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"Our Leaders Were Mighty": Identifying Modern

Leadership Philosophies in

the Book of Mormon

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Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

"Our Leaders Were Mighty": Identifying Modern
Leadership Philosophies in
the Book of Mormon

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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints provides a multitude of leadership opportunities to its members. Although many valuable leadership training resources are available, the Book of Mormon is surprisingly absent as a source material on leadership. Written by and about leaders in the ancient Americas, it seems like the Book of Mormon should contain important principles on how to lead within the context of building God's kingdom that could be instructive.

The Book of Mormon was not preserved to teach modern leadership styles, nor does its usefulness depend on how it does or does not connect to these leadership theories. However, an analysis of the leadership qualities and practices exhibited by leaders in the Book of Mormon could help leaders in the Church to use the Book of Mormon for inspiration and guidance.

This paper analyzed the leadership decisions exhibited by Captain Moroni and identified remarkable similarities to transformational leadership and its four components. Nephi, on the other hand, showed a servant leader mentality. Both of these leaders achieved remarkable levels of success, consistent with the current literature on both styles of leadership.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Introduction

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are encouraged to study the Book of Mormon daily. They believe that such study is, as Paul taught, "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). I would suggest that the Book of Mormon is also profitable for instruction in leadership. The Book of Mormon is replete with examples of successful leadership. It was written by and about colonizers, kings, prophets, judges, and generals. From Nephi to King Benjamin, from Alma to Moroni, the primary characters of the book were leaders. Their successes and failures, along with their commitment to be led by God, gave them valuable leadership experiences, many of which were recorded and preserved for the benefit of future generations.

For members of the Church, who are frequently asked to serve in leadership positions in the Church, the Book of Mormon has much to offer by way of leadership development—especially since many members serve in positions of leadership with little formal training. Church authorities do provide a number of resources to help members develop leadership skills citing the New Testament and the Doctrine and Covenants. The Book of Mormon is strikingly and surprisingly absent as a source material on leadership. Generally, Church scholars have written little about leadership in the Book of Mormon.

This is not to say that members, scholars and leaders in the Church have not recognized, appreciated, or been inspired by the leaders in the Book of Mormon. On the contrary, much has been written and taught about these individuals. What is missing is a careful analysis of, not just the leaders, but the leadership principles they exemplified. The few articles and references to the leadership patterns demonstrated in the Book of Mormon are more devotional than academic and fail to identify the reasons for the effectiveness of the leaders being discussed. Each of these

leaders made careful choices in times of peace and crisis to lead the best they knew how. Their leadership decisions followed a pattern that can be studied and emulated.

The primary purpose of the Book of Mormon is not to teach leadership philosophy, nor does its usefulness or veracity depend on how it does or does not connect to these leadership theories[1]. Nevertheless, a comparison of the leadership teachings in the Book of Mormon to modern leadership philosophy could be instructive. Identifying commonalities may make it easier to label and compare the leadership decisions found in its pages. This paper will therefore analyze the leadership patterns exemplified by a limited number of leaders in the Book of Mormon and compare them to common leadership theories of our day.

Scope of Analysis: Leaders

Attempts to analyze the Book of Mormon as a leadership resource could be overwhelming. As the size of this paper does not lend itself to a comprehensive review, limits will be placed on the number of Book of Mormon individuals and leadership theories studied. My analysis will focus on Nephi and Captain Moroni and the way they exemplified principles of servant and transformational leadership (hereafter TFL). Nephi's emphasis on loving, caring for, and serving his family while leading them to the promised land exemplifies the principle of servant leadership. Captain Moroni's methods of motivation while leading the Nephite army are remarkably similar to TFL philosophy.

Although there are additional positive leaders I could have chosen to study, like Alma, Helaman, or Mormon, Nephi and Captain Moroni were selected for three reasons. First, they

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[1] The Title Page of the Book of Mormon states that the purpose of the book "is to show unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever—And also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations."

seemed to have the most instances of observable leadership action. Second, their leadership

tenures had successful outcomes despite dealing with severe conflict. Nephi successfully

established a thriving colony in the promised land and Moroni led his armies to defeat the

invading Lamanites. Third, their leadership situations were so different from each other. Nephi

was not the appointed leader of his group for much of the story and nevertheless took the lead.

Moroni was acting in an official and authoritative capacity. Moroni was a military leader while

Nephi was a colonizer. Nephi led a small group, while Moroni commanded thousands. Despite

their differences, they both achieved positive outcomes for their people: "There never was a

happier time among the people of Nephi, since the days of Nephi, than in the days of Moroni"

(Alma 50:23). Nephi and Moroni's people were able to achieve uncommon levels of happiness

because of their uncommon leaders.

Scope of Analysis: Philosophies

Many current leadership philosophies could have been studied, such as charismatic,

humble, ethical, and authentic leadership. Transformational and servant leadership models were

chosen because after surveying the Book of Mormon, those two seemed to reflect the attitudes

and actions of the majority of the leaders in the Book of Mormon. However, elements of many

leadership styles can be found through a careful reading of the Book of Mormon. As will be

discussed later, the differences between Moroni and Nephi's leadership styles seem to reflect the

primary differences between these two leadership theories.

In order to accurately assess the leadership philosophy of any individual in the Book of

Mormon, it is important to point out the guiding force behind his or her leadership decisions. In

almost every instance, these righteous leaders chose to act as they did because they were

followers of Jesus Christ. This idea of leaders acting simultaneously as followers is referred to as

Followership. Followership is central to Christian doctrine. In the scriptures it is called discipleship. Because the leaders in the Book of Mormon were dedicated disciples or followers of the Savior Jesus Christ, they were more effective in their leadership. Their determination to follow Him throughout their lives prepared them for leadership service. Their accountability to Him gave them a moral compass to guide their decision making. Their followership determined the degree of their leadership. Therefore, I will conclude by briefly examining followership theory and how it influenced leadership decisions in the Book of Mormon.

Noticeably absent is a commentary on the leadership of Jesus Christ, even though He is the main focus in the Book of Mormon. Jeffrey R. Holland said that He is "the principal and commanding figure in the Book of Mormon, from first chapter to last."[2] Despite His prominence in the text, as well as His unparalleled leadership, I focused my study elsewhere because there is already a wealth of academic and religious work on Christ's leadership in the Church and across Christianity. Additionally, some may view His divine capacity as a distinct leadership advantage that no other leader can duplicate. In an effort to demonstrate leadership principles that can be accomplished by imperfect leaders, Nephi and Moroni will be the focus of study. This is in no way meant to diminish the value of Christ's leadership or discourage anyone from learning from and following His example. President Spencer W. Kimball, describing the Savior as the perfect leader, said "If we would be eminently successful, Jesus is our pattern. All the ennobling, perfect, and beautiful qualities of maturity, of strength, and of courage are found in this one person."[3]

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[2] Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant* (Deseret Book: Salt Lake City, 1997), 3.

[3] Spencer W. Kimball, "Jesus: The Perfect Leader," *Ensign* (August 1979).

Literature Review

Because so little has been written about servant leadership and TFL philosophy in the Book of Mormon, a survey of a number of separate fields is required. Although Latter-day Saint leadership literature is scarce and Book of Mormon leadership is even more so, servant leadership and TFL literature is plentiful and provides a framework for study in a Latter-day Saint context. This overview will examine TFL, servant leadership and how the two theories are similar. It will then consider leadership in the Book of Mormon and pertinent Latter-day Saint literature.

Transformational Leadership Literature

Although the concepts of TFL have been around for centuries, Burns was the first to offer a formal definition and description of the theory. He said that transformational leaders "stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity."[4] He also claimed that TFL is more impactful than other types of leadership because it motivates followers to perform at a level that transforms *them* into leaders.[5] Bass expanded on Burns ideas a few years later, explaining how transformational leaders attempt to motivate their followers to focus on the big picture needs of the organization rather than their own desires.[6]

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[4] Bernard M. Bass and Ronald E. Riggio, *Transformational Leadership*, (Mahwah, N.J.: Taylor & Francis Group, 2005): 3. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com (accessed March 15, 2019).

[5] James M. Burns, *Leadership* (N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1978), 4.

[6] Bernard M. Bass, "From Transactional to Transformational Leadership: Learning to Share the Vision," *Organizational Dynamics* 18 (1990): 19–31. http://discoverthought.com/Leadership/References_files/Bass%20leadership%201990.pdf (accessed March 14, 2019).

Transformational leaders believe in and strive to accomplish the goals of their organization. Because they lead individuals who have personal objectives within the organization, the transformational leaders' challenges are twofold. They must align the goals of the follower with those of the organization. They must also help their followers look beyond their own self-interests for the good of the group" which is done by "broaden[ing] and elevat[ing] the interests of their employees, [and] generat[ing] awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group."[7] Bass described this movement beyond self-interest as a transcendent experience,[8] which Bass and Avolio said requires leaders to "motivate colleagues and followers."[9]

Helping followers realign their focus may require that the leader "stimulate interest among colleagues and followers to view their work from new perspectives."[10] Bass said

"Effective transformational leaders can halt crises by disclosing opportunities, arousing courage, and stimulating enthusiasm. . . . Dramatic changes can be presented as challenges, not as disturbances. Stress can become challenging if the leaders select subordinates for the stressful conditions who prefer a vigorous, fast paced lifestyle and have the knowledge, intelligence, and preparation to cope adequately with the stress."[11]

They also, according to Bass, ask "to consider their longer-term needs to develop themselves, rather than their needs of the moment."[12]

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[7] Bass, "From Transactional," 21.

[8] Bernard M. Bass, *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, & Managerial Applications* 3d ed. (New York: Free Press, 1990)*, 53.

[9] Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio, *Improving Organizational Effectiveness*, (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1994), 2.

[10] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 2.

[11] Bass, *Handbook,* 655.

Transformational leaders' motivation for transcending their own self-interests can be to help their group and those who are part of the group to achieve success (utilitarian) or because of an innate sense of rightness that impels them to do the right thing (moral).[13] The result is higher levels of commitment, satisfaction, and performance among followers.[14] Not only do those followers do better than they did before, but they also "do more than they originally intended and often even more than they thought possible."[15] This process of building commitment to organizational objectives empowers followers to accomplish those objectives.[16]

Transformational leaders achieve higher levels of performance because they have high expectations for their followers, which gives meaning to their efforts as the team works together toward accomplishing the vision.[17] When employees buy into that vision, Bass and Riggio believed the result is "more committed and satisfied followers."[18] These followers know what the vision is and what their role is in accomplishing it.[19]

Stone, Russell, and Patterson said, "The primary aim is organizational conformance and performance more than it is service to and facilitation of followers."[20] This is the primary

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[12] Bass, *Handbook,* 53.

[13] Bass, *Transformational,* 14–15.

[14] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational,* 3.

[15] Ibid., 4.

[16] A. Gregory Stone, Robert F. Russell, and Kathleen Patterson, "Transformational Versus Servant Leadership: A Difference in Leader Focus," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 25 no. 4 (2004): 354. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730410538671 (accessed April 4, 2019).

[17] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 3.

[18] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 4.

[19] J. Bruce Tracey and Timothy R. Hinkin, "Transformational Leadership in the Hospitality Industry," Cornell University, School of Hotel Administration site, (1994), http://scholarship.sha.cornell.edu/articles/857 (accessed June 21, 2019), 6.

[20] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 355.

distinction between TFL and servant leadership. However, focusing on the goals of the organization does not mean that transformational leaders don't care about their followers. They emphasize personal development and seek to help followers fulfill their needs within the organization.[21] They "develop colleagues and followers to higher levels of ability and potential."[22] However, the goals of the organization come first. That priority makes decisions clearer when the leader must choose between the individual followers and the needs of the organization.

Transformational leaders understand, however, that the goals of the employee and organization are not exclusive or unrelated and seek to help followers recognize how focusing on the goals of organization will help them accomplish their own goals. If a transformational leader is effective in his or her motivation, the follower will be eager to accomplish the mission of the organization.[23]

There are many methods and programs that empower and motivate followers. However, Sosik, Arenas, Chun, and Ete found from over forty years of research that "transformational leadership [was the] most effective in influencing the performance and development of subordinates in corporate, military, educational, and religious organizations all over the world."[24] Bass, Jung, Avolio, and Berson noted that when implemented in a military setting, the presence or absence of TFL in platoon leaders could predict the performance of platoons.[25] Because of its

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[21] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 3.

[22] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 2.

[23] Bernard M. Bass, et al., "Predicting Unit Performance by Assessing Transformational and Transactional Leadership," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 88 no. 2 (2003), 209.

[24] Sosik et al., "Character," 7.

[25] Bass, et al., "Predicting," 213.

effectiveness, Bass recommended that organizations implement TFL training and development programs into their curriculum.[26]

Charisma, he added, is a key component of TFL as it is used to convince followers that they can do more than they thought possible.[27] Bass found that charismatic leaders were remarkably successful at inspiring their followers with a belief that they could accomplish more than they thought possible.[28] He added that "followers [respond] to the charismatic leader with passionate loyalty because the salvation, or promise of it, that he appears to embody represents the fulfillment of urgently felt needs."[29] Effective charismatic leaders are able to transform a follower's feelings of self into a desire to participate in the accomplishment of organizational goals.[30]

As important as charisma is to TFL, it is only part of the full equation and by itself is "fairly limited."[31] Although some have attempted to make transformational and charismatic leadership synonymous, Yukl clarified that charismatic personalities who don't guide their followers to fulfill a mission, may be emulated by their followers but will never be able to transform them. TFL utilizes charisma as one element to achieve this transforming effect.[32]

The Four I's

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[26] Bass, "From Transactional," 27.

[27] Bernard M. Bass, *Transformational Leadership: Industry, Military, and Educational Impact*, (Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1998), 4–6.

[28] Bass, "From Transactional," 21.

[29] Bass, *Transformational,* 31–32.

[30] Bass, et al., "Predicting," 209.

[31] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 5.

[32] Gary Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations* (4th ed.; Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1998), 211.

Bass described four components that determine the behavior and success of a transformational leader: Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration.[33] These components, referred to as the Four Is, are the key measure of TFL. Each of these components is defined and analyzed below and will later be used to measure Moroni's TFL.

Idealized Influence

This is where charisma is utilized and recognized in TFL. Bass said transformational leaders "behave in ways that result in their being role models for their followers" and "are admired, respected and trusted."[34] Followers view the leader as having remarkable capacity and dedication. Although this view is accurate, Bass and Riggio found that in addition to the leader's actual behaviors, followers describe their leader as having characteristics and attributes that have been conferred upon them by their followers and colleagues.[35] Bass and Steidlmeier said, "If the leadership is transformational, its charisma or idealized influence is envisioning, confident, and sets high standards for emulation."[36] Bass and Avolio pointed out how these leaders have remarkably high moral and ethical standards and act accordingly.[37] They added that because of their idealized influence, transformational leaders avoid "using power for personal gain and only when needed."[38] They are willing to take risks and share those risks with their followers.[39]

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[33] Bass, *Transformational,* 5–6.

