

LESSON 32
“They Did Obey... Every Word of Command with Exactness”
Alma 53-63

OVERVIEW:

Two thousand valiant young Ammonites covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephites. The young soldiers exercise faith in God and fight courageously.

This lesson is a continuation of the wars mentioned in last week’s lesson. Remember, that the strategies used in the wars recorded in the Book of Mormon are teaching us of the strategies we can use in the battle against temptations and evil.

SCRIPTURES:

THE BOOK OF ALMA
THE SON OF ALMA
CHAPTER 53

The Lamanite prisoners are used to fortify the city Bountiful—Dissensions among the Nephites give rise to Lamanite victories—Helaman takes command of the two thousand stripling sons of the people of Ammon. [About 64 B.C.]

1 AND it came to pass that they did set guards over the prisoners of the Lamanites, and did compel them to go forth and bury their dead, yea, and also the dead of the Nephites who were slain; and Moroni placed men over them to guard them while they should perform their labors. (It’s easier to guard prisoners when they’re working.)

2 And ^aMoroni went to the city of Mulek with Lehi, and took command of the city and gave it unto Lehi. Now behold, this Lehi was a man who had been with Moroni in the more part of all his battles; and he was a man like unto Moroni, and they rejoiced in each other’s safety; yea, they were beloved by each other, and also beloved by all the people of Nephi.

3 And it came to pass that after the Lamanites had finished burying their dead and also the dead of the Nephites, they were marched back into the land Bountiful; and Teancum, by the orders of Moroni, caused that they should commence laboring in ^adigging a ditch round about the land, or the city, ^bBountiful.

4 And he caused that they should build a ^abreastwork of timbers upon the inner bank of the ditch; and they cast up dirt out of the ditch against the breastwork of timbers; and thus they did cause the Lamanites to labor until they had encircled the city of Bountiful round about with a strong wall of timbers and earth, to an exceeding height. (Protect our homes and family from evil.)

5 And this city became an exceeding stronghold ever after; and in this city they did guard the prisoners of the Lamanites; yea, even within a wall which they had caused them to ^abuild with their own hands. Now Moroni was compelled to cause the Lamanites to labor, because it was easy to guard them while at their labor; and he desired all his forces when he should make an attack upon the Lamanites.

6 And it came to pass that Moroni had thus gained a victory over one of the greatest of the armies of the Lamanites, and had obtained possession of the city of ^aMulek, which was one of the strongest holds of the Lamanites in the land of Nephi; and thus he had also built a stronghold to retain his prisoners.

7 And it came to pass that he did no more attempt a battle with the Lamanites in that year, but he did employ his men in preparing for war, yea, and in making fortifications to guard against the Lamanites, yea, and also delivering their women and their children from famine and affliction, and providing food for their armies.

8 And now it came to pass that the armies of the Lamanites, on the west sea, south, while in the absence of Moroni on account of some intrigue amongst the Nephites, which caused ^adissensions amongst them, had gained some ground over the Nephites, yea, insomuch that they had obtained possession of a number of their cities in that part of the land.

9 And thus because of ^ainiquity amongst themselves, yea, because of dissensions and intrigue among themselves they were placed in the most dangerous circumstances. (Hugh Nibley: “So it was a blessing to the Nephites after all to have the Lamanites on their doorstep to stir them up to remembrance... No matter how wicked and ferocious and depraved the Lamanites might be (and they were that!), no matter by how much they outnumbered the Nephites,...they were not the Nephite problem. They were merely kept there to remind the Nephites of their real problem, which was to walk uprightly before the Lord.” (Since Cumorah, p. 376 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 358))

10 And now behold, I have somewhat to say concerning the ^apeople of Ammon, who, in the beginning, were Lamanites; but by Ammon and his brethren, or rather by the power and word of God, they had been ^bconverted unto the Lord; and they had been brought down into the land of Zarahemla, and had ever since been protected by the Nephites.

11 And because of their oath they had been kept from taking up arms against their brethren; for they had taken an oath that they ^anever would shed blood more; and according to their oath they would have perished; yea, they would have suffered themselves to have fallen into the hands of their brethren, had it not been for the pity and the exceeding love which Ammon and his brethren had had for them.

12 And for this cause they were brought down into the land of Zarahemla; and they ever had been ^aprotected by the Nephites.

13 But it came to pass that when they saw the danger, and the many ^aafflictions and tribulations which the Nephites bore for them, they were moved with compassion and were ^bdesirous to take up arms in the defence of their country.

14 But behold, as they were about to take their weapons of war, they were overpowered by the persuasions of Helaman and his brethren, for they were about to ^abreak the ^boath which they had made.

15 And Helaman feared lest by so doing they should lose their souls; therefore all those who had entered into this covenant were compelled to behold their brethren wade through their afflictions, in their dangerous circumstances at this time.

16 But behold, it came to pass they had many ^asons, who had not entered into a covenant that they would not take their weapons of war to defend themselves against their enemies; therefore they did assemble themselves together at this time, as many as were able to take up arms, and they called themselves Nephites.

17 And they entered into a covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephites, yea, to protect the land unto the ^alaying down of their lives; yea, even they covenanted that they never would give up their ^bliberty, but they would fight in all cases to protect the Nephites and themselves from bondage.

18 Now behold, there were two thousand of those young men, who entered into this covenant and took their weapons of war to defend their country.

19 And now behold, as they never had hitherto been a disadvantage to the Nephites, they became now at this period of time also a great support; for they took their weapons of war, and they would that Helaman should be their leader.

20 And they were all young men, and they were exceedingly valiant for ^acourage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted. (It's one thing to know the gospel is true, it's another thing to live it.)

21 Yea, they were men of truth and ^asoberness, (Take spiritual things seriously.) for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to ^bwalk uprightly before him. (“President Ezra Taft Benson concerning this generation, ‘Never before on the face of this earth have the forces of evil and the forces of good been so well organized. . . . While our generation will be comparable in wickedness to

the days of Noah, when the Lord cleansed the earth by flood, there is a major difference this time: God has saved for the final inning some of His stronger and most valiant children, who will help bear off the kingdom triumphantly.’ Then, speaking to the youth, he said, ‘You are the generation that must be prepared to meet your God’ (*Ensign*, April 1987, p. 73) “On another occasion, President Benson told the young men and the young women of the Church, ‘You have been born at this time for a sacred and glorious purpose. It is not by chance that you have been reserved to come to earth in this last dispensation of the fulness of times. Your birth at this particular time was foreordained in the eternities. You are to be the royal army of the Lord in the last days. You are *youth of the noble birthright*. (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 255.)’ Speaking to the young men, he added: ‘In the spiritual battles you are waging, I see you as today’s sons of Helaman...’ The stripling warriors of today, like those in times past, are strong largely because of what their mothers know and teach them, often without immediate evidence of the great lessons that are being woven into the fiber of their lives. “With prophetic insight and concern for our time, President N. Eldon Tanner explained, ‘The war which was begun in heaven is raging here upon the earth; two great forces of right and wrong are pitted against each other. It is important that we fight for the right. We must have well trained, disciplined, fearless, and loyal volunteers well equipped with the proper weapons of war and with a determination to win.’ Mothers participating in the training of this great volunteer force might more fully understand their influence for good while considering the words of the Apostle Paul to young Timothy: ‘Call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also’ (2 Timothy 1:5). Did this not give Timothy a sense of who he was: his identity, his heredity, his birthright as a man of faith, a man of God? Was he not profoundly influenced by his mother and grandmother, women of faith, women of God? Did they realize the sacred trust and great responsibility that was theirs when Timothy was only a child? Did they know the great missionary he was to become, and recognize their part in his preparation?’” (Ardeh Greene Kapp, *What Latter-day Stripling Warriors Learn from Their Mothers*, p. 17 - 18.))

22 And now it came to pass that Helaman did march at the head of his ^atwo thousand stripling soldiers, to the support of the people in the borders of the land on the south by the west sea.

23 And thus ended the twenty and eighth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

CHAPTER 54

Ammoron and Moroni negotiate for the exchange of prisoners—Moroni demands that the Lamanites withdraw and cease their murderous attacks—Ammoron demands that the Nephites lay down their arms and become subject to the Lamanites. [About 63 B.C.]

1 AND now it came to pass in the *commencement of the twenty and ninth year of the judges (About 63 BC), that ^aAmmoron sent unto Moroni desiring that he would exchange prisoners.

2 And it came to pass that Moroni felt to ^arejoice exceedingly at this request, for he desired the provisions which were imparted for the support of the Lamanite prisoners for the support of his own people; and he also desired his own people for the strengthening of his army.

3 Now the Lamanites had taken many women and children, and there was not a woman nor a child among all the prisoners of Moroni, or the prisoners whom Moroni had taken; therefore Moroni resolved upon a stratagem to obtain as many prisoners of the Nephites from the Lamanites as it were possible.

4 Therefore he wrote an epistle, and sent it by the servant of Ammoron, the same who had brought an epistle to Moroni. Now these are the words which he wrote unto Ammoron, saying:

5 Behold, Ammoron, I have written unto you somewhat concerning this war which ye have waged against my people, or rather which thy ^abrother hath waged against them, and which ye are still determined to carry on after his death.

6 Behold, I would tell you somewhat concerning the ^ajustice of God, and the sword of his almighty

wrath, which doth hang over you except ye repent and withdraw your armies into your own lands, or the land of your possessions, which is the land of Nephi.

7 Yea, I would tell you these things if ye were capable of hearkening unto them; yea, I would tell you concerning that awful ^ahell that awaits to receive such ^bmurderers as thou and thy brother have been, except ye repent and withdraw your murderous purposes, and return with your armies to your own lands. (Only those who will not repent, will become sons of perdition.)

8 But as ye have once rejected these things, and have fought against the people of the Lord, even so I may expect you will do it again.

9 And now behold, we are prepared to receive you; yea, and except you withdraw your purposes, behold, ye will pull down the ^awrath of that God whom you have rejected upon you, even to your utter destruction.

10 But, as the Lord liveth, our armies shall come upon you except ye withdraw, and ye shall soon be visited with ^adeath, for we will retain our cities and our lands; yea, and we will maintain our religion and the cause of our God.

11 But behold, it supposeth me that I talk to you concerning these things in vain; or it supposeth me that thou art a ^achild of hell; therefore I will close my epistle by telling you that I will not exchange prisoners, save it be on conditions that ye will deliver up a man and his wife and his children, for one prisoner; if this be the case that ye will do it, I will exchange.

12 And behold, if ye do not this, I will come against you with my armies; yea, even I will arm my women and my children, and I will come against you, and I will follow you even into your own land, which is the land of ^aour first inheritance; yea, and it shall be blood for blood, yea, life for life; and I will give you battle even until you are destroyed from off the face of the earth.

13 Behold, I am in my anger, and also my people; ye have sought to ^amurder us, and we have only sought to defend ourselves. But behold, if ye seek to destroy us more we will seek to destroy you; yea, and we will seek our land, the land of our first inheritance.

14 Now I close my epistle. I am Moroni; I am a leader of the people of the Nephites.

15 Now it came to pass that Ammoron, when he had received this epistle, was angry; and he wrote another epistle unto Moroni, and these are the words which he wrote, saying:

16 I am Ammoron, the king of the Lamanites; I am the brother of Amalickiah whom ye (Teancum was the one who killed Amalickiah) have ^amurdered. Behold, I will avenge his blood upon you, yea, and I will come upon you with my armies for I fear not your threatenings.

17 For behold, your fathers (Nephi and Sam) did wrong their brethren (Laman and Lemuel), insomuch that they did rob them of their ^aright to the ^bgovernment when it rightly belonged unto them.

18 And now behold, if ye will lay down your arms, and subject yourselves to be governed by those to whom the government doth rightly belong, then will I cause that my people shall lay down their weapons and shall be at war no more.

