<sub>2</sub> says, “*The fall had brought upon all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal*” (Alma 42:9) and, “*Thus we see that all mankind were fallen, and they were in the grasp of justice; yea, the justice of God, which consigned them forever to be cut off from his presence*” (Alma 42:14; see also 42:11). Samuel teaches, “*For all mankind, by the fall of Adam being cut off from*

**Table 2b. Samuel's Sources and Where He Uses Them**

<i>Sources Quoted</i>	<i>Samuel</i>	<i>Discussed on</i>
1 Ne. 22:25	Hel. 15:13	p. 131
2 Ne. 5:10	Hel. 15:5	p. 130
2 Ne. 6:11	Hel. 15:12	p. 131
2 Ne. 10:2	Hel. 15:11, 13	p. 132
2 Ne. 26:3	Hel. 13:24	p. 122
2 Ne. 26:6	Hel. 13:30	pp. 122–23
2 Ne. 26:10	Hel. 13:29	p. 138
2 Ne. 28:21, 25	Hel. 13:28	pp. 123–24
Jacob 2:29, 31, 33, 35	Hel. 13:16, 17, 24, 26	p. 132
Jacob 3:6–7	Hel. 15:11–13, 15	p. 135
Mosiah 1:5	Hel. 15:11–13, 15	p. 135
Mosiah 3:8	Hel. 14:12	p. 118
Hel. 7:18, 20–22	Hel. 13:21–23	p. 128
Hel. 7:23	Hel. 15:14	p. 133
Hel. 7:24	Hel. 15:11–13, 15	p. 135
Hel. 9:21	Hel. 13:29	p. 138
Hel. 9:23–24	Hel. 14:10	p. 129 n. 32
Hel. 11:8, 10–11	Hel. 13:32, 37	p. 129
Alma 9:8	Hel. 13:29	p. 138
Alma 9:16–17	Hel. 15:11–13, 15	p. 135
Alma 9:18	Hel. 13:10	pp. 125–26
Alma 9:19–20	Hel. 15:3	p. 126 n. 26
Alma 10:17, 25	Hel. 13:29	p. 138
Alma 10:19, 23	Hel. 13:14	p. 124
Alma 10:23	Hel. 13:9	p. 125
Alma 34:31, 33	Hel. 13:38	p. 127
Alma 42:9, 14	Hel. 14:16	pp. 120–21 n. 22

*the presence of the Lord*, are considered as *dead*, both as to things *temporal and to things spiritual*" (Hel. 14:16). In these verses, both Alma<sub>2</sub> and Samuel speak of a universal separation from God by virtue of the Fall. Jacob also employs similar usage (see 2 Ne. 9:6). It is possible that Alma has drawn from Jacob (see also 2 Ne. 9:11–12); however, additional textual similarities make it seem as though Alma, not Jacob, is Samuel's source in this instance. Other examples of intertextuality between Samuel and Alma<sub>2</sub> that are similar in nature are found in Alma 12:32 (see Hel. 14:18); Alma 42:13, 23 (Hel. 14:11, 15, 17–18); Alma 41:3–4 (Hel. 14:30–31); and Alma 41:14 (Hel. 14:29). However, since this theme is not as pronounced as the other two, we do not focus on it in the present study.

## THEME #1: SAMUEL'S USE OF NEPHITE PROPHECIES TO INDICT THE NEPHITES OF HIS DAY

As a Lamanite called to preach to the Nephites, Samuel found himself in a difficult position. While we do not know details concerning the relationships between the Nephites and Lamanites at this point in time, historically the Nephites had looked down upon the Lamanites (see Jacob 3:5, Mosiah 10:10–17, Alma 26:23–24). Thus, Samuel may have been looking for ways that he could increase the Nephites' perceptions of the validity of his message. By appealing to the words of both ancient and contemporary Nephite prophets and leaders, Samuel strengthened his message and made his warnings even more ominous.

### Samuel's Use of Nephi<sub>1</sub> to Condemn the Nephites

As the eponymous ancestor of the Nephites, Nephi<sub>1</sub> would be a primary person for Samuel to draw on when speaking to those in Zarahemla. Nephi<sub>1</sub> had spoken stern words regarding his descendants and their situation during the time period of Christ's mortal ministry. While Nephi<sub>1</sub> spoke of signs being given of Christ's birth, Samuel provides specific details regarding those signs (see Hel. 14:1–6, 20–28). Samuel also uses some of the same text as Nephi to describe these events in greater detail. Speaking of the time of the signs of the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ, Nephi said that at that day, “they perish because *they cast out the prophets*, and the saints, *and stone them, and slay them*” (2 Ne. 26:3).

Samuel makes it clear that the day of which Nephi had prophesied had come.<sup>18</sup> Rather than speak in third person, as did Nephi, Samuel speaks in second person: “Yea, wo unto this people, because of this time which has arrived, that *ye do cast out the prophets*, and do mock them, *and cast stones at them, and do slay them*” (Hel. 13:24). Although Nephi<sub>1</sub> was clearly speaking of the future, Samuel shifts Nephi<sub>1</sub>'s words from being about the future to being a time that “has arrived.”

Speaking of this same general time period, Nephi<sub>1</sub> had warned, “*The anger of the Lord shall be kindled against them*” (2 Ne. 26:6). Note that Nephi spoke in future tense and in third person in describing a later

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18. While the resurrection was still decades in the future, it was certainly much closer than it had been from Nephi's vantage point, centuries earlier. While we do not have a record of prophets being killed at this time period (but see Hel. 13:24), 3 Nephi 7:14 indicates that such things did happen. Thus, when Samuel says that the time “has arrived,” he may have been engaging in a bit of hyperbole, since the time of the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ had *nearly* arrived.

day and people. Samuel takes Nephi<sub>1</sub>'s words and again transforms the tense and moves the words to be directly about his audience saying, "*The anger of the Lord is already kindled against you*" (Hel. 13:30). This event that Nephi<sub>1</sub> had prophesied (the anger of the Lord being kindled against them) has *already* happened.

