

LESSON 19
“None Could Deliver Them but the Lord”
Mosiah 18-24

OVERVIEW:

Alma teaches the baptismal covenant and baptizes many people. King Noah betrays his people and suffers death by fire. Limhi’s people are chastened and eventually delivered by the Lord. The Lord delivers Alma’s people from bondage.

(Bondage is not always marked by the clanging of literal chains or the shouts of overseers. In mortality we often know bondage that is just as restricting, dimming our days and our hopes for happiness. The chains may be resentments or pride that take the shine off of life. Walls may be built brick by brick as disappointment and failed expectations mount and our will slacks. Tragedy, sin, or ill health may stalk above us like overseers, demanding our attention. To be mortal is to know pain and weakness, to taste disappointment like ashes in your mouth, to sin and face its bitter consequences. That is why the experiences of two groups of people who suffer and toil at the hands of Lamanite masters in these chapters of Mosiah are about us. Who has not known some form of bondage and who has not yearned for escape-or at least relief? The different experience of these two groups teaches us something about escaping bondage that can apply directly to us. Scot and Maurine Proctor, *Meridian Magazine*, Lesson 19.)

There are several instances in the Book of Mormon where people were in bondage. In this story, King Limhi’s people and Alma’s people were in bondage in fulfillment of Abinadi’s prophecies. Abinadi’s prophecy is still in force today and will occur if we don’t do the things mentioned in Mosiah chapter 7: Turn to the Lord with full purpose of heart; Trust in the Lord; and Serve the Lord with diligence of mind. (Mosiah 7:33)

SCRIPTURES:

THE BOOK OF MOSIAH
CHAPTER 18

Alma preaches in private—He sets forth the covenant of baptism and baptizes at the waters of Mormon—He organizes the Church of Christ and ordains priests—They support themselves and teach the people—Alma and his people flee from King Noah into the wilderness. [About 148—145 B.C.]

1 AND now, it came to pass that Alma, who had fled from the servants of king Noah, ^arepented of his sins and iniquities, and went about privately among the people, and began to teach the words of Abinadi—

2 Yea, concerning that which was to come, and also concerning the resurrection of the dead, and the ^aredemption of the people, which was to be brought to pass through the power, and sufferings, and ^bdeath of Christ, and his resurrection and ascension into heaven.

3 And as many as would hear his word he did teach. And he taught them privately, that it might not come to the knowledge of the king. And many did believe his words.

4 And it came to pass that as many as did believe him did go forth to a ^aplace which was called Mormon, having received its name from the king, being in the ^bborders of the land having been infested, by times or at seasons, by wild beasts.

5 Now, there was in Mormon a fountain of pure water, and Alma resorted thither, there being near the water a thicket of small trees, where he did hide himself in the daytime from the searches of the king.

6 And it came to pass that as many as believed him went thither to hear his words.

7 And it came to pass *after many days (This was not suddenly.) there were a goodly number gathered together at the place of Mormon, to hear the words of Alma. Yea, all were gathered together that believed on his word, to hear him. And he did ^ateach them, and did preach unto them repentance, and redemption, and faith on the Lord.

8 And it came to pass that he said unto them: Behold, here are the waters of Mormon (for thus were they called) and now, as ye are ^adesirous to come into the ^bfold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light; (Baptismal covenant.)

9 Yea, and are ^awilling to mourn with those that ^bmourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as ^cwitnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the ^dfirst resurrection, that ye may have eternal life—

10 Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being ^abaptized in the ^bname of the Lord, (Baptism is the first fruits of repentance. It is an ordinance, a sign of a covenant, an outward expression of the acceptance of and participation in a two-way promise. The initiate promises God certain things; in return, God promises certain blessings. According to Alma, persons desiring to enter the kingdom of God promise to 1) bear one another's burdens; 2) mourn with those that mourn; 3) comfort those that stand in need of comfort; and 4) stand as witnesses of God at all times. In return God promises that obedient souls may be: 1) redeemed from death; 2) numbered with those of the first resurrection; and 3) inheritors of eternal life. DCBM, 2:254) as a witness before him that ye have entered into a ^ccovenant with him, (Joseph Smith said "God has set many signs on the earth, as well as in the heavens; for instance, the oak of the forest, the fruit of the tree, the herb of the field, all bear a sign that seed hath been planted there... Upon the same principle do I contend that baptism is a sign ordained of God, for the believer in Christ to take upon himself in order to enter into the kingdom of God ... Baptism is a sign to God, to angels, and to heaven that we do the will of God, and there is no other way beneath the heavens whereby God hath ordained for man to come to Him to be saved, and enter into the Kingdom of God, except faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins, and any other course is in vain: then you have the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost. TPJS, p. 198.) that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you? (To have the Spirit more abundantly means that you now have the Gift of the Holy Ghost. Joseph Fielding Smith said: "In the waters of baptism, we covenanted that we would keep these commandments; that we would serve the Lord; that we would keep this first and greatest of all commandments, and love the Lord our God; that we would keep the next great commandment, we would love our neighbor as ourselves; and with all the might that we have, with all the strength, with all our hearts, we would prove to him that we would 'live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God;' that we would be obedient and humble, diligent in his service, willing to obey, to hearken to the counsels of those who preside over us and do all things with an eye single to the glory of God." (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 2, p. 238))

11 And now when the people had heard these words, they clapped their hands for joy, and exclaimed: This is the desire of our hearts.

12 And now it came to pass that Alma took Helam, he being one of the first, and went and stood forth in the water, and cried, saying: O Lord, pour out thy Spirit upon thy servant, that he may do this work with holiness of heart. (Alma was baptized and held the priesthood before the coming of Abinadi, but he became involved with other priests under the reign of the wicked King Noah, and when he baptized Helam, he felt he needed a cleansing himself so he buried himself in the water as a token of full repentance. Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, 2:336-37)

13 And when he had said these words, the ^aSpirit of the Lord was upon him, and he said: (This is not a baptismal prayer, but rather counsel to Helam.) Helam, I baptize thee, having ^bauthority from the Almighty God, (No ordinance will be of efficacy, virtue, and force in and after men are dead unless it is

the proper ordinance, performed in the manner ordained by the Lord, in his name and by his authority, under the direction of those holding the keys of his priesthood, and thereafter it receives the ratifying seal of the Holy Spirit of Promise. In our day, the person performing a baptism addresses the one being baptized by name, saying : Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ [that is, having been ordained to the priesthood and acting under the direction of those holding its keys], I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. DCBM, 2:257-58) as a testimony that ye have entered into a ^ccovenant to serve him until you are dead as to the mortal body; and may the Spirit of the Lord be poured out upon you; and may he grant unto you eternal life, (We do not earn eternal life, we inherit eternal life. After we have done all that we can do, after we have denied ourselves of ungodliness and worldly lusts, then is the grace of God sufficient for us; then we are sanctified in Christ and eventually made perfect in Christ. DCBM, 2:258) through the redemption of Christ, whom he has prepared from the ^dfoundation of the world.

14 And after Alma had said these words, both Alma and Helam were ^aburied in the water (Joseph Fielding Smith said: "Therefore, when Alma baptized himself with Helam that was not a case of Alma baptizing himself, but merely as a token to the Lord of his humility and full repentance. In Alma 5:3 we learn that Alma [the younger] was consecrated the high priest over the Church under his father. Now Alma did not organize the Church with the idea that they had no church before that time. They had a church from the days of Lehi and Alma only set things in order." (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 3, pp. 203-4) There is no question but that Alma held the priesthood, was one ordained after the holy order of God. Thus he would have been baptized previously. DCBM, 2:258. I think that Alma just slipped on a rock in the water and fell down. He was careful with his footing after that.); and they arose and came forth out of the water rejoicing, being filled with the Spirit.

15 And again, Alma took another, and went forth a second time into the water, and baptized him according to the first, only he did not bury ^ahimself again in the water.

16 And after this manner he did baptize every one that went forth to the place of Mormon; and they were in number about two hundred and four souls; yea, and they were ^abaptized in the waters of Mormon, and were filled with the ^bgrace of God. (There were probably more than 204 people, since those under 8 years of age would not have been baptized. There may have been as many as 500 people, an average sized ward in the Church today.)

17 And they were called the church of God, or the ^achurch of Christ, from that time forward. And it came to pass that whosoever was baptized by the power and authority of God was added to his church.