[34] Ibid., 5.

[35] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 6.

[36] Bernard M. Bass and Paul Steidlmeier, "Ethics, Character, and Authentic Transformational Leadership Behavior," *Leadership Quarterly* 10 no. 2 (1999): para. 22. doi:10.1016/S1048-9843(99)00016-8 (accessed March 15, 2019).

[37] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 3.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Bass, *Transformational,* 5.

Inspirational Motivation

A transformational leader will purposefully act in ways that inspire and motive others.[40] This is done by communicating the vision and defining the expectations that will lead to the actualization of that goal. Bass and Avolio said the leader uses "symbols, slogans, and the like" to communicate the meaning of the vision.[41] The leader will challenge followers to strive toward a higher ideal. As followers attempt this in concert, the team mentality of the group grows. Utilizing more of their charismatic ability, "enthusiasm and optimism are displayed."[42]

Intellectual Stimulation

As transformational leaders motivate their followers to align their goals with that of the organization and adjust their expectations of what can be achieved, they also need to encourage their followers "to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways."[43] The leader recognizes that those he leads have powerful contributions to make and helps them to recognize those contributions. They are encouraged to explore new ways of doing things to achieve better results. Bass described the attitudes necessary to create this climate of innovation:

> Leaders can be intellectually stimulating to their employees if their own jobs allow them
> to explore new opportunities, to diagnose organizational problems, and to generate
> solutions. Leaders whose jobs force them to focus on solving small, immediate problems

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[40] Ibid.

[41] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 45.

[42] Bass, *Transformational,* 5.

[43] Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass, *Developing Potential Across a Full Range of Leadership Cases on Transactional and Transformational Leadership* (Mahwah, N.J.: Erlbaum, 2002), 2.

are likely to be less intellectually stimulating than those who have time to think ahead and in larger terms.[44]

With this freedom to be innovative comes the likelihood that followers will make mistakes. When correction is needed, those mistakes are not criticized publicly, but privately discussed, in order to not quell the spirit of creativity.[45]

Individualized Consideration

Recognizing that each follower has different strengths and capacities, a transformational leader "disburses personal attention to followers based on the individual follower's needs for achievement and growth."[46] To do this, the leader acts as a mentor or coach developing followers in a supportive climate to "higher levels of potential."[47] Some followers will require special attention or more dedicated effort, but all are supported and developed so they can reach their next level of performance. Better communication and acceptance of differences will result as leaders listen effectively to the needs and desires of their followers.[48]

Employee development is crucial. Rather than hovering over the details of a project, a transformational leader will learn to delegate effectively and observe progress in a way that does not interrupt. Assignments are given with the understanding that support is available to assist in the completion of the task. That support emphasizes the need for altruistic behavior in order for leadership to be truly transformational.[49]

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[44] Bass, "From Transactional," 30.

[45] Bass, *Transformational,* 6.

[46] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 351.

[47] Bass, *Transformational,* 6.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics," para. 33.

There are some similarities in the way that each of these components is defined, but each is distinct in what it is trying to accomplish. As leaders utilize "one or more of the four core components of transformational leadership" they are able to "achieve superior results."[50] The combination of all four components creates a transformational nexus that makes the achievement of organizational goals more likely.

Transactional vs. Transformational

Bass also distinguished between TFL and transactional leadership.[51] Where transactional leadership relies on predetermined rewards and punishments to encourage performance, TFL inspires employees to perform well for the benefit of the organization. Transformational leaders help their followers focus on "higher ideals" while transactional leaders may appeal to "baser emotions."[52] Some scholars believe that all leaders are either transactional or transformational, though leadership could also be viewed as the process of discovering which model is more appropriate based on the situation and the needs and abilities of the followers.[53]

Transactional leaders treat the relationship between leader and follower as a transaction in which they agree to exchange rewards and benefits for meeting the leader's expectations. In its most simple form, an employer promises to pay an employee for work performed. Stone, Russell, and Patterson said that a transactional leader "recognizes followers' needs and then defines the exchange process for meeting those needs. Both the leader and the follower benefit from the exchange transaction."[54]

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[50] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 5.

[51] Bass, *Handbook*, 53.

[52] Yukl, *Leadership,* 211.

[53] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 354.

[54] Ibid., 350.

When followers fail to meet the agreed upon expectations, the leader withholds the reward or executes to promised punishment.[55] Bass explained, "Whether the promise of rewards or the avoidance of penalties motivates the employees depends on whether the leader has control of the rewards or penalties, and on whether the employees want the rewards or fear the penalties."[56] Transformational leaders move beyond merely establishing a system of rewards and punishments.[57] Rather, they inspire their followers to rise to a higher plane of performance without the rewards and punishments being a primary motivating factor.[58] A transactional leader "works within the framework of the self-interests of his or her constituency." A transformational leader "moves to change the framework."[59] Bass and Riggio described how TFL "raises leadership to the next level" because it inspires "followers to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization."[60]

Although Bass showed how transformational leaders were viewed as more "satisfying and effective leaders than are those who behave like transactional leaders,"[61] this does not mean that transactional leadership is ineffective. Bass believed that stable environments are more likely to produce transactional leadership situations while times of crisis require the use of TFL techniques.[62] A transformational leader may employ elements of transactional leadership as he or she strive to develop a transformational culture.

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[55] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 8.

[56] Bass, "From Transactional," 21.

[57] Bass, *Transformational,* 8.

[58] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 10.

[59] Bass, *Handbook,* 23.

[60] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 4.

[61] Bass, "From Transactional," 21.

Often associated with TFL is the Full Range of Leadership Model.[63] These behaviors, which include components of transactional leadership and laissez-faire (which Bass described as non-leadership) attitudes, are utilized to evaluate leader effectiveness. In a Contingent Reward method, which is essentially transactional leadership, the leader establishes the expectations and the payment to be received for completing the task assigned. This can be effective, though not nearly as much as the components of TFL. Bass and Riggio pointed out that Contingent Reward "can be transformational, however, when the reward is psychological, such as praise" but is "transactional when the reward is a material one, such as a bonus."[64]

Management-by-Exception (MBE) is known as *corrective transaction* and can be active or passive. When active, the leader is on the lookout for mistakes and failure to live up to standard. When passive, the leader waits until issues occur and come to his or her knowledge before taking action. Both methods are less effective than Contingent Reward and transformational behaviors, though they may have their place. Bass and Riggio suggested that active MBE would be helpful when leaders are concerned with safety and passive MBE may be necessary when a leader has direct supervision over too large of a group.[65]

Laissez-Faire Leadership, according to Bass and Riggio is "the avoidance or absence of leadership and is, by definition, most inactive, as well as most ineffective."[66] It is the opposite of both transformational and transactional leadership in that it does nothing to motivate followers to

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[62] Bass, *Transformational,* 52.

[63] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 7.

[64] Ibid., 8.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid.

a higher plane of performance nor does it participate in any sort of transaction. Rather, leaders remove themselves from responsibility by their inaction.[67]

Bass and Riggio pointed out that transactional leadership and both active and passive management-by-exception can be useful and effective in certain circumstances. However, TFL "augments transactional in predicting effects on follower satisfaction and performance."[68] Compared with the methods and outcomes of each of these separate components, TFL has exhibited a clear and measurable advantage when it comes to follower performance.

Criticism

TFL is widely accepted as an effective model for achieving greater results within organizations but is not without its critics. Tracey and Hinkin pointed out that this model is incomplete in that it describes the Four I's as the outcomes of TFL but does not explain what behaviors will lead to those outcomes.[69] Some leadership scholars feel that the four components of TFL are atheoretical. Charbonneau worried that the model left out too many critical leadership behaviors, particularly those associated with influence.[70] There also seems to be a number of similarities between this model and other leadership models, though it still possesses distinguishable elements.

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[67] Ibid., 8–9.

[68] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 10.

[69] Tracey and Hinkin, "Transformational Leadership," 223.

[70] Danielle Charbonneau, "Influence Tactics and Perceptions of Transformational Leadership," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 25 no. 7 (2004): 565–566. https:// doi.org/10.1108/01437730410561459 (accessed March 15, 2019).

Conger argued that the dark side to leadership can emerge in TFL. Leaders who are driven to accomplish their visions may ignore problems and misrepresent the realism of their visions.[71] Because of the influence these inspiring leaders have over their followers, those followers can develop an unhealthy dependence on the leader and ignore the leader's shortcomings. Clements and Washbush expressed concern that the leader could use his or her substantial influence to manipulate followers.[72] This is one reason that Bass revised his original explanation of TFL and coined the term "pseudotransformational leader" to describe leaders who seem to follow the components of TFL but whose motives are self-serving and immoral.[73]

Servant Leadership Literature

Robert Greenleaf is considered the father of servant leadership. Part of his inspiration for the concept came from the character of Leo from the story *Journey to the East.*[74] In the story, members of the expedition assumed that Leo was merely a servant. Not until the end of their journey do they learn that Leo was the head of the group that organized the expedition. Commenting on Leo's role, Greenleaf said, "Leadership was bestowed upon a man who was by nature a servant. It was something given, or assumed, that could be taken away. His servant nature was the real man, not bestowed, not assumed, and not to be taken away. He was servant first."[75]

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[71] Conger, "The Dark Side," 50.

[72] Clements and Washbush, "The Two Faces," 171.

[73] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational,* vii-viii.

[74] Hermann Hesse and Hilda Rosner, *The Journey to the East,* (New York : Farrar, Straus & Giroux,1968).

[75] Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), *8.*

Greenleaf believed that, like Leo, leaders should see their roles as servants to those they lead. [76] This is contrary to the common view of a leader, one who is meant to be served by his subordinates. Laub believed that servant leaders place "the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader."[77]

This focus on followers goes beyond the needs of the organization. Harvey stated that "chasing profits is peripheral; the real point of business is to serve as one of the institutions through which society develops and exercises the capacity for constructive action."[78] Placing profits in a lower-tier would seem counterintuitive. How can a business succeed if it doesn't focus on the very thing that brings about growth? A servant leader would argue that "organizational goals will be achieved on a long-term basis only by first facilitating the growth, development, and general well-being of the individuals who comprise the organization."[79] Harvey added that the company bottom line is not the priority for the servant leader.[80] Though still important, the needs and growth of the employees and the needs of the customers come first.

This can only be done when the leader is willing to place their own interests below the needs of those being led. Laub said that when a servant leader does this, it demonstrates that followers have value, and that building and developing people matters. This emphasis will lead to the betterment of "each individual, the total organization and those served by the

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[76] Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership,* 13.

[77] James Alan Laub, "Assessing the Servant Organization: Development of the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA) Instrument," (Ph.D. diss., Florida Atlantic University, 1999), 81. http://fau.digital.flvc.org/islandora/object/fau%3A9478 (accessed March 15, 2019).

[78] Harvey, "The Hidden Force," 38–39.

[79] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 355.

[80] M. Harvey, "The Hidden Force: A Critique of Normative Approaches to Business Leadership," *SAM Advanced Management Journal* 66 (2001): 39.

organization."[81] It can be difficult for leaders to place the needs of individuals in the organization first, particularly when those individuals are causing distress for the organization. That is why it isn't enough for a leader to *act* service-minded. They must *be* service-minded.

Russell and Stone said that "the prime motivation for leadership should be a desire to serve. . . . The leader should ascend to a higher plane of motivation that focuses on the needs of others."[82] However, leaders will never reach that plane if a pursuit of power dominates their motivation. This requires that the leader rely "upon the influence of self-giving without self-glory."[83]

Servant Leadership Attributes

Based on the work of Spears and others, Russell and Stone identified more than twenty distinct servant leadership attributes, including vision, honesty, trust, visibility, pioneering, persuasion.[84] Nine of these, he said, are functional attributes observable in the workplace. He paired these with nine accompanying attributes, which together delineate specific behaviors of servant leaders. Future empirical research may adjust these lists. In the meantime, those striving to develop servant leadership abilities can begin by comparing their own attributes to these.

Anyone can become more of a servant leader by attempting to develop these attributes. Joseph and Winston suggested, based on empirical evidence, that organizational performance will improve by practicing these behaviors.[85] In fact, Washington, Sutton, and Field

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[81] Laub, "Assessing," 81.

[82] Robert. F. Russell and Gregory A. Stone, "A Review of Servant Leadership Attributes: Developing a Practical Model," Leadership and Organization Development Journal 23 (2002) 145. https://www-emeraldinsight-com (accessed March 15, 2019).

[83] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 357.

[84] Russell and Stone, "A Review," 146.

[85] Joseph and Winston, "A Correlation," 16.

recommended that organizations embracing servant leadership should select leaders partly on the basis of certain personal attributes related to servant leadership.[86] They added that promoting these behaviors would attract candidates who already possessed them.[87] Leaders inherently possess these attributes to varying degrees, but Russell and Stone believed the value of these behaviors is in their application.[88] This gives hope that any determined individual can become a better servant leader.

Sendjaya and Sarros described servant leadership as the "I serve" rather than the "I lead" mentality.[89] This mindset allows servant leaders to effective at handling difficult situations. For example, Jit, Sharma, and Kawatra found that servant leaders seemed to be better equipped to handle conflict within the organization because the same attributes that create a good servant leader also assist with conflict resolution. Their focus on being "persuasive, patient, humble and employee-centered" deescalates situations quickly.[90] Joseph and Winston suggested that servant leadership engenders trust between leaders, followers, and the organization and leads to overall better performance within the organization.[91]

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[86] Rynetta R. Washington, Charlotte D. Sutton, and Hubert S. Field, "Individual Differences in Servant Leadership: The Roles of Values and Personality," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 27 no. 8 (2006): 711. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730610709309 (accessed March 15, 2019).

[87] Washington, Sutton, and Field, "Individual Differences," 711.

[88] Russell and Stone, "A Review," 152–153.

[89] Sen Sendjaya and James C. Sarros, "Servant Leadership: Its Origin, Development, and Application in Organizations," *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 9 no. 2 (2002): 60.

[90] Ravinder Jit, Chandra Shekhar Sharma, and Mona Kawatra, "Servant Leadership and Conflict Resolution: A Qualitative Study," *International Journal of Conflict Management* 27 no. 4, (2016): 609. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCMA-12-2015-0086 (accessed April 3, 2019).

[91] Errol E. Joseph and Bruce E. Winston, "A Correlation of Servant Leadership, Leader Trust, and Organizational Trust," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 26 no. 1 (2005): 16. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730510575552 (accessed March 14, 2019).

Many of the attributes discussed above are also key elements of other leadership philosophies. Therefore, developing these attributes on their own will not automatically transform an individual into a servant leader. The motive and focus of the leader are critical. Having a servant-first mentality will affect how those attributes are utilized and implemented.