As Nephi<sub>1</sub> contemplated the future destruction of his people, he stated that it would come because the Nephites "*choose works of darkness rather than light*" (2 Ne. 26:10). While Nephi was describing future people, Samuel takes this phrase and personalizes it for the Nephites of his day, directly asking them, "*How long will ye choose darkness rather than light?*" (Hel. 13:29).

Thus, in three instances within seven verses, Samuel takes a specific phrase that had been used by Nephi<sub>1</sub> when describing the time period of the birth and death of the Savior and informs the Nephites that they are living in the day that Nephi foretold. While each of these connections is significant in its own right,<sup>19</sup> these unique phrases from 2 Nephi 26:3–10 all clustering together in Helaman 13:24–30 does not appear to be coincidental. Thus, Samuel uses a rhetorical strategy of shifting Nephi<sub>1</sub>'s words from being prophetic utterances about six hundred years in the future into a statement about the current state of Nephite affairs, emphasizing to the Nephites the seriousness of their present situation.

Another phrase from Nephi<sub>1</sub> that Samuel appears to use in order to warn the Nephites is "all is well." While this might seem like a commonly used phrase, in the Book of Mormon it is employed only by Nephi<sub>1</sub> and Samuel.<sup>20</sup> Nephi<sub>1</sub> had warned that Satan would attempt to "pacify [the people], and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: *All is well* in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, *all is well*—and thus the devil cheateth their souls. . . . Wo be unto him that crieth: *All is well!*" (2 Ne. 28:21, 25). Nephi<sub>1</sub> said that those who believed "all is well" were being cheated by the devil and being led "away carefully down to hell" (2 Ne. 28:21). Samuel extends and specifies the same warnings to those

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19. The exact phrase "casting out the prophets" appears only one time in the Book of Mormon outside of these two passages (see 3 Ne. 9:10). The phrase "choose . . . darkness rather than light" does not appear in any other verses, although the phrase "darkness rather than light" occurs in John 3:19, as well as in D&C 10:21 and 29:45. The phraseology of the "anger of the Lord" being "kindled against" someone appears fourteen times in the Old Testament and three times in the Book of Mormon (2 Ne. 15:25; 2 Ne. 26:6; Hel. 13:30). "The anger of the Lord is kindled" also appears in D&C 1:13.

20. Outside the Book of Mormon, this phrase appears in 2 Samuel 18:28 and 2 Kings 5:22.

in his audience. Through his rhetoric, Samuel reminds his listeners of Nephi<sub>1</sub>'s teachings and indicates that they have again fallen into the snare that Nephi<sub>1</sub> had warned them against.

While Nephi<sub>1</sub> appears to have been specifically talking about latter-day readers (see 2 Ne. 28:1–3), Samuel attributes this same phrase to the Nephites of his day, accusing his listeners of not finding fault with false prophets who come among them and say “that *all is well*” (Hel. 13:28). The not-so-subtle implication to a Nephite audience would seem to be a stern reprimand—they themselves were articulating the very words of the devil that Nephi had warned against.<sup>21</sup>

### **Samuel's Use of Alma and Amulek's Preaching in Ammonihah and Antionum to Condemn the Nephites**

Samuel clearly utilizes the words of both Alma and Amulek's discourses in Ammonihah to condemn the Nephites. We first examine a series of connections between Samuel and Amulek, both of whom warn against the wickedness of their respective audiences and prophesy that destruction will fall upon them if they cast out the righteous. Both prophets accuse their listeners being a “wicked and perverse generation,” a phrase that appears only in these two pericopes.<sup>22</sup>

Amulek told the people of Ammonihah, “*If the time should come that this people should fall into transgression, they would be ripe for destruction. . . . But it is by the prayers of the righteous that ye are spared; now therefore, if ye will cast out the righteous from among you then will not the Lord stay his hand*” (Alma 10:19, 23). Samuel almost identically mirrors Amulek's words, saying to the inhabitants of Zarahemla, “*It is for the righteous' sake that [Zarahemla] is spared. But behold, the time cometh, saith the Lord, that when ye shall cast out the righteous from among you, then shall ye be ripe for destruction*” (Hel. 13:14).

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21. It had been less than one hundred years since Nehor had preached a message that essentially stated “All is well” to the Nephites, by telling them that all men would receive eternal life. The Nephites who listened to Nehor “began to support him and give him money” (Alma 1:5), and Nehor began “to wear very costly apparel” (Alma 1:6). Samuel may be telling the Nephites of his day that they are responding to “all is well” messages in the same way; Samuel states that in response to false prophets who say “all is well,” the Nephites “will give unto him of your gold, and of your silver, and ye will clothe him with costly apparel” (Hel. 13:28).

22. In addition to the uniqueness of this specific phrase, the words “wicked,” “perverse,” and “generation” appear together only in Alma 9:8; 10:17, 25; and Helaman 13:29.

Both prophets teach that the people are spared because of the righteous who live among them but warn of what will happen when the righteous are cast out. Ominously, where Amulek's words were conditional, Samuel's are not. Amulek said, "If the time should come," while Samuel says, "The time cometh"—no "if." Likewise, Amulek said, "If we will cast out the righteous," but Samuel says, "When ye shall cast out the righteous."

Amulek specifically warned the people of Ammonihah that God would come against them and then they would be "*smitten by famine, and by pestilence, and by the sword*" (Alma 10:23). Samuel likewise echoes this warning, as he tells the people that the Lord has said he would visit them "*with the sword and with famine and with pestilence*" (Hel. 13:9). Not only are the textual parallels between Alma 10 and Helaman 13 significant,<sup>23</sup> but their clustering further adds credence that it is intentional.