19 Behold, ye have breathed out many threatenings against me and my people; but behold, we fear not your threatenings.

20 Nevertheless, I will grant to exchange prisoners according to your request, gladly, that I may preserve my food for my men of war; and we will wage a war which shall be eternal, either to the subjecting the Nephites to our authority or to their eternal extinction.

21 And as concerning that God whom ye say we have rejected, behold, we ^aknow not such a being; neither do ye; but if it so be that there is such a being, we know not but that he hath made us as well as you.

22 And if it so be that there is a devil and a hell, behold will he not send you there to dwell with my brother whom ye have murdered, whom ye have hinted that he hath gone to such a place? But behold these things matter not.

23 I am Ammoron, and a descendant of ^aZoram, whom your fathers pressed and brought out of Jerusalem.

24 And behold now, I am a bold Lamanite; behold, this war hath been waged to avenge their wrongs (Ammoron is actually a Nephite through Zoram who dissented over to the Lamanites), and ^ato maintain and to obtain their rights to the government; and I close my epistle to Moroni.

* Verse 1 [63 B.C.].

CHAPTER 55

Moroni refuses to exchange prisoners—The Lamanite guards are enticed to become drunk, and the Nephite prisoners are freed—The city of Gid is taken without bloodshed. [About 63 B.C.]

1 NOW it came to pass that when Moroni had received this epistle he was more angry, because he knew that Ammoron had a perfect knowledge of his ^afraud; yea, he knew that Ammoron knew that it was not a just cause that had caused him to wage a war against the people of Nephi.

2 And he said: Behold, I will not exchange prisoners with Ammoron save he will withdraw his ^apurpose, as I have stated in my epistle; for I will not grant unto him that he shall have any more power than what he hath got.

3 Behold, I know the place where the Lamanites do guard my people whom they have taken prisoners; and as Ammoron would not grant unto me mine epistle, behold, I will give unto him according to my words; yea, I will seek death among them until they shall sue for peace.

4 And now it came to pass that when Moroni had said these words, he caused that a search should be made among his men, that perhaps he might find a man who was a descendant of Laman among them.

5 And it came to pass that they found one, whose name was Laman; and he was ^aone of the servants of the king who was murdered by Amalickiah.

6 Now Moroni caused that Laman and a small number of his men should go forth unto the guards who were over the Nephites.

7 Now the Nephites were guarded in the city of ^aGid; therefore Moroni appointed Laman and caused that a small number of men should go with him.

8 And when it was evening Laman went to the guards who were over the Nephites, and behold, they saw him coming and they hailed him; but he saith unto them: Fear not; behold, I am a Lamanite. Behold, we have escaped from the Nephites, and they sleep; and behold we have taken of their wine and brought with us.

9 Now when the Lamanites heard these words they received him with joy; and they said unto him: Give us of your wine, that we may drink; we are glad that ye have thus taken wine with you for we are weary.

10 But Laman said unto them: Let us keep of our wine till we go against the Nephites to battle. But this saying only made them more desirous to drink of the wine;

11 For, said they: We are weary, therefore let us take of the wine, and by and by we shall receive wine for our rations, which will strengthen us to go against the Nephites.

12 And Laman said unto them: You may do according to your desires.

13 And it came to pass that they did take of the wine freely; and it was pleasant to their taste, therefore they took of it more freely; and it was strong, having been prepared in its ^astrength.

14 And it came to pass they did drink and were merry, and by and by they were all ^adrunken.

15 And now when Laman and his men saw that they were all drunken, and were in a ^adeep sleep, they returned to Moroni and told him all the things that had happened.

16 And now this was according to the design of Moroni. And Moroni had prepared his men with weapons of war; and he went to the city Gid, while the Lamanites were in a deep sleep and drunken, and cast in ^aweapons of war unto the prisoners, insomuch that they were all armed;

17 Yea, even to their women, and all those of their children, as many as were able to use a weapon of war, when Moroni had armed all those prisoners; and all those things were done in a profound silence.

18 But had they awakened the Lamanites, behold they were drunken and the Nephites could have slain

them.

19 But behold, this was not the desire of Moroni; he did not ^adelight in murder or bloodshed, but he delighted in the saving of his people from destruction; and for this cause he might not bring upon him injustice, he would not fall upon the Lamanites and destroy them in their drunkenness. (Moroni is so merciful here. Even though the Lamanites are in his power, he does not destroy them.)

20 But he had obtained his desires; for he had armed those prisoners of the Nephites who were within the wall of the city, and had given them power to gain possession of those parts which were within the walls.

21 And then he caused the men who were with him to withdraw a pace from them, and surround the armies of the Lamanites.

22 Now behold this was done in the night-time, so that when the Lamanites awoke in the morning (Notice that Moroni waits patiently for the drunken Lamanites to awake, so that they don't choose to fight while still drunk, which would have been to their ruin.) they beheld that they were surrounded by the Nephites without, and that their prisoners were armed within.

23 And thus they saw that the Nephites had power over them; and in these circumstances they found that it was not expedient that they should fight with the Nephites; therefore their chief ^acaptains demanded their weapons of war, and they brought them forth and ^bcast them at the feet of the Nephites, pleading for mercy.

24 Now behold, this was the desire of Moroni. He took them prisoners of war, and took possession of the city, and caused that all the prisoners should be liberated, who were Nephites; and they did join the army of Moroni, and were a great strength to his army.

25 And it came to pass that he did cause the Lamanites, whom he had taken prisoners, that they should commence a ^alabor in strengthening the fortifications round about the city Gid.

26 And it came to pass that when he had fortified the city Gid, according to his desires, he caused that his prisoners should be taken to the city Bountiful; and he also guarded that city with an exceedingly strong force.

27 And it came to pass that they did, notwithstanding all the intrigues of the Lamanites, keep and protect all the prisoners whom they had taken, and also maintain all the ground and the advantage which they had retaken.

28 And it came to pass that the Nephites began ^aagain to be victorious, and to reclaim their rights and their privileges.

29 Many times did the Lamanites attempt to encircle them about by night, but in these attempts they did lose many prisoners.

30 And many times did they attempt to administer of their wine to the Nephites, that they might destroy them with poison or with drunkenness.

31 But behold, the Nephites were not slow to ^aremember the Lord their God in this their time of affliction. They could not be taken in their snares; yea, they would not partake of their wine, save they had first given to some of the Lamanite prisoners.

32 And they were thus cautious that no poison should be administered among them; for if their wine would poison a Lamanite it would also poison a Nephite; and thus they did try all their liquors.

33 And now it came to pass that it was expedient for Moroni to make preparations to attack the city ^aMorianton; for behold, the Lamanites had, by their labors, fortified the city Morianton until it had become an exceeding stronghold.

34 And they were continually bringing new forces into that city, and also new supplies of provisions.

35 And thus ended the twenty and ninth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

CHAPTER 56

Helaman sends an epistle to Moroni recounting the state of the war with the Lamanites—Antipus and Helaman gain a great victory over the Lamanites—Helaman's two thousand stripling sons fight with miraculous power and none of them are slain. [About 66—62 B.C.] (Helaman's letter to Moroni comprises chapters 56-58)

1 AND now it came to pass in the *commencement of the thirtieth year (62 BC) of the reign of the judges, on the second day in the first month, ^aMoroni received an ^bepistle from Helaman, stating the affairs of the people in ^cthat quarter of the land.

2 And these are the words which he wrote, saying: My dearly beloved brother, Moroni, as well in the Lord as in the tribulations of our warfare; behold, my beloved brother, I have somewhat to tell you concerning our warfare in this part of the land.

3 Behold, ^atwo thousand of the sons of those men whom Ammon brought down out of the land of Nephi—now ye have known that these were descendants of Laman, who was the eldest son of our father Lehi;

4 Now I need not rehearse unto you concerning their traditions or their unbelief, for thou knowest concerning all these things—

5 Therefore it sufficeth me that I tell you that two thousand of these young men have taken their weapons of war, and would that I should be their leader; and we have come forth to defend our country.

6 And now ye also know concerning the ^acovenant which their fathers made, that they would not take up their weapons of war against their brethren to shed blood.

7 But in the twenty and sixth year, when they saw our afflictions and our tribulations for them, they were about to ^abreak the covenant which they had made and take up their weapons of war in our defence.

8 But I would not suffer them that they should break this ^acovenant which they had made, supposing that God would strengthen us, insomuch that we should not suffer more because of the fulfilling the ^boath which they had taken.

9 But behold, here is one thing in which we may have great joy. For behold, in the *twenty and sixth year (66 BC), I, Helaman, did march at the head of these ^atwo thousand young men to the city of ^bJudea, to assist Antipus, whom ye had appointed a leader over the people of that part of the land.

10 And I did join my two thousand ^asons, (for they are worthy to be called sons) to the army of Antipus, in which strength Antipus did rejoice exceedingly; for behold, his army had been reduced by the Lamanites because their forces had slain a vast number of our men, for which cause we have to mourn.

11 Nevertheless, we may console ourselves in this point, that they have died in the cause of their country and of their God, yea, and they are ^ahappy.

12 And the Lamanites had also retained many prisoners, all of whom are chief ^acaptains, for none other have they spared alive. And we suppose that they are now at this time in the land of Nephi; it is so if they are not slain.

13 And now these are the cities of which the Lamanites have obtained possession by the shedding of the blood of so many of our valiant men;

14 The land of ^aManti, or the city of Manti, and the city of Zeezrom, and the city of ^bCumeni, and the city of Antiparah.

15 And these are the cities which they possessed when I arrived at the city of Judea; and I found Antipus and his men toiling with their might to fortify the city.

16 Yea, and they were depressed in body as well as in spirit, for they had fought valiantly by day and toiled by night to maintain their cities; and thus they had suffered great afflictions of every kind. (Jeffrey R. Holland: I know of nothing that Satan uses quite so cunningly or cleverly in his work on a young man or woman. I speak of doubt (especially self-doubt), of discouragement, and of despair. I wish at the

outset, however, to make a distinction that F. Scott Fitzgerald once made: "Trouble has no necessary connection with discouragement—discouragement has a germ of its own, as different from trouble as arthritis is different from a stiff joint." We all have troubles, but the "germ" of discouragement, to use Fitzgerald's word, is not in the trouble; it is in us—or to be more precise, I believe it is in Satan, the prince of darkness, the father of lies. And he would have it be in us. It's frequently a small germ, hardly worth going to a doctor for, but it will work and it will grow and it will spread. In fact, it can become almost a habit, a way of living and thinking, and there the greatest damage is done. Then it takes an increasingly severe toll on our spirit, for it erodes the deepest religious commitments we can make—those of faith, hope, and charity. We turn inward and look downward, and these greatest of Christlike virtues are damaged or at least impaired. We become unhappy and soon make others unhappy, and before long Lucifer laughs. *However Long and Hard the Road*, 1-2)

17 And now they were determined to conquer in this place or die; therefore you may well suppose that this little force which I brought with me, yea, those ^asons of mine, gave them great hopes and much joy.

18 And now it came to pass that when the Lamanites saw that Antipus had received a greater strength to his army, they were compelled by the orders of Ammoron to not come against the city of Judea, or against us, to battle.

19 And thus were we favored of the Lord; for had they come upon us in this our weakness they might have perhaps destroyed our little army; but thus were we preserved.

20 They were commanded by Ammoron to maintain those cities which they had taken. And thus ended the twenty and sixth year. And in the *commencement of the twenty and seventh year (65 BC) we had prepared our city and ourselves for defence.

21 Now we were desirous that the Lamanites should come upon us; for we were not desirous to make an attack upon them in their strongholds.

22 And it came to pass that we kept spies out round about, to watch the movements of the Lamanites, that they might not pass us by night nor by day to make an attack upon our other cities which were on the northward.

23 For we knew in those cities they were not sufficiently strong to meet them; therefore we were desirous, if they should pass by us, to fall upon them in their rear, and thus bring them up in the rear at the same time they were met in the front. We supposed that we could overpower them; but behold, we were disappointed in this our desire.

24 They durst not pass by us with their whole army, neither durst they with a part, lest they should not be sufficiently strong and they should fall.