18 And it came to pass that Alma, having ^aauthority from God, (Reference is here made to the priesthood which Alma held. Exactly when or where he was ordained is not given in the Book of Mormon. It may be that his office of high priest in King Noah's court was an actual priesthood office, an office to which he had been formally ordained by one having proper authority, this in spite of the abominations of the day. Second, it is not inconceivable that Alma could have been ordained by Abinadi. A third possibility is that heavenly messengers could have been sent to ordain Alma if circumstances precluded his having contact with some mortal holding proper authority. DCBM, 2:260) ^bordained priests; (These are not Aaronic Priesthood offices.) even one priest to every fifty of their number (The priesthood body used here was sufficient for their needs at the time. It is different in our day.) did he ordain to preach unto them, and to ^cteach them concerning the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. (Joseph Fielding Smith said: "Question: "Where did Alma get his authority? All we can find is that he received it from God, but there is no detail, and we are left to wonder if it was before he was baptized. We are confused about the whole matter and would appreciate any information you can give us." "Answer: We should take into consideration in the study of the Book of Mormon the fact that it is an abridgment taken from the records or history that had been kept by the prophets among the Nephites. Therefore, many of the details are lacking...Moreover, while the detail is lacking, the evidence is very clear that the Melchizedek Priesthood was possessed by the Nephites. "In the case of Alma and his priesthood, we are left to surmise that he legally and divinely received it before the days of

King Noah. We read that Zeniff, the father of Noah, was a righteous man. Alma evidently received the priesthood in the days of Zeniff, and at no time did he fully accept the teachings nor with full purpose follow the counsels and procedure of Noah and his wicked priests... "The question is: Where did Alma get his authority? Evidently he obtained it when he received the priesthood, which through his repentance he had not lost. There can be no serious question in relation to his authority, for it is written: 'And it came to pass that Alma; having authority from God, ordained priests; even one priest to every fifty of their number did he ordain to preach unto them, and to teach them concerning the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.'" (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, vol. 4, pp. 161-164))

19 And he commanded them that ^athey should ^bteach nothing save it were the things which he had taught, (Alma knew the damage that could occur if false doctrines are taught as among the people of King Noah. Here he is saying to only preach the Messiah like Abinadi taught.) and which had been spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets. (We cannot keep the commandments without first knowing them, and we cannot expect to know all, or more than we now know unless we comply with or keep those we have already received. TPJS, p. 256.)

20 Yea, even he commanded them that they should ^apreach nothing save it were repentance and faith on the Lord, who had redeemed his people. (To preach repentance is to preach the gospel, to declare the reality of Jesus Christ and him crucified, and to proclaim that salvation is in him and through the principles and ordinances of his gospel. In commanding the people to preach nothing but repentance, it was not the intent of Alma or Mosiah to preclude the preaching of other doctrines and principles, even including that which the scriptures call the mysteries of the kingdom. Rather, the teaching of the first principles must precede and thus lay the foundation for that which must and will follow. DCBM, 2:261)

21 And he commanded them that there should be no ^acontention one with another, but that they should look forward with ^bone eye, having one faith and one baptism, having their hearts ^cknit together in unity and in love one towards another. (Zion) (George Q. Cannon said: "My brethren and sisters, above all things, therefore, we should seek for this spirit of union and love. It should be sought for in our councils, and we should not contend. Now, suppose that I should take it into my head to say that a certain doctrine is true, and I contend for it, determined to have it so; does my contention make it true? Suppose that I should contend from now until the Savior came that it is true, would my contention make it true? Certainly not. I cannot change a principle of truth. Then why contend or dispute, or argue about it?... There can be no change wrought in doctrine and in truth by our contention. But I will tell you where there is room for differences of opinion--in regard to the policy to be pursued. There ought to be no contention, however. God speaks against it. We have no right to be a disputing, contentious people. And whenever I dispute with my brother I am likely to grieve the Spirit of the Lord and darken my own mind. Therefore, let us avoid contention, in our councils and in all our intercourse one with another." (*Collected Discourses 1886-1898*, ed. by Brian Stuy, vol. 4, George Q. Cannon, Apr. 7, 1895) Joseph F. Smith said: "I pray God that this spirit may especially enter into the hearts of this people, that they may strive for peace among themselves, that peace may dwell in their own hearts and houses, that peace may exist between neighbors, that peace, goodwill, love and union may characterize the associations of members of the Church with their fellow members, and that there may be no contention among them, nor strife, nor bitterness, nor back-sliding, nor back-biting, nor complaint of any description, but that peace on earth and good will to men may pervade the hearts and minds of all the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and that from them this spirit of peace and love for God and for our fellow man may go out into the world, as far as we have power to send it forth through the elders of the Church and otherwise, that men may hear the good tidings and receive them in their hearts, obey the truth, and join the ranks of the peaceful, of the peace-loving, of the peace-makers, of the God-fearing, and of the God-loving people that all Latter-day Saints should be, in every part of the world." (*Conference Reports*, Oct. 1914))

22 And thus he commanded them to preach. And thus they became the ^achildren of God. (True we are children of God, but through the Fall and our own disobedience we become alienated from God.

Through the atonement and our own righteousness, we obtain a reconciliation and are restored into the Royal Family.)

23 And he commanded them that they should observe the ^asabbath day, and keep it holy (Mark E. Petersen said: "...observance of the Sabbath is an indication of the depth of our conversion. Our observance or nonobservance of the Sabbath is an unerring measure of our attitude toward the Lord personally and toward his suffering in Gethsemane, his death on the cross, and his resurrection of the dead. It is a sign of whether we are Christians in very deed, or whether our conversion is so shallow that commemoration of his atoning sacrifice means little or nothing to us." (CR, April 1975, p. 72 as taken from McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2, p. 262)), and also every day they should give thanks to the Lord their God.

24 And he also commanded them that the priests whom he had ordained ^ashould ^blabor with their own hands for their support.

25 And there was ^aone day in every week that was set apart that they should ^bgather themselves together to teach the people, and to worship the Lord their God, and also, as often as it was in their power, to ^cassemble themselves together.

26 And the priests were not to depend upon the people for their support; but for their labor they were to receive the ^agrace of God, that they might wax strong in the Spirit, having the ^bknowledge of God, that they might teach with power and authority from God.

27 And again Alma commanded that the people of the church should impart of their substance, ^aevery one according to that which he had; if he have more abundantly he should impart more abundantly; and of him that had but little, but little should be required; and to him that had not should be given.

28 And thus they should impart of their ^asubstance of their own free will and good desires towards God, and to those priests that stood in need, yea, and to every needy, naked soul.

29 And this he said unto them, having been commanded of God; and they did ^awalk uprightly before God, imparting to one another both temporally and spiritually according to their needs and their wants. (D&C 82:17 – The Saints are to be equal, or in other words, you are to have equal claims on the properties [in the storehouse], for the benefit of managing the concerns of your stewardships, every man according to his wants and his needs, inasmuch as his wants are just.)

30 And now it came to pass that all this was done in Mormon, (This a reverent accounting of the events that happened here.) yea, by the ^awaters of Mormon, in the forest that was near the waters of Mormon; yea, the place of Mormon, the waters of Mormon, the forest of Mormon, how beautiful are they to the eyes of them who there came to the knowledge of their Redeemer (Converts feel an overwhelming sense of love and gratitude for those who first presented the gospel message to them.); yea, and how blessed are they, for they shall ^bsing to his praise forever.

31 And these things were done in the ^aborders of the land, that they might not come to the knowledge of the king.

32 But behold, it came to pass that the king, having discovered a movement among the people, sent his servants to watch them. Therefore on the day that they were assembling themselves together to hear the word of the Lord they were discovered unto the king.

33 And now the king said that Alma was stirring up the people to rebellion against him; therefore he sent his ^aarmy to destroy them.

34 And it came to pass that Alma and the people of the Lord were ^aapprised of the coming of the king's army; therefore they took their tents and their families and ^bdeparted into the wilderness.

35 And they were in number about ^afour hundred and fifty souls. (We may presume that this count is likely to be of adults only, as children are not mentioned, and converted families would certainly bring their families. If the count is four hundred and fifty adults, there would probably be somewhat more than half of that number as households, which would create a hamlet. Of course if the count follows the general Old World custom of counting adult males only (a distinct possibility since the Book of Mormon

is so studiously quiet about women) then we have a much more sizeable village. Brant Gardner.)