Conceivably, Samuel's words would have been seen by his audience as a direct reminder of the fate of the people of Ammonihah. Not only are Samuel's words thematically linked to Amulek's in terms of the prayers of the righteous protecting the people, but Samuel also uses specific phrases such as "cast out the righteous" and "smitten . . . with the sword and with famine and with pestilence" that appear rarely or never in other passages of scriptures.<sup>24</sup> Only seventy-five years had passed since the annihilation of the people of Ammonihah; the destruction of a city in one day had likely left a lasting impression on the people. Through his use of Amulek's words, Samuel reminds the Nephites of previous destruction that had been both prophesied and fulfilled. He thus implores the Nephites to learn from the past in order to change their future.

In addition to employing Amulek's words, Samuel also utilizes Alma<sub>2</sub>'s rebuke to the people of Ammonihah. In Ammonihah, Alma<sub>2</sub> preached, "*The Lamanites shall be sent upon you; . . . and ye shall be visited with utter destruction; and it shall be according to the fierce anger of the Lord*" (Alma 9:18). Samuel stated that the Lord had said of the

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23. The words "sword," "famine," and "pestilence" appear together in only four Book of Mormon verses (Alma 10:22, 23; Helaman 11:14; 13:9). These phrases do appear together in the Old Testament.

24. The phrase "cast out the righteous" appears in only Alma 10:23 and Helaman 13:14; the words "smitten," "sword," "famine," and "pestilence" appear in only two other passages outside of these two (see Jer. 21:7 and Ezek. 6:11). In addition, the words "ripe" and "destruction" appear together in only eleven verses of scripture.

Nephites, “I will visit them in my *fierce anger*, and there shall be those of the fourth generation who shall live, *of your enemies*, to behold your *utter destruction*” (Hel. 13:10). These passages share both thematic and textual similarities. Alma<sub>2</sub> warned the Nephites that if they did not repent, their perennial enemy, the Lamanites, would utterly destroy them because of the fierce anger of the Lord. Samuel echoes these themes; moreover, the phrases *utter destruction* and *fierce anger* appear together only in these two verses.<sup>25</sup>

Samuel appears to specifically use the words of Nephite prophets, perhaps to deemphasize himself as a Lamanite messenger. The result is that Samuel’s identity does not detract from his message. In fact, it may be significant that, unlike Alma<sub>2</sub>, Samuel stops short of explicitly naming the Lamanites as those who would cause the destruction of the Nephites. By employing the words of Nephite prophets who had taught a similar principle, Samuel may have been trying to prevent his listeners from falsely believing that Samuel was simply bearing a message of doom against a group with whom the Lamanites had long had enmity.<sup>26</sup>

Samuel also appears to borrow some of Amulek’s words to the Zoramites.<sup>27</sup> Amulek taught the Zoramites, “Now is the time and the *day of your*

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25. The phrase “fierce anger” appears eleven times in the Book of Mormon; three of those come from Isaiah quotations (2 Ne. 17:4; 23:9; 23:13), and four are spoken to the people of Ammonihah (Alma 8:29; 9:12, 18; 10:23). Other verses that use this phrase are Mosiah 12:1, Alma 43:44, and Helaman 11:12.

26. Alternatively, it’s possible that because the majority of the Lamanites were righteous (see Helaman 13:1), Samuel and the Nephites may have viewed the Gadianton robbers as representing the biggest danger. Another example of Samuel employing Alma<sub>2</sub>’s words of condemnation to the people of Ammonihah may be found in Alma<sub>2</sub>’s statement that the Lord “would rather suffer that the Lamanites might destroy all his *people who are called the people of Nephi*, if it were possible that [the Nephites] could fall into sins and transgressions, after having had *so much light and so much knowledge given unto them* of the Lord their God; Yea, after having been such a *highly favored people of the Lord*” (Alma 9:19–20). Similarly, Samuel said, “Wo unto this *people who are called the people of Nephi* except they shall repent, when they shall see *all these signs and wonders which shall be showed unto them*; for behold, they have been a *chosen people of the Lord*” (Hel. 15:3). While the phrase matches are not exact, they are thematically similar, and the phrase “called the people of Nephi” appears only in Jacob 1:2, Alma 9:19, Helaman 15:3, and 4 Nephi 1:43.

27. There is some evidence that the mission to the Zoramites had particular significance to the Lamanites. Aminadab appears to refer to the Zoramite mission as he encourages the Lamanites who had come to kill Nephi<sub>2</sub> to repent (see Hel. 5:41; Alma 31:32).

*salvation. . . . Therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end*” (Alma 34:31, 33). Samuel similarly speaks of the danger of procrastination; however, rather than providing a warning, he tells the Nephites it is too late for them to change: “But behold, *your days of probation are past; ye have procrastinated the day of your salvation until it is everlastingly too late*” (Hel. 13:38).<sup>28</sup>

Samuel thus both shifts and extends Amulek’s statement forward into his own time and context. As he had done previously, he takes a conditional statement from Amulek (“do not procrastinate until the end”) and makes it unconditional (“ye have procrastinated . . . until it is . . . too late”). By transforming Amulek’s statement, Samuel presents a portentous picture of what is to come for the Nephites.<sup>29</sup>

### Samuel’s Use of Nephi<sub>2</sub> to Condemn the Nephites

In addition to the foregoing examples of Samuel’s use of previous Nephite prophets, Samuel also used text similar to that of his contemporary among the Nephites, Nephi<sub>2</sub>, whose key recorded prophecies occur between 23 and 16 BC (see Hel. 7–11).<sup>30</sup> Perhaps more than any other prophet Samuel quotes, Nephi<sub>2</sub> may have been the most familiar to the Nephite people (since he was alive at the time of Samuel’s appearance); indeed, those who believed Samuel’s words sought Nephi<sub>2</sub> for further teaching and baptism (Hel. 16:1, 3). Not only were Nephi<sub>2</sub> and Samuel contemporaries in their prophetic mission, Samuel may have seen direct connections between himself and Nephi<sub>2</sub>. As he did with the words of others, Samuel sought to establish credibility for his message specifically by utilizing the words of a Nephite prophet to rebuke the Nephites.

