

AGENCY, APATHY, AND THE ANTI-CHRIST

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Great nations do not fall because of external aggression; they first erode and decay inwardly, so that, like rotten fruit, they fall of themselves. The strength of a country is the sum total of the moral strength of the individuals in that country.¹

—Ezra Taft Benson

Freedom and responsibility are inseparably connected, as world history has demonstrated over and over again. The freedoms promised in the Book of Mormon, are affected by righteousness and lack of concern. There are two types of neglect that are connected to—faith and involvement—that could put at risk the freedoms of the land of promise. Both are spoken of in the Book of Mormon.

The first type of neglect is a *disregard for faith and religion*, and is a consequence of agency (choosing a relationship with the world rather than God). The second neglect is somewhat similar but just as serious in maintaining the freedom of the land and it too is a product of agency. This is called *apathy*.

The *first* is that of individual wickedness—a neglect to remember and obey the covenants and commandments of God and exercising faith Jesus Christ” (Ether 2:12). This spiritual wickedness is the Babylon described previously, that of willful rebellion against the light, truth, and opportunity to know God. Spiritual wickedness will lead to the loss of freedom by the judgments of God, according to the restrictions placed on the promised land.

The *second* is a neglect of political participation that will ensure that the laws of the land continue to protect that which is most dear—our faith, freedom, and family. This neglect, according to the history presented in all scripture and especially the Book of Mormon, would result in the loss of these freedoms due to the choice and control of wicked leaders. The unfaithful actions of unrighteous leaders are a major theme in the Old Testament, where choice (or the voice of the people) could make no changes in a nation governed by a king. This historical theme is also stressed throughout the Book of Mormon, with repeated counsel to its future readers to watch for particular signs in officials and leaders that are chosen by the voice of the people.

Faith and Freedom

The prophecies and promises about the land of the Book of Mormon are replete throughout the text. From the arrival of Lehi in the promised land to the end of Nephite culture, every promise

¹ Ezra Taft Benson, *This Nation Shall Endure* [Salt Lake City:Deseret Book Co., 1977], 119.

of freedom and protection in the Book of Mormon is founded in the faith and religion of those who enjoy the blessing of living in that land. The brother of Jared, learning about the land of promise that he was going to be led to, received the words of the Lord that were sworn “in his wrath” to the leader of this Jaredite group.

And he had sworn in his wrath unto the brother of Jared, that *whoso should possess this land of promise, from that time henceforth and forever, should serve him, the true and only God, or they should be swept off* when the fulness of his wrath should come upon them. (Ether 2:8)

Moroni then added a few editorial comments in his translation of the Jaredite record to emphasize that this promise of the Lord was directed to all those who live, or might live, on this same land.

And now, we can *behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise; and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity.*

For behold, *this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God or shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God.* And it is not until the fulness of iniquity among the children of the land, that they are swept off.

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.

Behold, *this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written.* (Ether 2:9–12)

The promise contained in these verses are described by Moroni as an “everlasting decree of God” specifically addressed to readers of the Book of Mormon, that these LDS “Gentiles...may know the decrees of God.” These promises, requirements, and restrictions are for the people today who live on the land. Moroni directed the message of the promised land to the Gentiles of the latter-days., since this message was not written for any in the Nephite culture as all Nephites had been destroyed by the time Moroni wrote these words. This was a parting message of the last Nephite prophet, specifically directed to the future readers of the text (the Latter-day Saints) who might live upon this chosen land. These are the same “who are identified with the Gentiles” (D&C 109:60), as Joseph Smith revealed.