Criticism

The servant leader model has also been criticized. Stone, Russell, and Patterson pointed out that although the danger of charisma is not generally present in servant leadership, "the principle of reciprocation," is a real possibility.[92] The individuals who servant leaders serve often feel an obligation to do something in return. A less than ideal leader could use that mentality to manipulate a follower's actions. Alternatively, because servant leaders are focused on doing all they can to serve their followers, a manipulative follower could take advantage of the leaders altruism for personal gain.[93] There is also no commonly accepted definition of what servant leadership actually is. Uncertainty exists as to whether servant leadership is behavioral or personality based. Andersen pointed out how this makes it difficult to adequately measure the effectiveness of servant leadership.[94] Despite these criticisms, what empirical data does exist has verified the claim that implementing servant leadership attributes in an organization improves performance. It requires a significant shift in thinking and the purposeful development of the functional attributes.

<div align="center">Followership Literature</div>

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[92] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 357–358.

[93] J. Thomas Whetstone, "Personalism and Moral Leadership: The Servant Leader With a Transforming Vision," *Business Ethics: A European Review* 11 No. 4 (2002): 389.

[94] Jon A. Andersen, "When a Servant-Leader Comes Knocking…" *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 30 no. 1 (2009) 12. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730910927070 (accessed March 15, 2019).

Studies in followership began in the early 1900s by Mary Parker Follett, but for a variety of reasons (including gender discrimination and scholarship bias) her ideas were not given much credence.[95] Not until the 1980s did a more serious study of followership begin, and it has only been in the last decade that it has been recognized as a legitimate field of study. The recent interest in followership has begun to fill the academic void, and reliable resources are becoming more available.

Robert Kelley, one of the key voices in legitimizing the study of followership, defined a follower as "one who pursues a course of action in common with a leader to achieve an organizational goal." Followers are most effective, he said, when they understand their own limitations in comparison with the leader's authority and contribute to the success of the organization through purposeful decision-making, accountability, strong values, and open dialogue.[96] Followers do much more than walk behind someone. Rather, they are proactive participants in accomplishing a leader's vision.

Not all followers are created equal. Just as there are differing levels of leadership, there are also multiple stages of followership. A number of models exist (like Adair's, who uses terms like "disgruntled, disengaged, doer, disciple" to describe followers),[97] but Kelley's model begins with a group he labels "effective followers."[98] This follower is "highly participative [and a critical thinker] . . . courageously dissents when necessary, shares credit, admits mistakes, and

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[95] Laurie J. Barclay, "Following in the Footsteps of Mary Parker Follett: Exploring How Insights From the Past Can Advance Organizational Justice Theory and Research", *Management Decision*, 43, no. 5, (2005): 741.

[96] Robert E. Kelley, "In Praise of Followers," in *Military Leadership: In Pursuit of Excellence*, 3rd ed., ed. Robert L. Taylor and William E. Rosenbach (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996), 137.

[97] Rodger Adair, "Developing Great Leaders, One Follower at a Time," Pages 137–153 in *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations*. Edited by Ronald E. Riggio, et al. San Francisco: Wiley & Sons, 2008. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/byu/reader.action?docID=3314

[98] Kelley, "Praise," 137.

habitually exercises superior judgment."[99] These characteristics represent choices an individual can make regardless of his or her position in the organization. Latour and Rast pointed out that those attributes are commonly recognized as critical leadership characteristics, but they are "paramount to the supporting role a follower plays. This type of follower represents the essential link between leader and follower cultures."[100]

Those without an appropriate understanding of the positive qualities and contributions of exceptional followers can view followership as demeaning. It is often linked to negative and degrading words like *passive*, *weak*, and *conforming*. An online search for "books about leadership" received over 71 million results. A search for "books about followership" resulted in 222,000 results. Statistically, there are 322 times as many resources available about leadership as there are about followership.[101]

This unequal treatment is not unexpected. College applications and career questionnaires ask for evidence of leadership, not followership. Our society emphasizes and seeks to develop greater leaders at almost every level. What many organizations don't seem to realize is that the qualities that define exceptional followers are precisely those that build exceptional leaders. Working to develop greater followership in an organization provides the dual benefit of creating a more effective workforce and developing future leaders.

Recent scholarship has attempted to emphasize the dual nature of leader and follower roles. Maroosis said "There are no leaders who are not followers, nor followers who are not

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[99] Ibid., 138–41.

[100] Sharon M. Latour and Vicki J. Rast, "Dynamic Followership: The Prerequisite for Effective Leadership," *Air and Space Power Journal* (2003): para. 9. http://govleaders.org/dynamic-followership.htm#5 (accessed November 30, 2017).

[101] Search performed on yahoo.com on May 19, 2019 at approximately 6:20pm.

leaders; both need to learn what and how to follow."[102] Stech noted that leadership and

followership "can be occupied at various times by persons in working groups, teams, or

organizations."[103] A C.E.O. must answer to a board, and the leader of a country is accountable to

the people and the laws that govern them. Every leader to some degree is at the same time a

follower. Those placed in positions of leadership who have not developed the ability to follow

well are, at best, less effective and, at worst, detriments to their organization.

<div align="center">**Book of Mormon Leadership Literature**</div>

Little has been done to analyze the leadership behaviors of individuals in the Book of

Mormon and connect them to established leadership philosophies. However, a number of

scholars have commented on the leadership effectiveness of Book of Mormon leaders. Card

compared King Noah's leadership to his father's. Card did not label either men with a specific

style of leadership, but he did clearly identify the behaviors that caused Zeniff to be a successful

ruler and that led to Noah's downfall.[104] Hull commented on the effectiveness of Moroni's

leadership when he explained how his use of the title of liberty compared to known uses of

banners in Mesoamerica. Referencing the advertisement and construct of the title of liberty, Hull

drew some unintended parallels to TFL theory.[105]

Gardner explored the delicate and contentious leadership dynamics in Lehi's family. He

pointed out how most of the story of 1 Nephi and the beginning of 2 Nephi revolves around the

[102] Maroosis, "Leadership," 18.

[103] Ernest L. Stech, "A New Leadership-Followership Paradigm," in *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations*, Edited by Ronald E. Riggio, et al., (San Francisco: Wiley & Sons, 2008), 47. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com (accessed November 30, 2017).

[104] Orson S. Card, "Three Kings and a Captain: Nephite Leaders in the Land of Nephi," *Ensign* January 1977. https://www.lds.org (accessed March 15, 2019).

[105] Kerry Hull, "War Banners: A Mesoamerican Context for the Title of Liberty," Journal of Book of Mormon Studies 24 no. 1 (2015): 101–106. https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu (accessed April 3, 2019).

question of leadership authority and Nephi's brothers struggling with his divinely appointed leadership role. Focusing on ancient Israelite customs regarding birthright and inheritance, Gardner established why Nephi's leadership caused so much bitterness in his brothers.[106] Although not commenting on any particular leadership style, Holbrook did add to the conversation when he discussed the importance of Laban's sword in the question of Nephi's right to rule. Drawing from historical and mythological sword narratives, Holbrook argued that Nephi's divine right to rule may have been reinforced by his possession of and method of obtaining Laban's sword.[107]

Latter-day Saint Leadership Literature

Latter-day Saint leadership literature, while scarce, focuses primarily on principles of leadership that relate to effective discipleship. Surprisingly, they rarely utilize Book of Mormon leaders to strengthen their arguments. Rather, they use the doctrine of discipleship in the scriptures and connect it back to leadership principles. For example, the mid-twentieth century saw an increase in Latter-day Saint devotional leadership literature. Sill, Lythgoe, and Barker wrote anecdotal works on leadership for youth and adults.[108] All three emphasized general leadership practices through personal experiences but no empirical data. Additionally, scriptures were not used to support their arguments.

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[106] Brant A. Gardner, *1 Nephi*, Volume 1 of *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, (Salt Lake City: Kofford, 2007), 254.

[107] Brett L. Holbrook, "The Sword of Laban as a Symbol of Divine Authority and Kingship," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 2 no. 1 (1993): 42. https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu (accessed March 15, 2019).

[108] Barker, Shane R. *Youth Leading Youth*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1987; Lythgoe, Dennis L. *The Sensitive Leader.* Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1986; Sill, Sterling W. *Leadership*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960.

Elder Spencer J. Condie briefly discussed Nephi in a General Conference talk focusing on the lives of prophets from the Old and New Testaments and identifying principles that would lead to greater Christ-like service.[109] Duncan and Pinegar demonstrated how leadership is a significant part of covenant keeping in the Church.[110] Fisher wrote two books dealing with how to be leader like Jesus Christ.[111]

Some more official Church publications do deal directly with improving leadership. Recognizing that many of its local leaders are not studied or practiced, Church authorities provide basic leadership training through the Handbook of Instruction. This manual focuses more on administration than leadership, which is appropriate for its purpose. As a result, it devotes only three of its over two hundred pages to "Principles of Gospel Leadership." Church employees also have access to a web-based training series called "The Leadership Pattern," which teaches common business leadership principles and applies them directly to a gospel setting. Leaders at Brigham Young University created a document for the student leadership department ("A Summary of Divine-centered Leadership") in order to help students connect gospel teachings and leadership principles. While all of these resources are valuable, none of them utilizes the Book of Mormon in a significant way.

A few works have been more focused on leadership in the Book of Mormon. Benson used the Book of Mormon to emphasize priesthood leadership principles, focusing on leadership behaviors in the lives of Lehi and Nephi.[112] Welch claimed that specific teachings in the Book of

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[109] Condie, Spencer J. "Some Scriptural Lessons on Leadership," April 1990.

[110] Duncan, Rodger Dean and Ed J. Pinegar. *Leadership for Saints: A Practical Guide for Christlike Service.* American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2002.

[111] Fisher, Kimball. *The Christlike Leader.* Springville, Utah: Cedar Fort, 2015; Fisher, Kimball. *12 Leadership Lessons from the Life of Christ.* Springville, Utah: Cedar Fort, 2016.

[112] RoseAnn Benson, "The Book of Mormon: A Primer for Priesthood Leadership," *Religious Educator* 4, no. 2 (2003): 57–67, https://rsc.byu.edu (accessed March 15, 2019).

Mormon have been responsible for the administrative frameworks of the Church.[113] Recently, Mdletshe focused on the experiences of Nephi. He outlined some of Nephi's leadership attributes and how they were a benefit to his group.[114] Although there is not much discussion of established leadership theory, he does effectively demonstrate the value of analyzing the leadership behavior of scriptural figures.

The efforts described in this overview constitute a beginning. More is needed to explore the leadership demonstrated in the Book of Mormon and show connections to established leadership theories. In a church where leadership is stressed and expected, it seems that such work could be useful.

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[113] Welch, John W. "The Book of Mormon as the Keystone of Church Administration." Pages 15–57 in *A Firm Foundation: Church Organization and Administration*. Edited by David J. Whittaker and Arnold K. Garr. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book company, 2011.

[114] Khumbulani D. Mdletshe, "Leadership in the Book of Mormon: Nephi as a Case Study," Religious Educator 20 no. 1 (2019): 98–113.

Chapter One: Captain Moroni—The Transformational Leader

When organizations face crisis situations, the value of effective leadership is more obvious. Choppy waters reveal more about the character of a leader than calm seas. As Maxwell taught "Anyone can steer the ship, but it takes a leader to chart the course."[115] Captain Moroni was a remarkable leader because he knew exactly where he wanted his group to go and what it would take for them to arrive.

Moroni was determined to protect the rights and lives of his people. He understood how to inspire others with a vision. Because of that, he had a transforming effect on his people, helping them to accomplish more than they could have otherwise. Today this is called TFL. Transformational leaders understand that their focus influences their followers. Therefore, they focus on the organization, knowing that their "behavior builds follower commitment toward the organizational objectives."[116] That commitment was crucial for Moroni since his people struggled at times with dissensions. Although Moroni was unaware of the principles of TFL as outlined today, he understood the need to inspire his people to a cause greater than themselves and worked to communicate and achieve that vision.

Mormon claimed, "If all men had been, and were, and ever would be, like unto Moroni, behold, the very powers of hell would have been shaken forever; yea, the devil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men" (Alma 48:17). Likewise, if all leaders had been, and were, and ever would be, like unto Moroni, their groups would experience far greater success. To be like Moroni, leaders need to understand what was purposeful about his leadership.

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[115] John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, (Nashville: Nelson, 2007), 35.

[116] Yukl, *Leadership,* 354.

I will introduce Moroni as a leader, outline the doctrinal corollaries to TFL, demonstrate the ways Captain Moroni exemplified a transformational leader, and use Amalickiah and King Noah as models of pseudotransformational leadership.

Moroni's Appointment to Leadership

As far as we know, Moroni was the second youngest military leader in Nephi history,[117] being appointed when "he was only twenty and five years old" (Alma 43:17). His title of "chief captain over the Nephites" meant that he "took the command of all the armies of the Nephites" (Alma 43:16). Moroni's appointment came from "the chief judges and the voice of the people" (Alma 46:34). The phrasing makes it unclear if this was simply an appointment or if there was some form of election involved, though according to Bass there is no measurable difference in a transformational leader's success based on whether he or she was elected or appointed.[118] Regardless, Moroni's position gave him "power according to his will with the armies of the Nephites" (Alma 46:34).

The text does not directly state why Moroni was given this remarkable responsibility at such a young age. The easy answer is because of how strong he was. Mormon seemed to make it a point to comment on unique examples of physical strength in his record. Nephi was young, but "large in stature" (1 Nephi 2:16). Amalickiah "was a large and a strong man" (Alma 46:3). Mormon described himself as "being young, [but] large in stature" (Mormon 2:1). Lib "was a man of great stature, more than any other man among all the people" (Ether 14:10). Moroni was also describe as being a "strong and mighty man" (Alma 48:11). However, Mormon noted this

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[117] Mormon, the prophet-historian who compiled the Book of Mormon, stated that "in [his] sixteenth year [he] did go forth at the head of an army of the Nephites" (Mormon 2:2).

[118] Bass, *Transformational,* 128.

physical element in passing. The rest of the text describing Moroni focused on his faith in the Lord and other characteristics.

Moroni was forward thinking. He did things that had never been done before, was strategic, and spent a great deal of time in preparation. He was not afraid to rebuke when needed and was quick to give praise. He understood what was right and was completely committed to God. It is unknown if he demonstrated these qualities before his appointment or if they were the result of it. Either way, his actions as the leader of the Nephite armies transformed those he led and resulted in the deliverance of his people.

<div align="center">**Doctrinal Impact**</div>

Captain Moroni did not have access to the litany of TFL resources we enjoy today. What he did have was the words of prophets, which he valued and sought (Alma 43:23–24). Within their writings about the gospel of Jesus Christ there exists elements of TFL. I will briefly discuss teachings from the Old Testament, the words of prophets in the Book of Mormon before Moroni's time, and Christ's own teachings that reflect the fundamental principles of TFL.