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28. The phrase “day of your salvation” is unique to Amulek and Samuel. The phrase “day of salvation” can be found in Isaiah 49:8; 2 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Nephi 21:8–9; and Alma 13:21. The word “procrastinate” appears only in Alma 13:27; 34:33, 35; and Helaman 13:38.

29. This is not to say that Samuel never holds out any hope for the Nephites; on some occasions, he does indicate that destruction could be conditional for the Nephites (see Hel. 14:19).

30. We read that “the seventy and seventh year began in peace; and the church did spread throughout the face of all the land; and the more part of the people, both the Nephites and the Lamanites, did belong to the church; and they did have exceedingly great peace in the land” (Hel. 11:21), which indicates that Nephi<sub>2</sub>’s words could have reached the Lamanites. Therefore, it is plausible that Samuel would have access to Nephi<sub>2</sub>’s teachings.

Nephi<sub>2</sub> had chastised the people, saying, “O ye fools, ye uncircumcised of heart, ye *blind*, and ye *stiffnecked people*, do ye know how long the Lord your God will suffer you that ye shall go on in this your way of sin?” (Hel. 9:21). Samuel mirrors these words, warning, “Ye *stiffnecked people*, how long will ye suppose that the Lord will suffer you? Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and *blind* guides?” (Hel. 13:29). While some of this may sound like generic language, across all scripture the phrase “ye stiffnecked people” appears only in these two passages, and in the Book of Mormon, the phrases “how long” and “suffer you” also appear together only in these two passages.<sup>31</sup>

Another instance of Samuel’s use of Nephi<sub>2</sub>’s words illustrates parallels in rebuking the people’s forgetfulness and pleadings with the Nephites to repent and hearken to the Lord. Nephi<sub>2</sub> said,

*Ye will not hearken unto the voice of the good shepherd. . . . O, how could you have forgotten your God in the very day that he has delivered you? . . . Ye have set your hearts upon the riches and the vain things of this world, for the which ye do *murder*, and plunder, and steal, and bear false witness against your neighbor and do all manner of *iniquity*. And for this cause we shall come unto you except ye shall repent. For if ye will not repent, behold, this great city . . . shall be taken away that ye shall have no place in [it].* (Hel. 7:18, 20–22)

Similarly, Samuel stated,

Behold ye, the people of *this great city*, . . . are cursed because of your riches, . . . because ye have set your hearts upon them, and have not hearkened unto the words of him who gave them unto you. Ye do not remember the Lord your God in the things with which he hath blessed you, but ye do always remember your riches; . . . your hearts . . . do swell with great pride, unto . . . murders, and all manner of *iniquities*. For this cause hath the Lord God caused that a curse should come upon the land (Hel. 13:21–23).

While none of the specific phrases that match in these passages are extremely unique in and of themselves, the multiple relationships between these verses demonstrate a possible connection. Approximately twenty years had elapsed since Nephi<sub>2</sub> delivered these words from his garden tower; Samuel’s use of similar words may be a textual way of indicating that the while Nephites may have briefly demonstrated sincere

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<sup>31</sup> These phrases also appear together in Matthew 17:17, Mark 9:19, and Luke 9:41.

repentance (see Hel. 11), they had quickly returned to their former state. Moreover, Samuel shifts Nephi<sub>2</sub>'s words forward in time; while Nephi<sub>2</sub> had used the future tense when he stated, "Wo shall come unto you except ye repent," Samuel speaks in the past tense saying that God "hath . . . [already] caused that a curse should come upon the land" (Hel. 13:23).

Another example of Samuel using a Nephite prophet's words to condemn the Nephites stems from Nephi<sub>2</sub>'s prayer to turn away the famine the Nephites suffered a few years prior to Samuel's arrival. Because of this famine, the people humbled themselves and pleaded with Nephi<sub>2</sub>, "Cry unto the Lord our God that he turn away from us this famine" (Hel. 11:8). Nephi<sub>2</sub> did pray unto the Lord, saying, "Lord, behold this people repenteth. . . . Now, O Lord, because of this their humility wilt thou turn away thine anger" (Hel. 11:10–11).

Although the Nephites repented and the famine abated, within a decade "they did wax stronger and stronger in their pride, and in their wickedness" (Hel. 11:37). Samuel may have alluded to the words we have in Helaman 11 by speaking of the inevitable vainness of crying to the Lord later if the people don't repent now. Samuel prophesies, "In the days of your poverty ye shall cry unto the Lord; . . . then shall ye lament and say: . . . O Lord, canst thou not turn away thine anger from us? And this shall be your language in those days" (Hel. 13:32, 37). Samuel might have purposefully used this language<sup>32</sup> to remind the Nephites of their previous pitiable state, when they had cried unto the Lord, pleading for mercy, and in fact had mercy granted unto them. Perhaps by using the very words spoken by both the people and Nephi<sub>2</sub>, Samuel warns the people

