

Comments on Mosiah 10

1 AND it came to pass that we again began to establish the kingdom and we again began to possess the land in peace. And I caused that there should be weapons of war made of every kind, that thereby I might have weapons for my people against the time the Lamanites should come up again to war against my people. 2 And I set guards round about the land, that the Lamanites might not come upon us again unawares and destroy us; and thus I did guard my people and my flocks, and keep them from falling into the hands of our enemies. 3 And it came to pass that we did inherit the land of our fathers for many years, yea, for the space of twenty and two years. 4 And I did cause that the men should till the ground, and raise all manner of grain and all manner of fruit of every kind. 5 And I did cause that the women should spin, and toil, and work, and work all manner of fine linen, yea, and cloth of every kind, that we might clothe our nakedness; and thus we did prosper in the land--thus we did have continual peace in the land for the space of twenty and two years.

v1-5 After the war of 9:14-19, Zeniff prepares his people for continuing conflict by deliberately making weapons (v. 1) and posting guards around the land (v. 2). But, another 9 years pass (the first conflict occurred in the 13th year of their inheriting the land. cf. 9:14) in peace (v. 3) so they largely return to their agrarian ways with the men laboring in the fields (v. 3) and the women spinning cloth (v. 4) and presumably keeping house. Another 13 years pass, for a total of 22 years of peace (v. 5).

6 And it came to pass that king Laman died, and his son began to reign in his stead. And he began to stir his people up in rebellion against my people; therefore they began to prepare for war, and to come up to battle against my people. 7 But I had sent my spies out round about the land of Shemlon, that I might discover their preparations, that I might guard against them, that they might not come upon my people and destroy them. 8 And it came to pass that they came up upon the north of the land of Shilom, with their numerous hosts, men armed with bows, and with arrows, and with swords, and with cimeters, and with stones, and with slings; and they had their heads shaved that they were naked; and they were girded with a leathern girdle about their loins. 9 And it came to pass that I caused that the women and children of my people should be hid in the wilderness; and I also caused that all my old men that could bear arms, and also all my young men that were able to bear arms, should gather themselves together to go to battle against the Lamanites; and I did place them in their ranks, every man according to his age. 10 And it came to pass that we did go up to battle against the Lamanites; and I, even I, in my old age, did go up to battle against the Lamanites. And it came to pass that we did go up in the strength

of the Lord to battle. 11 Now, the Lamanites knew nothing concerning the Lord, nor the strength of the Lord, therefore they depended upon their own strength. Yet they were a strong people, as to the strength of men.

12 They were a wild, and ferocious, and a blood-thirsty people, believing in the tradition of their fathers, which is this--Believing that they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem because of the iniquities of their fathers, and that they were wronged in the wilderness by their brethren, and they were also wronged while crossing the sea; 13 And again, that they were wronged while in the land of their first inheritance, after they had crossed the sea, and all this because that Nephi was more faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord--therefore he was favored of the Lord, for the Lord heard his prayers and answered them, and he took the lead of their journey in the wilderness. 14 And his brethren were wroth with him because they understood not the dealings of the Lord; they were also wroth with him upon the waters because they hardened their hearts against the Lord. 15 And again, they were wroth with him when they had arrived in the promised land, because they said that he had taken the ruling of the people out of their hands; and they sought to kill him. 16 And again, they were wroth with him because he departed into the wilderness as the Lord had commanded him, and took the records which were engraven on the plates of brass, for they said that he robbed them. 17 And thus they have taught their children that they should hate them, and that they should murder them, and that they should rob and plunder them, and do all they could to destroy them; therefore they have an eternal hatred towards the children of Nephi. 18 For this very cause has king Laman, by his cunning, and lying craftiness, and his fair promises, deceived me, that I have brought this my people up into this land, that they may destroy them; yea, and we have suffered these many years in the land.

19 And now I, Zeniff, after having told all these things unto my people concerning the Lamanites, I did stimulate them to go to battle with their might, putting their trust in the Lord; therefore, we did contend with them, face to face. 20 And it came to pass that we did drive them again out of our land; and we slew them with a great slaughter, even so many that we did not number them.

21 And it came to pass that we returned again to our own land, and my people again began to tend their flocks, and to till their ground.

v6-21 King Laman dies and his son replaces him as king. He stirs up the Lamanites against Zeniff's people (v. 6). Zeniff is apprized of their warlike preparations by his spies, so the Lamanites lose the element of surprise (v. 7). The Lamanites come upon the land of Shilom (v. 8) apparently with the intent of sacking the city Shilom. But, Zeniff and all of his men who can use weapons go out to meet them before they reach the city, after

having the women and children retreat into the forest (v. 9). Zeniff and his men meet the Lamanites with the strength of the Lord to support them (v. 10), and while the Lamanites are strong they do not have the strength of the Lord supporting them (v. 11).

Zeniff pauses to explain the tradition of the Lamanites (v. 12-18), which is why they do not have the strength of the Lord to support them. This parenthetical comment is from what he told his people concerning the Lamanites, explaining to them why it is the Lamanites hate them so much (v. 17-18).

Zeniff builds his people's morale and strengthens their trust in the Lord, and thus they go into battle (v. 19). They route the Lamanites terribly, causing so many casualties they cannot be numbered (v. 20).

After the great conflict, Zeniff and his people return to their land and take up their agrarian ways again (v. 21).

v12-18 The Lamanite tradition of institutionalized hatred for the Nephites is explained by Zeniff. Zeniff places the blame squarely at the feet of the original Laman and Lemuel, who claim they were repeatedly wronged (v. 12-15) and robbed as well (v. 16). In doing so they have taught all of their children through the generations to hate the Nephites and to seek to murder them (v. 17). For this very reason king Laman permitted Zeniff and his people to settle in the land, so they could exploit and destroy them (v. 18).

v21 After having beaten the Lamanites and causing such great casualties among them one would assume it would have been entirely militarily possible for them to then sack and plunder the neighboring Lamanite cities. But, they do not glory or revel in bloodshed, so they simply return to farms and herds, also cp. v. 4-5 and ct. 11:19.

22 And now I, being old, did confer the kingdom upon one of my sons; therefore, I say no more. And may the Lord bless my people. Amen.

v22 Zeniff sees that his mortal life is coming to an end soon so he turns over rulership of his people to one of his sons (v. 22).

The terse ending and the way Noah acted as king leads some to speculate Zeniff was not particularly concerned about the leadership of the kingdom. This is unlikely given Zeniff's track record or righteous leadership, and Mormon's comment in 11:1 where he explicitly states Noah did not walk in his father's footsteps.

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