Old Testament Teachings

The Old Testament contains a number of examples of leaders who understood, like Moroni, the value of having a transformational influence on your followers. Friedman and Langbert felt that Abraham was this kind of leader because of the way his vision affected his decisions, his charisma, and his willingness to set aside his self-interests to achieve a higher ideal.[119] Jehovah, speaking with Moses, used what could be described as transformative language to convince Moses that he was capable of doing things he felt unqualified to do (see Exodus 3–4).

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[119] Hershey H. Friedman and Mitchell Langbert, "Abraham as a Transformational Leader," *The Journal of Leadership Studies* 7 no. 2 (2000) 90, https://journals-sagepub-com (accessed March 14, 2019).

After Moses succeeded in liberating the children of Israel, the Lord tried to help the entire group raise their sights beyond their own base desires. "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:2–3). The Lord clearly outlined what their priorities should have been. Putting the Lord first would allow them to achieve greater results than whatever else they could choose to prioritize. He reemphasized the importance of putting God first when He later added, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy 6:4–5).

Book of Mormon Teachings Pre-Moroni

Prophets that Moroni admired and studied taught similar principles about the blessings that come from placing God first: "But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God. And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good" (Jacob 2:18–19). King Benjamin taught his people of the need to set aside personal priorities in order to better do the will of God (see Mosiah 3:19). Alma, a contemporary of Moroni's, encouraged the people of Zarahemla to align their desires with the Lord's so that they could become more like Him (see Alma 5).

Christ's Teachings

Many of the Savior's teachings while on the earth could be categorized as transformational. He consistently tried to raise his disciples' expectations of what they could accomplish and who they could become: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do" (John 14:12). He gave them a model worthy of emulation. "What manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am" (3 Nephi 27:27); "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew

5:48). He also emphasized the need to put the will of the Father above all other things: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). When confronted with questions as to which commandments should be prioritized, the Savior responded that though it was important to love God and our neighbors, love of God always comes first (see Mark 12:28–33). His disciples understood that greater blessings would come from following Him than they could receive on their own: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9).

These teachings from multiple sources all reveal a common theme of helping God's children put off their personal inclinations in order to achieve a greater result. The example of one greater than themselves acted as a role model to be followed. Moroni would have been very familiar with these teachings and seemed to implement them into his military leadership.

Moroni as a Transformational Leader

TFL seems to be most effective during times of crisis. The chapters that contain Moroni's experiences are some of the most violent, politically charged, and chaotic in the Book of Mormon. Despite the unrest and uncertainty, the record states, "There never was a happier time among the people of Nephi, since the days of Nephi, than in the days of Moroni" (Alma 50:23). Notice that the record refers to this time as the days of Moroni, not the days of Pahoran, who was the chief judge, or of Helaman, who was the high priest over the church. Mormon, who compiled the Nephite records that would become the Book of Mormon, viewed this time as the days of Moroni. This was a direct reflection of his leadership and the impact he had on his people. During his time, they achieved a remarkable level of happiness. The satisfaction of the group is one of the measures of a successful leader. To better evaluate how he was able to attain that

success, I will look at each of the Four I's of TFL and compare those outcomes with what Moroni was able to accomplish.

Moroni's Idealized Influence

If Moroni really was transformative in his leadership, we would expect to see him acting as a role model, demonstrating high ethical and moral standards, and being admired and trusted by his or her followers. He would do the right thing simply because he knew it was right and would the organization and the followers he led.[120] His followers would begin to emulate his transformative behavior. The following episodes from the Book of Mormon highlight each of these outcomes of his leadership.

When we are first introduced to Moroni, "the Lamanites were coming upon" the Nephites, led by Zerahemnah (Alma 43:4–5). The reason for the attack was "to usurp great power over [the Nephites] . . . by bringing them into bondage" (Alma 43:8). The Nephites had no such desires:

> And now the design of the Nephites was to support their lands, and their houses, and their
> wives, and their children, that they might preserve them from the hands of their enemies;
> and also that they might preserve their rights and their privileges, yea, and also their
> liberty, that they might worship God according to their desires. For they knew that if they
> should fall into the hands of the Lamanites, that whosoever should worship God in spirit
> and in truth, the true and the living God, the Lamanites would destroy. (43:9–10)

We can view the *design of the Nephites* as their organizational standards. We do not know if all of the Nephites felt this way inherently or if this represents the feelings of the Nephite leadership. Moroni did feel this way.

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[120] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 3.

Though he participated in bloodshed, he took no joy in it. When it became obvious that the Nephites were going to win this battle, Moroni, seeing that Zerahemnah's forces were terrified, "commanded his men that they should stop shedding their blood" (Alma 43:54). Addressing Zerahemnah, Moroni told him that he and his men did "not desire to be men of blood" even though they could easily slay them (Alma 44:1). They were not seeking power or to bring the Lamanites under bondage. On the other hand, Moroni said "this is the very cause for which ye have come against us" (Alma 44:2). Moroni then offered the enemy forces the chance to withdraw if they would enter into a covenant of peace. Moroni's offer to Zerahemnah was transactional, but his attitude and example towards his own men was transformational.

This isn't the only instance in which we learn of Moroni's lack of bloodlust. In one battle, when all of the Lamanite leaders had been killed and the Lamanite soldiers were confused and unsure of what to do, Moroni gave them the option of surrendering, and he would allow them to depart (Alma 52:36–37). When attempting to free his captured people, he had the opportunity to kill the drunk Lamanite guards, but "this was not the desire of Moroni; he did not delight in murder or bloodshed, but he delighted in the saving of his people from destruction" (Alma 55:18–19). Mormon described Moroni as someone who did not glory "in the shedding of blood but in doing good, in preserving his people, yea, in keeping the commandments of God, yea, and resisting iniquity" (Alma 48:16).

This was Moroni's moral compass and it guided his decisions. Bass could have been describing Moroni when he explained that transformational leaders "do what fits the principles of morality, responsibility, sense of discipline, and/or respect for authority, customs, rules, and traditions of the society."[121] Moroni's sense of right stemmed from his dedication to the Lord.

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[121] Bass, *Transformational,* 14–15.

Moroni's "heart did swell with thanksgiving to his God. . . . Yea, and he was a man who was firm in the faith of Christ . . . and this was the faith of Moroni, and his heart did glory in it . . . yea, in keeping the commandments of God" (Alma 48:12–13, 16). When confronting what he believed was traitorous behavior from the government, Moroni declared "I do not fear your power nor your authority, but it is my God whom I fear" (Alma 60:28). Moroni's constancy in his devotion may seem incredible, but "leadership is difficult to comprehend without understanding followership."[122] Moroni's determination to follow the Lord augmented his leadership ability. This spiritual aspect of Moroni's influence should not be overlooked. Bass and Steidlmeier found that "recent literature underscores the spiritual dimensions of such influence."[123]

One way to know that transformational leaders are being effective is by how their followers imitate them. Their followers begin to act in ways that reflect the motivation and behavior of the leader. After Zerahemnah refused to enter Moroni's proposed covenant of peace, Moroni gave back his adversary's sword to continue the fight:

> And [Zerahemnah] was angry with Moroni, and he rushed forward that he might slay Moroni; but . . . one of Moroni's soldiers smote . . . smote Zerahemnah that he took off his scalp and it fell to the earth. And . . . he picked up the scalp and said in a loud voice: Even as this scalp has fallen to the earth, which is the scalp of your chief, so shall ye fall to the earth except ye will deliver up your weapons of war and depart with a covenant of peace. (Alma 44:12–14)

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[122] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 39.

[123] Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics," para. 22.

Many of the terrified Lamanite soldiers threw down their weapons and eventually the entire army surrendered (see Alma 44:15–20). The actions of the soldier who stepped forward to defend Moroni appear very Moroni-esque. "Moroni was a strong and a mighty man" and was capable of defending himself against Zerahemnah (Alma 48:11). However, one of his soldiers was willing to put his own safety at risk to protect his leader. The man then echoed Moroni's covenant in a visually powerful way, using imagery in a way that Moroni did repeatedly. Moroni's example not only caused this man to be a better soldier, he helped him begin to develop into a leader himself. His chief captains did the same thing, employing his strategic tactics into their own planning (see Alma 43:30; 58:13–31).

Moroni's feelings about taking the lives of his enemies seemed to influence the way his entire army felt. They were "compelled reluctantly to contend with their brethren, the Lamanites. . . . Now, they were sorry to take up arms against the Lamanites, because they did not delight in the shedding of blood; yea, and . . . were sorry to be the means of sending so many of their brethren out of this world into an eternal world, unprepared to meet their God" (Alma 48:21, 23). Was this originally the way all of his soldiers felt, or were they emulating his feelings and attitude toward war? Based on the amount of effort Moroni put into being a role model and inspiring his people, I propose he was the cause of it.

The way Moroni was viewed by others also reflects the effectiveness of his leadership. "[Lehi] 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" (Alma 53:2). Moroni's influence impacted his people and those who would live much later. In summarizing Moroni's character, Mormon, who may also have been idealizing Moroni, wrote that "if all men had been, and were, and ever would be, like unto Moroni, behold, the very powers of hell would have been

shaken forever; yea, the devil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men"
(Alma 48:17). Moroni had become the model for how the Nephites should live their lives and
develop their character.

Referring back to emulation, there are two ways two interpret this verse and both ways
align with TFL behavior. First, Mormon could be saying that if all men who lived before him
and during his lifetime and forever afterwards would emulate his example, they would achieve
greater success. Second, this verse could be inviting men to be as constant as Moroni. It could be
saying that if all men had been like Moroni up to this point in their lives, and were like him
currently, and would continue to be like him for the remainder of their lives, then the devil would
never have power over their hearts. Both interpretations reflect the importance of a
transformational leader being a role model worthy of emulation.

Moroni's idealized influence was evident by the way his people approached warfare and
how they conducted themselves. His immediate subordinates emulated his example. The people
loved him because of his effectiveness and righteousness. Leading in this way made it easier for
him to share his vision and motivate his followers to strive for greater results.

Moroni's Inspirational Motivation

A transformational leader is crucial for organizations to handle crises, uncertainty, and
threats.[124] Part of the reason is because they know how to inspire and motivate their followers,
particularly by sharing the organizations vision in a clear and powerful way. Moroni was
masterful in his ability to motivate his followers to achieve greater results than even they may
have thought possible. Much of this motivation came through his sharing of the vision. I will

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[124] David Krackhardt and Robert N. Stern, "Informal Networks and Organizational Crises: An Experimental Simulation," Social Psychology Quarterly 51 no. 2 (1988): 125. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2786835 (accessed March 14, 2019).

show how Moroni demonstrated inspirational motivation during the battle with Zerahemnah, with the Title of Liberty, in response to the king-men, and in his letter to Pahoran.

As the battle with Zerahemnah progressed, the members of the Lamanite army demonstrated their remarkable strength and courage. "Never had the Lamanites been known to fight with such exceedingly great strength and courage. . . . And they were inspired by . . . their . . . leaders . . . (Alma 43:43–44). Even the Lamanite captains understood the necessity of motivating their troops to achieve greater results. Some of the Nephites may have been unsure if they could defeat an army that was so much bigger than her own. That is why leadership is necessary. Bass and Avolio said, "Transformational leaders motivate others to do more than they originally intended and often even more than they thought possible."[125] Moroni understood this. He knew that "the Nephites were inspired by a better cause . . . they were fighting for their homes and their liberties, their wives and their children, and their all, yea, for their rites of worship and their church. And they were doing that which they felt was the duty which they owed to their God" (Alma 43:45–46). He needed them to remember what they were fighting for, knowing that it would motivate them to perform better. Bass said that the whole point of TFL is to "move followers to exceed expectations in performance. Such performance is beyond what would be motivated by transactional leadership."[126]

In this instance, exceeding expectations meant defeating a much larger army. When Moroni saw that his men "were about to shrink and flee from them . . . [he] sent forth and inspired their hearts with these thoughts—yea, the thoughts of their lands, their liberty, yea, their freedom from bondage" (Alma 43:48). That Moroni does this personally mattered a great deal.

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[125] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 4.

[126] Bass, *Transformational,* 26.

Bass said that "a visible transformational leader can make the difference between a rout or a rally."[127] Bass was right. "And they began to stand against the Lamanites with power; and in that selfsame hour that they cried unto the Lord for their freedom, the Lamanites began to flee before them. . . . Now, the Lamanites were more numerous, yea, by more than double the number of the Nephites; nevertheless, they were driven" (Alma 43:50–51). Moroni was able to inspire their hearts in a way that caused them to fight with greater power. Physical performance was accentuated by an emotional appeal. Transformational leaders understand the human need for inspiration and motivation and the results it can achieve.

Before Moroni offered Zerahemnah the covenant of peace, he tried to help him understand why his army was able to perform so well:

> The Lord is with us; and ye behold that he has delivered you into our hands. And now I would that ye should understand that this is done unto us because of our religion and our faith in Christ. Now ye see . . . that God will support, and keep, and preserve us, so long as we are faithful unto him, and unto our faith, and our religion; and never will the Lord suffer that we shall be destroyed except we should fall into transgression and deny our faith. (Alma 44:3–4)

The text does not tell us how loudly Moroni spoke at this moment, though when his soldier spoke a few verses later it does say that he did so in a loud voice (Alma 44:13). Zerahemnah was close enough to Moroni that they could exchange swords, so there was no need to shout. If Moroni was speaking in a loud voice, it was for one of two reasons. First, so that Zerahemnah's men would hear the covenant and choose for themselves to accept it. Second, Moroni was speaking to his own soldiers as well as Zerahemnah. He wanted to be sure that his men

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[127] Ibid., 29.

understood why they had won that battle. It was because they followed his inspired vision and trusted in the Lord. The memory of this moment would certainly inspire them during future battles and hardships.

Not all of the opposition Moroni's forces faced were external. After Helaman had appointed "priests and teachers throughout all the land" many of them dissented (Alma 45:22–23). These men wanted power and were willing to kill for it. Their leader, Amalickiah, was able to lead "away the hearts of many people to do wickedly" because of his cunning and flattering (Alma 46:10). When Moroni learned what was being done, he was angry:

> And it came to pass that [Moroni] rent his coat . . . and wrote upon it—In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children—and he fastened it upon the end of a pole. And he put on his armor and "took the pole, which had on the end thereof his rent coat, (and he called it the title of liberty) and he bowed himself to the earth, and he prayed . . . that the cause of the Christians, and the freedom of the land might be favored." (Alma 46:12–13, 16)

Moroni's purpose in doing this was to motivate the people to "maintain their rights, and their religion, that the Lord God may bless them" (Alma 46:20). The words he wrote became the vision for the Nephite nation, though it wasn't new. What Moroni wrote on the banner was similar to what the people said they were fighting for at the battle with Zerahemnah and what Moroni used to motivate them to fight with greater power (Alma 43:9–10, 45–48).

