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## Chapter XLI

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**Abstract:** The Last Chief Judge Murdered and the Republic Overthrown—The Signs of the Savior's Death Appear—A Terrible Storm—The Universal Darkness—The Unparalleled Destruction—The Terror of those Hours

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Nephites. Many thousands surrendered, and the remainder were slain. Zenmarihah was taken and hanged to the top of a tree; which, when he was dead, the Nephites cut down. They then greatly rejoiced and praised God for his mercies and blessings in delivering them from their enemies.

The soldiers of Gidgiddoni succeeded in taking as prisoners all the robbers that were not killed. The word of God was preached to them, and those who repented of their sins, and covenanted to cease their evil practices, were set at liberty. The remainder were condemned for their crimes and punished according to law. This entirely broke up these bands of murderers and robbers, and peace and righteousness again prevailed (A. C. 21), but it was not until five years later (A. C. 26) that the Nephites returned to and possessed their old homes.

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## CHAPTER XLI.

THE LAST CHIEF JUDGE MURDERED AND THE REPUBLIC  
OVERTHROWN—THE SIGNS OF THE SAVIOR'S DEATH  
APPEAR—A TERRIBLE STORM—THE UNIVERSAL DARK-  
NESS—THE UNPARALLELED DESTRUCTION—THE TER-  
ROR OF THOSE HOURS.

THE NEXT year the laws were revised according to justice and equity. They had, doubtless, been violently tampered with during the times that the Gadian-ton robbers held control of the administration and elected the officers. Good order now prevailed throughout the whole land. Soon new cities were founded

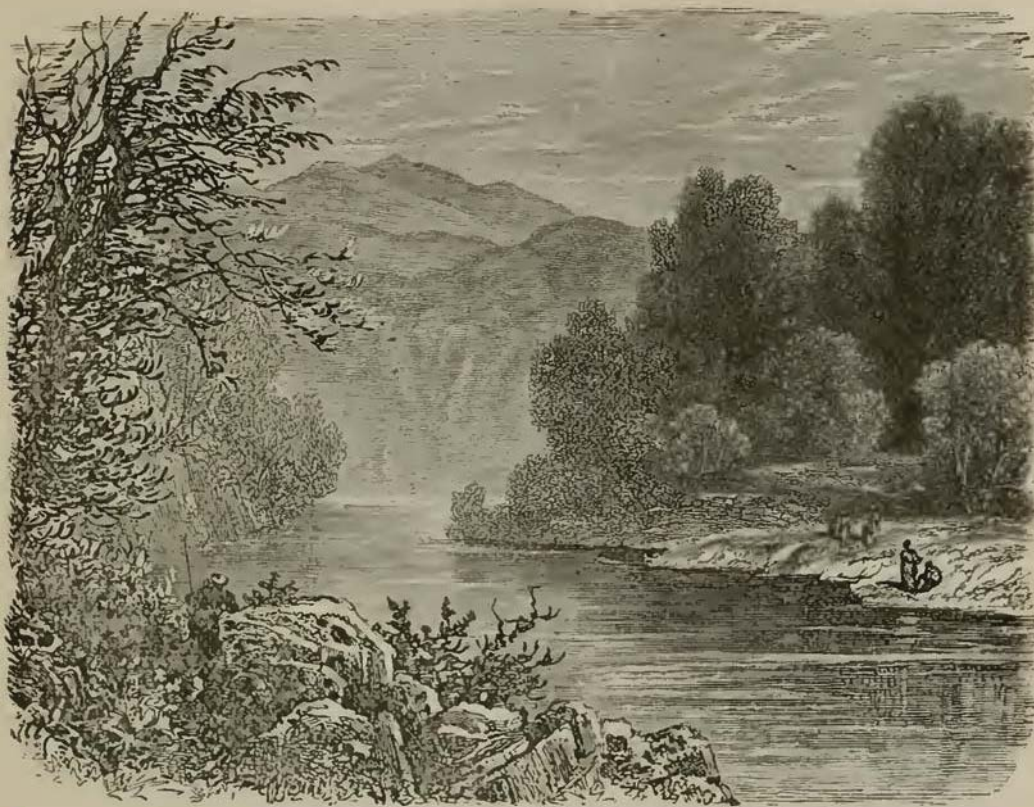
and built, and many improvements made. Yet for all this, the peace was short lived. Iniquity and dissension soon began to again raise their hideous heads, and the prophets and servants of God were persecuted and illegally condemned to death.

No officer, according to Nephite law, had power to condemn a person to death without the authority of the governor, but many of the prophets were put to death secretly by the judges. A complaint was entered against these judges to the governor and they were tried for their crimes, according to the law made by the people.

The kindred and friends of the offenders, with the lawyers and high priests, entered into a secret covenant to destroy the people who were in favor of law and justice, and to save the guilty judges from the just penalty of their misdeeds. This was, in fact, the re-establishment of the order of Gadianton. They proposed to assassinate the governor, set up a king to rule the country, and destroy its liberties. That same year they murdered the chief judge Lachoneus, the younger, as he sat in the judgment seat. The result was not what the plotters anticipated; for the people, being dissatisfied with the condition of affairs, divided into tribes, every man with his family uniting with his kindred and friends. This completely disorganized the government and deranged the plans of the conspirators. Some men had large families and many kindred and friends, and their tribes were correspondingly large. Each tribe appointed its chief, or leader, and it was his special duty to see that the laws they had adopted were properly carried out (B. C. 30).