25 Neither durst they march down against the city of Zarahemla; neither durst they cross the head of Sidon, over to the city of Nephihah.

26 And thus, with their forces, they were determined to maintain those cities which they had taken.

27 And now it came to pass in the second month of this year, there was brought unto us many provisions from the fathers of those my two thousand sons.

28 And also there were sent two thousand men unto us from the land of Zarahemla. And thus we were prepared with ten thousand men, and provisions for them, and also for their wives and their children.

29 And the Lamanites, thus seeing our forces increase daily, and provisions arrive for our support, they began to be fearful, and began to sally forth, if it were possible to put an end to our receiving provisions and strength.

30 Now when we saw that the Lamanites began to grow uneasy on this wise, we were desirous to bring a stratagem into effect upon them; therefore Antipus ordered that I should march forth with my little sons to a neighboring city, ^aas if we were carrying provisions to a neighboring city.

31 And we were to march near the city of Antiparah, as if we were going to the city beyond, in the borders by the seashore.

32 And it came to pass that we did march forth, as if with our provisions, to go to that city.

33 And it came to pass that Antipus did march forth with a part of his army, leaving the remainder to

maintain the city. But he did not march forth until I had gone forth with my little army, and came near the city Antiparah.

34 And now, in the city Antiparah were stationed the strongest army of the Lamanites; yea, the most numerous.

35 And it came to pass that when they had been informed by their spies, they came forth with their army and marched against us.

36 And it came to pass that we did flee before them, northward. And thus we did lead away the most powerful army of the Lamanites;

37 Yea, even to a considerable distance, insomuch that when they saw the army of Antipus pursuing them, with their might, they did not turn to the right nor to the left, but pursued their march in a straight course after us; and, as we suppose, it was their intent to slay us before Antipus should overtake them, and this that they might not be surrounded by our people.

38 And now Antipus, beholding our danger, did speed the march of his army. But behold, it was night; therefore they did not overtake us, neither did Antipus overtake them; therefore we did camp for the night.

39 And it came to pass that before the dawn of the morning, behold, the Lamanites were pursuing us. Now we were not sufficiently strong to contend with them; yea, I would not suffer that my little sons should fall into their hands; therefore we did continue our march, and we took our march into the wilderness.

40 Now they durst not turn to the right nor to the left lest they should be surrounded; (The straight and narrow way.) neither would I turn to the right nor to the left lest they should overtake me, and we could not stand against them, but be slain, and they would make their escape; and thus we did flee all that day into the wilderness, even until it was dark.

41 And it came to pass that again, when the light of the morning came we saw the Lamanites upon us, and we did flee before them.

42 But it came to pass that they did not pursue us far before they halted; and it was in the morning of the third day of the seventh month.

43 And now, whether they were overtaken by Antipus we knew not, but I said unto my men: Behold, we know not but they have halted for the purpose that we should come against them, that they might catch us in their snare;

44 Therefore what say ye, my sons, will ye go against them to battle?

45 And now I say unto you, my beloved brother Moroni, that never had I seen ^aso great ^bcourage, nay, not amongst all the Nephites.

46 For as I had ever called them my sons (for they were all of them very young) even so they said unto me: Father, behold our God is with us, and he will ^anot suffer that we should fall; then let us go forth; we would not slay our brethren if they would let us alone; therefore let us go, lest they should overpower the army of Antipus.

47 Now they never had fought, yet they did not fear death; and they did think more upon the ^aliberty of their ^bfathers than they did upon their lives; yea, they had been taught by their ^cmothers, that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them.

48 And they rehearsed unto me the words of their ^amothers, saying: We ^bdo not doubt our mothers knew it. (Heber J. Grant: The mother in the family far more than the father is the one who instills in the hearts of the children, a testimony and a love for the gospel of Jesus Christ... Wherever you find a woman who is devoted to this work, almost without exception you will find that her children are devoted to it. Gospel Standards, 150 Boyd K. Packer: Put your homes in order. If Mother is working outside of the home, see if there are ways to change that, even a little. It may be very difficult to change at the present time. But analyze carefully and be prayerful... Expect intervention from power from beyond the veil to help you move... to what is best for your family. Ensign, May 2004, 79.)

49 And it came to pass that I did return with my two thousand against these Lamanites who had pursued

us. And now behold, the armies of Antipus had overtaken them, and a terrible battle had commenced. 50 The army of Antipus being weary, because of their long march in so short a space of time, were about to fall into the hands of the Lamanites; and had I not returned with my two thousand they would have obtained their purpose.

51 For Antipus had fallen by the sword, and many of his leaders, because of their weariness, which was occasioned by the speed of their march—therefore the men of Antipus, being confused because of the fall of their leaders, began to give way before the Lamanites.

52 And it came to pass that the Lamanites took courage, and began to pursue them; and thus were the Lamanites pursuing them with great vigor when ^aHelaman came upon their rear with his two thousand, and began to slay them exceedingly, insomuch that the whole army of the Lamanites halted and turned upon Helaman.

53 Now when the people of Antipus saw that the Lamanites had turned them about, they gathered together their men and came again upon the rear of the Lamanites.

54 And now it came to pass that we, the people of Nephi, the people of Antipus, and I with my two thousand, did surround the Lamanites, and did slay them; yea, insomuch that they were compelled to deliver up their weapons of war and also themselves as prisoners of war.

55 And now it came to pass that when they had surrendered themselves up unto us, behold, I numbered those young men who had fought with me, fearing lest there were many of them slain.

56 But behold, to my great joy, there had ^anot one soul of them fallen to the earth; yea, and they had fought as if with the ^bstrength of God; yea, never were men known to have fought with such miraculous strength; and with such mighty power did they fall upon the Lamanites, that they did frighten them; and for this cause did the Lamanites deliver themselves up as prisoners of war.

57 And as we had no place for our prisoners, that we could guard them to keep them from the armies of the Lamanites, therefore we sent them to the land of Zarahemla, and a part of those men who were not slain of Antipus, with them; and the remainder I took and joined them to my stripling ^aAmmonites, and took our march back to the city of Judea.

* Verse 1 [62 B.C.]; Verse 9 [66 B.C.]; Verse 20 [65 B.C.].

CHAPTER 57

Helaman recounts the taking of Antiparah and the surrender and later the defense of Cumeni—His Ammonite striplings fight valiantly and all are wounded, but none are slain—Gid reports the slaying and the escape of the Lamanite prisoners. [About 64—63 B.C.] (This is a continuation of Helaman's letter to Moroni.)

1 AND now it came to pass that I received an epistle from Ammoron, the king, stating that if I would deliver up those prisoners of war whom we had taken that he would deliver up the city of Antiparah unto us.

2 But I sent an epistle unto the king, that we were sure our forces were sufficient to take the city of Antiparah by our force; and by delivering up the prisoners for that city we should suppose ourselves unwise, and that we would only deliver up our prisoners on exchange.

3 And Ammoron refused mine epistle, for he would not exchange prisoners; therefore we began to make preparations to go against the city of Antiparah.

4 But the people of Antiparah did leave the city, and fled to their other cities, which they had possession of, to fortify them; and thus the city of Antiparah fell into our hands. (Hugh Nibley: “Verse 4 is the turning point of the war. From now on everything starts to slow down and go downward. There's a psychological point when you can tell which way it is going to go... The war can drag on for years, and yet you know how it is going to turn out. It's an interesting thing.” (*Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, vol. 3, p. 177))

5 And thus ended the twenty and eighth year of the reign of the judges.

6 And it came to pass that in the *commencement of the twenty and ninth year (63 BC), we received a supply of provisions, and also an addition to our army, from the land of Zarahemla, and from the land round about, to the number of six thousand men, besides sixty of the ^asons of the Ammonites who had come to join their brethren, my little band of two thousand. And now behold, we were strong, yea, and we had also plenty of provisions brought unto us.

7 And it came to pass that it was our desire to wage a battle with the army which was placed to protect the city ^aCumoni.

8 And now behold, I will show unto you that we soon accomplished our desire; yea, with our strong force, or with a part of our strong force, we did surround, by night, the city Cumeni, a little before they were to receive a supply of provisions.

9 And it came to pass that we did camp round about the city for many nights; but we did sleep upon our swords, and keep guards, that the Lamanites could not come upon us by night and slay us, which they attempted many times; but as many times as they attempted this their blood was spilt.

10 At length their provisions did arrive, and they were about to enter the city by night. And we, instead of being Lamanites, were Nephites; therefore, we did take them and their provisions.

11 And notwithstanding the Lamanites being cut off from their support after this manner, they were still determined to maintain the city; therefore it became expedient that we should take those provisions and send them to ^aJudea, and our prisoners to the land of Zarahemla.

12 And it came to pass that not many days had passed away before the Lamanites began to lose all hopes of succor; therefore they yielded up the city unto our hands; and thus we had accomplished our designs in obtaining the city Cumeni.

13 But it came to pass that our prisoners were so numerous that, notwithstanding the enormity of our numbers, we were obliged to employ all our force to keep them, or to put them to death.

14 For behold, they would break out in great numbers, and would fight with stones, and with clubs, or whatsoever thing they could get into their hands, insomuch that we did slay upwards of two thousand of them after they had surrendered themselves prisoners of war.

15 Therefore it became expedient for us, that we should put an end to their lives, or guard them, sword in hand, down to the land of Zarahemla; and also our provisions were not any more than sufficient for our own people, notwithstanding that which we had taken from the Lamanites.

16 And now, in those critical circumstances, it became a very serious matter to determine concerning these prisoners of war; nevertheless, we did resolve to send them down to the land of Zarahemla; therefore we selected a part of our men, and gave them charge over our prisoners to go down to the land of Zarahemla.

17 But it came to pass that on the morrow they did return. And now behold, we did not ^ainquire of them concerning the prisoners; for behold, the Lamanites were upon us, and they returned in season to save us from falling into their hands. For behold, Ammoron had sent to their support a new supply of provisions and also a numerous army of men.

18 And it came to pass that those men whom we sent with the prisoners did arrive in season to check them, as they were about to overpower us.

19 But behold, my little band of two thousand and sixty fought most desperately; yea, they were firm before the Lamanites, and did ^aadminister death unto all those who opposed them.

20 And as the remainder of our army were about to give way before the Lamanites, behold, those two thousand and sixty were firm and undaunted.

21 Yea, and they did ^aobey and observe to perform every word of command with exactness (In order to obey military commands, they must have been trained in combat. Bruce R. McConkie taught, "Obedience is the first law of heaven, the cornerstone upon which all righteousness and progression rest." (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 539) The full expression of "righteousness and progression" in mortality is to have one's calling and election made sure. Joseph Smith taught that obedience *with exactness* is a

prerequisite, “After a person has faith in Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized...then let him continue to humble himself before God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, *and living by every word of God*, and the Lord will soon say unto him, Son, thou shalt be exalted. When the Lord has thoroughly proved him, and finds that the man is determined to serve Him at all hazards, then the man will find his calling and his election made sure.” (*Teachings*, p. 150, italics added) “I find the elements of obedience within this verse fascinating. What is the motivation for obeying with exactness? Could this be seen as blind obedience? Blind obedience is sheep following sheep, while following in exactness is sheep following the Shepherd; and Christ is the Good Shepherd (see Alma 5:37-39). This is the same principle the Lord was teaching the Saints in 1832, when he said, ‘I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise’ (D&C 82:10). By obeying Helaman’s orders with exactness, they were showing they did not doubt the Lord’s promise made to them through their mothers. The stripling warriors must have been aware that their obedience to their leaders was an extension of their obedience to their God. This was not a new concept to the Nephites. (See 1 Nephi 3:5-7; Mosiah 2:30-31; Alma 45:2-8) Their obedience to Helaman’s command was more than swift, it was exact. A celestial strategy was involved, even in that mortal battlefield. They had been promised that if they, ‘did not doubt, that they should be preserved by his [God’s] marvelous power’ (Alma 57:26). Would it have been possible for them to support their God without supporting their leaders? This is the ultimate test of obedience; to show one’s allegiance to a perfect and infallible God by how we obey those less than perfect who are called to lead us.” (K. Douglas Bassett, *Alma, the Testimony of the Word*, ed. by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr., p. 229)); yea, and even according to their faith it was done unto them; and I did remember the words which they said unto me that their ^bmothers had taught them.