What Moroni did was not unusual. In fact, there is evidence that it was remarkably common. Hull explained that the use of banners and flags in ancient Mesoamerica was a common practice.[128] Even more instructive is the message on those ancient banners, which

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[128] Hull, "War Banners," 86.

included the use of poetic parallels. Poetic parallels involve repeating phrases in sets to doubly emphasize a point. Notice the parallels in what Moroni wrote: God and freedom, liberty and peace, wives and children. By the way it was written, "Moroni shows himself to be adept at using local poetic forms as a means of generating the greatest emotional impact on his audience."[129] Moroni understood how to appropriately motivate his people in a way that would carry the most weight. His message was crafted expertly, even if the canvas was created unexpectedly. There was also no element of *self* in the wording. He did not include any promises of preserving their own lives. His people understood that the realization of this vision would require that many of them would lose their lives. Everything about Moroni's vision was transformational and selfless.

The standard of liberty was not meant to simply be read, but to be seen as a symbol of something greater. Bass and Avolio said, "Through the use of organizational stories, rights and rituals, symbols, slogans, logos, and other cultural elements, the leader provides others at distance with a picture of the organization."[130] The Title of Liberty became a symbol of everything for which the Nephites were fighting. Bass said, "The inspirational leader works to move subordinates to consider the moral values involved in their duties as a citizen soldiers."[131] Therefore, Moroni "went forth among the people, waving the rent part of his garment in the air, that all might see the writing which he had written upon the rent part, and crying with a loud voice, saying: Behold, whosoever will maintain this title upon the land, let them come forth in the strength of the Lord, and enter into a covenant that they will maintain their rights, and their

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[129] Ibid., 101.

[130] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 44.

[131] Bass, *Transformational,* 22.

religion, that the Lord God may bless them" (Alma 46:19–20). Moroni clearly communicated what the vision was and what he expected those who followed him to do. These people had been concerned about what was happening with Amalickiah and were concerned for the welfare of their community. Bass explained why a clear vision is so impactful on a community during times of crisis:

> Those under stress in seeking relief from it readily respond zealously to leaders who strengthen their faith in that relief. By calling for a transcendental goal or innovative mission to relieve the stress, charismatic leaders induce renewal and mobilize collective effort to face the stress or crisis.[132]

And it worked: "The people came running together with their armor girded about their loins, rending their garments in token, or as a covenant, that they would not forsake the Lord their God" (Alma 46:21). Not only were they responding to Moroni, but to the symbol he has created for them.

Transformational leaders don't just present the goal and encourage its accomplishment. They help followers understand the purpose and value of the goal.[133] Moroni helped them understand the spiritual significance of the covenant they had made, comparing it to Joseph in Egypt (Alma 46:23–27). The title of liberty wasn't just a call to arms to protect them against an immediate threat, but to take the long view and recognize what else was at stake. If they wanted to protect their families, freedoms, and religion, they needed to stand against Amalackiah and his men. Bass said, "Charismatic and inspirational leaders instill faith in a better future for the followers."[134] Moroni knew that he needed to communicate this vision to those not just in the

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[132] Ibid., 32.

[133] Bass, *Transformational,* 23.

capitol, but across the Nephite nation. So "he went forth, and also sent forth in all the parts of the land where there were dissensions and gathered together all the people who were desirous to maintain their liberty, to stand against Amalickiah" (Alma 46:20). When Amalickiah and his followers saw that Moroni had more support, they fled to the land of the Lamanites (Alma 46:29).

Moroni then "caused the title of liberty to be hoisted upon every tower which was in all the land, which was possessed by the Nephites; and thus Moroni planted the standard of liberty among the Nephites" (Alma 46:36). The word *planted* implies that it became a permanent feature. The Nephites now had a symbol of the vision they were fighting to protect. Hull taught, "The title of liberty banner was the focal point of this dramatic ritual display by Moroni in part as a means of inspiring the people to join forces in preserving their rights—a classic use of a military banner in Mesoamerica."[135]

After four years of peace, during which time Moroni continued to prepare his people for the threat he knew would come, contention arrived in the form of the king-men. These men sought to alter the law to establish a king and were angry that Pahoran refused to allow the change that would enable them to do so. When the voice of the people was sought, they supported Pahoran (Alma 51:1–7).

In the meantime, "Amalickiah had gathered together a wonderfully great army" (Alma 51:11) and was preparing to attack the Nephites. When they saw this, the king-men "would not take up arms to defend their country" (Alma 51:13). Moroni was angry to see all of his effort to protect his people being undermined by self-serving men. To curb the threat, Moroni asked the

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[134] Ibid., 24.

[135] Hull, "War Banners," 105.

governor to grant "him power to compel those dissenters to defend their country or to put them to death" and it was "granted according to the voice of the people" (Alma 51:14–16). This may seem drastic, but Moroni's first priority was to uphold the rights of the Nephite people. If the king-men were unwilling to support that, they would be a serious hindrance and could not be allowed to remain part of the group. Bass and Avolio taught, "The team is benefited to the degree that the organization's cultural values and norms support accomplishing the team's tasks or goals. But if accomplishing the team's goals will be impeded by the current organizational culture, the effective leader works to establish different norms."[136] When employees or followers are unwilling to participate and accept even a transactional form of leadership, termination of employment is often required.

Moroni's armies confronted the king-men, who chose to fight against Moroni. Four thousand rebels were slain, and their leaders were cast into prison. "And the remainder of those dissenters, rather than be smitten down to the earth by the sword, yielded to the standard of liberty, and were compelled to hoist the title of liberty upon their towers, and in their cities, and to take up arms in defense of their country" (Alma 51:17–20). Hull taught that "It was not to Moroni or his forces but to the standard that they covenanted their allegiance."[137] They yielded, not to a person, but to the ideals, or the vision, of the group to which they belonged. That is the very definition of TFL.

Unfortunately, as a result of all the internal unrest, the war was not going well. While "Moroni was thus breaking down the wars and contentions among his own people" (Alma 51:22) the Lamanites attacked and took possession of a number of Moroni's strongly fortified cities (see

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[136] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 49.

[137] Hull, "War Banners," 106.

Alma 51:23–27). Bass and Avolio noted, "Conflicts within the group are more likely to be disruptive to group functioning and effectiveness in comparison to conflicts between the group and any external entity. In fact, external or intergroup conflict has been shown to increase cohesiveness, task orientation, group loyalty, and acceptance of leaders."[138]

While Moroni and his chief captains worked to regain possession of their lost cities, they noticed a lack of support from the government. Helaman wrote to Moroni that they did not have enough men or food. They had sent an embassy to the governor asking for help but waited months without a response and were about to perish with hunger (Alma 58:3–7). With all this suffering going on, why did the soldiers under their command stay loyal? Hunger had caused Lehi's family and even Lehi himself to murmur and complain against the Lord (1 Nephi 16:20). What was different about the experience of these soldiers? Part of it was their faith in the Lord, but another important element was Moroni's leadership. His constant inspiration provided a level of strength that allowed his soldiers to perform beyond what was expected. Bass taught that "commitment to the organization and its goals is enhanced by the extent that the leader is engaging in inspirational behavior that provides meaning for the soldier in the organizational mission and challenge for accomplishing it."[139]

Fortunately for Moroni, he didn't have to do all the inspiring himself. His immediate subordinates, Lehi, Helaman, and Teancum, were remarkable leaders as well and their influence on their troops reinforced what Moroni was teaching. Hearing the message from their immediate supervisors and from the head of the organization would create a sense of unity among leadership and greater devotion among the followers. Bass added that "Transformational

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[138] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 77.

[139] Bass, *Transformational,* 22.

leadership by the immediate superior can enhance local commitment and help in commitment to the organization, but transformational leadership at the top of the organization is likely to be needed for commitment to extend to the organization as a whole."[140] Despite the dissensions from the king-men, Moroni's soldiers remained fiercely loyal regardless of their suffering and hardships.

When help finally came to Helaman's men, it was an unremarkable two thousand troops carrying food, hardly a help at all compared to the strength the Lamanites were receiving daily. Helaman expressed his concern to Moroni in an epistle:

> And now the cause of these our embarrassments, or the cause why they did not send more strength unto us, we knew not . . . we fear that there is some faction 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. But, behold, it mattereth not—we trust God will deliver us, notwithstanding the weakness of our armies, yea, and deliver us out of the hands of our enemies. (Alma 58:9, 36–37)

Such neglect by the government was unacceptable. Bass and Avolio said, "Knowing what new resources are needed above and beyond those available within the existing organizational structure and ensuring their availability is essential . . . the organization must provide the team and its leader with the resources necessary to accomplish the task."[141] Yet the governor gave them little support. Moroni began to worry that, because of wickedness, they would fall to the Lamanites. His captains began to doubt as well (Alma 59:11–12). Moroni decided he needed to address the situation directly. He understood what Bass wrote years later: "Leaders need to

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[140] Ibid., 19.

[141] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 51.

arouse inert followers to the significance of threats and the group's lack of preparedness."[142] Although Pahoran was a colleague and not a follower, Moroni used the same approach with him.

Charbonneau pointed out how rational persuasion can augment a leader's ability to be transformational:

One can be perceived as more inspirational if one can provide factual evidence and logical arguments to support the feasibility of an appealing vision or to justify their optimism. . . . Such perceptions may be raised even more if this [evidence] were followed by rational arguments to justify the confidence leaders have in their subordinates. . . . Alternatively, subordinates may need rational/logical reasons before they commit to a task.[143]

Charbonneau was referring to positive persuasion, but Moroni used rational persuasion to compel Pahoran to fulfill his responsibilities. Moroni's words were pointed:

I direct mine epistle to Pahoran . . . and also to all those who have been chosen by this people to govern and manage the affairs of this war. . . . [However] myself, and also my men, and also Helaman and his men, have suffered exceedingly great sufferings; yea, even hunger, thirst, and fatigue, and all manner of afflictions of every kind. But behold, were this all we had suffered we would not murmur nor complain. 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. And now behold, we desire to know the cause of this exceedingly great neglect; yea, we desire to know the cause of

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[142] Bass, *Transformational,* 42.

[143] Charbonneau, "Influence," 572–573.

your thoughtless state. Can you think to sit upon your thrones in a state of thoughtless

stupor, while your enemies are spreading the work of death around you? . . . 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. 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… it will be expedient that we contend no more with the Lamanites until we

have first cleansed our inward vessel. . . . Yea, behold I do not fear your power nor your

authority, but it is my God whom I fear. . . . Behold, I am Moroni, your chief captain. I

seek not for power, but to pull it down. I seek not for honor of the world, but for the glory

of my God, and the freedom and welfare of my country. (Alma 60:1, 3–7, 23–24, 28, 36)

Moroni's response was harsh and direct. The anger he expressed could be viewed as a leadership

weakness. On the other hand, this could have been the perfect response. Moroni was working

with limited information and responded to what he thought he knew. Moroni's words were not

simply meant to be scathing, but to inspire in the government a greater sense of their duty. He

wanted them to set aside their self-interests and work towards the greater good of the entire

group.

     Fortunately for Moroni and the Nephite people, Pahoran was not the negligent politician

they thought he was. In his return epistle Pahoran described to Moroni the insurrection in the

government. He had been banished from the city and encourage Moroni to come to him so they

could rectify the situation (Alma 61:1–20). Pahoran even suggested that he appreciated the way

Moroni wrote his epistle because it fortified his resolve to fight back (Alma 61:9, 19–20). In a

very transformational way, he ended his correspondence by inviting Moroni to "strengthen Lehi

and Teancum in the Lord" (Alma 61:21) or in the words of Bass and Avolio, "develop . . .

followers to higher levels of ability and potential."[144]

Moroni rejoiced when he received Pahoran's letter and immediately set off to gather

more troops to assist in his march. In order to inspire and motivate those he met along his march,

"he did raise the standard of liberty in whatsoever place he did enter and gained whatsoever force

he could. . . . And it came to pass that thousands did flock unto his standard, and did take up their

swords in the defense of their freedom" (Alma 62:4–5). Again we see how when a leader

communicates an inspiring vision it inspires confidence and invites followers to put aside their

own self-interests to support the organization.

Moroni's Intellectual Stimulation

Transformational leaders "stimulate the followers' efforts to be innovative and creative

by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. . .

. New ideas and creative problem solutions are solicited from followers, who are included in the

process of addressing problems and finding solutions."[145] Mormon's record implies that

Moroni's constant desire to prepare and improve led to the success of his armies. Rather than

being satisfied with what his group had achieved, he motivated them to reach higher. He

involved them in the process and created a culture of innovation.

During the battle with Zerahemnah, Moroni armed his people with swords, cimeters,

breastplates, arm-shields, helmets and thick clothing (Alma 43:18–19). "Now the army of

Zerahemnah was not prepared with any such thing . . . and they were naked, save it were a skin

which was girded about their loins . . . therefore, they were exceedingly afraid of the armies of

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[144] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 2.

[145] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 3.

the Nephites because of their armor, notwithstanding their number being so much greater than the Nephites" (Alma 43:20–21). The Lamanites' surprise at the way the Nephite armies were prepared suggests that at least some of these armaments were not previously part of Nephite soldiers apparel. Moroni, however, recognized the advantage this would give his soldiers, one that would hopefully improve their chances against a more numerous foe.

The Lamanite army decided not to attack the Nephites and began their retreat. Moroni was unaware of their intended destination and was left without crucial information to make his next decision. Bass, Jung, Avolio, and Berson said that effective leaders "make sense of the challenges confronted by both leaders and followers and then appropriately responding to those challenges."[146] Moroni's response demonstrated his humility, faith, and innovative mindset. He utilized two means of gaining the knowledge he lacked. He first sent spies to follow the departing army. He then sent men to ask Alma to inquire of the Lord to know how to "defend themselves against the Lamanites" (Alma 43:23). Seeking this divine help is not inconsistent with research. Bass and Steidlmeier said, "Such openness has a transcendent and spiritual dimension and helps followers to question assumptions and to generate more creative solutions to problems."[147] Turning to Alma was a great example of faith, but also demonstrated a strategic brilliance. With his spies and Alma he was receiving multiple points of information. From Alma he learned that the army was traveling "round about in the wilderness" to attach the city of Manti. Moroni was able to arrive at Manti before the Lamanites, suggesting that the enemy had fled in an attempt to appear that they were returning to their own lands, but then took the long way through the wilderness to arrive undetected at Manti. After preparing the people of that land

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[146] Bass, et al., "Predicting," 207.

[147] Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics," para. 29.

for the attack, Moroni learned from his spies which path the enemy was taking to arrive there, and planned accordingly (Alma 43:24–36).

When Moroni's army confronted the Lamanites, the value of his preparation was apparent. The Lamanites experienced far more casualties than the Nephites "for their nakedness was exposed to the heavy blows of the Nephites. . . . While on the other hand, there was now and then a man fell among the Nephites, by their swords and the loss of blood, they being shielded from the more vital parts of the body" (Alma 43:37–38). After ordering his men to stop fighting, Moroni explained to Zerahemnah how the faith of the Nephites was the cause of their success, and offered him a covenant of peace. Zerahemnah did not agree with Moroni's conclusion about their success: "Behold, we are not of your faith; we do not believe that it is God that has delivered us into your hands; but we believe that it is your cunning that has preserved you from our swords. Behold, it is your breastplates and your shields that have preserved you" (Alma 44:9). Although undervaluing the crucial role the Lord played in the Nephites' deliverance, the enemy clearly recognized the value of Moroni's innovation.