After arriving on the promised land, in a prophetic context Lehi revealed a future about the land to which he was led and obtained as an inheritance for him and his posterity. Lehi stated:

But, said he, notwithstanding our afflictions, we have obtained *a land of promise, a land which is choice above all other lands; a land which the Lord God hath covenanted with me should be a land for the inheritance of my seed. Yea, the Lord hath covenanted this land unto me, and to my children forever, and also all those who should be led out of other countries by the hand of the Lord*” (2 Nephi 1:5)

Lehi explained that this land of his inheritance and the inheritance to his “children forever” would become a land of inheritance of others who would be led there. Who are these others spoken of by Lehi? Nephi, seeking to understand his father’s visions, saw another migration that would come to the same land. These are the same Gentiles to whom Moroni directed his final comments:

Nevertheless, thou beholdest that *the Gentiles who have gone forth out of captivity, and have been lifted up by the power of God above all other nations, upon the face of the land* which is choice above all other lands, *which is the land that the Lord God hath covenanted with thy father that his seed should have for the land of their inheritance;* wherefore, thou seest that the Lord God will not suffer that the Gentiles will utterly destroy the mixture of thy seed, which are among thy brethren. (1 Nephi 13:30)

After explaining that none will come to the land unless “they shall be brought by the hand of the Lord” (2 Nephi 1:6), Lehi spoke of the promise connected to the land and the relationship of faith to freedom.

Wherefore, this land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring. *And if it so be that they shall serve him according to the commandments which he hath given, it shall be a land of liberty unto them; wherefore, they shall never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because of iniquity; for if iniquity shall abound cursed shall be the land for their sakes, but unto the righteous it shall be blessed forever.*

Wherefore, I, Lehi, have obtained a promise, that inasmuch as *those whom the Lord God shall bring out of the land of Jerusalem shall keep his commandments, they shall prosper upon the face of this land; and they shall be kept from all other nations, that they may possess this land unto themselves. And if it so be that they shall keep his commandments they shall be blessed upon the face of this land, and there shall be none to molest them, nor to take away the land of their inheritance; and they shall dwell safely forever.* (2 Nephi 1:7, 9)

It must be remembered that the Book of Mormon is a history of three migrations that come to the promised land: the Jaredites, the Mulekites, and the Lehites. However, this book is also a *prophetic* history of four migrations: the three already mentioned and the Gentiles who were yet to come (when the Nephite histories were inscribed in pages of gold).

Jacob also spoke of the promise of the land, the relationship to the Gentiles who were to come to this land in the future, and the requirement of faith for freedom:

...wherefore, *the promises of the Lord are great unto the Gentiles*, for he hath spoken it, and who can dispute?

But behold, *this land, said God, shall be a land of thine inheritance, and the Gentiles shall be blessed upon the land.*

And *this land shall be a land of liberty unto the Gentiles*, and there shall be no kings upon the land, who shall raise up unto the Gentiles.

And *I will fortify this land against all other nations.*

And he that fighteth against Zion shall perish, saith God.

Wherefore, he that fighteth against Zion, both Jew and Gentile, both bond and free, both male and female, shall perish; for they are they who are the whore of all the earth; for they who are not for me are against me, saith our God.

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, thus saith our God: I will afflict thy seed by the hand of the Gentiles; nevertheless, I will soften the hearts of the Gentiles, that they shall be like unto a father to them; wherefore, *the Gentiles shall be blessed and numbered among the house of Israel.*

Wherefore, *I will consecrate this land unto thy seed, and them who shall be numbered among thy seed, forever, for the land of their inheritance;* for it is a choice land, saith God unto me, above all other lands, *wherefore I will have all men that dwell thereon that they shall worship me, saith God.* (2 Nephi 10:9–13, 16, 18–19)

The conclusion gleaned from the verses above is that the promise connected to the chosen land is one of worship and faith. The Lord declared that “I will have all men that dwell thereon that they shall worship me, saith God.” With the concluding declaration that the land will “never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because of iniquity; for if iniquity shall abound cursed shall be the land for their sakes, but unto the righteous it shall be blessed forever.” And that “whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come.” This because it is “a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ” (Ether 2:12).