22 And now behold, it was these my sons, and those men who had been selected to convey the prisoners, to whom we owe this great victory; for it was they who did beat the Lamanites; therefore they were driven back to the city of Manti.

23 And we retained our city Cumeni, and were not all destroyed by the sword; nevertheless, we had suffered great loss.

24 And it came to pass that after the Lamanites had fled, I immediately gave orders that my men who had been wounded should be taken from among the dead, and caused that their wounds should be dressed.

25 And it came to pass that there were two hundred, out of my two thousand and sixty, who had fainted because of the loss of blood (Had the war not ended quickly, these that had fainted with the loss of blood probably would have died without swift medical attention.); nevertheless, according to the goodness of God, and to our great astonishment, and also the joy of our whole army, there was ^anot one soul of them who did perish; yea, and neither was there one soul among them who had not received many wounds.

26 And now, their ^apreservation was astonishing to our whole army, yea, that they should be spared while there was a thousand of our brethren who were slain. And we do justly ascribe it to the miraculous ^bpower of God, because of their exceeding ^cfaith in that which they had been taught to believe—that there was a just God, and whosoever did not doubt, that they should be preserved by his marvelous power.

27 Now this was the ^afaith of these of whom I have spoken; they are young, and their minds are ^bfirm, and they do put their trust in God continually.

28 And now it came to pass that after we had thus taken care of our wounded men, and had buried our dead and also the dead of the Lamanites, who were many, behold, we did inquire of Gid concerning the ^aprisoners whom they had started to go down to the land of Zarahemla with.

29 Now Gid was the chief captain over the band who was appointed to guard them down to the land.

30 And now, these are the words which Gid said unto me: Behold, we did start to go down to the land of Zarahemla with our prisoners. And it came to pass that we did meet the spies of our armies, who had been sent out to watch the camp of the Lamanites.

31 And they cried unto us, saying—Behold, the armies of the Lamanites are marching towards the city of Cumeni; and behold, they will fall upon them, yea, and will destroy our people.

32 And it came to pass that our prisoners did hear their cries, which caused them to take courage; and they did rise up in rebellion against us.

33 And it came to pass because of their rebellion we did cause that our swords should come upon them. And it came to pass that they did in a body run upon our swords, in the which, the greater number of them were slain; and the remainder of them broke through and fled from us.

34 And behold, when they had fled and we could not overtake them, we took our march with speed towards the city Cumeni; and behold, we did arrive in time that we might assist our brethren in preserving the city.

35 And behold, we are again delivered out of the hands of our enemies. And blessed is the name of our God; for behold, it is he that has delivered us; yea, that has done this great thing for us.

36 Now it came to pass that when I, Helaman, had heard these words of Gid, I was filled with exceeding joy because of the goodness of God in preserving us, that we might not all perish; yea, and I trust that the souls of them who have been slain have ^aentered into the rest of their God.

* Verse 6 [63 B.C.].

CHAPTER 58

Helaman, Gid, and Teomner take the city of Manti by a stratagem—The Lamanites withdraw—The sons of the people of Ammon are preserved as they stand fast in defense of their liberty and faith. [About 63 B.C.] (This is still a continuation of Helaman's letter to Moroni.)

(Preparedness is today on every tongue. There is danger ahead, and defenses must be set up. Preparedness is not a new word to Latter-day Saints. For one hundred and ten years our voice has been one of warning to prepare against the commotion and calamities of the last days. We have taught and continue to teach that full preparedness and complete defense against the devastation by evil is the acceptance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ we may look for the peace of Eden, but not before. Our land is setting up defenses of powder and steel. That is well enough. But there are intangible material defenses. These must be fostered, if our preparedness shall be adequate. John A. Widtsoe. CR, Oct 1940, p. 61-62)

1 AND behold, now it came to pass that our next object was to obtain the city of Manti; but behold, there was no way that we could lead them out of the city by our small bands. For behold, they remembered that which we had hitherto done; therefore we could not ^adecoy them away from their strongholds.

2 And they were so much more numerous than was our army that we durst not go forth and attack them in their strongholds.

3 Yea, and it became expedient that we should employ our men to the maintaining those parts of the land which we had regained of our possessions; therefore it became expedient that we should wait, that we might receive more strength from the land of Zarahemla and also a new supply of provisions.

4 And it came to pass that I thus did send an embassy to the governor of our land, to acquaint him concerning the affairs of our people. And it came to pass that we did wait to receive provisions and strength from the land of Zarahemla.

5 But behold, this did profit us but little; for the Lamanites were also receiving great strength from day to day, and also many provisions; and thus were our circumstances at this period of time.

6 And the Lamanites were sallying forth against us from time to time, resolving by stratagem to destroy us; nevertheless we could not come to battle with them, because of their ^aretreats and their strongholds.

7 And it came to pass that we did wait in these difficult circumstances for the space of many months,

even until we were about to ^aperish for the want of food.

8 But it came to pass that we did receive food, which was guarded to us by an army of two thousand men to our assistance; and this is all the assistance which we did receive, to defend ourselves and our country from falling into the hands of our enemies, yea, to contend with an enemy which was innumerable.

9 And now the cause of these our embarrassments, or the cause why they did not send more strength unto us, we knew not; therefore we were grieved and also filled with fear, lest by any means the judgments of God should come upon our land, to our overthrow and utter destruction.

10 Therefore we did pour out our souls in prayer to God, that he would strengthen us and deliver us out of the hands of our enemies, yea, and also give us strength that we might retain our cities, and our lands, and our possessions, for the support of our people.

11 Yea, and it came to pass that the Lord our God did visit us with assurances that he would deliver us; yea, insomuch that he did speak peace to our souls, and did grant unto us great faith, and did cause us that we should hope for our ^adeliverance in him.

12 And we did take courage with our small force which we had received, and were fixed with a determination to conquer our enemies, and to ^amaintain our lands, and our possessions, and our wives, and our children, and the cause of our ^bliberty.

13 And thus we did go forth with all our might against the Lamanites, who were in the city of Manti; and we did pitch our tents by the wilderness side, which was near to the city.

14 And it came to pass that on the morrow, that when the Lamanites saw that we were in the borders by the wilderness which was near the city, that they sent out their spies round about us that they might discover the number and the strength of our army.

15 And it came to pass that when they saw that we were not strong, according to our numbers, and fearing that we should cut them off from their support except they should come out to battle against us and kill us, and also supposing that they could easily destroy us with their numerous hosts, therefore they began to make preparations to come out against us to battle.

16 And when we saw that they were making preparations to come out against us, behold, I caused that Gid, with a small number of men, should ^asecrete himself in the wilderness, and also that Teomner and a small number of men should secrete themselves also in the wilderness.

17 Now Gid and his men were on the right and the others on the left; and when they had thus secreted themselves, behold, I remained, with the remainder of my army, in that same place where we had first pitched our tents against the time that the Lamanites should come out to battle.

18 And it came to pass that the Lamanites did come out with their numerous army against us. And when they had come and were about to fall upon us with the sword, I caused that my men, those who were with me, should retreat into the wilderness.

19 And it came to pass that the Lamanites did follow after us with great speed, for they were exceedingly desirous to overtake us that they might slay us; therefore they did follow us into the wilderness; and we did pass by in the midst of Gid and Teomner, insomuch that they were not discovered by the Lamanites.

20 And it came to pass that when the Lamanites had passed by, or when the army had passed by, Gid and Teomner did rise up from their secret places, and did cut off the spies of the Lamanites that they should not return to the city.

21 And it came to pass that when they had cut them off, they ran to the city and fell upon the guards who were left to guard the city, insomuch that they did destroy them and did take possession of the city.

22 Now this was done because the Lamanites did suffer their whole army, save a few guards only, to be led away into the wilderness.

23 And it came to pass that Gid and Teomner by this means had obtained possession of their strongholds. And it came to pass that we took our course, after having traveled much in the wilderness towards the land of Zarahemla.

24 And when the Lamanites saw that they were marching towards the land of Zarahemla, they were exceedingly afraid, lest there was a plan laid to lead them on to destruction; therefore they began to retreat into the wilderness again, yea, even back by the same way which they had come.

25 And behold, it was night and they did pitch their tents, for the chief ^acaptains of the Lamanites had supposed that the Nephites were weary because of their march; and supposing that they had driven their whole army therefore they took no thought concerning the city of Manti.

26 Now it came to pass that when it was night, I caused that my men should not sleep, but that they should march forward by another way towards the land of Manti.

27 And because of this our march in the night-time, behold, on the morrow we were beyond the Lamanites, insomuch that we did arrive before them at the city of Manti.

28 And thus it came to pass, that by this stratagem we did take possession of the city of Manti without the shedding of blood (Their own blood, because it appears that the guards and maybe the spies of the Lamanites were killed.).

29 And it came to pass that when the armies of the Lamanites did arrive near the city, and saw that we were prepared to meet them, they were astonished exceedingly and struck with great fear, insomuch that they did ^aflee into the wilderness.

30 Yea, and it came to pass that the armies of the Lamanites did flee out of all this quarter of the land. But behold, they have carried with them many women and children out of the land.

31 And ^athose cities which had been taken by the Lamanites, all of them are at this period of time in our possession; and our fathers and our women and our children are returning to their homes, all save it be those who have been taken prisoners and carried off by the Lamanites.

32 But behold, our armies are small to maintain so great a number of cities and so great possessions.

33 But behold, we ^atrust in our God who has given us victory over those lands, insomuch that we have obtained those cities and those lands, which were our own.

34 Now we do not know the ^acause that the government does not grant us more strength; neither do those men who came up unto us know why we have not received greater strength.

35 Behold, we do not know but what ^aye are unsuccessful, and ye have drawn away the forces into that quarter of the land; if so, we do not desire to murmur. (“Helaman...almost as an apology for being negative he writes, ‘we do not desire to murmur’ (Alma 58:35). Elder Neal A. Maxwell has said, ‘If our lips are closed to murmuring, then our eyes will be open.’ Notice how Helaman has shared an unpleasant truth in a fashion that will still allow the lines of communication to remain open. His sensitivity to his leaders, as well as his subordinates, is commendable. President Harold B. Lee counseled, ‘The men under you will never be loyal to you if they see that you are disloyal to those who preside over you.’ Helaman’s letter validates this principle. His was not the expression of a weak-kneed foot soldier trying not to be responsible for the bad news he had born. He is once again illustrating his total allegiance to his leaders; recognizing full well that he cannot expect God to stand by him if he doesn’t stand by his leaders.” (K. Douglas Bassett, *Alma, the Testimony of the Word*, edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr., p. 301) Dallin H. Oaks: “The primary reason we are commanded to avoid criticism is to preserve our own spiritual well-being, not to protect the person whom we would criticize...Does this counsel to avoid faultfinding and personal criticism apply only to statements that are false? Doesn’t it also apply to statements that are true? The fact that something is true is not always a justification for communicating it...For example, it is wrong to make statements of fact out of an evil motive, even if the statements are true. One who focuses on faults, though they be true, tears down a brother or a sister...One who focuses on faults, though they be true, fosters dissensions and divisions among fellow Church members in the body of Christ.” (*Ensign*, Feb. 1987, pp. 68-9 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 524))

36 And if it is not so, behold, we fear that there is some ^afaction in the government, that they do not send more men to our assistance; for we know that they are more numerous than that which they have sent.

37 But, behold, it mattereth not—we trust God will ^adeliver us, notwithstanding the weakness of our

armies, yea, and deliver us out of the hands of our enemies.

38 Behold, this is the twenty and ninth year, in the latter end, and we are in the possession of our lands; and the Lamanites have fled to the land of Nephi.