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32. One could argue that these phrase matches are coincidental, given that the phrase "cry unto the Lord" appears seventy times in scripture and "turn away thine anger" appears nine times. It also is not clear how Samuel would have accessed these specific words from Nephi<sub>2</sub>. However, we believe that their close proximity in these two passages and Samuel's other evident use of Nephi<sub>2</sub>'s words in other passages argue for an intentional textual connection. Another possible connection between Samuel and Nephi<sub>2</sub> is found in the following passages: Nephi<sub>2</sub> said, "Because I have testified unto you . . . ye are angry with me, and seek to destroy my life" (Hel. 9:23–24). Similarly, Samuel said, "Because I am a Lamanite, and have spoken unto you the words which the Lord hath commanded me . . . ye are angry with me and do seek to destroy me" (Hel. 14:10). While not a perfect match, the similarity of the phraseology in these two passages indicate that perhaps Samuel is making an intentional comparison. Outside of these two passages, the word "anger" and the phrase "seek/sought to destroy" appear together only in Alma 54:13 and Helaman 13:37.

that the Lord had already *turned away his anger* when they *cried unto him*, but a point will come when “it is everlastingly too late” (Hel. 13:38).

## THEME #2: SAMUEL’S USE OF PHRASES REGARDING THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL TO SPECIFICALLY REFER TO THE LAMANITES

A second key way in which Samuel utilizes the words of previous prophets is by employing their words to describe the Lamanites. Throughout Nephite history, their prophets had spoken about various members of the house of Israel, including the Jews, the Nephites, and the Lamanites. Samuel takes words originally spoken about each of these groups and applies them specifically to the Lamanites, typically to show that the Lamanites are more righteous than the Nephites.

### Samuel’s Use of Nephi<sub>1</sub>’s Words to Describe the Lamanites

In describing his people after their separation from the Lamanites, Nephi<sub>1</sub> says they “*did observe to keep the judgments, and the statutes, and the commandments of the Lord in all things according to the law of Moses*” (2 Ne. 5:10). Samuel takes these words and applies them in his own context by using Nephi<sub>1</sub>’s earlier words about the Nephites to describe the Lamanites: “I would that ye should behold that the more part of [the Lamanites] . . . *do observe to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments according to the law of Moses*” (Hel. 15:5). This lengthy use of nearly identical and unique phraseology<sup>33</sup> indicates intentional usage by Samuel.

It seems that Samuel is poetically stating the Lamanites of his time were just as righteous as Nephi<sub>1</sub>’s people were at the time of their separation from Laman and Lemuel. Samuel takes Nephi<sub>1</sub>’s words and shifts them forward in time to describe the Lamanites. The irony is found in the fact that while Nephi<sub>1</sub>’s people once fled from the Lamanites

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33. The key words “observe,” “commandments,” “judgments,” and “statutes,” coupled with the phrase “law of Moses” appear only in these two passages. As described by John W. Welch, connections between “statutes,” “commandments,” and “judgments” appear in 1 Kings 2:3 and was likely on the plates of brass. See “Statutes, Judgments, Ordinances, and Commandments,” in Welch, *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, 62–65. It is possible that Samuel is thinking of other passages such as Mosiah 6:6; Alma 8:17; 58:40; or Helaman 3:20. However, given that the connection in 2 Nephi 5:10 and Helaman 15:5 is reinforced with the inclusion of the Law of Moses, we believe Samuel intentionally draws on this particular passage.

because the Nephites were those who *observed to keep the commandments, statutes, and judgments of the Lord according to the law of Moses*, now the Lamanites set the example for the Nephites.<sup>34</sup>

Another example of Samuel's shifting Nephi<sub>1</sub>'s words to make them specifically apply to the Lamanites concerns Nephi<sub>1</sub>'s general prophecy about God's children being gathered and cared for like sheep and applies it specifically to the Lamanites. Nephi had taught that God "numbereth his sheep, and they know him; and there shall be one fold and one *shepherd*; and he shall feed his *sheep*, and in him they shall find pasture" (1 Ne. 22:25). Samuel makes it clear that this concept applies to the Lamanites, stating that the Lamanites would "be brought to the true knowledge, which is the knowledge of their Redeemer, and their great and true *shepherd*, and be *numbered* among *his sheep*" (Hel. 15:13).<sup>35</sup> Through this statement, Samuel emphasizes that the gathering of which Nephi<sub>1</sub> prophesied specifically applies to the Lamanites. As we will see in the following example, it seems that Samuel is emphasizing the fact that the Lamanites are a chosen people who are heirs to great promises and not defined by past iniquities.

### Samuel's Use of Jacob's Words to Describe the Lamanites

Just as Samuel transforms some of Nephi<sub>1</sub>'s statements regarding other nations and applies them to the Lamanites, he does the same with some of Jacob's teachings. Speaking of the Jews, Jacob said, "After they are *driven to and fro*, . . . they shall be *scattered, and smitten, and hated*; nevertheless, *the Lord will be merciful unto them*" (2 Ne. 6:11). Samuel applies these words to the Lamanites, saying, "Notwithstanding they [the Lamanites] shall be *driven to and fro* upon the face of the earth, and be hunted, and shall be *smitten and scattered* abroad, having no place for refuge, *the Lord shall be merciful unto them*" (Hel. 15:12). Samuel utilizes

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34. While Mae Blanch does not discuss aspects of Samuel's intertextuality, she does suggest that Samuel's overall rhetoric regarding the Lamanites may have been "an effort to shame the Nephites into repenting." Blanch, "Samuel the Lamanite," 121. This example of intertextuality could strengthen Blanch's claim.