The responsibility to recognize Jesus Christ as the God of the promised land cannot be limited just to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The knowledge that there is a connection to faith and freedom places a responsibility upon the Latter-day Saints who have read and understand the Book of Mormon. *There is a need for a non-denominational call to go throughout the land.* Like the Title of Liberty, this message should go to all those concerned about the freedom of the land. The return to Christ is required for the promises to be fulfilled, for the protection of their ‘faith and religion, freedom and peace and their wives and families.’ This work effort must be a non-denominational cry of faith for the security of freedom. This was a major concern and worry for the prophets of the Book of Mormon, and this message was a warning prepared for the hearts and minds of the Latter-day Saints. Mormon, while writing his farewell message to his son Moroni, explained that the end of their civilization was due in part to the individual and collective wickedness and rejection of the God of the land—a result promised to all people, in every time period, who possess the land.

Behold, my son, I will write unto you again if I go not out soon against the Lamanites. Behold, *the pride of this nation, or the people of the Nephites, hath proven their destruction except they should repent.*

Pray for them, my son, that repentance may come unto them. But behold, I fear lest the Spirit hath ceased striving with them; *and in this part of the land they are also seeking to put down all power and authority which cometh from God; and they are denying the Holy Ghost.*

And after rejecting so great a knowledge, my son, they must perish soon, unto the fulfilling of the prophecies which were spoken by the prophets, as well as the words of our Savior himself. (Moroni 8:27–29)

The promises and prophecies will be fulfilled to those who live in the land of promise and especially those who have had a great knowledge of the goodness of God. These prophecies and promises are recorded in scripture for our day, our time, our nation—the promised land of Lehi, the United States.

Politics and Religion

This nation was founded on religious freedom and faith in God, who was—to the founding fathers—Jesus Christ. The subtle movements of modern-day philosophers, politicians, and platforms that teach the new morality and intellectualism of today are nothing more than faithless falsehoods. Couched in such a subtle way, the doctrines of the anti-Christ are taught as truths. Though not spoken loudly, these philosophies are nonetheless presented in a form of propriety called ‘moral tolerance’ or ‘political correctness’ to sway or convince the unsuspecting masses. By teaching these doctrines of the anti-Christ with ‘flattering words’ many are led to believe that moral tolerance and religion should be separated. The message of the Book of Mormon is that the political freedoms held sacred *cannot* be separated from faith and religion. For “*this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ*” (Ether 2:12). The freedoms guaranteed by law in the Bill of Rights are in peril when the foundation of God, faith and religion is forced into the background and hoped to be forgotten.

Since the freedoms of the land are connected to faith, religion, and the worship of Jesus Christ, it becomes necessary to know what worship and faith will conform to the restrictions set upon the land for the continual freedoms promised. Mormon stated that part of the wickedness that led to the destruction of the Nephite nation was that “after rejecting so great a knowledge...they must perish soon, unto the fulfilling of the prophecies which were spoken by the prophets” (Moroni 8:29). This ‘rejection’ is described by Mormon as “seeking to put down all power and authority which cometh from God,” and thus “they are denying the Holy Ghost” (Moroni 8:28).

Concerned about the Gentiles of the last days, the prophet Mormon taught how to judge between that which comes from God or the devil. The prophet leaves little room to question where the influence might originate. Beginning with the character of man, Mormon wrote:

For I remember the word of God which saith by their works ye shall know them; for if their works be good, then they are good also. For behold, God hath said a man being evil cannot do that which is good... (Moroni 7:5–6)

Mormon continued to explain:

For behold, a bitter fountain cannot bring forth good water; neither can a good fountain bring forth bitter water; wherefore, *a man being a servant of the devil cannot follow Christ; and if he follow Christ he cannot be a servant of the devil.*

Wherefore, *all things which are good cometh of God; and that which is evil cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually.*

But behold, *that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.*

Wherefore, *take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.*

For behold, my brethren, *it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.*

For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; *for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.*

But *whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil;* for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him. (Moroni 7:11–17)

This message from Mormon is directed to the reader and is meant to instruct *how* to determine the difference between good and evil men and doctrine. The ‘rule of judgment,’ as taught by Mormon, is “*every thing which inviteth enticeth to do good continually, and to persuade to believe in Christ, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.*” This is the rule of judgment that should be used especially when choosing the leaders of this Gentile nation, to ensure the freedoms necessary to worship God.