39 And those sons of the people of Ammon, of whom I have so highly spoken, are with me in the city of Manti; and the Lord has supported them, yea, and kept them from falling by the sword, insomuch that even ^aone soul has not been slain.

40 But behold, they have received many wounds; nevertheless they ^astand fast in that ^bliberty wherewith God has made them free; and they are strict to remember the Lord their God from day to day (Howard W. Hunter: “Today another battle of far more serious consequence is being waged. It is a battle being fought for the souls of men. Its outcome likewise depends on the steadiness of the soldiery. The clarion call of the chieftain is heard above the fierce artillery of the archenemy, ‘Stand firm! Be true!’ I am grateful that most Latter-day Saints today are standing firm and remaining true to the kingdom of God. Like Helaman’s stripling warriors, ‘they stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has made them free; and they are strict to remember the Lord their God from day to day; yea, they do observe to keep his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments continually; and their faith is strong in the prophecies concerning that which is to come.’ (Alma 58:40.) I am referring to those members of the Church who live their Christian beliefs in the quiet commonplace of their daily lives. On November 1, 1831, at a conference of the Church in Hiram, Ohio, the Lord revealed in the preface to the Doctrine and Covenants that this is the ‘only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased, speaking unto the church collectively and not individually.’ (D&C 1:30.) This should raise a question in our minds of eternal significance: We know that this is the true and living church institutionally, but am I a true and living member individually? This question may appear as a play on the words of the Lord when he said this is the true and living church. When I ask, ‘Am I a true and living member?’ my question is, Am I deeply and fully dedicated to keeping the covenants I have made with the Lord? Am I totally committed to living the gospel and being a doer of the word and not a hearer only? Do I live my religion? Will I remain true? Do I stand firm against Satan’s temptations? He is seeking to cause us to lose our way in a storm of derision and a tide of sophistry. We can have victory, however, by responding to that inner voice calling ‘Stand firm!’” (*That We Might Have Joy*, p. 149)); yea, they do observe to keep his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments continually; and their faith is strong in the prophecies concerning that which is to come.

41 And now, my beloved brother, Moroni, may the Lord our God, who has redeemed us and made us free, keep you continually in his presence; yea, and may he favor this people, even that ye may have success in obtaining the possession of all that which the Lamanites have taken from us, which was for our support. And now, behold, I close mine epistle. I am Helaman, the son of Alma.

CHAPTER 59

Moroni asks Pahoran to strengthen the forces of Helaman—The Lamanites take the city of Nephihah—Moroni is angry with the government. [About 62 B.C.]

1 NOW it came to pass in the *thirtieth year (62 BC) of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi, after Moroni had received and had read Helaman’s ^aepistle, he was exceedingly rejoiced because of the welfare, yea, the exceeding success which Helaman had had, in obtaining ^bthose lands which were lost.

2 Yea, and he did make it known unto all his people, in all the land round about in that part where he was, that they might rejoice also.

3 And it came to pass that he immediately sent ^aan epistle to ^bPahoran, desiring that he should cause men to be gathered together to strengthen Helaman, or the armies of Helaman, insomuch that he might with ease maintain that part of the land which he had been so miraculously prospered in regaining.

4 And it came to pass when Moroni had sent this epistle to the land of Zarahemla, he began again to lay

a plan that he might obtain the remainder of those possessions and cities which the Lamanites had taken from them.

5 And it came to pass that while Moroni was thus making preparations to go against the Lamanites to battle, behold, the people of ^aNephihah, who were gathered together from the city of Moroni and the city of Lehi and the city of Morianton, were attacked by the Lamanites.

6 Yea, even those who had been ^acompelled to flee from the land of Manti, and from the land round about, had come over and joined the Lamanites in this part of the land.

7 And thus being exceedingly numerous, yea, and receiving strength from day to day, by the command of Ammoron they came forth against the people of Nephihah, and they did begin to slay them with an exceedingly great slaughter.

8 And their armies were so numerous that the remainder of the people of ^aNephihah were ^bobliged^c to flee before them; and they came even and joined the army of Moroni.

9 And now as Moroni had supposed that there ^ashould be men sent to the city of Nephihah, to the assistance of the people to maintain that city, and knowing that it was easier to keep the city from falling into the hands of the Lamanites than to retake it from them, he supposed that they would easily maintain that city.

10 Therefore he retained all his force to maintain those places which he had recovered.

11 And now, when Moroni saw that the city of Nephihah was ^alost he was exceedingly sorrowful, and began to doubt, because of the wickedness of the people, whether they should not fall into the hands of their brethren.

12 Now this was the case with all his chief captains. They doubted and marveled also because of the wickedness of the people, and this because of the success of the Lamanites over them.

13 And it came to pass that Moroni was angry with the government, because of their ^aindifference concerning the freedom of their country.

* Verse 1 [62 B.C.].

CHAPTER 60

Moroni complains to Pahoran of the government's neglect of the armies—The Lord suffers the righteous to be slain—The Nephites must use all of their power and means to deliver themselves from their enemies—Moroni threatens to fight against the government unless help is supplied to his armies. [About 62 B.C.]

1 AND it came to pass that he (Moroni) wrote ^aagain to the governor of the land, who was Pahoran, and these are the words which he wrote, saying: Behold, I direct mine epistle to Pahoran, in the city of Zarahemla, who is the chief judge and the ^bgovernor over the land, and also to all those who have been chosen by this people to govern and manage the affairs of this war.

2 For behold, I have somewhat to say unto them by the way of ^acondemnation; for behold, ye yourselves know that ye have been appointed to gather together men, and arm them with swords, and with cimeters, and all manner of weapons of war of every kind, and send forth against the Lamanites, in whatsoever parts they should come into our land.

3 And now behold, I say unto you that myself, and also my men, and also Helaman and his men, have suffered exceedingly great ^asufferings; yea, even hunger, thirst, and fatigue, and all manner of afflictions of every kind.

4 But behold, were this all we had suffered we would not murmur nor complain.

5 But behold, great has been the slaughter among our people; yea, thousands have fallen by the sword, while it might have otherwise been if ye had rendered unto our armies sufficient strength and succor for them. Yea, great has been your neglect towards us.

6 And now behold, we desire to know the cause of this exceedingly great neglect; yea, we desire to

know the cause of your thoughtless state.

7 Can you think to sit upon your thrones in a state of thoughtless ^astupor, while your enemies are spreading the work of death around you? Yea, while they are murdering thousands of your brethren—

8 Yea, even they who have looked up to you for protection, yea, have placed you in a situation that ye might have succored them, yea, ye might have sent armies unto them, to have strengthened them, and have saved thousands of them from falling by the sword.

9 But behold, this is not all—ye have withheld your provisions from them, insomuch that many have fought and bled out their lives because of their great desires which they had for the welfare of this people; yea, and this they have done when they were about to ^aperish with hunger, because of your exceedingly great neglect towards them.

10 And now, my beloved brethren—for ye ought to be beloved; yea, and ye ought to have stirred yourselves more diligently for the welfare and the freedom of this people; but behold, ye have neglected them insomuch that the blood of thousands shall come upon your heads for vengeance; yea, for ^aknown unto God were all their cries, and all their sufferings—

11 Behold, could ye suppose that ye could sit upon your thrones, and because of the exceeding goodness of God ye could do nothing and he would deliver you? Behold, if ye have supposed this ye have supposed in vain.

12 Do ye ^asuppose that, because so many of your brethren have been killed it is because of their wickedness? I say unto you, if ye have supposed this ye have supposed in vain; for I say unto you, there are many who have fallen by the sword; and behold it is to your condemnation; (Heber J. Grant: “If, harkening to that call [to serve one’s country] and obeying those in command over them, they shall take the lives of those who fight against them, that will not make them murderers, nor subject them to the penalty that God has prescribed for those who kill...For it would be a cruel God that would punish His children as moral sinners for acts done by them as the innocent instrumentalities of a sovereign whom He had told them to obey and whose will they were powerless to resist...In this terrible war now waging, thousands of our righteous young men in all parts of the world and in many countries are subject to a call into the military service of their own countries...That in their work of destruction they will be striking at their brethren will not be held against them. That sin, as Moroni of old said, is to the condemnation of those who ‘sit in their places of power in a state of thoughtless stupor,’ those rulers in the world who in a frenzy of hate and lust for unrighteous power and dominion over their fellow men, have put into motion eternal forces they do not comprehend and cannot control. God, in His own due time, will pass sentence upon them.” (Message of the First Presidency, *Conference Report*, Apr. 1942, pp. 92-96 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 356))

13 For the Lord suffereth the ^arighteous to be slain that his justice and ^bjudgment may come upon the wicked (“In a remarkable letter to Pahoran, governor of the Nephite lands, the prophet-general, Moroni, gives answer to a question every soldier’s mother is asking: ‘Will God permit a righteous boy to be slain on the field of battle?’ Some of the Nephite parents must have been asking the same question...Why does a just God permit the innocent to be slain? Again the Book of Mormon gives answer. God will not take away from men their free agency. Men may abuse their free agency. They may in its exercise become carnal, sensual, and devilish. They may make war on their neighbors and put the innocent to death, but interfere with that free agency and the whole purpose of life is frustrated, and progress is ended...During the missionary work of Alma and Amulek in the land of Ammonihah, they were arrested and forced to witness the burning of those whom they had converted: ‘And when Amulek saw the pains of the women and children who were consuming in the fire, he also was pained; and he said unto Alma: How can we witness this awful scene? Therefore let us stretch forth our hands, and exercise the power of God which is in us, and save them from the flames. But Alma said unto him: The Spirit constraineth me that I must not stretch forth mine hand, for behold the Lord receiveth them up unto himself, in glory; and he doth suffer that they may do this thing, or that the people may do this thing unto them, according

to the hardness of their hearts, that the judgments which he shall exercise upon them in his wrath may be just; and the blood of the innocent shall stand as a witness against them, yea, and cry mightily against them at the last day.' (Alma 14:10-11.) Alma's answer goes to the heart of the problem. God will not interfere with the free agency of his children that his judgments may be just, nor can we expect him to stop wars and evil in our day for the same reason." (William E. Berrett, *A Book of Mormon Treasury: Selections from the Pages of the Improvement Era*, p. 281-2)); therefore ye need not suppose that the righteous are lost because they are slain; but behold, they do enter into the rest of the Lord their God. (Harold B. Lee: "It is my conviction that the present devastating scourge of war in which hundreds of thousands are being slain, many of whom are no more responsible for the causes of the war than are our own boys, is making necessary an increase of missionary activity in the spirit world and that many of our boys who bear the Holy Priesthood and are worthy to do so will be called to that missionary service after they have departed this life." (*Conference Report*, October 1942, p. 73))

14 And now behold, I say unto you, I fear exceedingly that the judgments of God will come upon this people, because of their exceeding^a slothfulness, yea, even the slothfulness of our government, and their exceedingly great neglect towards their brethren, yea, towards those who have been slain.

15 For were it not for the wickedness which first commenced at our head, we^a could have withstood our enemies that they could have gained no power over us.

16 Yea, had it not been for the war which broke out^a among ourselves; yea, were it not for these^b king-men, who caused so much bloodshed among ourselves; yea, at the time we were contending among ourselves, if we had united our strength as we hitherto have done; yea, had it not been for the desire of power and authority which those king-men had over us; had they been true to the cause of our freedom, and united with us, and gone forth against our enemies, instead of taking up their swords against us, which was the cause of so much bloodshed among ourselves; yea, if we had gone forth against them in the strength of the Lord, we should have dispersed our enemies, for it would have been done, according to the^c fulfilling of his word.

17 But behold, now the Lamanites are coming upon us, taking^a possession of our lands, and they are murdering our people with the sword, yea, our women and our children, and also carrying them away captive, causing them that they should suffer all manner of afflictions, and this because of the great wickedness of those who are seeking for power and authority, yea, even those king-men.