35. Although this phraseology may seem common, outside of these two verses, the words *shepherd*, *number*, and *sheep* appear together only in 3 Nephi 16:13. While there are clear connections between John 10:16; 1 Nephi 22:25; and 3 Nephi 15:17, 21; 16:3, the verses in John and 3 Nephi do not speak of being *numbered* among the sheep as do 1 Nephi 22:25 and Helaman 15:13. Whereas Gardner sees in these words "certain signs that Joseph was influenced by the New Testament," it is equally plausible that this phrase could stem from Nephi. See Gardner, *Second Witness*, 208.

these unique phrases<sup>36</sup> to assert that the Lamanites are not secondary citizens but rather have a special part in God's plan. Their role is likened unto the Jews—God's chosen people who have marvelous promises extended to them in latter days. Samuel's words emphasize that the Lamanites too are part of God's covenant people and have the blessings that pertain to that covenant.

Samuel may be utilizing this same approach as he transforms Jacob's words regarding the descendants of the Nephites into a prophecy about the Lamanites. Jacob had taught, "Our children shall be *restored*, that they may come to that which will give them *the true knowledge of their Redeemer*" (2 Ne. 10:2). Samuel applies Jacob's words<sup>37</sup> to the Lamanites, referring to how many prophets have spoken "concerning the *restoration* of our brethren, the Lamanites, again . . . to *the true knowledge*, which is the knowledge of *their Redeemer*" (Hel. 15:11, 13). Thus, Samuel uses Jacob's phrases in order to indicate that the Lamanites are equal to the Nephites and will receive similar blessings.

Samuel incorporated several of Jacob's phrases, as illustrated in table 3.

**Table 3. Samuel's Use of Jacob's Words Regarding the Nephites**

<b>Jacob's Words</b>	<b>Samuel's Words</b>
<p>This people shall keep my commandments, <i>saith the Lord of Hosts</i>, or <i>cursed be the land for their sakes</i>. . . . I, the Lord, have seen the sorrow, and heard the mourning of the daughters of my people . . . <i>because of the wickedness and abominations</i> of their husbands. . . . I shall <i>visit them with a sore curse</i>, even unto destruction; for they shall not commit whoredoms, <i>like unto them of old</i>. . . . Behold, <i>ye have done greater iniquities than the Lamanites, our brethren</i>. (Jacob 2:29, 31, 33, 35)</p>	<p>Wo be unto all the cities which are in the land round about, which are possessed by the Nephites, <i>because of the wickedness and abominations</i> which are in them. And behold, a <i>curse shall come upon the land, saith the Lord of Hosts, because of the peoples' sake</i> who are upon the land, yea, <i>because of their wickedness and their abominations</i>. . . . Yea, wo unto this people, because of this time which has arrived, that ye . . . do all manner of <i>iniquity</i> unto them, <i>even as they did of old time</i>. . . . <i>Behold ye are worse than they</i>. (Hel. 13:16–17, 24, 26)</p>

36. The phrase "scattered and smitten" (or "smitten and scattered") appears only in these two verses and in 2 Nephi 1:11; the word "driven" combined with the phrase "to and fro" appears only three times outside these two verses (Job 13:25; Mosiah 17:17; 21:13).

37. It could be argued that Samuel refers to the words of Lehi or Nephi (see 1 Ne. 10:14; 2 Ne. 1:10). However, the phrase "true knowledge" appears only in 2 Nephi 10:2 and Helaman 15:13.

There are multiple connection points between these two quotations. Both employ the relatively unique phrase “saith the Lord of Hosts”<sup>38</sup> to warn that *the land will be cursed for the people’s sake because of the wickedness and abominations* of the people. In both cases, Samuel and Jacob compare their listeners with others and declare that their audience is the less righteous group. Jacob directly compares his Nephite listeners to the Lamanites; however, Samuel compares his listeners to those (presumably Nephites) of an earlier generation. Significantly, Samuel uses Jacob’s words to indicate that, as in Jacob’s day, the Nephites are currently more wicked than the Lamanites. This message would undoubtedly have been difficult for Nephites to receive, particularly from a Lamanite. Perhaps Samuel felt that by using Jacob’s words to deliver this news he was in a sense shifting the responsibility for his ominous message to previous Nephite prophets.

### Samuel’s Use of Nephi<sub>2</sub>’s Words to Describe the Lamanites

When Nephi<sub>2</sub> stood on his tower, he specifically stated to his Nephite listeners, “*It shall be better for the Lamanites than for you except ye shall repent*” (Hel. 7:23). Samuel echoes this phrase, stating to the Nephites, “*It shall be better for them [the Lamanites] than for you except ye repent*” (Hel. 15:14). This relatively long phrase is unique in multiple ways. The phrase “it shall be better” appears in these two verses, and the words “better,” “except,” and “repent,” also exclusively appear together in these two verses. It seems like Samuel is specifically using this phrase from a contemporary prophet to emphasize the fact that, due to Nephite wickedness, the Lamanites will ultimately receive a better result than will the Nephites.

### Samuel’s Use of Multiple Prophets’ Words to Describe the Lamanites

Perhaps Samuel’s most significant instance of intertextuality describing the Lamanites is his use of the teachings of several previous prophets regarding the Lamanites. Unlike the previous examples, in which Samuel applied to the Lamanites words that had been spoken about other

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38. This phrase is relatively rare in the Book of Mormon. Not including heavenly messengers or biblical authors quoted in the Book of Mormon, the only individuals in the Book of Mormon who use this phrase are Nephi<sub>1</sub>, Jacob, and Samuel the Lamanite. Shon Hopkin and John Hilton III discuss this phrase further in “Samuel’s Reliance on Biblical Language.”

groups, in this instance, he uses the words of previous prophets regarding the Lamanites. He explicitly refers to plural prophets, speaking of the “time [that] shall come which hath been spoken of by our *fathers*, and *also by the prophet Zenos, and many other prophets*, concerning the restoration of our brethren, the Lamanites, again to the knowledge of the truth” (Hel. 15:11). Throughout much of Nephite history, prophets had taught that while the Lamanites did not believe in Christ, they were in some respects more righteous than the Nephites, and the Lord will be merciful to them in latter days. This theme is first developed by Jacob, but King Benjamin, Alma<sub>2</sub>, Nephi<sub>2</sub>, and Samuel all repeat it. Samuel appears to combine unique phrases from each of these prophets as illustrated in table 4.