Every political party has a platform that becomes an overall agenda or policy, which acts as the foundation for the ideologies and subsequent philosophies of the party’s belief. The Book of Mormon states that the leaders and philosophies that govern the promised land should reflect the belief and worship of God in their agendas, with a responsibility to chose leaders who are “*just men...who would establish the laws of God, and judge this people according to his commandments*” (Mosiah 29:13). Some platforms are founded on the assumed virtues of freedom *from religion*, calling religious morals ‘oppression’ while opening the door for the loss of liberty in espousing the absence of faith. Mosiah warned that the leaders chosen by the “voice of the people” should be those that would lead and judge “*according to the laws which have been given you by our fathers, which are correct and which were given them by the hand of the Lord*” (Mosiah 29:25). This injunction places a moral responsibility to choose the leaders of the promised land that would reflect the worship of God and the support of, a moral Christian code of ethics. This is not a *suggestion* in the Book of Mormon; it is a *requirement* founded on the prophecies and promises to maintain the freedoms on the land of promise.

The necessity of a separation between the church and state exists so that the government would have no control over the freedom of religion and speech (which are intimately connected). This ‘separation of church and state’ does not mean that religious and moral leaders should not be chosen. On the contrary, good and moral individuals should be sought out (as Mormon described) to enact and defend the laws as Mosiah counseled in the previous paragraph.

Leaders who have a religious and moral background will have a natural tendency to protect freedom because freedom, faith in God, and individual responsibility cannot be divided. God exists. He is real. And life continues after death. Therefore, all of life—and every aspect of mortality, or this probationary state—becomes a moral issue. Alma taught this life is a “time repent and serve God” (Alma 42:4). Therefore, every law and leader chosen should be mindful of God for the protection of that probationary right of mortal life. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that all choice and action should reflect a belief in God. Even the Constitution was established to give *all* people the right and responsibility to act in “futuraity,” which means to act knowing there is life and a moral judgment of agency after death.

According to the laws and constitution of the people, which I have suffered to be established, and *should be maintained* for the rights and protection of all flesh, *according to just and holy principles;*

That every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment.

Therefore, it is not right that any man should be in bondage one to another.

And for this purpose have I established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom I raised up unto this very purpose, and redeemed the land by the shedding of blood. (D&C 101:77–80)

The Lord explained in clear and concise terms that the Constitution exists for the protection of all “according to just and holy principles” that every individual should act upon, knowing that God exists, there is life after death, and a judgment “according to the moral agency.” The beginning and concluding verses stress that the Constitution of the promised land was established for this very reason and purpose, and that these freedoms should be “maintained” for the benefit of all. The only way these freedoms can be maintained for all flesh is by the chosen representatives who are elected by the people. These elected leaders should be willing first to protect and maintain that Constitution that was established, to allow everyone to “*act in principle pertaining to futurity according to the moral agency*” given by God.

The Anti-Christ

To choose good and moral men is more than a scriptural suggestion to ensure freedom. The Book of Mormon explains the policies, political thought, and philosophy underlying those who seek to separate God from government and, therefore, from freedom. The description of this philosophical separation found in the Book of Mormon is also the definition and state of mind which the scriptures describe as “anti-Christ.” The term “anti-Christ” is used because the teachings and beliefs were “against the prophecies which had been spoken by the prophets, concerning” Christ, and teaching in particular that there could be no Christ (Alma 30:6, 12).

It is interesting that the description of the “anti-Christ” is not that of an evil political leader who will rise up in the latter-days, but a *philosophy* that does away with God in thought and responsibility. The term ‘anti’ can mean ‘before, in front of, replace or replacement,’ and sometimes the context might render it to mean ‘against.’ However, scripturally speaking, it is a way of thinking, or a philosophical premise, that God does not exist and should not be associated with civil life and order. The anti-Christ is an intellectual platform and action based on replacing God by man’s abilities and desires, and a morality founded on animalistic instincts. The modern assumption is that progress requires the absence of an unseen and unknown higher power called God, because the education and logic of man (the arm of flesh) can make a better determination of what is best for human kind rather than the word of God. The historical results of this philosophy can be seen in the loss of freedom found in Communism, Marxism, and Socialism. The absence of God and the ‘trust in man’ has always, in the past, taken away freedoms and promoted a self-serving evil among the leaders of government. Hitler’s Third Reich was founded on the absence of God and the evolution of man from animals, which led to the horrific murders of the Holocaust. This absence of God and its replacement by the ‘philosophies of men’ is the anti-Christ described in the Book of Mormon.