18 But why should I say much concerning this matter? For we know not but what ye yourselves are seeking for authority. We know not but what ye are also^a traitors to your country.

19 Or is it that ye have neglected us because ye are in the heart of our country and ye are^a surrounded by security, that ye do not cause food to be sent unto us, and also men to strengthen our armies?

20 Have ye forgotten the commandments of the Lord your God? Yea, have ye forgotten the captivity of our fathers? Have ye forgotten the many times we have been delivered out of the hands of our enemies?

21 Or do ye suppose that the Lord^a will still deliver us, while we sit upon our thrones and do not make use of the means which the Lord has provided for us?

22 Yea, will ye sit in idleness while ye are surrounded with thousands of those, yea, and tens of thousands, who do also sit in idleness, while there are thousands round about in the borders of the land who are falling by the sword, yea, wounded and bleeding?

23 Do ye suppose that God will look upon you as guiltless while ye sit still and behold these things?

Behold I say unto you, Nay. Now I would that ye should remember that God has said that the^a inward vessel shall be^b cleansed first, and then shall the outer vessel be cleansed also. ("As I read the scriptures, I often reflect upon the chilling implications of what the Apostle Peter meant when he said, 'Judgment must begin at the house of God.' (1 Pet. 4:17.) In our own day, the Lord has said, 'Vengeance cometh speedily upon the inhabitants of the earth. ... And upon *my house* shall it begin.' (D&C 112:24-25; italics added.) What kind of judgments does the Lord have in mind? Why do the scriptures say that the cleansing will begin with the Church, rather than with the wicked? The scriptures reveal that the Lord will save his greatest wrath and condemnation for those who outwardly appear religious but who are

actually full of evil within. Speaking to Jewish religious leaders, the Savior said, 'Cleanse first that which is within the cup. ... Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.' (Matt. 23:26-27.) Similarly, the great Book of Mormon leader, Moroni, wrote, 'God has said that the inward vessel shall be cleansed first.' (Alma 60:23.) "President Ezra Taft Benson left little room for doubt that these warnings apply to us. He declared, 'All is not well in Zion. ... We must cleanse the inner vessel, beginning first with ourselves, then with our families, and finally with the Church.' (*Ensign*, May 1986, p. 4.) There are two methods of cleansing the inner vessel. The first is repentance. But if we do not repent, the Lord will invoke the second method of cleansing—from without. One way or another, the vessel will be cleansed." (Larry Tippetts, *Ensign*, Oct. 1992, p. 21))

24 And now, except ye do repent of that which ye have done, and begin to be up and doing, and send forth food and men unto us, and also unto Helaman, that he may support those parts of our country which he has regained, and that we may also recover the remainder of our possessions in these parts, behold it will be expedient that we contend no more with the Lamanites until we have first cleansed our inward vessel, yea, even the great head of our government.

25 And except ye grant mine epistle, and come out and show unto me a true ^aspirit of freedom, and strive to strengthen and fortify our armies, and grant unto them food for their support, behold I will leave a part of my freemen to maintain this part of our land, and I will leave the strength and the blessings of God upon them, that none other power can operate against them—

26 And this because of their exceeding faith, and their patience in their ^atribulations—

27 And I will come unto you, and if there be any among you that has a desire for freedom, yea, if there be even a spark of freedom remaining, behold I will stir up insurrections among you, even until those who have desires to usurp power and authority shall become extinct.

28 Yea, behold I do not fear your power nor your authority, but it is my ^aGod whom I fear; and it is according to his commandments that I do take my sword to defend the cause of my country, and it is because of your iniquity that we have suffered so much loss.

29 Behold it is time, yea, the time is now at hand, that except ye do bestir yourselves in the defence of your country and your little ones, the ^asword of justice doth hang over you; yea, and it shall fall upon you and visit you even to your utter destruction.

30 Behold, I wait for assistance from you; and, except ye do administer unto our relief, behold, I come unto you, even in the land of Zarahemla, and smite you with the sword, insomuch that ye can have no more power to impede the progress of this people in the cause of our freedom.

31 For behold, the Lord will not suffer that ye shall live and wax strong in your iniquities to destroy his righteous people.

32 Behold, can you suppose that the Lord will spare you and come out in judgment against the Lamanites, when it is the ^atradition of their fathers that has caused their hatred, yea, and it has been redoubled by those who have dissented from us, while your iniquity is for the cause of your love of glory and the vain things of the world?

33 Ye know that ye do transgress the laws of God, and ye do know that ye do trample them under your feet. Behold, the Lord saith unto me: If those whom ye have appointed your governors do not repent of their sins and ^ainiquities, ye shall ^bgo up to battle against them.

34 And now behold, I, Moroni, am constrained, according to the covenant which I have made to keep the commandments of my God; therefore I would that ye should adhere to the word of God, and send speedily unto me of your provisions and of your men, and also to Helaman.

35 And behold, if ye will not do this I come unto you speedily; for behold, God will not suffer that we should perish with hunger; therefore he will give unto us of your food, even if it must be by the sword. Now see that ye fulfil the word of God.

36 Behold, I am Moroni, your chief captain. I ^aseek not for power, but to pull it down. I ^bseek not for honor of the world, but for the glory of my God, and the freedom and welfare of my country. And thus I

close mine epistle. (If Joseph Smith had made up this book, he would not have included this section because it shows that Moroni was wrong in his accusation of Pahoran. He would have wanted to show Moroni in the best light as a hero, not making this mistake.)

CHAPTER 61

Pahoran tells Moroni of the insurrection and rebellion against the government—The king-men take Zarahemla and are in league with the Lamanites—Pahoran asks for military aid against the rebels. [About 62 B.C.]

1 BEHOLD, now it came to pass that soon after Moroni had sent his epistle unto the chief governor, he received an epistle from ^aPahoran, the chief governor. And these are the words which he received:

2 I, Pahoran, who am the chief governor of this land, do send these words unto Moroni, the chief captain over the army. Behold, I say unto you, Moroni, that I do not joy in your great ^aafflictions, yea, it grieves my soul.

3 But behold, there are those who do joy in your afflictions, yea, insomuch that they have risen up in ^arebellion against me, and also those of my people who are ^bfreemen, yea, and those who have risen up are exceedingly numerous.

4 And it is those who have sought to take away the judgment-seat from me that have been the cause of this great iniquity; for they have used great ^aflattery, and they have ^bled away the hearts of many people, which will be the cause of sore affliction among us; they have withheld our provisions, and have daunted our ^cfreemen that they have not come unto you.

5 And behold, they have driven me out before them, and I have fled to the land of Gideon, with as many men as it were possible that I could get.

6 And behold, I have sent a proclamation throughout this part of the land; and behold, they are ^aflocking to us ^bdaily, to their arms, in the defence of their country and their ^cfreedom, and to avenge our ^dwrongs.

7 And they have come unto us, insomuch that those who have risen up in rebellion against us are set at defiance, yea, insomuch that they do fear us and durst not come out against us to battle.

8 They have ^agot possession of the land, or the city, of Zarahemla; they have appointed a ^bking over them, and he hath written unto the king of the Lamanites, in the which he hath joined an alliance with him; in the which alliance he hath agreed to maintain the city of Zarahemla, which maintenance he supposeth will enable the Lamanites to conquer the remainder of the land, and he shall be placed king over this people when they shall be conquered ^cunder the Lamanites.

9 And now, in your epistle you have ^acensured me, but it mattereth not; I am not angry, but do rejoice in the greatness of your heart (Neal A. Maxwell: "...we must always realize that in a perfect church filled with imperfect people, there are bound to be some miscommunications at times. A noteworthy example occurred in ancient American Israel. Moroni wrote two times to Pahoran complaining of neglect because much-needed reinforcements did not arrive. Moroni used harsh language, accusing the governor of the land, Pahoran, of sitting on his throne in a state of 'thoughtless stupor.' (Alma 60:7.) Pahoran soon made a very patriotic reply, explaining why he could not do what Moroni wanted. Though censured, Pahoran was not angry; he even praised Moroni for 'the greatness of your heart.' (Alma 61:9.) Given the intense, mutual devotion of disciples, discussions as to how best to move the Lord's work along are bound to produce tactical differences on occasion. Just as in this episode, sometimes scolding occurs that is later shown to be unjustified. Parley P. Pratt recalled an episode when President Brigham Young chastened him and others for their management of the westward migration. In this instance also, there were two letters of a scolding nature, even alleging insubordination. Of this Elder Pratt wrote, 'I could not realize this at the time, and protested that in my own heart, so far as I was concerned, I had no such motive; that I had been actuated by the purest motives. . . .' Later it became clear to Elder Pratt that some of those scolded had motives that were not as pure as his. He commented further, '. . . yet I thank God for this

timely chastisement; I profited by it, and it caused me to be more watchful and careful ever after.’ (*Autobiography of Parley Parker Pratt* [Deseret Book, 1961], pp. 341-42.) It is worthy remembering that Elder Pratt protested in his heart, not publicly. He *took it*. Perhaps President Young, like Moroni, might have taken note of how Elder Pratt was even sick at the time—but, like Moroni, President Young did not know of the full conditions. The stuff out of which offense is made is all around us, if we wish to seize upon it. What we learn, however, from men like Pahoran and Elder Pratt should give us pause, especially when we may be inclined to take umbrage instead of following the Brethren.” (*All These Things Shall Give Thee Experience*, p. 119-20) Hugh Nibley: **“The church is a training school in which everyone is there for the training. So don't waste time criticizing the authorities.** In that regard the Book of Mormon gives us another neat example. Moroni had very good reason to complain about the top men of the nation ‘sitting upon [their] . . . thrones in a state of thoughtless stupor’ while the work of death was going on all around them (Alma 60:7). Many today are complaining of a like situation. . . . But the moral of the story, as it turns out, is that Moroni in his criticism was wrong, completely out of order; he simply did not understand the situation. He was quite right about the crime, but it was not for him to apportion the guilt. So let us, when distressed by the inadequacies of others, remember the number-one instruction of the Book of Mormon: ‘This is my doctrine . . . that the Father commandeth all men everywhere to repent and believe in me’ (3 Nephi 11:32). This life is ‘a state of probation’ (2 Nephi 2:21). ‘Be wise in the days of your probation’ (Mormon 9:28).” (*The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, p. 564)). I, Pahoran, do not ^bseek for power, save only to retain my judgment-seat that I may preserve the rights and the liberty of my people. My soul standeth fast in that liberty in the which God hath made us ^cfree. (Gordon B. Hinckley: “I have worked with seven Presidents of this Church. I have recognized that all have been human. But I have never been concerned over this. They may have had some weaknesses. But this has never troubled me. I know that the God of heaven has used mortal men throughout history to accomplish His divine purposes. They were the very best available to Him, and they were wonderful.” (*Ensign*, May 1992, p. 53 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 524))

10 And now, behold, we will resist wickedness even unto bloodshed. We would ^anot shed the blood of the Lamanites if they would stay in their own land.

11 We would not shed the blood of our brethren if they would not rise up in rebellion and take the sword against us.

12 We would subject ourselves to the ^ayoke of bondage if it were requisite with the justice of God, or if he should command us so to do.

13 But behold he doth not command us that we shall subject ourselves to our enemies, but that we should put our ^atrust in him, and he will deliver us.

14 Therefore, my beloved brother, Moroni, let us resist evil, and whatsoever evil we cannot resist with our ^awords, yea, such as rebellions and dissensions, let us ^bresist them with our swords, that we may retain our freedom, that we may rejoice in the great privilege of our church, and in the cause of our Redeemer and our God.

15 Therefore, come unto me speedily with a few of your men, and leave the remainder in the charge of Lehi and Teancum; give unto them power to conduct the ^awar in that part of the land, according to the ^bSpirit of God, which is also the ^cspirit of freedom which is in them.

16 Behold I have sent a few provisions unto them, that they may not perish until ye can come unto me.

17 Gather together whatsoever force ye can upon your march hither, and we will go speedily against those dissenters, in the strength of our God according to the faith which is in us. (Pahoran is giving orders to Moroni, because Pahoran is the commander in chief. Moroni is the chief captain of the army under Pahoran.)