* Verse 7 [About 147 B.C.].

CHAPTER 19

Chapters 19-22 were taken from the record of Zeniff. These chapters teach us how to deal with our enemies.

Gideon seeks to slay King Noah—The Lamanites invade the land—King Noah suffers death by fire—Limhi rules as a tributary monarch. [Between 145 and 122 B.C.]

1 AND it came to pass that the ^aarmy of the king returned, having searched in vain for the people of the Lord.

2 And now behold, the forces of the king were small, having been reduced, and there began to be a division among the remainder of the people. (It appears that there were factions dividing the people. It may be that those who previously followed Zeniff and Abinadi had persuaded others to follow them after Abinadi's death reducing those who supported King Noah.)

3 And the lesser part began to ^abreathe out threatenings against the king, and there began to be a great contention among them.

4 And now there was a man among them whose name was Gideon, and he being a strong man and an enemy to the king, (Noah) therefore he drew his sword, and swore in his wrath that he would slay the king. (Gideon must have been a military man who may have had responsibilities around the king's palace to have heard the teachings of Abinadi.)

5 And it came to pass that he fought with the king; and when the king saw that he was about to overpower him, he fled and ran and got upon the ^atower which was near the temple. (Noah was probably in good enough shape to fight off a military man and have sufficient time to run away. He was probably not the overweight person depicted in pictures.)

6 And Gideon pursued after him and was about to get upon the tower to slay the king, and the king cast his eyes round about towards the land of ^aShemlon, and behold, the army of the Lamanites were within the borders of the land.

7 And now the king cried out in the anguish of his soul, saying: Gideon, ^aspare me, for the Lamanites are upon us, and they will destroy us; yea, they will destroy my people.

8 And now the king was not so much concerned about his people as he was about his ^aown life; nevertheless, Gideon did spare his life. (Gideon realized that even a bad king was necessary in time of crisis so he spared his life.)

9 And the king commanded the people that they should flee before the Lamanites, and he himself did go before them, and they did flee into the wilderness, with their women and their children.

10 And it came to pass that the Lamanites did pursue them, and did overtake them, and began to slay them. (It was probably easier for the Lamanites to attack a fleeing group of people than the organized military men of Gideon who were defending the city.)

11 Now it came to pass that the king commanded them that all the men should ^aleave their wives and their children, and flee before the Lamanites.

12 Now there were many that would not leave them, but had rather stay and perish with them. And the rest left their wives and their children and fled. (Noah is a coward.)

13 And it came to pass that those who tarried with their wives and their children caused that their fair daughters should stand forth and plead with the Lamanites that they would not slay them.

14 And it came to pass that **the Lamanites had compassion on them**, for they were charmed with the beauty of their women.

15 Therefore the Lamanites did spare their lives, and took them captives and carried them back to the

land of Nephi, and granted unto them that they might possess the land, under the conditions that they would deliver up king Noah into the hands of the Lamanites, and deliver up their property, even ^aone half of all they possessed, one half of their gold, and their silver, and all their precious things, and thus they should pay tribute to the king of the Lamanites from year to year. (Heavy taxes.)

16 And now there was one of the sons of the king among those that were taken captive, whose name was ^aLimhi. (Limhi would have fled with Noah and the rest of his family and loyalists. We find out later that Limhi's character is much better than his father's. With the future king captured, the city also fell into Lamanite hands.)

17 And now Limhi was desirous that his father should not be destroyed; nevertheless, Limhi was not ignorant of the iniquities of his father, he himself being a just man.

18 And it came to pass that Gideon sent men into the wilderness secretly, (This may mean that the men were sent without Limhi's knowledge, or they were sent to find Noah cautiously.) to search for the king and those that were with him. And it came to pass that they met the people in the wilderness, all save the king and his priests.

19 Now they had sworn in their hearts that they would return to the land of Nephi, and if their ^awives and their children were slain, and also those that had tarried with them, that they would seek revenge, and also perish with them.

20 And the king commanded them that they should not return; and they were angry with the king, and caused that he should suffer, even unto ^adeath by fire.

21 And they were about to take the priests also and ^aput them to death, and they fled before them.

22 And it came to pass that they were about to return to the land of Nephi, and they met the men of Gideon. And the men of Gideon told them of all that had happened to their wives and their children; and that the Lamanites had granted unto them that they might possess the land by paying a tribute to the Lamanites of one half of all they possessed. (This tribute was probably used to support those who guarded them.)

23 And the people told the men of ^aGideon that they had slain the king, and his ^bpriests had fled from them farther into the wilderness.

24 And it came to pass that after they had ended the ceremony, (These are two opposing parties that come together. The ceremony they have is like smoking the peace pipe, a peace ceremony of some kind. A treaty. It was some way to reconcile themselves to each other.) that they returned to the land of Nephi, rejoicing, because their wives and their children were not slain; and they told Gideon what they had done to the king.

25 And it came to pass that the king of the Lamanites made an ^aoath unto them, that his people should not slay them.

26 And also Limhi, being the son of the king, having the kingdom conferred upon him ^aby the people (If the people had known of Noah's death, Limhi would have automatically become king. The fact that the people make him king shows that they did not yet know of Noah's death.), made ^boath unto the king of the Lamanites that his people should pay ^ctribute unto him, even one half of all they possessed.

27 And it came to pass that Limhi began to establish the kingdom and to establish ^apeace among his people.

28 And the king of the Lamanites set ^aguards round about the land (This is to make sure they keep their treaty.), that he might ^bkeep the people of Limhi in the land, that they might not depart into the wilderness; and he did support his guards out of the tribute which he did receive from the Nephites.

29 And now king Limhi did have continual peace in his kingdom for the space of two years, that the Lamanites did not molest them nor seek to destroy them.

CHAPTER 20

Lamanite daughters are abducted by the priests of Noah—The Lamanites wage war upon Limhi and his people—They are repulsed and pacified. [Between 145 and 122 B.C.]

1 NOW there was a place in ^aShemlon where the daughters of the Lamanites did gather themselves together to sing, and to ^bdance, and to make themselves merry.

2 And it came to pass that there was one day a small number of them gathered together to sing and to dance. (This may have been a religious ritual.)

3 And now the priests of king Noah, being ashamed to return to the city of Nephi, yea, and also fearing that the people would ^aslay them, therefore they durst not return to their wives and their ^bchildren.

4 And having tarried in the wilderness, and having discovered the daughters of the Lamanites, they laid and watched them;

5 And when there were but few of them gathered together to dance, they came forth out of their secret places and took them and carried them into the wilderness; yea, twenty and four of the ^adaughters of the Lamanites they carried into the wilderness. (“Bride capture is, in fact, an old idea and was found throughout much of the ancient world, not just in Israel. The fact that two different Israelite groups practiced it on a one-time basis is not at all unexpected, particularly if the priests of Noah were acquainted with the story from Judges 19-21.” (FARMS Review of books, vol. 4, p. 226) Hugh Nibley states that there were festival dances and competitions among girls. One girl to represent each month of the year to compete against another girl. Hence, the reason for 24 maidens. He also indicated that the bridal veil came from capturing your bride with a net.)

6 And it came to pass that when the Lamanites found that their daughters had been missing, they were angry with the people of Limhi, for they thought it was the people of Limhi.

7 Therefore they sent their armies forth; yea, even the king himself went before his people; and they went up to the land of Nephi to destroy the people of Limhi.

8 And now Limhi had discovered them from the ^atower, even all their preparations for war did he discover; therefore he gathered his people together, and laid wait for them in the fields and in the forests.

9 And it came to pass that when the Lamanites had come up, that the people of Limhi began to fall upon them from their waiting places, and began to slay them.

10 And it came to pass that the battle became exceedingly sore, for they fought like lions for their prey.

11 And it came to pass that the people of Limhi began to drive the Lamanites before them; yet they were not half so numerous as the Lamanites. But they ^afought for their lives, and for their ^bwives, and for their children; therefore they exerted themselves and like dragons did they fight.

12 And it came to pass that they found the king of the Lamanites among the number of their dead; yet he was not dead, having been wounded and left upon the ground, so speedy was the flight of his people.

(When the king fell, the battle was over. With the king fallen there was no more reason to fight. That is why they made a speedy retreat.)