Samuel explicitly states that he is aware of prophecies that have been made by the previous prophets, and he evidently incorporates the text of multiple prophecies while crafting his own.<sup>39</sup> As he has done with the passages previously described in this theme, Samuel uses the words of Nephite prophets to elevate the status of the Lamanites. At the same time that Samuel prophesies of the ultimate destruction of the Nephites, he emphasizes the latter-day restoration of the Lamanites. By using the words of Nephite prophets, he perhaps hopes that his listeners will be more receptive than they would be to words coming from a Lamanite.

## CONCLUSION

We have demonstrated that Samuel the Lamanite has a penchant for quoting from previous Nephite prophets and leaders and that his quotations cluster around indicting the Nephites and building up the Lamanites. Throughout this article, we have assumed that Samuel’s words in Helaman 13–15 are presented just as he said them, but it is possible that Mormon (or another redactor) reshaped Samuel’s discourse. Samuel’s words regarding the people *crying unto the Lord* and the *anger of*

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39. Because statements regarding the Lord being merciful to the Lamanites who have dwindled in unbelief appear throughout the Book of Mormon, it is difficult to know which specific prophecies Samuel refers to. However, Samuel’s statement that “the promises of the Lord have been extended to our brethren, the Lamanites” (Hel. 15:12) appears to be directly related to Alma<sub>2</sub>’s words to the people of Ammonihah. The words “promise” and “extend” occur together only in Alma 9:16, 24; 17:15; and Helaman 15:12. Other concepts, such as the Lord being merciful to the Lamanites, appear in multiple passages.

**Table 4. Samuel's Use of Multiple Prophetic Statements  
Regarding the Future of the Lamanites**

Speaker	Quotation
Samuel	<p>The time shall come which hath been spoken of by our fathers, and also by the prophet Zenos, and many other prophets, concerning the restoration of our brethren, the Lamanites, . . . in the latter times the <i>promises</i> of the Lord have been <i>extended to our brethren, the Lamanites</i>; . . . <i>the Lord shall be merciful unto them</i>. And this is according to the prophecy, that they shall again be brought to the true knowledge. . . . For behold, had the mighty works been shown unto them which have been shown unto you, yea, unto them who have <i>dwindled in unbelief because of the traditions of their fathers</i>, ye can see of yourselves that they never would again have <i>dwindled in unbelief</i>. (Hel. 15:11–13, 15)</p>
Jacob	<p>[God] <i>will be merciful unto them</i> [the Lamanites]; and one day they shall become a blessed people. . . . Their <i>unbelief</i> and their hatred towards you is <i>because of the iniquity of their fathers</i>; wherefore, how much better are you than they, in the sight of your great Creator? (Jacob 3:6–7)</p>
King Benjamin	<p>I say unto you, my sons, were it not for these things, . . . that even our fathers would have <i>dwindled in unbelief</i>, and we should have been <i>like unto our brethren, the Lamanites</i>, who know nothing concerning these things, or even do not believe them when they are taught them, <i>because of the traditions of their fathers</i>. (Mosiah 1:5)</p>
Alma <sub>2</sub>	<p><i>For there are many promises which are extended to the Lamanites</i>; for it is <i>because of the traditions of their fathers</i> that caused them to remain in their state of ignorance; <i>therefore the Lord will be merciful unto them</i> and prolong their existence in the land. And at some period of time <i>they will be brought to believe in his word</i>. (Alma 9:16–17)</p>
Nephi <sub>2</sub>	<p>For behold, they [the Lamanites] are more righteous than you, for they have not sinned against that great knowledge which ye have received; <i>therefore the Lord will be merciful unto them</i>; yea, he will lengthen out their days and increase their seed. (Hel. 7:24)</p>

*the Lord turning away* (Hel. 13:32, 39) refer to conversations between the Nephites and Nephi<sub>2</sub>, recorded in Helaman 11. It seems likely that Samuel might not have been privy to such conversations, although we cannot rule out this possibility.<sup>40</sup> Instances such as this prompt us to wonder if Samuel's speech was edited in order to create or enhance these instances of intertextuality. After all, it would be very difficult for a contemporary listener in Zarahemla to precisely record Samuel's words as he spoke from the wall.

There are many potential reasons that Mormon (or another redactor) might have created these textual connections. It may be that he wanted to show that the Lord speaks the same message to prophets from multiple nations (both Nephite and Lamanite). Perhaps he intended to emphasize the wickedness of the Nephites by creating a striking framework of comparisons, delivered by a Lamanite, that highlight the distinction between the two nations.

While Mormon or another redactor certainly could be the source of these connections, let us consider the possibility that they originated with Samuel. Why would Samuel so frequently utilize the same words as his prophetic predecessors? Perhaps he felt the Nephites would be more receptive to the words of their ancestors. Alternatively, it may be Samuel felt insecure in his role as a Lamanite prophet and found strength by using the words of other prophets. Moroni<sub>2</sub> explicitly mentions his concerns regarding his weakness writing, and Grant Hardy suggests that perhaps this is one reason why Moroni<sub>2</sub> may have borrowed so heavily from other prophets.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps a similar phenomenon occurs with Samuel.

Another intriguing possibility behind Samuel's multiple use of the words of previous prophets lies in a unique phrase spoken of in relation to Samuel. In the scriptures, there are only three instances in which God puts ideas or words into people's hearts; two of these concern Samuel.<sup>42</sup> After being rejected once by the Nephites, as "he was about

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40. The fact that these textual connections come from potentially non-public statements by Nephi and the people may indicate that Mormon is the source of these connections. At the same time, there may have been a record distributed among that people after the famine. Mormon would have learned of the experience through some kind of written record; perhaps such a record was also available to Samuel.

41. Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon*, 266.

42. See Helaman 13:4–5. The other instance is in Nehemiah 7:5.

to return to his own land . . . the voice of the Lord came unto him, that he should return again, and prophesy unto the people whatsoever things should come into his heart. . . . Therefore he went and got upon the wall thereof, and stretched forth his hand and cried with a loud voice, and prophesied unto the people whatsoever things the Lord put into his heart. And he said unto them: Behold, I, Samuel, a Lamanite, do speak the words of the Lord which he doth put into my heart" (Hel. 13:2–5).<sup>43</sup>

In conjunction with this statement, Samuel uses the phrase "saith the Lord" more than any Nephite prophet.<sup>44</sup> Perhaps the words the Lord put into Samuel's heart were the words of previous prophets. While this could have happened simply through inspiration,<sup>45</sup> it is also possible that this came as a result of Samuel's intense study of the scriptures.<sup>46</sup> He can be seen as a role model of the Lord's injunction to "neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man" (D&C 84:85).<sup>47</sup>

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43. Christ emphasizes the fact that he was directing Samuel's words (see 3 Ne. 23:9–11). Samuel is an outstanding example of one who followed this direction: "Lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men; for it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say" (D&C 100:5–6).

44. Samuel uses this phrase seventeen times compared with fourteen instances where Nephi<sub>1</sub> is the speaker (Jacob uses the phrase ten times). The fact that Samuel employed the phrase more frequently than Nephi<sub>1</sub> is particularly significant, given that Nephi<sub>1</sub>'s voice is heard much more frequently in the Book of Mormon than Samuel's.

45. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland has posited that similar scriptural language could be "another evidence that the Holy Ghost can reveal a truth in essentially the same words to more than one person." Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book: 1997), 413.

46. This possibility is complicated by the significant probability that the Nephite language changed dramatically between the time of Nephi<sub>1</sub> and Samuel. Although all the engravings that were in Helaman's possession (which would have included the small plates) "were written and sent forth among the children of men throughout all the land" (Alma 63:12), it is not clear whether or how the language would have shifted over time.

47. While it is beyond the scope of the present study, it is interesting to note that many of the phrases that Samuel alludes to are also spoken by Christ to the people in darkness in 3 Nephi 9. For example, Christ speaks of casting

Although we cannot always specifically ascertain which sources Samuel draws from, it is clear that in many instances he weaves together words and phrases from multiple previous prophets. For example, in Helaman 13:29, where Samuel merges distinct phrases from three different prophets: *O ye wicked and ye perverse generation* (Alma<sub>2</sub> or Amulek: Alma 9:8, 10:25)<sup>48</sup>; *ye hardened and ye stiffnecked people, how long will ye suppose that the Lord will suffer you? Yea, how long will ye suffer yourselves to be led by foolish and blind guides?* (Nephi<sub>2</sub>: Helaman 9:21)<sup>49</sup> Yea, how long will ye *choose darkness rather than light?* (Nephi<sub>1</sub>: 2 Ne. 26:10).<sup>50</sup> It may be that Samuel had treasured up the prophetic word<sup>51</sup> and thus was able to be inspired to use these and other passages as he spoke to the Nephites.<sup>52</sup>

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out prophets and stoning them (compare Hel. 13:24; 2 Ne. 26:3), and destruction coming after the righteous were cast out (compare Alma 10:23, Hel. 13:14). While the textual connections are not as tight or numerous, they may bear future examination.

48. The words “wicked,” “perverse,” and “generation” appear together only in Alma 9:8; 10:17, 25; and Helaman 13:29.

49. As noted previously (see text associated with note 32), the phrases “how long” and “suffer you” appear together in the Book of Mormon only in these two passages. Nephi<sub>2</sub>’s use of these phrases is as follows: “But Nephi said unto them: O ye fools, ye uncircumcised of heart, *ye blind, and ye stiffnecked people, do ye know how long the Lord your God will suffer you* that ye shall go on in this your way of sin?” (Hel. 9:21).

50. The words “choose,” “darkness,” and “light” appear together in same verse of scripture only in these two verses. Nephi<sub>1</sub> taught, “And when these things have passed away a speedy destruction cometh unto my people; for, notwithstanding the pains of my soul, I have seen it; wherefore, I know that it shall come to pass; and they sell themselves for naught; for, for the reward of their pride and their foolishness they shall reap destruction; for because they yield unto the devil and *choose works of darkness rather than light*, therefore they must go down to hell” (2 Ne. 26:10).

51. If this is the case, Samuel’s use of previous Nephite prophets’ words may help us understand how much access people in the Book of Mormon had to prophetic word. The relatively lengthy allusions that Samuel the Lamanite makes to Nephi<sub>1</sub>’s words indicate that at least parts of Nephi<sub>1</sub>’s record were available to him. Similar statements could be made about Jacob, Alma, Amulek, and King Benjamin.

52. Modern religious educators have been instructed to teach in this manner. Elder David A. Bednar taught, “We have the obligation to study, treasure up, ponder, so that in the very moment we can be given that which is needful or in the very moment, connections will be created . . . that we have never

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noticed before.” Question and Answer Session with Seminaries and Institutes, Worldwide Training Broadcast, August 2, 2011. Quoted in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, “Follow the Master Teacher,” <https://www.lds.org/prophets-and-apostles/unto-all-the-world/follow-the-example-of-the-master-teacher?lang=eng>. Perhaps Samuel’s sermon on the wall of Zarahemla can serve as a model of that phenomenon.