18 And we will ^atake possession of the city of Zarahemla, that we may obtain more food to send forth unto Lehi and Teancum; yea, we will go forth against them in the strength of the Lord, and we will put an end to this great iniquity.

19 And now, Moroni, I do joy in receiving your epistle, for I was somewhat worried concerning what we should do, whether it should be just in us to go against our brethren. (George Q. Cannon: it is better to carry out a plan that is not so wise, if you are united on it. Speaking generally, a plan or a policy that may be inferior in some respects is more effective if men are united upon it than a better plan would be upon which they were divided. When they carry that counsel out unitedly and in the same spirit, will be blessed, and the Church will be blessed, and, as I have said, God will supplement our weakness by His strength and our want of knowledge by His infinite knowledge and His great power. Gospel Truths, 163-64)

20 But ye have said, except they repent the Lord ^ahath commanded you that ye should go against them.
21 See that ye ^astrengthen Lehi and Teancum in the Lord; tell them to fear not, for God will deliver them, yea, and also all those who ^bstand fast in that liberty wherewith God hath made them free. And now I close mine epistle to my beloved brother, Moroni.

CHAPTER 62

Moroni marches to the aid of Pahoran in the land of Gideon—The king-men who refuse to defend their country are put to death—Pahoran and Moroni retake Nephiah—Many Lamanites join the people of Ammon—Teancum slays Ammoron and is in turn slain—The Lamanites are driven from the land, and peace is established—Helaman returns to the ministry and builds up the Church. [About 62—57 B.C.]

1 AND now it came to pass that when Moroni had received this epistle his heart did take courage, and was filled with exceedingly great joy because of the faithfulness of Pahoran, that he was not also a ^atraitor to the freedom and cause of his country.

2 But he did also mourn exceedingly because of the iniquity of those who had driven Pahoran from the judgment-seat, yea, in fine because of those who had rebelled against their country and also their God.

3 And it came to pass that Moroni took a small number of men, according to the desire of Pahoran, and gave Lehi and Teancum command over the remainder of his army, and took his march towards the land of Gideon.

4 And he did raise the ^astandard of ^bliberty in whatsoever place he did enter, and gained whatsoever force he could in all his march towards the land of Gideon.

5 And it came to pass that thousands did ^aflock unto his standard, and did take up their swords in the defence of their freedom, that they might not come into bondage.

6 And thus, when Moroni had gathered together whatsoever men he could in all his march, he came to the land of Gideon; and uniting his forces with those of Pahoran they became exceedingly strong, even stronger than the men of Pachus, who was the ^aking of those dissenters who had driven the ^bfreemen out of the land of Zarahemla and had taken possession of the land.

7 And it came to pass that Moroni and Pahoran went down with their armies into the land of Zarahemla, and went forth against the city, and did meet the men of Pachus, insomuch that they did come to battle.

8 And behold, Pachus was slain and his men were taken prisoners, and Pahoran was restored to his judgment-seat.

9 And the men of Pachus received their trial, according to the law, and also those king-men who had been taken and ^acast into prison; and they were ^bexecuted according to the law (They were executed for treason.); yea, those men of Pachus and those ^cking-men, whosoever would not take up arms in the defence of their country, but would fight against it, were put to death.

10 And thus it became expedient that this law should be strictly observed for the safety of their country; yea, and whosoever was found denying their freedom was speedily ^aexecuted according to the law.

(“One might ask, Why compel men to fight or be executed? The answer is simple: treason is a serious offense. Pachus and his men were committed to the overthrow of Nephite freedom. To permit to live men who insisted on using the sword to destroy the very thing Moroni’s soldiers were fighting and

dying to preserve would be treason to the God-inspired cause of liberty. This neither Moroni nor Pahoran would do.” (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*, 1981, p. 348))

11 And thus ended the thirtieth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi; Moroni and Pahoran having restored peace to the land of Zarahemla, among their own people, having ^ainflicted death upon all those who were not true to the cause of freedom.

12 And it came to pass in the *commencement of the thirty and first year (61 BC) of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi, Moroni immediately caused that provisions should be sent, and also an army of six thousand men should be sent unto Helaman, to assist him in preserving that part of the land.

13 And he also caused that an army of six thousand men, with a sufficient quantity of food, should be sent to the armies of Lehi and Teancum. And it came to pass that this was done to fortify the land against the Lamanites.

14 And it came to pass that Moroni and Pahoran, leaving a large body of men in the land of Zarahemla, took their march with a large body of men towards the land of Nephiah, being determined to ^aoverthrow the Lamanites in that city.

15 And it came to pass that as they were marching towards the land, they took a large body of men of the Lamanites, and slew many of them, and took their provisions and their weapons of war.

16 And it came to pass after they had taken them, they caused them to enter into a ^acovenant that they would no more take up their weapons of war against the Nephites.

17 And when they had entered into this covenant they sent them to ^adwell with the people of Ammon, and they were in number about four thousand who had not been slain. (The Nephites have a capacity to forgive their enemies if they will promise not to hurt them anymore.)

18 And it came to pass that when they had sent them away they pursued their march towards the land of ^aNephiah. And it came to pass that when they had come to the city of Nephiah, they did pitch their tents in the plains of Nephiah, which is near the city of Nephiah.

19 Now Moroni was desirous that the Lamanites should come out to battle against them, upon the plains; but the Lamanites, knowing of their exceedingly great courage, and beholding the greatness of their numbers, therefore they durst not come out against them; therefore they did not come to battle in that day.

20 And when the night came, Moroni went forth in the darkness of the night, and came upon the top of the wall to spy out in what part of the city the Lamanites did camp with their army.

21 And it came to pass that they were on the east, by the entrance; and they were all asleep (Where are the guards?). And now Moroni returned to his army, and caused that they should prepare in haste strong cords and ladders, to be let down from the top of the ^awall into the inner part of the wall.

22 And it came to pass that Moroni caused that his men should march forth and come upon the top of the wall, and let ^athemselves down into that part of the city, yea, even on the west, where the Lamanites did not camp with their armies.

23 And it came to pass that they were all let down into the city by night, by the means of their strong cords and their ladders; thus when the morning came they were all within the walls of the city. (The Lamanites are sound sleepers.)

24 And now, when the Lamanites awoke and saw that the armies of Moroni were within the walls, they were affrighted exceedingly, insomuch that they did flee out by the pass.

25 And now when Moroni saw that they were fleeing before him, he did cause that his men should march forth against them, and slew many, and surrounded many others, and took them prisoners; and the remainder of them fled into the land of Moroni, which was in the borders by the seashore.

26 Thus had Moroni and Pahoran obtained the ^apossession of the city of Nephiah without the loss of one soul; and there were many of the Lamanites who were slain.

27 Now it came to pass that many of the Lamanites that were prisoners were desirous to ^ajoin the people of Ammon and become a free people.

28 And it came to pass that as many as were desirous, unto them it was granted according to their

desires. (Repenting Lamanites)

29 Therefore, all the prisoners of the Lamanites did join the people of Ammon, and did begin to labor exceedingly, tilling the ground, raising all manner of grain, and flocks and herds of every kind; and thus were the Nephites relieved from a great burden; yea, insomuch that they were relieved from all the prisoners of the Lamanites.

30 Now it came to pass that Moroni, after he had obtained possession of the city of Nephihah, having taken many prisoners, which did reduce the armies of the Lamanites exceedingly, and having regained many of the Nephites who had been taken prisoners, which did strengthen the army of Moroni exceedingly; therefore Moroni went forth from the land of Nephihah to the land of ^aLehi.

31 And it came to pass that when the Lamanites saw that Moroni was coming against them, they were again frightened and fled before the army of Moroni.

32 And it came to pass that ^aMoroni and his army did pursue them from city to city, until they were met by Lehi and Teancum; and the Lamanites fled from Lehi and Teancum, even down upon the borders by the seashore, until they came to the land of Moroni.

33 And the armies of the Lamanites were all gathered together, insomuch that they were all in one body in the land of Moroni. Now Ammoron, the king of the Lamanites, was also with them.

34 And it came to pass that Moroni and Lehi and Teancum did encamp with their armies round about in the borders of the land of Moroni, insomuch that the Lamanites were encircled about in the borders by the wilderness on the south, and in the borders by the wilderness on the east.

35 And thus they did encamp for the night. For behold, the Nephites and the Lamanites also were weary because of the greatness of the march; therefore they did not resolve upon any stratagem in the night-time, save it were Teancum; for he was exceedingly angry with Ammoron, insomuch that he considered that Ammoron, and Amalickiah his brother, had been the ^acause of this great and lasting war between them and the Lamanites, which had been the cause of so much war and bloodshed, yea, and so much famine.

36 And it came to pass that Teancum in his anger did go forth into the camp of the Lamanites, and did let himself down over the walls of the city. And he went forth with a cord, from place to place, insomuch that he did find the king; and he did ^acast a javelin at him, which did pierce him near the heart. But behold, the king did awaken his servants before he died, insomuch that they did pursue Teancum, and slew him. (The other times that Teancum killed the leader of the Lamanites, the record did not state that he was angry. Here it says that Teancum did this out of anger. Maybe this is the reason that Teancum died in doing this.)

37 Now it came to pass that when Lehi and Moroni knew that Teancum was dead they were exceedingly sorrowful; for behold, he had been a man who had ^afought valiantly for his country, yea, a true friend to liberty; and he had suffered very many exceedingly sore afflictions. But behold, he was dead, and had gone the way of all the earth.

38 Now it came to pass that Moroni marched forth on the morrow, and came upon the Lamanites, insomuch that they did slay them with a great slaughter; and they did drive them out of the land; and they did flee, even that they did not return at that time against the Nephites.

39 And thus ^{*}ended the thirty and first year (60 BC) of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi; and thus they had had wars, and bloodsheds, and famine, and affliction, for the space of many years.

40 And there had been murders, and contentions, and dissensions, and all manner of iniquity among the people of Nephi; nevertheless for the ^arighteous' sake, yea, because of the prayers of the righteous, they were spared. (Spencer W. Kimball: "There are many upright and faithful who live all the commandments and whose lives and prayers keep the world from destruction." (*Ensign*, June 1971, p. 16 as taken from *Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon* compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 370))

41 But behold, because of the exceedingly great length of the war between the Nephites and the Lamanites many had become **hardened**, because of the exceedingly great length of the war; and many

were softened because of their ^aafflictions, insomuch that they did humble themselves before God, even in the depth of humility. (Dallin H. Oaks: "...great adversities are not without some eternal purpose or effect. They can turn our hearts to God...Such large-scale adversities as natural disasters and wars seem to be inherent in the mortal experience. We cannot entirely prevent them, but we can determine how we will react to them. For example, the adversities of war and military service, which have been the spiritual destruction of some, have been the spiritual awakening of others. The Book of Mormon describes the contrast: (quotes Alma 62:41). I read of a similar contrast after the devastating hurricane that destroyed thousands of homes in Florida some years ago. A news account quoted two different persons who had suffered the same tragedy and received the same blessing: each of their homes had been totally destroyed, but each of their family members had been spared death or injury. One said that this tragedy had destroyed his faith; how, he asked, could God allow this to happen? The other said that the experience had strengthened his faith. God had been good to him, he said. Though the family's home and possessions were lost, their lives were spared and they could rebuild the home. For one, the glass was half empty. For the other, the glass was half full. The gift of moral agency empowers each of us to choose how we will act when we suffer adversity." (*Ensign*, July 1998, p. 7))

42 And it came to pass that after Moroni had fortified those parts of the land which were most exposed to the Lamanites, until they were sufficiently strong, he returned to the city of Zarahemla; and also Helaman returned to the place of his inheritance; and there was once more peace established among the people of Nephi.