13 And they took him and bound up his wounds, and brought him before Limhi, and said: Behold, here is the king of the Lamanites; he having received a wound has fallen among their dead, and they have left him; and behold, we have brought him before you; and now let us slay him. (The word “checkmate” means, the king is dead. Here, Limhi’s people have won the game and now want to kill the king. TBM, 2:133.)

14 But Limhi said unto them: Ye shall not slay him, but bring him hither that I may see him. And they brought him. And Limhi said unto him: What cause have ye to come up to war against my people?

Behold, my people have not broken the ^aoath that I made unto you; therefore, why should ye break the oath which ye made unto my people? (Mormon is quoting from the official record of the king.)

15 And now the king said: I have broken the oath because thy people did carry away the daughters of my people; therefore, in my anger I did cause my people to come up to war against thy people.

16 And now Limhi had heard nothing concerning this matter; therefore he said: I will search among my people and whosoever has done this thing shall perish. Therefore he caused a search to be made among his people. (Limhi's concern was not in the numbers killed in the battle but in the breaking of an oath.)

17 Now when ^aGideon had heard these things, he being the king's captain, he went forth and said unto the king: I pray thee forbear, and do not search this people, and lay not this thing to their charge.

(Gideon, being the military man in charge of watching over the city, would have seen anyone carrying 24 girls against their will into the city. Since this did not happen, he surmises that the priests of Noah did the deed. Hugh Nibley said: "Notice that he is being very realistic; these are the steps by which the problem is solved here. It's a very touchy thing, but they solve the problem very sensibly on both sides—a thing people rarely do...Gideon is the last man you would expect to do this. But he had the experience of these things, and he knew. It's the old commander that knows. The most passionate talks I've ever heard against war in the Army have been by generals, without any exception. They know what it is, and boy do they light in! There were some wonderful ones by Omar Bradley, Max Taylor, and others. Eisenhower said some pretty strong things too. '...therefore, let us put a stop to the shedding of so much blood,' Gideon said, with his rush of excitement. This is the Gideon who chased the king up the tower with a sword, and all that sort of thing. He is the one who is making a plea to put an end to all this bloodshed, whatever they do." (*Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, Lecture 38, p. 138))

18 For do ye not remember the priests of thy father, whom this people sought to destroy? And are they not in the wilderness? And are not they the ones who have stolen the daughters of the Lamanites?

19 And now, behold, and tell the king of these things, that he may tell his people that they may be pacified towards us; for behold they are already preparing to come against us (The Lamanites must have selected another king. They are still upset about the broken oath.); and behold also there are but few of us.

20 And behold, they come with their numerous hosts; and except the king doth pacify them towards us we must perish.

21 For are not the words of Abinadi ^afulfilled, which he prophesied against us—and all this because we would not hearken unto the words of the Lord, and turn from our iniquities? (These people have not forgotten the words of Abinadi and are now returning to the Lord. Abinadi's prophecy was that if the people didn't repent after being in bondage, they would be destroyed.)

22 And now let us pacify the king, and we fulfil the ^aoath which we have made unto him; for it is better that we should be in bondage than that we should lose our ^blives; therefore, let us put a stop to the shedding of so much blood.

23 And now Limhi told the king all the things concerning his father, and the ^apriests that had fled into the wilderness, and attributed the carrying away of their daughters to them.

24 And it came to pass that the king was pacified towards his people; and he said unto them: Let us go forth to meet my people, without arms; and I swear unto you with an ^aoath that my people shall not slay thy people.

25 And it came to pass that they followed the king, and went forth without arms to meet the Lamanites. And it came to pass that they did meet the Lamanites; and the king of the Lamanites did bow himself down before them, and did plead in behalf of the people of Limhi. (Both sides were being reasonable and avoided more conflict.)

26 And when the Lamanites saw the people of Limhi, that they were without arms, they had ^acompassion on them and were pacified towards them, and returned with their king in peace to their own land. (The Lamanites are always more compassionate toward the Nephites than the other way around.)

CHAPTER 21

Limhi's people are smitten and defeated by the Lamanites—They meet Ammon and are converted—They tell Ammon of the twenty-four Jaredite plates. [Between 145 and 121 B.C.]

1 AND it came to pass that Limhi and his people returned to the city of Nephi, and began to dwell in the land again in peace.

2 And it came to pass that after many days the Lamanites began again to be stirred up in anger against the Nephites, and they began to come into the borders of the land round about.

3 Now they durst not slay them, because of the ^aoath which their king had made unto Limhi; but they would smite them on their ^bcheeks, and exercise authority over them; and began to put heavy ^cburdens upon their backs, and drive them as they would a dumb ass— (This may not have been a government sanctioned treatment but rather the work of individuals who did not believe their story that the priests of Noah took their daughters.)

4 Yea, all this was done that the ^aword of the Lord might be ^bfulfilled. (Abanadi's prophecies.)

5 And now the afflictions of the Nephites were great, and there was no way that they could deliver themselves out of their hands, for the Lamanites had ^asurrounded them on every side.

6 And it came to pass that the people began to murmur with the king because of their afflictions; and they began to be desirous to go against them to battle. And they did afflict the king sorely with their complaints; therefore he granted unto them that they should do according to their desires.

7 And they gathered themselves together again, and put on their armor, and went forth against the Lamanites to drive them out of their land.

8 And it came to pass that the Lamanites did beat them, and drove them back, and ^aslew many of them.

9 And now there was a great ^amourning and lamentation among the people of Limhi, the widow mourning for her husband, the son and the daughter mourning for their father, and the brothers for their brethren.

10 Now there were a great many ^awidows in the land, and they did cry mightily from day to day, for a great fear of the Lamanites had come upon them.

11 And it came to pass that their continual cries did stir up the remainder of the people of Limhi to anger against the Lamanites; and they went again to battle, but they were driven back again, suffering much loss.

12 Yea, they went again even the third time, and suffered in the like manner; and those that were not slain returned again to the city of Nephi. (Now they know that they will not be able to redeem themselves, but the Lord would have to save them.)

13 And they did humble themselves even to the dust, subjecting themselves to the ^ayoke of bondage, ^bsubmitting themselves to be smitten, and to be driven to and fro, and burdened, according to the desires of their enemies.

14 And they did ^ahumble themselves even in the depths of humility; and they did cry mightily to God; yea, even all the day long did they cry unto their God that he would ^bdeliver them out of their afflictions. (They are turning to the Lord, but not serving him, yet.)

15 And now the Lord was slow to ^ahear their cry (The Lord who is patient and long-suffering even with evil may be equally slow to redeem the transgressor. The seeds of iniquity are not easily uprooted; time and suffering are a part of the healing process. The blessings of heaven are not cheaply obtained. One hardly merits the company of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the exalted of all ages by the mere profession of faith or the lamentation for sin. A merely verbal repentance is hardly good training for the discipline necessary in keeping the commandments. D&C 101:7-8 - 7 They were slow to ^ahearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; therefore, the Lord their God is slow to hearken unto their prayers, to answer them in the day of their trouble. 8 In the day of their peace they esteemed lightly my counsel; but, in the day of their ^atrouble, of necessity they ^bfeel after me. DCBM 2:273.) because of their iniquities; nevertheless the Lord did hear their ^bcries, and began to soften the hearts of the Lamanites that they began to ease their burdens; yet the Lord did not see fit to deliver them out of bondage. (Joseph Fielding Smith said: "When we neglect this and other duties we do not have the same claim on the blessings of the Lord, and he has said if we are slow to hear him he may be slow to hear us in the hour of our trouble. (D. & C. 101:7-8.) The Lord was slow to hearken to the Nephites in their rebellion until

they were humbled and so with the Israelites, and this happened repeatedly. We should profit by their example. In our praying we should seek to do the will of the Lord and not merely to reap some advantage or gratification which may not be the best for us. This is a very significant saying: ‘Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name it shall be given unto you, that is expedient for you; and if ye ask anything that is not expedient for you, it shall turn unto your condemnation.’ (DC 88:63-65) Therefore we should not be too insistent, but should pray earnestly seeking light and to know the will of the Lord, with an unselfish spirit. Then, with this spirit, will our bodies be filled with light.” (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, p. 135))

16 And it came to pass that they began to prosper by degrees in the land, and began to raise grain more abundantly, and flocks, and herds, that they did not suffer with hunger. (The Lord began to bless them, but not to the fullest. They still have to pay for the consequences of their choices.)