Korihor

The modern-day philosophies of the anti-Christ can easily be seen in the elements and beliefs of Korihor found in Alma 30. Because of the teachings of Korihor, he is called *an* Anti-Christ (Alma 30:12). Today these same viewpoints are seen almost daily in our media and news, as this

battle continues in a public arena which has taken the forum of political platforms without the interference of God. Espoused as ‘political correctness’ and ‘moral tolerance,’ this mindset becomes a faithless belief of those who are without a desire to act “pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency” (D&C 101:78), thereby justifying an amoral lifestyle. These philosophies of the anti-Christ are seen in the teachings of Korihor and are listed below. The anti-Christ text is long but important and is presented here for reference and to provide a deeper understanding.

First, the Book of Mormon explains that freedom of religion and belief was an important factor in the lives of the Nephites:

Now there was no law against a man's belief; for it was strictly contrary to the commands of God that there should be a law which should bring men onto unequal grounds.

For thus saith the scripture: Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve.

Now if a man desired to serve God, it was his privilege; or rather, if he believed in God it was his privilege to serve him; but if he did not believe in him there was no law to punish him.

But if he murdered he was punished unto death; and if he robbed he was also punished; and if he stole he was also punished; and if he committed adultery he was also punished; yea, for all this wickedness they were punished.

For there was a law that men should be judged according to their crimes. Nevertheless, there was no law against a man's belief; therefore, a man was punished only for the crimes which he had done; therefore all men were on equal grounds. (Alma 30:7–11)

Equality in respect to belief and religion was paramount in Nephite thought and culture. This freedom of belief was one of the blessings established and connected to the promised land by revelation to prophets (2 Nephi 1:7) and declared by Christ in 3 Nephi 21:3–4. These freedoms of belief and religion made it so “all men were on equal grounds” without fear of reprisal.

The definition of Anti-Christ is given as Alma recorded: “And this Anti-Christ, whose name was Korihor, (and as today, the law could have no hold upon him), began to preach unto the people that there should be no Christ...” (Alma 30:12).

The verses below are from Alma 30, and each verse is followed by the philosophies and teachings of an Anti-Christ.

O ye that are bound down under a foolish and a vain hope, why do ye yoke yourselves with such foolish things? Why do ye look for a Christ? For no man can know of anything which is to come. (Alma 30:13)

- Religion is a “foolish and vain hope.”
- Why look for a Christ? Don’t waste your life.
- No man can know of things to come.

Behold, these things which ye call prophecies, which ye say are handed down by holy prophets, behold, they are foolish traditions of your fathers. (Alma 30:14)

- Prophecies are foolish traditions of the past.

How do ye know of their surety? Behold, ye cannot know of things which ye do not see; therefore ye cannot know that there shall be a Christ. (Alma 30:15)

- One cannot know prophecies are true.
- One cannot understand things he cannot see.
- One cannot know that Christ exists.

Ye look forward and say that ye see a remission of your sins. But behold, it is the effect of a frenzied mind; and this derangement of your minds comes because of the traditions of your fathers, which lead you away into a belief of things which are not so. (Alma 30:16)

- Belief in the Atonement is the effect of a “frenzied mind.”
- Teachings about the Atonement are just erroneous traditions of the fathers.
- Religious traditions and beliefs are of things which are not so.

And many more such things did he say unto them, telling them that there could be no Atonement made for the sins of men, but every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and that every man conquered according to his strength; and whatsoever a man did was no crime. (Alma 30:17)

- No Atonement can be made for sins so, therefore, the Atonement cannot exist.
- Man is on his own...without a God.
- Man prospered according to his own ability and knowledge.
- Man conquered because of his own strength, not by God.
- Whatever a man chose to do was no crime to man, because God does not exist, and man becomes his own god.