43 And Moroni yielded up the ^acommand of his armies into the hands of his son, whose name was ^bMoronihah; and he retired to his own house that he might spend the remainder of his days in peace. (This is similar to George Washington, who following his tenure as President of the United States, retired to his home in Mount Vernon. Although many people had wanted him to remain President longer, he knew he should retire.)

44 And Pahoran did return to his judgment-seat; and Helaman did take upon him again to preach unto the people the word of God; for because of so many wars and contentions it had become expedient that a ^aregulation should be made again in the church.

45 Therefore, Helaman and his brethren went forth, and did declare the word of God with much power unto the ^aconvincing of many people of their wickedness, which did cause them to repent of their sins and to be baptized unto the Lord their God.

46 And it came to pass that they did establish again the church of God, throughout all the land.

47 Yea, and regulations were made concerning the law. And their ^ajudges, and their chief judges were chosen.

48 And the people of Nephi began to ^aprosper again in the land, and began to multiply and to wax exceedingly strong again in the land. And they began to grow exceedingly rich.

49 But notwithstanding their riches, or their strength, or their prosperity, they were not lifted up in the pride of their eyes; neither were they ^aslow to remember the Lord their God; but they did humble themselves exceedingly before him.

50 Yea, they did remember how great things the Lord had done for them, that he had ^adelivered them from death, and from bonds, and from prisons, and from all manner of ^bafflictions, and he had ^cdelivered them out of the hands of their enemies.

51 And they did pray unto the Lord their God continually, insomuch that the Lord did bless them, according to his word, so that they did wax strong and ^aprosper in the land.

52 And it came to pass that all these things were done. And ^aHelaman died, in the *thirty and fifth year (57 BC) of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

* Verse 12 [61 B.C.]; Verse 39 [60 B.C.]; Verse 52 [57 B.C.].

CHAPTER 63

Shiblon and later Helaman take possession of the sacred records—Many Nephites travel to the land northward—Hagoth builds ships, which sail forth in the west sea—Moronihah defeats the Lamanites in battle. [Between 56 and 53 B.C.]

1 AND it came to pass in the *commencement of the thirty and sixth year (56 BC) of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi, that ^aShiblon took possession of those ^bsacred things which had been delivered unto Helaman by Alma. (“The book of Alma in the Book of Mormon is made up of the records of three different writers: Alma and his sons, Helaman, and Shiblon. The record of Alma in the book of Alma is unique in that it comprises 22.6 percent of the entire Nephite record and yet covers only 18 years, or merely 1.76 percent of the entire 1021 years of Nephite history from 600 BC to AD 421. The record of Alma covers the first 44 chapters of the book of Alma, the 18 years from 91 to 73 BC. The record of Helaman makes up chapters 45-62, covering the 16 years from 73 to 57 BC. Mormon's abridgement of Shiblon's record constitutes the last chapter (Alma 63).” (Fred E. Woods, *Alma, the Testimony of the Word*, edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, p. 305.))

2 And he was a just man, and he did walk uprightly before God; and he did observe to do good continually, to keep the commandments of the Lord his God; and also did his brother (Corianton).

3 And it came to pass that ^aMoroni died also. And thus ended the thirty and sixth year of the reign of the judges.

4 And it came to pass that in the *thirty and seventh year (55 BC) of the reign of the judges, there was a large company of men, even to the amount of five thousand and four hundred men, with their wives and their children, departed out of the land of Zarahemla into the land which was ^anorthward.

5 And it came to pass that Hagoth, he being an ^aexceedingly curious man, therefore he went forth and built him an exceedingly large ship, on the borders of the land ^bBountiful, by the land Desolation, and launched it forth into the west sea, by the ^cnarrow neck which led into the land northward.

6 And behold, there were many of the Nephites who did enter therein and did sail forth with much provisions, and also many women and children; and they took their course northward. And thus ended the thirty and seventh year.

7 And in the thirty and eighth year, this man built ^aother ships. And the first ship did also return, and many more people did enter into it; and they also took much provisions, and set out again to the land northward.

8 And it came to pass that they were never heard of more. And we suppose that they were drowned in the depths of the sea (This is one of the subtle testimonies of the truthfulness of this record. Had Joseph Smith simply been creating the Book of Mormon, fabricating it (rather than translating it), he probably would not have inserted such ideas into the narrative. Here we see that Mormon, a powerful prophet-editor, was simply unaware of what became of Hagoth and his followers. Living almost five centuries after their departure from the promised land, Mormon could have inquired as to their whereabouts, but presumably he had not done so, or if he had, he had not learned by revelation what became of those people. DCBM, 3:329). And it came to pass that one other ship also did sail forth; and whither she did go we know not. (Robert L. Simpson: Now, young people, as I bear my testimony to you this morning, I want to relate some very intimate happenings. I want to tell you some things that have been important in my life, things that have been the main structural supports in my testimony, and I want to tell them to you in all humility. I hope you will not misconstrue these remarks. I want you to be sure and realize that I tell them to you not in a boasting way. I tell them to you just because they are a part of my life and so much a part of my life that I do not know how to separate myself from them. I give them to you in hopes that you might be able to at least remember the spirit of what I say and perhaps make it a small part of your testimony, too. I would like, in making reference to these wonderful people from New Zealand—especially the Maori folks here today—to turn to Alma 63 and read a very significant quotation. It talks

about a man called Hagoth, a man who set sail from these Americas many centuries ago. (quotes Alma 63:5-8). I would like to tell you young people that in a great gathering of Polynesians held right in Salt Lake City just prior to 1915, a prophet of the Lord, President Joseph F. Smith, addressing a group of Polynesians who had come to Salt Lake City to participate in their temple endowment work, made the statement that without a doubt this man Hagoth and his company were the progenitors of the Polynesian races, and that this migration was the beginning of the Polynesian population in the South Pacific. Now up until very recently men of science have said, no, the Polynesians have come from the Malay States, they have come from the African, from the Asian side, and they have migrated from a westerly direction to the Polynesian islands-not from the Americas. This has been popular thinking until about 1940, when a very bold scholar by the name of Thor Heyerdahl made the observation that indeed these people must be from the Americas. He set out to prove this by building some balsa rafts on which he set himself adrift off the shores of South and Central America. He and his companions drifted for about one hundred days, and depending only on the prevailing tides and winds of that area, they found themselves cast upon the shores of these South Pacific islands, not far from Tahiti. It seems rather significant that all of a sudden scientific opinion began to change and Thor Heyerdahl, since that day, has presented additional evidences that have further made it a very important consideration-that the Polynesians did originate from the Americas. Now the Maoris themselves have something to say about this theory. They all have the same answer to the questions, 'Where did your people come from? Where did you originate?' The answer is always the same: 'I haere mai matou i tawhiti nui, i tawhiti roe, i tawhiti pamamau i te hono i te wai e rua.' ('We came from a great distance, from a still greater distance, from a very, very great distance, from the joining place of two great waters.')

Perhaps by the narrow neck of land that separated the two great seas, the narrow neck of land which led into the land northward. This is Maori tradition and I want to tell you that those who have joined the Church believe without reservation, that these things I have told you are part and parcel of Mormon doctrine. (*BYU Speeches of the Year*, April 4, 1962, p. 6.) Mark E. Petersen: "...the Polynesian Saints are characterized by a tremendous faith. Why do they have this great faith? It is because these people are of the blood of Israel. They are heirs to the promises of the Book of Mormon. God is now awakening them to their great destiny." (*Conference Report*, Apr. 1962, p. 112))

9 And it came to pass that in this year there were many people who went forth into the land ^anorthward. And thus ended the thirty and eighth year. (In the church it is generally held that Hagoth was the father of the Polynesians, that his expeditions to the isles of the sea were a part of the foreordained plan whereby the descendants of father Lehi, as children of Abraham, might be spread to all nations and thus fulfill God's covenant with the father of the faithful. In speaking to the Saints in Samoa, President Spencer W. Kimball said: "I thought to read to you a sacred scripture which pertains especially to you, the islanders of the Pacific. It is in the sixty-third chapter of Alma. And so it seems to me rather clear that your ancestors moved northward and crossed a part of the South Pacific. You did not bring your records with you, but you brought much food and provisions. And so we have a great congregation of people in the South Seas who came from the Nephites, and who came from the land southward and went to the land northward, which could have been Hawaii. And then the further settlement could have been a move southward again to all of these islands and even to New Zealand. The Lord knows what he is doing when he sends his people from one place to another. That was the scattering of Israel. Some of them remained in America and went from Alaska to the southern point. And others of you came this direction." Samoa Area Conference Report, February 1976, p. 15. To another group of Saints in the South Seas, President Kimball observed: "President Joseph F. Smith, the president of the Church, reported, 'You brothers and sisters from New Zealand, I want you to know that you are from the people of Hagoth.' For New Zealand Saints, that was that. A prophet of the Lord had spoken... It is reasonable to conclude that Hagoth and his associates were about nineteen centuries on the islands, from about 55 B.C. to 1854 before the gospel began to reach them. They had lost all the plain and precious things which the Savior brought to the earth, for they were likely on the islands when the Christ was born in

Jerusalem.” Temple View Area Conference Report, February 1976, p. 3. DCBM, 3:328-29.)

10 And it came to pass in the ^{*}thirty and ninth year (53 BC) of the reign of the judges, ^aShiblon died also, and Corianton had gone forth to the land northward in a ship, to carry forth provisions unto the people who had gone forth into that land.

11 Therefore it became expedient for ^aShiblon to confer those sacred things, before his death, upon the son of ^bHelaman, who was called ^cHelaman, being called after the name of his father.

12 Now behold, all those ^aengravings which were in the possession of Helaman were written and sent forth among the children of men throughout all the land, save it were those parts (Joseph Fielding Smith: “The people of Limhi brought to Mosiah a record, ‘... engraven on plates of ore,’ (Mosiah 21:27) which record Mosiah translated by the aid of ‘two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow,’ and which gave an account of the Jaredites. (See *Ibid.*, 28:11-19.) In translating this record Mosiah kept from going forth to the people that particular part forbidden of the Lord to be revealed until after he was lifted up upon the cross. (See Ether 4:1.) These sacred revelations given to the brother of Jared were kept from the Nephite people, as well as many other things, until after the resurrection of Christ. (See Alma 63:12.) After the appearing of the Savior to the Nephites, the vision of the brother of Jared was revealed to the Nephites.” (“Your Question by Joseph Fielding Smith,” *Improvement Era*, June, 1954)) which had been commanded by Alma should ^bnot go forth. (Orson Pratt: “From the time that Lehi left Jerusalem to the days of Jesus, there were a great many records kept by the remnant of Joseph, upon this land. The Book of Mormon does not contain one hundredth part of the records of these prophets. Now did they keep all of them on plates, or did they multiply them by thousands of copies on this land? Let me refer you to page 388, of the Book of Mormon. ‘And now behold all those engravings which were in the possession of Helaman, were written and sent forth among the children of men throughout all the land...’ Now to confine the sacred records in one place, and to keep the people in ignorance in regard to their contents, would not be reasonable. Hence we are informed that they were written and sent forth throughout all the land, and this will account for the extracts from the Scriptures written in ancient Hebrew, discovered in the mounds that have been opened in Ohio, among which were the ten commandments. The people of this land were well acquainted with the Scriptures.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 16: 56 - 57.))

13 Nevertheless, these things were to be kept sacred, and ^ahanded down from one generation to another; therefore, in this year, they had been conferred upon Helaman, before the death of Shiblon.

14 And it came to pass also in this year that there were some dissenters who had gone forth unto the Lamanites; and they were ^astirred up again to anger against the Nephites.

15 And also in this same year they came down with a numerous army to war against the people of ^aMoronihah, or against the army of Moronihah, in the which they were beaten and driven back again to their own lands, suffering great loss.

16 And thus ended the thirty and ninth year of the reign of the judges over the people of Nephi.

17 And thus ended the account of ^aAlma, and Helaman his son, and also Shiblon, who was his son.

* Verse 1 [56 B.C.]; Verse 4 [55 B.C.]; Verse 10 [53 B.C.].