While these terrible social overturnings were tak-

ing place on this continent, how different were the events that were occurring in the midst of the house of Israel on the eastern continent, for it was in this year that Jesus, the Redeemer of the world, was baptized by John in Jordan, as Lehi, Nephi, and others of the



THE RIVER JORDAN.

ancient prophets had long before foretold; and it was in this year that he commenced his public ministry, and began to teach men the law of his gospel.

There was but little to unite the Nephite tribes except their fear of the Gadianton robbers. This appears to have led to a confederacy for the purpose of defense. They agreed to keep peace with one another, and established laws to prevent one tribe trespassing upon the rights of the others.

The secret association that had slain the chief judge elected one Jacob to be their leader. Seeing that their enemies, the tribes of the people, were too numerous to contend with, he commanded his followers to flee into the northernmost parts of the land, where they could build up a kingdom to themselves. They carried out his plan, and their flight was too speedy to be intercepted. In the north they built a large city which they called Jacobugath.

In this calamitous condition of affairs, Nephi was called, by the voice of the Lord and the administration of angels, to labor diligently in the ministry among this wicked people. At first, but few accepted the truth; but in the following year (A. C. 32) many were baptized into the church. As the year (A. C. 33) was passing away, the people began to look anxiously for the fulfilment of the predictions of Samuel, the Lamanite, concerning the important events which would take place at the death of our Savior. Notwithstanding the many predictions of the prophets already fulfilled, there was much doubt and uneasiness among the people concerning that which was yet in the future. They had not to wait long, however, for the fulfilment of his words.

On the fourth day of the thirty-fourth year the promised signs of the Savior's crucifixion began. A horrible and devastating tempest burst upon the land. All that was ever told of the loudest thunder, and all that was ever seen of the most vivid lightning, would fail to picture the terrific visitation. The earth quivered and groaned and opened in wide, unfathomable chasms. Forests of gigantic trees were uprooted and carried high above the earth to meet in fearful shocks in the

air and then to be driven down again and shattered upon the unyielding rocks. Mountains were riven and swallowed up in yawning gulfs, or were scattered into fragments and dispersed like hail before the tearing wind. Cattle were lifted from their feet and dashed



THE CRUCIFIXION.

over precipices, or were hurried before the blast to perish in the far off sea. Towers, temples, houses, were torn up, scattered in fragments or crushed by

falling rocks, and together with their inmates were ground to dust in the convulsion. Human beings were hurled high into the air and driven from point to point, until they found graves fathoms deep below the earth's surface. Blue and yellow flames burst from the edges of sinking rocks, blazed for a moment and then all was the deepest darkness again. Boiling springs gushed upwards from sulphurous caverns. Shrieks and howls from suffering animals, awful in themselves, were drowned in the overwhelming uproar. Rain poured down in torrents, cloud-bursts, like floods, washed away all with which they came in contact, and pillars of steaming vapor seemed to unite the earth and sky.

This unparalleled storm raged throughout the land for three hours only—but to those who suffered it seemed an age.

During its short continuance the whole face of nature was changed. Mountains sank, valleys rose, the sea swept over the plains, large stagnant lakes usurped the place of flourishing cities, great chasms, rents and precipices disfigured the face of the earth. Many cities were destroyed by earthquakes, fire, and the tumultuous overflow of the waters of the great seas.

Three days of unnatural and impenetrable darkness followed the horrors of the tempest, and from the heavens the voice of the Lord was heard by the affrighted people, proclaiming in their terrified ears the destruction that had taken place.

Terrible was the catalogue of woes that that heavenly voice rehearsed. The great city of Zarahemla and the inhabitants thereof God had burned with fire. Moroni had been sunken in the depths of the sea and



DESTRUCTION OF ZARAHEMLA





her iniquitous children had been drowned. Gilgal had been swallowed up in an earthquake and her people were entombed in the bowels of the earth. Onihah, Mocchi and Jernsalem had disappeared and waters overflowed the places where they so lately stood. Gadiandi, Gadiomnah, Jacob and Giingimno were all overthrown, and desolate hills and valleys occupied their places, while their inhabitants were buried deep in the earth. Jacobugath, Laman, Josh, Gad and Kishkumen had all been burned, most probably by lightnings from heaven. The desolation was complete, the face of the land was changed, tens of thousands, probably millions, of souls had been suddenly called to meet the reward of their sinful lives; for this destruction came upon them that their wickedness and their abominations might be hid from the face of heaven, and that the blood of the prophets and the saints might not come up any more in appeal unto God against them.

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## CHAPTER XLII.

THE VOICE FROM HEAVEN—THE SAVIOR TESTIFIES OF HIMSELF—SILENCE THROUGHOUT THE LAND—HOW OFT WOULD CHRIST HAVE GATHERED HIS PEOPLE—THE DARKNESS DEPARTS.

WHEN THE heavenly voice had finished the recital of the calamities that had befallen the land and its inhabitants, the speaker commenced an appeal to those who yet lived, and revealed to them who he was. He declared unto them:

O all ye that are spared because ye were more