And thus he did preach unto them, leading away the hearts of many, causing them to lift up their heads in their wickedness, yea, leading away many women, and also men, to commit whoredoms—telling them that when a man was dead, that was the end thereof. (Alma 30:18)

The belief that God does not exist and that man and his abilities are the best we can hope for ‘lead many away’ from the truth, “causing them to lift up their heads in wickedness...causing many women and men to commit whoredoms” which is a direct reference to same gender relationships. All of these philosophies and beliefs are founded on the final and fundamental false premise that:

- God does not exist; therefore, death is the end of all life.

Having an opportunity to talk to the high priest, Korihor continued these Anti-Christ teachings:

Now the high priest’s name was Giddonah. And Korihor said unto him: Because I do not teach the foolish traditions of your fathers, and because I do not teach this people to bind themselves down under the foolish ordinances and performances which are laid down by ancient priests, to usurp power and authority over them, to keep them in ignorance, that they may not lift up their heads, but be brought down according to thy words. (Alma 30:23)

- Religious beliefs bind people down and are foolish.
- Ordinances and performances of righteousness were invented to ‘usurp power and authority.’

- Priests teach these things to keep the people in ignorance and under their control.

Ye say that this people is a free people. Behold, I say they are in bondage. Ye say that those ancient prophecies are true. Behold, I say that ye do not know that they are true. (Alma 30:24)

- Because of faith and religion, people are not free but in bondage.
- Again, the scriptures are not true.

Ye say that this people is a guilty and a fallen people, because of the transgression of a parent. Behold, I say that a child is not guilty because of its parents. (Alma 30:25)

- Man cannot be fallen from God because of the transgression of Adam (a parent).
- There is no consequence of Adam's that was passed onto his posterity.

And ye also say that Christ shall come. But behold, I say that ye do not know that there shall be a Christ. And ye say also that he shall be slain for the sins of the world— (Alma 30:26)

- There cannot be a Christ.
- Christ cannot pay for the sins of the world.

And thus ye lead away this people after the foolish traditions of your fathers, and according to your own desires; and ye keep them down, even as it were in bondage, that ye may glut yourselves with the labors of their hands, that they durst not look up with boldness, and that they durst not enjoy their rights and privileges. (Alma 30:27)

- Religion is to keep the people in bondage for control.
- Religion exists to steal from the faithful.
- Religion takes away the rights and privileges of believers, which is to act the way they want, and to sin without guilt.

Yea, they durst not make use of that which is their own lest they should offend their priests, who do yoke them according to their desires, and have brought them to believe, by their traditions and their dreams and their whims and their visions and their pretended mysteries, that they should, if they did not do according to their words, offend some unknown being, who they say is God—a being who never has been seen or known, who never was nor ever will be. (Alma 30:28)

- Religion requires the giving of time and money to others.
- Religion instills fear of offending the priests.
- Religion 'yokes' the believer to whatever the priest desires for control.
- All religion is founded upon traditions, dreams, whims, visions, and pretended mysteries.
- Religion forces guilt upon the believer by suggesting he can offend a God.
- God does not exist. God 'never has been seen or known, who never was nor ever will be.'

These are the anti-Christ philosophies taught by Korihor as he sought to take away the freedom of the people by taking God, faith, and religion from their lives. Korihor sought to destroy the doctrines of salvation by teaching that God does not exist. And based upon this, Korihor taught there was no fall, and therefore no sin or guilt, so no Atonement is necessary and thus Christ does not exist, and there is no resurrection because death is the final end. If God does not exist, the doctrines of the anti-Christ provide the reason to trust in the arm of flesh, as every 'moral choice'