17 Now there was a great number of women, more than there was of men; therefore king Limhi commanded that every man should ^aimpart to the support of the ^bwidows and their children, that they might not perish with hunger; and this they did because of the greatness of their number that had been slain. (They were forced to live the law of consecration to survive. Now they are starting to serve one another. Maybe we as a church will be forced to live the law of consecration someday.)

18 Now the people of Limhi kept together in a body as much as it was possible, and secured their grain and their flocks;

19 And the king himself did not trust his person without the walls of the city, unless he took his guards with him (This is how Ammon found the king, with his guards.), fearing that he might by some means fall into the hands of the Lamanites.

20 And he caused that his people should watch the land round about, that by some means they might take those priests that fled into the wilderness, who had stolen the ^adaughters of the Lamanites, and that had caused such a great destruction to come upon them.

21 For they were desirous to take them that they might ^apunish them; for they had come into the land of Nephi by night, and carried off their grain and many of their precious things; therefore they laid wait for them.

22 And it came to pass that there was no more disturbance between the Lamanites and the people of Limhi, *even until the time that ^aAmmon and his brethren came into the land. (The first encounter of Ammon with Limhi was from Ammon’s point of view. Now we see it from Limhi’s point of view.)

23 And the king having been without the gates of the city with his guard, ^adiscovered Ammon and his brethren; and supposing them to be priests of Noah therefore he caused that they should be taken, and bound, and cast into ^bprison. And had they been the priests of Noah he would have caused that they should be put to death. (This is the end to the flashback. We now come back to the sequence of Mosiah 7-8.)

24 But when he found that they were not, but that they were his brethren, and had come from the ^aland of Zarahemla, he was filled with exceedingly great joy. (The duplication of events recorded here and in Mosiah 8 is because Mormon was being true to the records from which the abridgment was taken.)

25 Now king Limhi had sent, previous to the coming of Ammon, a ^asmall number of men to ^bsearch for the land of Zarahemla; but they could not find it, and they were lost in the wilderness.

26 Nevertheless, they did find a land which had been peopled; yea, a land which was covered with dry ^abones; yea, a land which had been peopled and which had been destroyed; and they, having supposed it to be the land of Zarahemla, (This is why the people of Limhi thought that the people of Zarahemla had been destroyed.) returned to the land of Nephi, having arrived in the borders of the land not many days before the ^bcoming of Ammon.

27 And they brought a ^arecord with them, even a record of the people whose bones they had found; and it was engraven on plates of ore. (“The twenty-four plates were called *The Book of Ether* after its author. (Ether 1:2) Their discovery was not an accident. For, when Ether had finished his record, ‘He hid them

in a manner that the people of Limhi did find them.’ (Ether 15:33)” (Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2, p. 283))

28 And now Limhi was again filled with joy on learning from the mouth of Ammon that king Mosiah had a ^agift from God, whereby he could ^binterpret such engravings; yea, and Ammon also did rejoice.
29 Yet Ammon and his brethren were filled with sorrow because so many of their brethren had been ^aslain;

30 And also that king Noah and his priests had caused the people to commit so many sins and iniquities against God; and they also did mourn for the ^adeath of Abinadi; and also for the ^bdeparture of Alma and the people that went with him, who had formed a church of God through the strength and power of God, and faith on the words which had been spoken by Abinadi.

31 Yea, they did mourn for their departure, for they knew not whither they had fled. Now they would have gladly joined with them, for they themselves had entered into a ^acovenant with God to serve him and keep his commandments.

32 And now since the coming of Ammon, king Limhi had also entered into a covenant with God, and also many of his people, to serve him and keep his commandments.

33 And it came to pass that king Limhi and many of his people were desirous to be baptized; (They wanted to enter into the covenant relationship with God like Alma and his people.) but there was none in the land that had ^aauthority from God. (Little or no effort is made in the Book of Mormon to detail or explain the nature of priesthood and Church government – no systematic treatment of such matters as priesthood offices, quorums, councils, or even the organization of the Church itself. Such was not its purpose: the Book of Mormon is more a narrative of a family than an ecclesiastical history. What it makes abundantly clear, however – the Nephite prophets leave no question – is the necessity for the ordinances of salvation and the proper authority to perform them. DCBM 2:275.) And Ammon declined doing this thing, considering himself an unworthy servant. (It’s possible that Ammon held the priesthood but did not hold priesthood keys which would enable him to perform baptisms.)

34 Therefore they did not at that time form themselves into a ^achurch, waiting upon the Spirit of the Lord. Now they were desirous to become even as Alma and his brethren, who had fled into the wilderness.

35 They were desirous to be baptized as a witness and a testimony that they were willing to serve God with all their hearts (The covenant of baptism is here aptly described as a witness and a testimony that we are willing to serve God with all our hearts. In turn, it is our right to expect the powers of heaven – contingent upon our worthiness – to sustain us at all times and in all places we may be in. DCBM, 2:275.); nevertheless they did prolong the time; and an account of their baptism shall be ^agiven hereafter.

36 And now all the study of Ammon and ^ahis people, and king Limhi and his people, was to deliver themselves out of the hands of the Lamanites and from ^bbondage. (They are studying very hard to find a way to escape bondage. We need to do all we can for deliverance, then rely upon the Lord.)

* Verse 22 [About 121 B.C.].

CHAPTER 22

Plans are made for the people to escape from Lamanite bondage—The Lamanites are made drunk—The people escape, return to Zarahemla, and become subject to King Mosiah. [About 121 B.C.] (The complexities of these writings, with flashback and detailed people all fitting perfectly together, again testify that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and could not have done this without the help of the Lord.)

1 AND now it came to pass that Ammon and king Limhi began to consult with the people how they should ^adeliver themselves out of bondage; and even they did cause that all the people should gather

themselves together; and this they did that they might have the voice of the people concerning the matter. (Their form of government was a monarchy, not a democracy. Yet King Limhi was interested in understanding the will of the people in this matter. Elder Antoine R. Ivins said: "... democracy does not consist in a set of rules which provide for the election of representatives of the people, whom we name presidents and senators and representatives, but democracy is a condition of the heart; democracy consists in the recognition, on the part of one person, of the rights of another, and the thought that the common good is the determining principle, or should be, in all government; that men who are placed in prominent positions to direct the destinies of people derive that right from the voice of the people. In other words, that the people is sovereign, and the ruler is the servant of the people. "Our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, taught that when he said: 'He that is greatest among you shall be your servant.' Verily this is true. Democracy is the underlying principle, when it comes to government in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I have stood in this pulpit before and stressed the fact that that democracy is represented in the Priesthood of the Church of God." (*Conference Reports*, Apr. 1938, p. 47))

2 And it came to pass that they could find no way to deliver themselves out of bondage, except it were to take their women and children, and their flocks, and their herds, and their tents, and depart into the wilderness; for the Lamanites being so numerous, it was impossible for the people of Limhi to contend with them, thinking to deliver themselves out of bondage by the sword.

3 Now it came to pass that ^aGideon went forth and stood before the king, and said unto him: Now O king, thou hast hitherto hearkened unto my words many times when we have been contending with our brethren, the Lamanites.

4 And now O king, if thou hast not found me to be an unprofitable servant, or if thou hast hitherto listened to my words in any degree, and they have been of service to thee, even so I desire that thou wouldst listen to my words at this time, and I will be thy servant and deliver this people out of bondage.

5 And the king granted unto him that he might speak. And Gideon said unto him:

6 Behold the back pass, through the back wall, on the back side of the city. The Lamanites, or the ^aguards of the Lamanites, by night are ^bdrunken; (Gideon has sent out spies to learn of the weaknesses of the Lamanites.) therefore let us send a proclamation among all this people that they gather together their flocks and herds, that they may drive them into the wilderness by night. (This is a very well thought out plan.)

7 And I will go according to thy command and pay the last ^atribute of wine to the Lamanites, and they will be ^bdrunken; and we will pass through the secret pass on the left of their camp when they are drunken and asleep.

8 Thus we will depart with our women and our children, our flocks, and our herds into the wilderness; and we will travel around the land of ^aShilom.