Years later, when Amalickiah ordered his people to attack the city of Ammonihah, the Lamanites had "prepared themselves with shields, and with breastplates; and they had also prepared themselves with garments of skins, yea, very thick garments to cover their nakedness" (Alma 49:5). This preparation, along with the size of their army, gave them great confidence. However, when they arrived at Ammonihah, they found that Moroni had fortified the city to such a degree that the Lamanites were afraid to attack it. Indeed, "the chief captains of the Lamanites were astonished exceedingly, because of the wisdom of the Nephites in preparing their places of security" Alma 49:5). The Lamanites were awed by the wisdom of the Nephites, not just of Moroni. He was not the one coming up with all these ideas, but instead made it a group effort,

though Moroni played a key role. Mormon pointed out again how astonished the Lamanites were because the Nephites "were prepared for them, in a manner which never had been known among the children of Lehi . . . for Moroni had altered the management of affairs among the Nephites" (Alma 49:8, 11). Intellectually stimulating leaders are able to respond appropriately during a crisis by "questioning assumptions and disclosing opportunities, fostering unlearning, and eliminating fixation on old ways of doing things."[148] Moroni could have been satisfied with their accomplishments at the battle of Zerahemnah and not made any major changes. However, had he done so, the Nephites would likely have suffered tremendous losses. Instead, the enemy, much better prepared and protected than they were before, chose to not even engage because the risk was too great.

Hoping to catch the Nephites off guard, the army marched to Noah "supposing that to be the next best place for them to come against the Nephites" (Alma 49:12). However, Moroni had fortified every city in the land. "The city of Noah, which had hitherto been a weak place, had now, *by the means of Moroni*, become strong, yea, even to exceed the strength of the city Ammonihah" (Alma 49:14; italics added). Mormon stated that this was all part of Moroni's plan. "This was wisdom in Moroni; for he had supposed that they would be frightened at the city Ammonihah; and as the city of Noah had hitherto been the weakest part of the land, therefore they would march thither to battle; and *thus it was according to his desires*" (Alma 49:15; italics added). Moroni's strategy and innovation allowed him to have a greater vision and foresee and respond to future challenges. As a result of Moroni's preparations for that battle, "more than a thousand of the Lamanites were slain; while, on the other hand, there was not a single soul of the Nephites which was slain" (Alma 49:23).

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[148] Bass, *Transformational,* 45.

Despite his success, "Moroni did not stop making preparations for war . . . [but] caused that his armies should commence in the commencement of the twentieth year . . . in digging up heaps of earth round about all the cities" (Alma 50:1). On these heaps he added tall works of timber, with a picket frame on top and towers and places of security to overlook the ridges (see Alma 50:2–5). "Thus Moroni did prepare strongholds against the coming of their enemies, round about every city in all the land" (Alma 50:6). This could have seemed over the top, but Moroni knew that his people were experiencing a crisis. Krackhardt and Stern said, "Crisis refers to a situation facing organization which requires that the organization, under time constraints, engaged in new, untested, unlearned behaviors in order to obtain or maintain its desired goal states."[149] This preparation not only created added protection for their cities, it inspired confidence in potential recruits. "Thus Moroni, with his armies, which did increase daily because of the assurance of protection which his works did bring forth unto them" (Alma 50:12). Bass said, "Transformational leaders both enhance follow her commitment, and at the same time, serve to reduce employees feelings of stress."[150] Effective leadership is the best recruiter.[151]

Though Moroni seemed to be the one to initiate and encourage this culture of innovation, he encouraged his followers to be part of the problem-solving process. When Moroni and Teancum realized that the Lamanite army was too well protected to allow for a traditional attack, Moroni called for all of his chief captains to meet in council to figure out what to do (Alma 52:15–19). The plan they agreed upon involved not just Moroni, but Lehi and Teancum as well (Alma 52:21–36).

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[149] Krackhardt and Stern, "Informal Networks," 125.

[150] Bass, *Transformational,* 27.

[151] Bass, "From Transactional," 25.

Moroni's Individualized Consideration

In order to have a transforming effect on his followers, Moroni needed to recognize the individuality of his followers and their desire for personal development. He would work with these followers to align their needs with the goals of the organization and work to develop their potential. He would provide support and direction and monitor the situation, but never in a way that would make his followers feel that he wasn't confident in their abilities.[152]

Of all the components of TFL, the record gives us the least amount of information about Moroni's individualized consideration. Very little is said about his personal mentoring of lower-level leaders and followers and we lack specific conversations that display this dimension of TFL. However, Moroni applied the principles of individualized consideration to the cities that he was fortifying. As he strengthened the armies of the Nephites, he identified which of his fortifications were the weakest, and that's where he did "place the greater number of men; and thus he did fortify and strengthen the land which was possessed by the Nephites" (Alma 48:9). Individually considering the needs of each city and fort allowed Moroni to deflect the advances of the enemy. The Lamanites believed that the city of Ammonihah had "become an easy prey for them" because they had destroyed it once before. (Alma 49:3). They were greatly disappointed and astonished to see the change that had taken place in the city, insomuch that they diverted their efforts to another city. A transformational leader seeks to do this with his followers. He knows their needs, strengths, and weaknesses well enough that they can inspire and motivate them to become better. They are transformed to a new level of performance, which generates greater success.

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[152] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 4.

Moroni understood the *individual* aspect of this process, for not every city was fortified in the same way. After the Lamanites left Ammonihah, they marched to Noah, thinking that it would be "the next best place for them to come against the Nephites" (Alma 49:12). But because of the planning and effort of Moroni, this once weak place had "become strong, yea, even to exceed the strength of the city Ammonihah" (Alma 49:14). Moroni did not utilize the same formula for each fortification. Each location received individualized consideration and was strengthened based on its circumstance. Employees should be treated the same way.

Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir said that "transformational leaders evaluate the potential of all followers in terms of their ability to fulfill current commitments, while also envisioning expansion of their future responsibilities."[153] Moroni did this with his chief captains. When considering how to best fortify the city of Noah, Moroni delegated the responsibly for preparing and defending that city to Lehi, Moroni's least talked about and most important chief captain. He had been with Moroni in the battle of Zerahemnah and "in the more part of all his battles; and he was a man like unto Moroni" (Alma 53:2). Moroni continued to give Lehi increasingly greater responsibilities and allowed him to act on his own. Lehi became such an experienced and capable leader that when the Lamanites came to attack the city of Noah, they were not only astonished at its level of fortification, but "they feared Lehi exceedingly" (Alma 49:16–17).

Transformational leaders seeking to consider their followers individually avoid public criticism of their followers. However, they do not shy away from publicly acknowledging their accomplishments. When he learned of all the success they had experienced, [Moroni] "rejoiced because of the welfare [and] success which Helaman had had . . . and he did make it known unto

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[153] Dvir et al., "Impact," 736.

all his people, in all the land round about in that part where he was, that they might rejoice also"
(Alma 59:1–2).

The four components of TFL work together in empowering ways. Because Moroni had
modeled a commitment to the vision, inspired and motivated his followers to do great things, and
created a culture of intellectual stimulation, those he led felt empowered to act under his
direction. Teancum was inspired to set aside his own personal safety twice in coming up with a
creative solution to the Lamanite threat (see Alma 51:33–34; 62:35–36). When he needed
someone with a specific skill set to accomplish a task, Moroni "caused that a search should be
made among his men, that perhaps he might find a man who" could do what he needed (Alma
55:3). This was certainly an important opportunity for this soldier to help and grow. However,
we need to remember that while a transformational does care for the individuals he or she is
leading and is seeking to help them develop and grow, the primary focus is on achieving the
goals of the organization. More than helping this soldier develop, Moroni was looking for the
best way to accomplish the mission.

Moroni monitored his chief captains' efforts through epistles but empowered them to act
on their own while receiving support from him when needed (Alma 57–58). Dvir, Eden, Avolio,
and Shamir described how transformational leaders "enhance followers' capacity to think on their
own, develop new ideas, and question outmoded operating rules" and "develop follower self-
management and self-development."[154]

Implementation of the Four I's can affect large and small groups. Moroni had the unique
experience of being a direct and indirect leader. He had followers who reported directly to him
(Lehi, Helaman, Teancum) but he was also indirectly responsible for the thousands of soldiers in

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[154] Ibid.

each of their armies. Bass and Avolio described how leaders working with indirect followers experience a number of challenges, like less effective two-way communication, not knowing each follower individually, and the risk of the message being watered down.[155] These challenges can be overcome by effectively implementing the four components of TFL. Because Moroni was so effective at leading his direct subordinates, he indirectly impacted the entire army. Based on a study by Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir, indirect follower performance improves in direct correlation with the use of TFL methods.[156]

A leader does not need to utilize all four components to be transformational. However, the combination of the Four I's allows a leader to be more effective. Bass noted that "the transformational leadership components of charisma, inspirational leadership, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration contributes to effective leadership under stress" including when facing "threats to their lives."[157] Moroni was not a perfect leader. However, his determination to do the Lord's will and his commitment to the welfare of his people made him remarkable. Because Moroni's leadership included aspects from all four components, his example was visible to his followers, they were more motivated to exceed expectations, innovative ideas were implemented, and individuals were developed to greater levels of potential.

Other Book of Mormon Examples of Transformational Leadership

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[155] Bass and Avolio, *Improving*, 30.

[156] Dvir et al., "Impact," 741.

[157] Bass, *Transformational,* 41.

Aside from Moroni, there are a number of leaders in the Book of Mormon who exhibited characteristics similar to transformational leaders. Their leadership, like Moroni's, was heavily influenced by their discipleship. The examples of King Mosiah and Alma are discussed below.

King Mosiah's Idealized Influence

After implementing a system of judges to lead the people at the end of his rule, the record attests to the remarkable influence King Mosiah had on his people:

> And they did wax strong in love towards Mosiah; yea, they did esteem him more than any other man; for they did not look upon him as a tyrant who was seeking for gain, yea, for that lucre which doth corrupt the soul; for he had not exacted riches of them, neither had he delighted in the shedding of blood; but he had established peace in the land, and he had granted unto his people that they should be delivered from all manner of bondage; therefore they did esteem him, yea, exceedingly, beyond measure. (Mosiah 29:40)

Compared to other monarchs in the scriptures, Mosiah was unique in the way that his people felt about him. Those feelings were fortified because of the example he set for them of what a good king does for his people. His idealized influence allowed him to unite his people and motivate them to greater levels of discipleship.

Alma's Individualized Consideration

Alma recognized his need to preach the gospel of Christ to his people. He also understood that not all of his people were at the same level of spiritual maturity. When he spoke to the people in Zarahemla, his message was one of repentance and deeper devotion to the Savior (see Alma 5). When he visited the people of Gideon, he knew that same message wasn't what they needed:

But behold, I trust that ye are not in a state of so much unbelief as were your brethren; I trust that ye are not lifted up in the pride of your hearts; yea, I trust that ye have not set your hearts upon riches and the vain things of the world; yea, I trust that you do not worship idols, but that ye do worship the true and the living God, and that ye look forward for the remission of your sins, with an everlasting faith, which is to come. (Alma 7:6)

Instead, he was able to teach them more concerning the coming of Christ and the blessings of his atoning sacrifice (see Alma 7). Because he adapted his message to meet the needs of each group he taught, his message was more impactful.

Amalickiah: The Pseudotransformational Leader

As TFL scholars like Burns, Bass, and others discussed the defining characteristics of TFL, they encountered "The Hitler Problem."[158] Tyrants like Hitler, Stalin, and cult leaders like Jim Jones seemed to possess some of the qualities of transformational leaders, but their motives were self-centered or immoral. They shared an inspired vision and helped align their followers' views with that vision. They motivated their followers to do horrific things. Could these leaders be called transformational? We could ask the same question about a man like Amalickiah, who was effective in his leadership and highly charismatic, but whose motives were less than exemplary. Bass said, "Originally, the dynamics of TFL were expected to be the same whether beneficial or harmful to followers, although Burns believed that to be transforming, leaders had to be morally uplifting."[159] How then do we label these leaders?

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[158] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, vii.

[159] Bass, *Transformational,* 15.

Bass used this question to come up with the term pseudotransformational leader. These leaders "exhibit many elements of TFL (the charismatic elements particularly) but have personal, exploitative, and self-aggrandizing motives."[160] Morality and an inward sense of rightness are hallmarks of TFL. Bass and Steidlmeier noted, "It is the presence or absence of such a moral foundation of the leader as a moral agent that grounds the distinction between authentic versus pseudo-transformational leadership."[161]

Bass said, "They may exhibit many transforming displays but cater, in the long run, to their own self-interests."[162] Bass and Riggio described how charismatic leadership can be socialized or personalized. Socialized leaders exhibit the positive traits of TFL: "Personalized charismatic leadership is based on personal dominance and authoritarian behavior."[163] They stated that pseudotransformational leaders are:

- power-oriented

- self-aggrandizing and self-serving

- exploitative of other

- manipulative and threatening

- aggressive and narcissistic

- unconcerned about the rights and feelings of others

Looking at this list, it becomes apparent that the Book of Mormon is full of examples of these types of leaders, men who were not devoted followers of Christ and yet still led their groups

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[160] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 5.

[161] Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics," para. 19.

[162] Bass, *Transformational,* 15.

[163] Bass and Riggio, *Transformational*, 13.

effectively for a time: King Noah, Korihor, Amalickiah and Ammaron, Gadianton, and

Giddianhi were some. Although we view these men as corrupt and ultimately ineffective, there is

value in analyzing their leadership and discovering what worked and what did not. Most of these

leaders exhibit at least some of the traits of a pseudotransformational leader. Bass and

Steidlmeier said, "The ethics of leadership rests upon three pillars: (1) the moral character of the

leader; (2) the ethical legitimacy of the values embedded in the leaders vision, articulation, and

program which followers either embrace or reject; and (3) the morality of the processes of social

ethical choice and action that leaders and followers engage in and collectively pursue."[164] I will

analyze how the leadership of Amalickiah followed some elements of the Four I's and where he

deviated into pseudotransformational territory.

Amalickiah came to power when certain men rebelled against the teachings of Helaman

and sought to make Amalickiah their king: "And they had been led by the flatteries of

Amalickiah, that if they would support him and establish him to be their king that he would make

them rulers over the people" (Alma 46:5). Notice how Amalickiah used a form of inspirational

motivation to convince his followers that there would be a better future state with him on the

throne. He utilized a contingent reward method in promising power in exchange for support:

"Thus they were led away by Amalickiah to dissensions, notwithstanding the preaching of

Helaman and his brethren" (Alma 46:6).