becomes a civil right. These teachings of Korihor have become the foundation of modern political platforms that stress political views contrary to the laws of God, as freedoms and choices, just as Korihor taught. These political strategies do not consider the scriptures as the word of God, but only ‘foolish traditions’ of the past, and antiquated thoughts and mores. Ironically, the actual and real foolish traditions are the philosophies of the anti-Christ. Korihor taught that ‘without God,’ the yoke of moral obligation was lifted from the natural man, therefore, making aberrant behavior a privilege rather than a sin in the eyes of man, and eliminating the consequences of moral choice. Terms could be used like “Pro-Choice” or “Gay-Rights,” implying that a release from morality was actually freedom of ‘choice’ and a ‘right’ by decision, while the consequences and differing opinion are viewed as intolerant. Some leaders couch these same doctrines of Korihor within the framework of doing that which is best for mankind, like turning the righteousness of charity from a character trait into a tax rate and a redistribution of wealth. The fundamental principle of the Anti-Christ doctrine is founded in the conviction that God does not exist, freeing one from the moral obligation and guilt of being responsible to a power higher than oneself. Leaders and candidates seeking for public office (and their platforms) should be “good” as defined by Mormon, in that they seek to persuade mankind to believe in Christ (Moroni 7:5-17).

Governments, and institutions become ‘anti-Christ’ as they strip God and Christ from the court houses, schools, public areas and more. Of course these ‘anti-Christ’ philosophies come about by laws enacted by leaders chosen by the voice of the people and the judges who are appointed because of personal agendas and philosophies of the chosen representatives. All branches of the government, the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative may act the part of an ‘anti-Christ’ as we are warned about in scripture.

The reality of the freedoms—of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—inseparably connect the freedom of religion and freedom of speech together. Without the freedom to teach or preach publicly doctrines espoused in a given religion, the freedom of religion cannot exist. This is a concern Elder Dallin H. Oaks recently addressed:

...some are contending that a religious *message* is just another message in a world full of messages, not something to be given unique or special protection. One author takes the extreme position that religious speech should have even *less* protection. In *Freedom from Religion*, published by the Oxford University Press, a law professor makes this three-step argument:

1. In many nations “society is at risk from religious extremism.”
2. “A follower is far more likely to act on the words of a religious authority figure than other speakers.”
3. Therefore, “in some cases, society and government should view religious speech as inherently *less protected* than secular political speech because of its extraordinary ability to influence the listener.”

The professor then offers this shocking conclusion:

“[W]e must begin to consider the possibility that religious speech can no longer hide behind the shield of freedom of expression...”

“Contemporary religious extremism leaves decision-makers and the public alike with no choice but to re-contour constitutionally granted rights as they pertain to religion and speech.”

I believe most thoughtful people would reject that extreme conclusion. All should realize how easy it would be to gradually manipulate the definition of “religious

extremism” to suppress any unpopular religion or any unpopular preaching based on religious doctrine.²

Elder Oaks emphasized, as does the Book of Mormon, that freedom of speech is directly connected to the freedom of religion, as in the case of Korihor or any other teacher—religious or irreligious.

The loss of freedom can be subtle as governments and leaders turn the values and morals attached to one’s choice of faith and religion,—which should be protected by the First Amendment—into a ‘civil right to sin’ protected by law and the judges appointed by the “Amalickiah’s” of the day. These new ‘civil rights’ are founded in the doctrine of the anti-Christ and the underlying assumptions that there is no God, so therefore religious values or moral choices espoused by people of faith are considered persecution, harassment, prejudice, or intolerance by those who don’t believe. What is a ‘sin’ by religious choice and belief may become a ‘right’ protected by law and considered a hate crime if preached against in a religious setting, and therefore, could be punishable by law.

Political platforms founded on ‘moral tolerance’ and ‘political correctness’ are code phrases in the subtle desire to do away with the integration of deity and faith in the political arena. Freedom exists because of religion, and law exists for the protection of that freedom, maintaining the rights of every individual within the community to have the same privileges. Basic freedoms such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; religious freedom; and the protection of private property become the primary purpose that governments and laws are established. As soon as the government, laws, or judgments are enacted that favor one individual or entity over another, individual freedoms are compromised and the corruption of power is imminent. This corruption is detailed within the Book of Mormon, and is not only true of kings, but of elected leaders also.

² <http://newsroom.lds.org/article/elder-oaks-religious-freedom-Chapman-University>