9 And it came to pass that the king hearkened unto the words of Gideon.

10 And king Limhi caused that his people should gather their flocks together; and he sent the tribute of wine to the Lamanites; and he also sent more wine, as a present unto them; and they did drink freely of the wine which king Limhi did send unto them.

11 And it came to pass that the people of king Limhi did ^adepart by night into the wilderness with their flocks and their herds, and they went round about the land of ^bShilom in the wilderness, and bent their course towards the land of Zarahemla, being led by Ammon and his brethren.

12 And they had taken all their gold, and silver, and their precious things, which they could carry, and also their provisions with them, into the wilderness; and they pursued their journey.

13 And after being many days in the wilderness they ^aarrived in the land of Zarahemla, and joined Mosiah's people, and became his subjects.

14 And it came to pass that Mosiah ^areceived them with joy; and he also received their ^brecords, and also the ^crecords which had been found by the people of Limhi. ("The early history contained in the Book of Mormon is obtained from three sets of plates: the brass plates of Laban, the small plates of Nephi, and

the large plates of Nephi. However, when Limhi's people join with the people of King Mosiah in the land of Zarahemla they bring with them two additional sets of plates: (1) their own records, which are known as the record of Zeniff, and (2) the 'records which had been found by the people of Limhi,' which are later identified as the records of Ether. (See Ether 1:1-2.) When Alma and his people come into the land of Zarahemla, they also evidently bring their own records with them. (See Mosiah 25:6 and also the superscription before Alma, chapter 23.)" (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p.188))

15 And now it came to pass when the Lamanites had found that the people of Limhi had departed out of the land by night, that they sent an ^aarmy into the wilderness to pursue them;

16 And after they had pursued them two days, they could no longer follow their tracks (The terrain was such that their tracks disappeared. Either it was a very rocky terrain, or they were walking through a desert where the wind blew away their tracks.); therefore they were lost in the wilderness.

An account of Alma and the people of the Lord, who were driven into the wilderness by the people of King Noah. Comprising chapters 23 and 24.

CHAPTER 23

Alma refuses to be king—He serves as high priest—The Lord chastens his people, and the Lamanites conquer the land of Helam—Amulon, leader of King Noah's wicked priests, rules subject to the Lamanite monarch. [Between 145 and 121 B.C.] (This is a continuation of Mosiah 18.)

1 NOW Alma, having been ^awarned of the Lord that the armies of king Noah would come upon them, and having made it known to his people, therefore they gathered together their flocks, and took of their grain, and ^bdeparted into the wilderness before the armies of king Noah.

2 And the Lord did strengthen them, that the people of king Noah could not overtake them to destroy them.

3 And they fled ^aeight days' journey into the wilderness.

4 And they came to a land, yea, even a very beautiful and pleasant land, a land of pure water.

5 And they pitched their tents, and began to till the ground, and began to build buildings; yea, they were ^aindustrious, and did labor exceedingly.

6 And the people were desirous that Alma should be their ^aking, for he was beloved by his people.

7 But he said unto them: Behold, it is not expedient that we should have a king; for thus saith the Lord: Ye shall ^anot esteem one flesh above another, or one man shall not think himself above another; therefore I say unto you it is not expedient that ye should have a king.

8 Nevertheless, if it ^awere possible that ye could always have just men to be your ^bkings it would be well for you to have a king. (Even though a righteous king is chosen, there is no way to assure that those who succeed him will be of like spirit. For this reason the Lord commanded Samuel to warn Israel not to establish a monarchical government, but they would not listen to their God or to his prophet. DCBM 2:278)

9 But remember the ^ainiquity of king Noah and his ^bpriests; and I myself was ^ccaught in a snare, and did many things which were abominable in the sight of the Lord, which caused me sore ^drepentance; (There is no true repentance without suffering. Alma 42:16)

10 Nevertheless, ^aafter much ^btribulation, the Lord did hear my cries, and did answer my prayers, and has made me an ^cinstrument in his hands in bringing ^dso many of you to a knowledge of his truth. (Only those who walk in the ordinances of the Lord have the promise that they will find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures. D&C 89:18-19)

11 Nevertheless, in this I do not glory, for I am unworthy to glory of myself.

12 And now I say unto you, ye have been ^aoppressed by king Noah, and have been in bondage to him

and his priests, and have been ^bbrought into iniquity by them; therefore ye were bound with the ^cbands of iniquity.

13 And now as ye have been delivered by the power of God out of these bonds; yea, even out of the ^ahands of king Noah and his people, and also from the ^bbonds of iniquity, even so I desire that ye should ^cstand fast in this ^dliberty wherewith ye have been made free, and that ye trust ^eno man to be a king over you. (Remember that Mormon is writing these words for us. We should avoid spiritual bondage through our faith in Christ.)

14 And also trust no one to be your ^ateacher nor your minister, except he be a man of God, walking in his ways and keeping his commandments.

15 Thus did Alma teach his people, that every man should ^alove his ^bneighbor ^cas himself, that there should be no ^dcontention among them.

16 And now, Alma was their ^ahigh priest, he being the founder of their church. (“In the part of the Book of Mormon where we first read that Alma was the ‘founder of their church,’ the pronoun their refers only to the people who were with Alma in the wilderness; it does not refer to the entire Nephite nation.” (Daniel Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*, p.189) Having laid the foundation for the Church among this people, Alma is properly referred to as its founder. This is not to suggest that the Church originated with him, any more than the expression “their church” was intended to mean that the Church originated on the initiative of the people rather than with God. DCBM, 2:281.)

17 And it came to pass that none received ^aauthority to preach or to teach except it were by him from God. Therefore he [Alma] ^bconsecrated (That is he set them apart to their callings; he ordained them to their offices. DCBM 2:282.) all their priests and all their teachers; (It is evident that Alma held both priesthood and keys. Keys are the right of presidency, the authority that controls and directs the activities, functions, and ordinances of the priesthood, thus assuring that the Lord’s house will always be a house of order. DCBM 2:281. Those who hold priesthood keys today include deacon and teacher quorum presidents, elders quorum presidents, bishops, stake presidents and apostles.) and none were consecrated except they were just men.

18 Therefore they did watch over their people, and did ^anourish them with things pertaining to righteousness.

19 And it came to pass that they began to prosper exceedingly in the land; and they called the land ^aHelam. (Helam means “to be healthy, to recuperate, to restore, to revive a place, to prosper.” TBM 2:154.)

20 And it came to pass that they did multiply and prosper exceedingly in the land of Helam; and they built a city, which they called the city of Helam.

21 Nevertheless the Lord seeth fit to ^achasten his people; yea, he trieth their ^bpatience and their faith. (Neal A. Maxwell said: “Faith ... includes faith in God’s developmental purposes, for ‘the Lord seeth fit to chasten his people; yea, he trieth their patience and their faith.’ (Mosiah 23:21.) Still, some of us have trouble when God’s tutoring is applied to us! We plead for exemption more than we do for sanctification.” (*Ensign*, May 1991, p. 90.) Howard W. Hunter said: “Mormon surely knew that no pain we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God.” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1987, p. 60 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 316) Notwithstanding their desires for righteousness and the covenant that they had made with the Lord, the people of Alma were sorely tried and tested. Such is the purpose of mortality. Faith and obedience do not excuse one from the vicissitudes of a lone and dreary world, do not preclude the constant buffetings of Satan and his hosts. DCBM 2:285. Whom I love I also chasten that their sins may be forgiven, for with the chastisement I prepare a way for their deliverance. D&C 95:1 The Lord’s people must be tried as by fire. It is great challenges that produce great people, and great difficulties that produce great faith.