Not only were Amalickiah's direct followers affected by his vision, but "many in the

church . . . believed in the flattering words of Amalickiah, therefore they dissented even from the

church. . . . Yea, and we also see the great wickedness one very wicked man can cause to take

place among the children of men" (Alma 46:7, 9). At this point, we don't really understand the

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[164] Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics," para. 5.

immorality of Amalickiah's desires. Seeking to be the king may or may not have been an immoral desire. The next verse, however, reveals his true intent: "Because he was a man of cunning device and a man of many flattering words . . . he led away the hearts of many people to do wickedly; yea, and to seek to destroy the church and to destroy the foundation of liberty" (Alma 46:10).

Despite his complete lack of morality, we must acknowledge his effectiveness. He was able to share an inspired vision and motivate his followers to see things differently. In other words, he was effective because he was able to convince others to follow him, even though he was leading them somewhere they shouldn't have gone. Three brief examples illustrate how Amalickiah epitomizes the pseudotransformational model: abandoning his followers, inspiring Lamanites, and selecting leaders.

Abandoning His Followers

Once Amalickiah realized that Moroni's supporters were more numerous than his own, he fled with his people to the land of Nephi (Alma 46:29). When Amalickiah realized that Moroni's army was pursuing them, he "fled with a small number of his men" and abandoned the rest to be "delivered up into the hands of Moroni" (Alma 46:33). Amalickiah did not support or stand by his people. Bass and Steidlmeier said of such leaders, "They profess strong attachment to their organization and its people but privately are ready to sacrifice them."[165] Later, when his armies were hesitant to attack Nephite strongholds, we learn that Amalickiah "did care not for the blood of his people" (Alma 49:10). A transformational leader's focus is on the goals of the organization. However, they still care about and seek the best interest of those they lead. They simply try to align those interests with the organizations vision. Amalickiah had a powerful

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[165] Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics," para. 25.

vision but lacked concern for his followers. Although pseudotransformational leaders may possess the attributes of transformational leaders, Bass and Steidlmeier believed, "The component that ordinarily is missing in the personalized leadership of the pseudo-transformational leader is individualized consideration."[166]

Inspiring the Lamanites

Through flattery and subterfuge, Amalickiah was able to gain the command over all the armies of the Lamanites, and then the kingdom itself. However, his ultimate desire was to "reign over all the land, yea, and all the people who were in the land, the Nephites as well as the Lamanites" and "to overpower the Nephites and to bring them into bondage" (Alma 48:2, 4). Bass and Steidlmeier said, "Although this may not be expressed publicly, privately pseudo-transformational leaders are concerned about their power and gaining more of it."[167] The public reasons for the campaign against the Nephites was likely similar to what his brother wrote to Moroni, who said, "This war hath been waged to avenge their wrongs, and to maintain and to obtain their rights to the government" (Alma 54:24).

In order to achieve his private ambitions, Amalickiah needed to convince his people to attack the Nephites. Before taking command, many of the Lamanites were hesitant and afraid to attack the Nephites. Amalickiah knew he needed to change their perspective so that they aligned their desires with his. Therefore, he "began to inspire the hearts of the Lamanites against the people of Nephi; yea, he did appoint men to speak unto the Lamanites from their towers, against the Nephites" (Alma 48:1). Bass and Steidlmeier said, "A first difference between authentic transformational leadership and pseudo-transformational leadership lies in the values for which

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[166] Ibid., para. 36.

[167] Ibid., para. 34.

they are idealized. For instance, the authentic leader calls for universal brotherhood; the pseudo-transformational leader highlights fictitious we-they differences in values and argues that we have inherently good values and they do not."[168] "Therefore he . . . hardened the hearts of the Lamanites and blinded their minds, and stirred them up to anger" (Alma 48:3). Amalickiah's use of inspirational motivation was impressive. He communicated the vision clearly and purposefully selected men who would share that vision in a motivating way. Bass and Steidlmeier said, "Pseudo-transformational leaders overweight authority and underweight reason. . . . They substitute anecdotes for hard evidence."[169] As a result, rather than dealing with a population who was not willing to follow his orders, he realigned their vision to match his own. Compare that method to the ineffectiveness of Amalickiah's predecessor who tried to "compel [his armies] to arms" (Alma 47:3).

Selecting His Leaders

As Amalickiah began to establish his kingdom, he was very purposeful in who he appoints to leadership positions. "And thus he did appoint chief captains of the Zoramites, they being the most acquainted with the strength of the Nephites, and their places of resort, and the weakest parts of their cities; therefore he appointed them to be chief captains over his armies" (Alma 48:5). He understood that in order to carry out his vision, he needed his direct subordinates to be those with the knowledge and skill necessary to accomplish it. Zerahemnah had done the same thing "that he might preserve their hatred towards the Nephites" knowing that they would inspire the vision the way he wanted. Bass and Steidlmeier said, "The inspirational appeals of the authentic transformational leader tend to focus on the best in people--on harmony,

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[168] Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics," para. 23.

[169] Ibid., para. 30.

charity and good works; the inspirational appeals of the pseudo-transformational leader tend to focus on the worst in people--on demonic plots, conspiracies, unreal dangers, excuses, and insecurities."[170]

Moroni and Amalickiah both used the components of TFL to some degree of effectiveness. Amalickiah, however, was motivated by personal gain and a lust for power. Bass and Steidlmeier said, "Pseudotransformational leaders may also motivate and transform their followers, but in doing so, they arouse support for special interests at the expense of others rather than what's good for the collectivity."[171] Amalickiah's ability to motivate and inspire his people toward a common goal was impressive. His lack of concern for his people was deplorable.

Conclusion

The most unique thing about Moroni's use of his power is how willing he was to give it up. After seventeen years of war, "there was once more peace established among the people of Nephi. And Moroni yielded up the command of his armies into the hands of his son . . . and he retired to his own house that he might spend the remainder of his days in peace" (Alma 62:42-43). Moroni had been the "chief captain over the Nephites" and "took the command of all the armies of the Nephites" (Alma 43:16). He had "power according to his will with the armies of the Nephites" (Alma 46:34). He was granted emergency powers to use force to compel the people to arms (see Alma 51:14–16). Once the war was over, he divested himself of all of that power. This is the greatest indication of his transformational influence. He was motivated by an internal sense of morality that drove him to do what was right for his people. To paraphrase Mormon, if all leaders could lead like Moroni, the world would be transformed.

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[170] Bass and Steidlmeier, "Ethics," para. 27.

[171] Ibid., para. 37.

Chapter Two: Nephi—The Servant Leader

Some of the leadership lessons in the Book of Mormon are implicit. The lessons Nephi taught were often direct. Nephi stated that one reason he wrote his record was to "give an account [of his] reign and ministry (1 Nephi 10:1). Nephi understood the importance of effective leadership and shared his experiences as a leader. Knowing that leadership training was part of Nephi's purpose in writing, it is worthwhile to consider the patterns of leadership he followed. One way to discuss that pattern is by considering his focus. Leaders are responsible for the success of the organization they lead, but also for the people within that organization. Giving priority to the success of the organization versus the progress of the people they lead reveals a leadership pattern.

Nephi cared about the success of his group in achieving their goals, but his writings reveal that he focused his efforts on the well-being of those with whom he worked. His many responsibilities did nothing to derail those efforts. He was a colonizer, navigator, and prophet, but he was first a servant. Nephi's servant first mentality is seen today in the concepts of servant leadership. Nephi understood the importance of service in leadership and purposefully responded to situations with a servant focus.

After exploring what made Nephi's leadership experience unique, I will discuss the key points of servant leadership, the doctrinal foundation for servant leadership, and how Nephi's actions displayed an innate understanding of the value of service in leadership.

Nephi's Unique Leadership Position

Although Nephi was writing about his "reign and ministry," we only see him reigning in an official capacity for one chapter.[172] Prior to that he enjoyed no official position in the family,

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[172] see 2 Nephi 5

group, or community. So why did Nephi say that he would give an account of his reign and ministry? Nephi recognized that being a leader was not limited to formal positions and that he was leading throughout all of his experiences. This is one of the defining features of effective followership and provided for the distinctness of Nephi's leadership experience. To better understand what made Nephi's leadership unique, I will discuss his father's role as the leader of the group, the tensions created by Nephi's leadership, and his divine appointment to lead.

Lehi—Patriarch and Prophet

At the outset of his record, Nephi made it clear that he was not the leader. His respect for the leadership hierarchy in the group would drive many of his decisions. Nephi was subordinate to Lehi because he was his father and one of the prophets (1 Nephi 1:4). The revelation regarding the destruction of Jerusalem came to Lehi, not Nephi. One day Nephi would act as prophet for God's people in the New World. Initially, however, he recognized that his father filled that role. He purposefully included episodes that showed his father guiding the family (see 1 Nephi 1:4–5), offering correction (see 1 Nephi 1:14), continually receiving revelation (see 1 Nephi 3:2; 7:2; 8:2–33; 16:9; 18:5), and fulfilling his patriarchal obligation as head of the family (see 2 Nephi 1–4).

Lehi's example of positive leadership qualities, including servant and TFL attributes, prepared Nephi to serve more effectively. Lehi was deeply concerned about his people. He felt a prophetic responsibility for them and "prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart, in behalf of his people" (1 Nephi 1:5). Lehi's vision was preceded by his concern for their welfare. That concern drove his leadership decisions and provided a model for Nephi to follow.

Nephi included incidents in the story that demonstrated his deferral to his father's leadership. Gardner felt that the purpose of 1 Nephi was to show how "the prophetic mantle

shifts to Nephi's shoulders" as the story progresses.[173] As readers we see how that shift took place. Nephi was likely aware of it and he still deferred appropriately to his father. When trying to help his family obtain food, Nephi did everything within his stewardship. He prepared himself by making a new bow and arrow, acquired additional weaponry, but he refrained from doing the one thing he felt was outside of his stewardship—obtaining revelation on behalf of the entire group. Turning to his father, he asked for him to petition the Lord on behalf of the family (1 Nephi 16:23). Nephi could have used this opportunity to establish his right to lead, but he instead sustained his father's position and keys.

Nephi's efforts to lead frequently frustrated his older brothers, but there is no evidence that Lehi ever felt threatened by Nephi. Lehi continued to trust Nephi to accomplish difficult assignments and commended him for being an effective follower (1 Nephi 3:8; 2 Nephi 1). Lehi's leadership gave Nephi a chance to be a better follower and prepared him for his own opportunity to lead.

Tensions Created by Nephi's Leadership

Nephi's leadership was a source of serious contention for his oldest brothers, who may have viewed his initiative to serve as a seditious power play. Culturally and scripturally, the firstborn son was to be the recipient of a favored land inheritance and the right to lead.[174] Gardner described how "Nephi continues to describe situations in which he is in violation of that cultural expectation."[175] Laman and Lemuel were fully aware that culture dictated that they should lead and believed Nephi was defying that convention. "Our younger brother thinks to rule

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[173] Gardner, *1 Nephi*, 47–48.

[174] Daniel N. Rolph, "Prophets, Kings, and Swords: The Sword of Laban and Its Possible Pre-Laban Origin," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 2 no. 1 (1991): 76.

[175] Gardner, *1 Nephi*, 254.

over us; and we have had much trial because of him. . . . We will not have him to be our ruler; for it belongs unto us, who are the elder brethren, to rule over this people" (2 Nephi 5:3). If Nephi was trying to usurp power and bypass his brothers' leadership, then Laman and Lemuel's anger would have been justified.

Part of the problem was that Laman and Lemuel did not understand the important relationship between leadership and followership. What they viewed as insurrection could have simply been effective followership. Had they been better followers themselves they may have seen that more easily. When the family was traveling across the sea and Laman and Lemuel, among others, began behaving in ways that displeased the Lord, Nephi courageously dissented, reminding his brothers of what was expected of them. His concern was for the safety of those on the ship (see 1 Nephi 18:10). However, they did "not hear his concern for their welfare, but rather his presumption."[176] In anger they responded, "We will not that our younger brother shall be a ruler over us" (1 Nephi 18:10). Laman and Lemuel were overly sensitive about their position of leadership. Nephi did not say anything that presumed authority over them, yet all they could see was a mutinous younger brother.

Culturally it appears that Nephi was out of line, but there are multiple scriptural accounts of younger brothers being chosen for significant leadership roles instead of the older brothers. Some of those exceptions occurred because of the older brother's unrighteousness. Esau lost his birthright to Jacob (see Genesis 25:24-34). Reuben's birthright was given to Joseph.[177] Others do not appear to be because of any wickedness on the part of the older brother. Moses was chosen to

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[176] Gardner, *1 Nephi*, 317.

[177] There are many similarities between the story of Joseph and Nephi. Both received divine confirmation that they would preside over their older brothers. Both sets of brothers reacted with hostility and violence to the leadership of their younger brother but were preserved because of the younger brother's actions.

lead Israel out of Egypt over his brother Aaron (see Exodus 7:7). Samuel chose the youngest of Jesse's eight sons as king over Israel (see 1 Samuel 16:6–13).[178]

In some of these accounts, the land inheritance was a point of conflict. In others it was the authority to lead. For Laman and Lemuel, it was initially the latter, given that their entire inheritance was lost or abandoned when they left Jerusalem (see 1 Nephi 2:4; 3:26). However, the brass plates, the Liahona, and the sword of Laban, as the only items of any material value the family possessed, seem to have been viewed as the only inheritable property. When Nephi took these items with him when he separated from Laman and Lemuel, it caused long-lasting resentment. Laman and Lemuel's belief that Nephi robbed them became a deeply held tradition among their descendants. Zeniff recorded that the Lamanites believed what they'd been taught by their fathers regarding Nephi's injustices:

> They were wronged in the wilderness by their brethren, and they were also wronged while crossing the sea; And . . . they said that he had taken the ruling of the people out of their hands; and they sought to kill him. 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 . . . therefore they have an eternal hatred towards the children of Nephi. (Mosiah 10:12, 15–16)

The father of King Lamoni, who was king over all the land of the Lamanites (see Alma 20:8) told Lamoni that Ammon was "one of the children of a liar" (Alma 20:10) and that Nephi "robbed our fathers; and now his children are also come amongst us that they . . . again may rob

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[178] The story of King Mosiah's sons is instructive. Aaron was the eldest son of King Mosiah and should have become king of the Nephites. He refused that position and went with his brothers to teach the gospel (Mosiah 29:2–3). However, "Ammon [was] the chief among them, or rather he did administer unto them, and . . . blessed them according to their several stations" (Alma 17:18). We have no indication from the record as to why Ammon was the leader of this group instead of Aaron but we can infer that it was not because of unworthiness.

us of our property" (Alma 20:13). Ammaron, a Nephite-turned-Lamanite, told Moroni in an epistle that the Nephites' "fathers did wrong their brethren, insomuch that they did rob them of their right to the government when it rightly belonged unto them" (Alma 54:17). The issue of right to rule and property not only created conflict among Nephi's immediate family, but among their descendants for hundreds of years.

