
Ether 9 — He Even Saw the Son of Righteousness — The Combination Devours Itself, and the Long Reigns of the Righteous Kings

Ether 9: the working-out of the secret combination founded in chapter 8, and a long season of righteous kings between the eras of wickedness. The combination of Akish overthrows Omer, but the Lord warns Omer in a dream and he escapes; then the combination devours itself — Akish murders his own son, his sons war against him for money and power, and nearly the whole people are destroyed. Omer is restored, and there follows one of the brightest stretches in the book: Emer reigns sixty-two years in prosperity and even saw the Son of Righteousness and rejoiced; Coriantum and Com walk in righteousness. Then wickedness returns under Heth, who kills his father and casts out the prophets, and the Lord sends a famine and poisonous serpents until the people repent. It is the chapter where the secret combination consumes its own builders, and where, in the gap between the eras of darkness, a king beholds the coming Christ.

Ether 9 shows what becomes of the secret combination founded in chapter 8, and the answer is a grim vindication of Moroni's warning: the combination devours its own builders. Akish, who murdered his way to the throne, ends by murdering his own son, and his sons war against him *for money* until *nearly all the people of the kingdom* are destroyed (v. 12). The evil that promised power and gain delivers only mutual destruction — the wicked punishing the wicked, exactly as Mormon taught (Mormon 4:5). But the chapter is not all darkness. Between the era of Akish and the later era of Heth lies one of the brightest stretches in the whole book of Ether: Omer is restored, and a line of righteous kings — Emer, Coriantum, Com — reigns in long prosperity, with the curse lifted and the land pouring out its blessings. At the center of this bright stretch stands one of the most remarkable verses in the book: king Emer *even saw the Son of Righteousness, and did rejoice and glory in his day; and he died in peace* (v. 22). The chapter is a study in the two destinies of the choice land — the combination consuming itself in blood, and the righteous kings beholding the coming Christ — set side by side so the reader sees the whole difference that righteousness makes.

Hebrew Word Studies

shemesh-tsedakah / chalom / batsoreth (שֶׁמֶשׁ / מְלֶכֶת / בָּטָרֶת) — **Sun of Righteousness / dream (the medium of divine warning) / drought, dearth, famine v. 22, v. 3, v. 30.** Three Hebrew expressions illuminate the chapter. *Shemesh tsedakah* — Sun of Righteousness — stands behind *the Son of Righteousness* whom Emer saw (v. 22). The phrase is from Malachi 4:2: *unto you that fear my name shall the Sun (shemesh) of righteousness (tsedakah) arise with healing in his wings.* The Book of Mormon's *Son of Righteousness* is a deliberate reading of Malachi's *Sun* as the Son — Christ as the rising sun of righteousness, the light and healing of the world. Emer, who walked in *tsedakah* (righteousness), was granted to see the *Son/Sun of Righteousness* himself, the dawn of the very righteousness he had lived. *Chalom* — dream — is the medium of Omer's deliverance (v. 3): *the Lord warned Omer in a dream.* The *chalom* is a recurring channel of divine guidance in the Hebrew Bible — Jacob's ladder, Joseph's dreams, Daniel's visions, the dream that warned Joseph to flee to Egypt with the child. God's warning of Omer in a *chalom* places him in this line of those whom God preserved by dream-revelation, the faithful delivered out of danger because they heeded the dream. *Batsoreth* — drought, dearth — is the judgment the Lord sends under Heth (v. 30). It is the covenant curse for breaking faith: *I will make your heaven as iron... your land shall not yield her increase* (Lev. 26:19–20); the *batsoreth* withholds the rain that the choice land's blessing depends on. And the chapter shows the curse's purpose — not destruction for its own sake but to drive the people to repentance, so that when they humble themselves the Lord *did send rain* (v. 35). The *batsoreth* is a severe mercy: the withholding of water until the people thirst enough to turn back to the fountain of living water.

From the Chapter's Architecture

```cross-references Gen. 41:25–36 (Pharaoh's dream of coming famine — the dream-warning of v. 3); Gen. 37:5–11 (Joseph's dreams — the divine chalom of v. 3); Lev. 26:18–20 (the covenant curse of drought, your heaven as iron — the famine of v. 30); Deut. 28:23–24 (the rain made powder and dust for disobedience — the dearth of v. 30); Num. 21:6–9 (the fiery serpents sent among Israel — the poisonous serpents of vv. 31–33); 1 Kgs. 17:1; 18:1 (Elijah and the withheld and restored rain — the famine and rain of vv. 30, 35); Ps. 7:15–16 (he made a pit... and is fallen into the ditch which he made — the combination's self-destruction, vv. 11–12); Prov. 26:27 (whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein — vv. 11–12, and the prophets cast into pits, v. 29); Mal. 4:2 (the Sun of righteousness... with healing in his wings — the Son of Righteousness Emer saw, v. 22); Matt. 2:12–13 (Joseph warned in a dream to flee — the dream-deliverance of v. 3); Jn. 8:56 (Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad — Emer who did rejoice and glory in his day, having seen the Son, v. 22); Acts 7:55–56 (Stephen sees the Son standing — a mortal beholding of the glorified Christ, v. 22); Mormon 4:5 (by the wicked are the wicked punished — the combination devouring itself, vv. 11–12); Ether 2:8–11 (the choice-land decree restated at v. 20); Ether 3:13–16 (the brother of Jared sees the premortal Christ — the vision Emer shares, v. 22); Ether 8:22–25 (Moroni's warning that the combinations destroy all people — fulfilled in the house of Akish, vv. 11–12); Ether 7:23–26 (Shule defending the prophets — the contrast to Heth casting them into pits, v. 29); 2 Ne. 26:3; 3 Ne. 25:2 (the Sun of Righteousness arising — v. 22); D&C 88:7 (Christ the light of the sun, the light of the sun... which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God — the Son of Righteousness, v. 22). ```