Of the Savior – and, by extension, all who seek society with him – we are told, “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. We can hardly lay claim to any attribute of godliness unless we have been tried and tested on the matter. It is meaningless to say that someone is filled with love if he has never been in a situation that evokes hate; that he is courageous if he has never been in a situation that elicits fear; that he is generous if he has never been called upon to share; and so forth. It was an epic trial that merited for Abraham the title Father of the Faithful. There are no conquering heroes unless there are great battles to be fought. DCBM 2:285-86. Neal A. Maxwell: Patience is not indifference. Actually, it is caring very much, but being willing, nevertheless, to submit both to the Lord and to what the scriptures call the “process of time.” Patience is tied very closely to faith in our Heavenly Father. Actually, when we are unduly impatient, we are suggesting that we know what is best—better than does God. Or, at least, we are asserting that our timetable is better than his. We read in Mosiah about how the Lord simultaneously tries the *patience* of his people even as he tries their faith (see Mosiah 23:21). One is not only to endure—but to endure well and gracefully those things which the Lord “seeth fit to inflict upon [us]” (Mosiah 3:19), just as did a group of ancient American Saints who were beating unusual burdens but who submitted “cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord” (Mosiah 24:15). Sometimes that which we are doing is correct enough but simply needs to be persisted in—patiently—not for a minute or a moment but sometimes for years. Patience is a willingness, in a sense, to watch the unfolding purposes of God with a sense of wonder and awe—rather than pacing up and down within the cell of our circumstance. Too much anxious opening of the oven door and the cake falls instead of rising! So it is with us. If we are always selfishly taking our temperature to see if we are happy, we won’t be. Whereas faith and patience are companions, so are selfishness and impatience. Patience is, therefore, clearly not fatalistic, shoulder-shrugging resignation; it is accepting a divine rhythm to life; it is obedience prolonged. Patience stoutly resists pulling up the daisies to see how the roots are doing! Ensign, Oct. 1980, 28-30)

22 Nevertheless—whosoever putteth his ^atrust in him the same shall be ^blifted up at the last day. Yea, and thus it was with this people.

23 For behold, I will show unto you (This is Mormon’s editorial comment.) that they were brought into ^abondage, and none could deliver them but the Lord their God, yea, even the God of Abraham and Isaac and of Jacob.

24 And it came to pass that he did deliver them, and he did show forth his mighty power unto them, and great were their rejoicings.

25 For behold, it came to pass that while they were in the land of Helam, yea, in the city of Helam, while tilling the land round about, behold an army of the Lamanites was in the borders of the land.

26 Now it came to pass that the brethren of Alma fled from their fields, and gathered themselves together in the city of Helam; and they were much frightened because of the appearance of the Lamanites.

27 But Alma went forth and stood among them, and exhorted them that they should not be frightened, but that they should remember the Lord their God and he would deliver them.

28 Therefore they hushed their fears, and began to cry unto the Lord that he would soften the hearts of the Lamanites, that they would spare them, and their wives, and their children.

29 And it came to pass that the Lord did soften the hearts of the Lamanites. And Alma and his brethren went forth and delivered themselves up into their hands; and the Lamanites took possession of the land of Helam.

30 Now the ^aarmies of the Lamanites, which had followed after the people of king Limhi, had been lost in the wilderness for many days.

31 And behold, they had found those priests of king Noah, in a place which they called ^aAmulon; and they had begun to possess the land of Amulon and had begun to till the ground.

32 Now the name of the leader of those priests was ^aAmulon.

33 And it came to pass that Amulon did plead with the Lamanites; and he also sent forth their wives, who were the ^adaughters of the Lamanites, to plead with their brethren, that they should not destroy their husbands.

34 And the Lamanites had ^acompassion on Amulon and his brethren, and did not destroy them, because of their wives.

35 And ^aAmulon and his brethren did join the Lamanites, and they were traveling in the wilderness in search of the land of Nephi when they discovered the land of Helam, which was possessed by Alma and his brethren.

36 And it came to pass that the Lamanites promised unto Alma and his brethren, that if they would show them the ^away which led to the land of Nephi that they would grant unto them their lives and their liberty.

37 But after Alma had shown them the way that led to the land of Nephi the Lamanites would not keep their promise; but they set ^aguards round about the land of Helam, over Alma and his brethren. (Maybe this is the reason the Lord led the people of Alma out of the land in a miraculous way instead of having the guards get drunk. That the Lamanites would not keep their promise.)

38 And the remainder of them went to the land of Nephi; and a part of them returned to the land of Helam, and also brought with them the wives and the children of the guards who had been left in the land.

39 And the king of the Lamanites had granted unto Amulon that he should be a king and a ruler over his people, who were in the land of Helam; nevertheless he should have no power to do anything contrary to the will of the king of the Lamanites.

CHAPTER 24

Amulon persecutes Alma and his people—They are to be put to death if they pray—The Lord makes their burdens seem light—He delivers them from bondage, and they return to Zarahemla. [Between 145 and 120 B.C.]

1 AND it came to pass that Amulon did gain favor in the eyes of the king of the Lamanites; therefore, the king of the Lamanites granted unto him and his brethren that they should be appointed teachers over his people, yea, even over the people who were in the land of Shemlon, and in the land of Shilom, and in the ^aland of Amulon.

2 For the Lamanites had taken possession of all these lands; therefore, the king of the Lamanites had appointed kings over all these lands.

3 And now the name of the king of the Lamanites was ^aLaman, being called after the name of his father; and therefore he was called king Laman. And he was king over a numerous people.

4 And he appointed ^ateachers of the ^bbrethren of Amulon in every land which was possessed by his people; and thus the ^clanguage (or culture) of Nephi began to be taught among all the people of the Lamanites. (The mixing of the races. They learned the languages for business purposes. The teaching of the language of Nephi prepares the people for the time when Ammon and the other sons of Mosiah preach to the Lamanites.)

5 And they were a people friendly one with another; nevertheless they knew not God; neither did the brethren of Amulon teach them anything concerning the Lord their God, neither the law of Moses; nor did they teach them the words of Abinadi;

6 But they taught them that they should keep their record, and that they might write one to another.

7 And thus the Lamanites began to increase in riches, and began to ^atrade one with another and wax great, (Their business made them prosper. The fact that they learned the language of the Nephites helped them in business.) and began to be a cunning and a wise people, as to the wisdom of the world, yea, a very cunning people, delighting in all manner of wickedness and plunder, except it were among their

own brethren.

8 And now it came to pass that ^aAmulon began to exercise ^bauthority over Alma and his brethren, and began to persecute him, and cause that his children should persecute their children. (Amulon was one of the priests of Noah, as was Alma, and now Amulon is persecuting Alma for what he said and did against King Noah.)

9 For Amulon knew Alma, that he had been ^aone of the king's priests, and that it was he that believed the words of Abinadi and was driven out before the king, and therefore he was wroth with him; for he was subject to king Laman, yet he exercised authority over them, and put ^btasks upon them, and put ^ctask-masters over them.

10 And it came to pass that so great were their afflictions that they began to cry mightily to God.

11 And Amulon commanded them that they should stop their cries; and he ^aput guards over them to watch them, that whosoever should be found calling upon God should be put to death. (Amulon knew that prayer works, that's why he commanded them to stop praying.)

12 And Alma and his people did not raise their voices to the Lord their God, (They must have had communal prayers which are now prohibited.) but did pour out their ^ahearts to him; and he did know the ^bthoughts of their hearts.

13 And it ^acame to pass (This is a long time that passes.) that the voice of the Lord came to them in their afflictions, saying: Lift up your heads and be of good comfort, for I know of the covenant which ye have made unto me; and I will covenant with my people and deliver them out of bondage.

14 And I will also ease the ^aburdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, even while you are in bondage; and this will I do that ye may stand as ^bwitnesses for me hereafter, and that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their ^cafflictions. (John Taylor said: "I do not desire trials. I do not desire affliction...I used to think, if I were the Lord, I would not suffer people to be tried as they are. But I have changed my mind on that subject. Now I think I would, if I were the Lord, because it purges out the meanness and corruption that stick around the Saints, like flies around molasses...I have seen men tempted so sorely that finally they would say, 'I'll be damned if I'll stand it any longer.' Well, you will be damned if you do not...We have learned many things through suffering. We call it suffering. I call it a school of experience." (*The Gospel Kingdom*, pp. 332-4 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 228) Joseph Smith said: "[From Liberty Jail, in a time of anguish and deep suffering for the gospel's sake, the Prophet Joseph Smith wrote the following message to the Saints] Dear brethren, do not think that our hearts faint, as though some strange thing had happened unto us, for we have seen and been assured of all these things beforehand, and have an assurance of a better hope than that of our persecutors. Therefore God hath made broad our shoulders for the burden. We glory in our tribulation, because we know that God is with us, that He is our friend, and that he will save our souls." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 123 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 229) Thomas S. Monson said: "Remember that this work is not yours and mine alone. It is the Lord's work, and when we are on the Lord's errand, we are entitled to the Lord's help. Remember that the Lord will shape the back to bear the burden placed upon it." (*Ensign*, May 1992, p. 48 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 229) George Q. Cannon said: "My theory is that when a man is conscious or a people are conscious that he or they are in the path of duty, doing that which is right in the sight of God, they should always be happy, no matter what the circumstances may be which surround them. I think that God has created us to be happy, and my belief is that he placed happiness within the reach of all, and it is man's own fault if he is not happy and does not enjoy himself every day of his life. This is one of my reasons for liking my religion...because it bestows full happiness and joy upon its believers. They can be happy in the midst of the most adverse circumstances; they can rejoice when their lives are imperiled." (*Gospel Truths*, p. 125 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 228))

15 And now it came to pass that the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light; yea, the Lord did ^astrengthen them that they could bear up their ^bburdens with ease, (The Lord was strengthening the people so that when they fled to Zarahemla over a 12 day period, they would have the strength to do so.) and they did submit cheerfully and with ^cpatience to all the will of the Lord. ([T]he test a loving God has set before us is not to see if we can endure difficulty. It is to see if we can endure it well. We pass the test by showing that we remembered Him and the commandments He gave us. And to endure well is to keep those commandments whatever the opposition, whatever the temptation, and whatever the tumult around us. We have that clear understanding because the restored gospel makes the plan of happiness so plain (Elder Henry B. Eyring, April 2004: Saturday AM). John Taylor: I do not desire trials. I do not desire affliction. I used to think, if I were the Lord, I would not suffer people to be tried as they are. But I have changed my mind on that subject. Now I think I would, if I were the Lord, because it purges out the meanness and corruption that stick around the Saints, like flies around molasses. I have seen men tempted so sorely that finally they would say, "I'll be damned if I'll stand it any longer." Well, you will be damned if you do not. We have learned many things through suffering. We call it suffering. I call it a school of experience. The Gospel Kingdom, 332-34. Neal A. Maxwell: Concerning his personal suffering, Joseph was promised, "Thy heart shall be enlarged." An enlarged Joseph wrote from Liberty Jail, "It seems to me that my heart will always be more tender after this than ever it was before... I think I never could have felt as I now do if I had not suffered. Ensign, May 1992, 387. If we are serious about our discipleship, Jesus will eventually request each of us to do those very things which are most difficult for us to do... Sometimes the best people have the worst experiences, because they are the most ready to learn. Church New, 10 Aug 2002. The submission of one's will is really the only uniquely personal thing we have to place on God's altar. The many other things we "give," brothers and sisters, are actually the things He has already given or loaned to us. However, when you and I finally submit ourselves by letting our individual wills be swallowed up in God's will, then we are really giving something to Him! It is the only possession which is truly ours to give! CR, Oct. 1995, 30)

16 And it came to pass that so great was their faith and their patience that the voice of the Lord came unto them again, saying: Be of good comfort, for on the morrow I will deliver you out of bondage.

17 And he said unto Alma: Thou shalt go before this people, and I will go ^awith thee and deliver this people out of ^bbondage. (Christ is the one to deliver them out of bondage by a miracle.)

18 Now it came to pass that Alma and his people in the night-time gathered their flocks together, and also of their grain; yea, even all the night-time were they gathering their flocks together. (They exercised their faith before the miracle happened.)

19 And in the morning the Lord caused a ^adeep sleep to come upon the Lamanites, yea, and all their task-masters were in a profound sleep. (Instead of using wine, the Lord caused the guards to sleep during the escape.)

20 And Alma and his people departed into the wilderness; and when they had traveled all day they pitched their tents in a valley, and they called the valley Alma, because he led their way in the wilderness.

21 Yea, and in the valley of Alma they poured out their ^athanks to God because he had been merciful unto them, and eased their ^bburdens, and had delivered them out of bondage; for they were in bondage, and none could deliver them except it were the Lord their God.

22 And they gave ^athanks to God, yea, all their men and all their women and all their children that could speak lifted their voices in the praises of their God. (Now they prayed vocally.)

23 And now the Lord said unto Alma: Haste thee and get thou and this people out of this land, for the Lamanites have awakened and do pursue thee; therefore get thee out of this land, and I will stop the Lamanites in this valley that they come no further in pursuit of this people. (Somehow the Lord would stop the Lamanites in their pursuit. Maybe the Lord poisoned their food or gave them diarrhea.)

24 And it came to pass that they departed out of the valley, and took their journey into the wilderness.

(No one in this group had been to Zarahemla before, so they were led by the Lord. With Limhi's people, Ammon had come from Zarahemla, so he knew the way. Alma did not know the way.)

25 And after they had been in the wilderness ^atwelve days *they arrived in the land of Zarahemla; and king Mosiah did also ^breceive them with joy.

* Verse 25 [About 120 B.C.].

Additional Reading:

BIBLE DICTIONARY BAPTISM

From a Greek word meaning to *dip* or *immerse*. Baptism in water is the introductory ordinance of the gospel, and must be followed by baptism of the Spirit in order to be complete. As one of the ordinances of the gospel, it is associated with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance, and the laying on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Baptism has always been practiced whenever the gospel of Jesus Christ has been on the earth and has been taught by men holding the holy priesthood who could administer the ordinances. Although there is some obscurity in the Bible as to the antiquity of baptism before the time of Jesus, from latter-day revelation it is clear that Adam was baptized (Moses 6: 64-68) and that the patriarchs and prophets since his time have taught the gospel and administered the ordinances that pertain to the gospel. This includes both water baptism and the laying on of hands for the Holy Ghost (Moses 8: 23-24). The Book of Mormon shows also that baptism was taught and practiced long before the coming of Jesus Christ (2 Ne. 31; Mosiah 18: 8-17). In the N.T. Paul speaks of the children of Israel being baptized by Moses "in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. 10: 1-4). Noah and Abraham are spoken of as "preachers of righteousness," which means they taught the gospel and administered its ordinances (Gal. 3: 8; Heb. 4: 1-2; 2 Pet. 2: 5; cf. Moses 8: 23-24).

Baptism symbolizes death, burial, and resurrection, and can only be done by immersion. It is clear that John the Baptist and Philip baptized in that manner (Matt. 3: 16; Acts 8: 37-39; Rom. 6: 1-6; Col. 2: 12; D&C 20: 72-74; D&C 128: 12-13). Any other method is not baptism.

We learn from latter-day revelation, which confirms the teaching in the Bible, that the Aaronic Priesthood has authority to baptize with water, whereas the Melchizedek Priesthood has power to baptize not only with water but also to confer the Holy Ghost (D&C 13; JS-H 1: 68-72). We note also that John the Baptist, who had the Aaronic Priesthood, recognized this distinction and used it to illustrate one of the differences between his mission and the mission of Jesus, who had the priesthood of Melchizedek (Matt. 3: 11; Mark 1: 8; Luke 3: 15-16; John 1: 25-33; cf. Acts 8: 5-25).

Baptism is not optional if one wishes the fullness of salvation. Jesus said a person must be born of water and of the Spirit (John 3: 3-5). When he sent the twelve apostles forth to teach the gospel he told them that whosoever believed and was baptized would be saved; and whosoever did not believe would be damned (Mark 16: 16). Jesus himself was baptized "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3: 15; 2 Ne. 31: 4-11). But the Pharisees, being unwilling to accept the gospel "rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized" (Luke 7: 30).

Baptism in water has several purposes. It is for the remission of sins, for membership in the Church, and for entrance into the celestial kingdom; it is also the doorway to personal sanctification when followed by the reception of the Holy Ghost.

The age at which baptism should be administered is not specified in the Bible, although it is evident that candidates were to be old enough to be capable of belief and have some understanding. In latter-day

revelation we learn that the Lord has set the age at eight years as the time when a person begins to become accountable and can be baptized (D&C 20: 71; D&C 68: 25-28). This was also the age given in O.T. times (JST Gen. 17: 11).

Baptism is a most sacred ordinance, which a person, having received it, can remember throughout life as a reminder of the personal commitment to Jesus Christ. Its symbolism is beautiful, and its consequences ever so desirable. John the Baptist had the signal honor among all men to take the Son of God into the water and baptize him, after which he saw the Holy Ghost descend upon Jesus. By being baptized Jesus obeyed the law himself, and set the example for all mankind.

See also Confirmation; John the Baptist; Laying on of Hands.