Laman and Lemuel clearly understood that they had the right to rule, but they seemed to lack the responsibility of rule. According to Benson, Laman and Lemuel "suffered from a mistaken entitlement expectation."[179] They repeatedly allowed themselves to be acted upon rather than endeavoring to lead. Organ would have said that Laman had poor sportsmanship, which he defined as the quality of a person who does not complain about trivial things, is slow to find fault, tries to make the best out of difficult situations, and tolerates inconveniences.[180] Laman murmured about hard things while Nephi prayed to gain a testimony of them. Laman wanted to give up trying to get the plates after one attempt whereas Nephi refused to do so. Laman complained about Nephi breaking his bow when his own bow had lost its spring while Nephi encouraged his family to be faithful and made a new bow. For all of Laman's complaining about how he should lead, he never did.

This is disappointing, because Laman had leadership ability. Maxwell stated, "The true measure of leadership is influence—nothing more, nothing less."[181] Laman exerted an enormous amount of influence over Lemuel and certain members of Ishmael's family. "And it came to pass that Laman was angry with me, and also with my father; and also was Lemuel, for he hearkened

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[179] Benson, "The Book of Mormon," para. 13.

[180] Dennis W. Organ, *Organizational Citizenship Behavior: It's Nature, Antecedents, and Consequences* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2006), 22.

[181] Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws*, 11.

unto the words of Laman" (1 Nephi 3:28). "And Laman said unto Lemuel and also unto the sons of Ishmael: Behold, let us slay our father, and also our brother Nephi, who has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, who are his elder brethren" (1 Nephi 16:37). Burns said, "The crisis of leadership today is the mediocrity or irresponsibility of" those who should be leading, although Laman and Lemuel exhibited the same deficiency 2,600 years ago.[182]

As stated previously, a leader's focus reveals what type of leader he is. Laman had the responsibility and at least some ability to lead. His energy, however, was focused completely on himself. Because he did not utilize the opportunity that should have been his, it was passed on to Nephi.

Divine Appointment to Leadership

Despite cultural norms and his brothers' outraged insistence that the right to lead was theirs, Nephi knew that at some point he would take over the leadership responsibilities of the group. Early in his record, Nephi recorded that he received a divine mandate to lead. "And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments, thou shalt be made a ruler and a teacher over thy brethren" (1 Nephi 2:22). Later in the record, Laman complained to Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael about Nephi's attempts to lead:

> Nephi . . . has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, who are his elder
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> brethren. Now, he says that the Lord has talked with him, and also that angels have
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> ministered unto him. But behold, we know that he lies unto us; and he tells us these
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> things . . . that he may deceive our eyes, thinking, perhaps, that he may lead us away into
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> some strange wilderness; and after he has led us away, he has thought to make himself a

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[182] Burns, *Leadership*, 1.

king and a ruler over us, that he may do with us according to his will and pleasure. (1

Nephi 16:37–38)

The weakness in Laman's argument was that he did not acknowledge Nephi's divine

appointment to lead. Not only did Nephi receive an angelic witness that he should lead, so did

Laman and Lemuel. When they beat Nephi with a rod, an angel appeared to them and said, "Why

do ye smite your younger brother with a rod? Know ye not that the Lord hath chosen him to be a

ruler over you, and this because of your iniquities?" (1 Nephi 3:29). The angel explained that

Laman and Lemuel had lost the right to rule because of their wickedness. In a moment of crisis

when Laman had the opportunity to demonstrate true leadership, he showed exactly what kind of

leader he would be. Turner described how the rod in Laman's hands was a symbol of authority

and that the angel removed that rod from Laman and placed it in Nephi's hands.[183]

This angelic experience was not enough to remove Laman's desire for power. The

appearance of an angel was problematic, so the only way for them to oppose Nephi's leadership,

Gardner said, was to reject that the event had even occurred (see 1 Nephi 16:38).[184] The angel's

visit, however, was not the only divine sanction of Nephi's leadership. According to Holbrook

Laban's sword could be viewed as a divine transfer of authority, the right to rule:

> As a symbol of power in war, the sword came to be part of the regalia (royal objects)
>
> owned by kings that justified their kingship and rule. The sword was passed on to the heir
>
> as a transfer of authority, and the giving of a sword to the new king was a widespread
>
> feature of coronation ceremonies.[185]

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[183] Rodney Turner, "The Prophet Nephi," in *First Nephi, The Doctrinal Foundation*, (Edited by M. S. Nyman and C. D. Tate Jr. Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1988): 84.

[184] Gardner, *1 Nephi*, 301.

[185] Holbrook, "The Sword," 42.

That sword remained an important symbol of power and leadership among the Nephites. Nephi used it to defend his people (Jacob 1:10) as did King Benjamin (Words of Mormon 1:13). When King Benjamin passed the kingship to his son Mosiah, he gave him the sword as well (Mosiah 1:16).

When the monarchy ended and a system of judges took over (Mosiah 29:11), Mosiah "took the plates of brass, and all the things which he had kept, and conferred them upon Alma" who was the first chief judge and high priest over the church (Mosiah 28:20). It is unclear if the sword and ball were transferred to his care as well, but the plates stayed with him in his role as high priest even after giving up the judgment seat (see Alma 50:38). Later, when Alma's great-grandson Nephi was departing out of the land of Zarahemla, he put his eldest son in charge of "the plates of brass, and all the records which had been kept, and all those things which had been kept sacred from the departure of Lehi out of Jerusalem" (3 Nephi 1:2). It seems clear that in addition to the plates of brass and the other records, the only "things which had been kept sacred" from the time Lehi left Jerusalem included the sword of Laban and the Liahona. They were preserved and passed on until the time that Moroni buried them with his record. Why would that sword be viewed with such sacredness and honor? One reason could be that taking the sword of Laban was a powerful symbol of Nephi's divine right to rule.[186] Unfortunately, the sword was not only a symbol of Nephi's leadership but a reminder of Laman's failure. Gardner explained that Laman's inability to retrieve the plates was the moment when the birthright passed from him to Nephi.[187] Perhaps that explains why the *robbery* of Nephi was such an enduring tradition among the Lamanites.

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[186] Though there is likely no historical connection, it is interesting that the sword and ball are handed down from king to king, not unlike the orb and scepter used in European monarchies.

[187] Gardner, *1 Nephi*, 105.

Despite Laman and Lemuel's frequent protests against Nephi's leadership, it was clear that the right to lead had passed to him. Their unwillingness to follow and lead effectively harmed the entire group. Nephi's divine right to rule, as demonstrated by his retrieving the plates and taking the sword of Laban and proclaimed by the angel, should have convinced them that he should lead. Instead, as Gardner pointed out, "The history of the wilderness journey and crossing the ocean developed into a continual contest between Nephi as leader and his older brothers' reluctant cooperation, resistance, and defiance."[188]

Doctrinal Foundation for Servant Leadership

Nephi's motivation for practicing servant leadership may have stemmed from an innate understanding of the organizational value of service. Perhaps it did not. What we do know is that as a devout follower of Christ, service was part of his covenant responsibility. Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santoro felt that spirituality plays a key role in motivating servant leaders.[189] Nephi's knowledge of the scriptures would have shown him how the Lord valued service and caring for others. For example, the Law of Moses mandated that during certain years unharvested food be left for the poor (Exodus 23:11). At other times, the people were to tithe their produce and use it to care for the Levites, as well as "the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow" (Deuteronomy 14:28-29). The Israelites were told to "not harden [their] heart, nor shut [their] hand from [their] poor brother" (Deuteronomy 15:7) The writer of Proverbs said failure to serve others is a sin (see Proverbs 14:21). Isaiah taught that one of the purposes of fasting is to care for the poor (see Isaiah 58:6-7) and that it is the Spirit of the Lord that inspires us to care for those with whom we interact (see Isaiah 61:1).

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[188] Gardner, *1 Nephi*, 112.

[189] Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora, "Defining," 404.

Nephi's descendants would later write about the importance of service in the gospel of Christ. King Benjamin taught his people that service to others equates to service to God and that part of a leader's obligation is to serve those he or she leads (see Mosiah 2:17–18). He added that service is one way to walk guiltless before God and retain a remission of sins (see Mosiah 4:26). Alma accused the Nephites in Zarahemla of "turning [their] backs upon the poor, and the needy, and in withholding [their] substance from them" (Alma 5:55). Moroni warned those reading his father's record to not love money more than helping others (see Mormon 8:37).

Nephi would not have had access to Christ's teachings from when He lived on the earth, but they also emphasized the value of service. When speaking to a wealthy young man about what it would take to receive eternal life, the Savior told him to use his resources and energy serving the poor (Matthew 19:16–22). He told his disciples that if anyone sought to be great in God's kingdom, service would be the key (Matthew 23:11–12). He also taught them that His purpose in coming to mortality was to serve (Matthew 20:26–28). He modeled that type of leadership during the Last Supper. Christ took time to wash the apostles' feet, despite their protests (John 13:3–8). He then gave a perfect summary of what today is called the servant leadership model. "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:13–14). The Lord was teaching them about leadership. After His death, His disciples would continue to teach one another the importance of serving with love (Galatians 5:13).

The teachings of Christ regarding service are still valued today. During the early days of the restored Church, the Savior warned about the cankerous effects of not serving the poor (see D&C 56:16). Early members of the Church were commanded to look after the needs of the poor so that they didn't suffer (see D&C 38:35). Later, He gave the matter even more emphasis: "And

remember in all things the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted, for he that doeth not these things, the same is not my disciple" (D&C 52:40). At one point he told His Saints that they were "full of all manner of evil" because they didn't serve those in need (D&C 105:3).

In every dispensation the Lord has commanded His people to serve others. It is so critical to our spiritual development that it was recorded in every book of scripture. Christ exemplified what it looked like for a dedicated leader to serve. Nephi understood why service mattered doctrinally and made it a focus in his leadership.

Nephi as a Servant Leader

I have already established Nephi's unique leadership position as well as the effectiveness of his leadership. Nephi was a great leader because he did not simply do what was best for the group but also for the individual members of that group. His relationship with Laman and Lemuel, although strained, provided opportunities for Nephi to serve them. Nephi, however, wasn't just trying to perform acts of service. He *was* a servant leader. Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora believed that this concept of being is at the core of what it means to be a servant leader and reflects a leader's true character.[190]

Servant leaders possess—or have developed—particular attributes that allow them to be effective in their leadership. The following chart summarizes the functional and accompanying attributes of servant leadership and cites instances in which Nephi exemplified it.

Functional and Accompanying Attributes	Description	Nephi's Example
Vision and Communication	The servant leader must have a view of what will come and communicate it in an inspiring way to the	• Lehi tried to give Laman and Lemuel a vision of what they could be (1 Nephi 2:9–10)

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[190] Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora, "Defining," 406.

	organization. The communication must be clear, both verbally and through example.	• Nephi supported his father's vision (1 Nephi 2:16–18) • Nephi spent time seeking greater vision (1 Nephi 11:1; 18:3) • Nephi reminded his brothers of the end goal (1 Nephi 3:15–20; 7:13; 17:42)
Honesty, Integrity and Credibility	Servant leaders must behave in ways that elicit trust from the group. Their words are backed up by action. Repeatedly doing so builds credibility.	• Nephi did what he told his brothers he would (1 Nephi 3:15 and 1 Nephi 4:38) • Nephi did not allow his brothers to worship him (17:55)
Trust and Competence	When a leader demonstrates competence repeatedly over time, it builds trust.	• Nephi's brothers, initially doubtful he can build a boat, saw that it was good (1 Nephi 18:4)
Service and Stewardship	Servant leaders feel accountable for the way they serve their organization.	• 2 Nephi 5 described the growth of their community.
Modeling and Visibility	Servant leaders must act with integrity and model the vision in public as well as in private.	• Nephi corrected the group when they were behaving poorly on the ship (1 Nephi 18:9–10).
Pioneering and Influence, Persuasion	Accomplishing the vision requires servant leaders to blaze new trails. Convincing the group to follow them on that trail requires a great deal of influence and persuasion.	• Nephi took an unknown path to accomplish the objective (1 Nephi 4:6) • Nephi built a boat like no one had seen before (1 Nephi 18:2) • Nephi persuaded his brothers to keep trying (1 Nephi 3:21)
Appreciation of Others and Listening, Encouragement	Servant leaders make the needs of others a priority. They associate with and listen to those they serve and help them to feel significant.	• Nephi took time to respond to his brothers' questions (1 Nephi 15:2–16:5) • Lehi helped his sons feel significant (1 Nephi 2:9–10)
Empowerment and Teaching, Delegation	Empowerment provides followers with the necessary skills and opportunities to succeed. These skills are taught clearly, and employees are given multiple opportunities to practice them.	• Nephi taught his brothers how to gain spiritual understanding for themselves (1 Nephi 15:2–11)

Figure 1: Adapted from Russell and Stone's findings in "A Review," 146–152.

Although Nephi displayed each of the elements in the preceding chart, some of these

attributes are more visible in his leadership than others. Five of those elements are detailed

below. They include the way he cared for Laman and Lemuel, communicated his vision,

persuaded and influenced his group, gained their trust and demonstrated competence, and in how he handled conflict.

Care for Laman and Lemuel

The basic measure of whether someone is a servant leader is how much effort he or she is willing to dedicate to serving followers, including those who may not be immediately receptive. Nephi cared about all the members of his group, and purposefully acted in ways that demonstrated his concern for their welfare (see 1 Nephi 18:10; 19:23). He was especially concerned about Laman and Lemuel, and for good reason. They frequently murmured against the Lord and His prophet (see 1 Nephi 2:11–12; 3:5, 31; 4:4; 16:20, 35–36; 17:17, 20, 22; 2 Nephi 5:3). They seemed unaffected by the appearance of an angel, continuing to murmur and complain (see 1 Nephi 3:31). That isn't surprising, since Nephi declared that they "were past feeling, that [they] could not feel his words" (1 Nephi 17:45). Nephi would later teach that "Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost" (2 Nephi 32:3). If Laman and Lemuel's unrighteousness disqualified them from feeling the influence of the Holy Ghost, then an angel speaking by the power of the Holy Ghost would not have an effect on them.

Nephi had more reasons to be concerned about his brothers. The voice of the Lord had warned Nephi that Laman and Lemuel might rebel and be "cut off from the presence of the Lord" (1 Nephi 2:21). An angel had declared that they were iniquitous (see 1 Nephi 3:29). Lehi's vision of the tree of life caused him to "fear exceedingly" because of them (1 Nephi 8:4, 17–18, 35–37). Perhaps most alarming was their tendency towards violence and desire to commit patricide and fratricide (see 1 Nephi 3:28; 7:16; 16:37; 17:48; 18:11; 2 Nephi 5:2–3).

Laman and Lemuel had demonstrated that they were an offensive appendage that deserved to be removed (see Matthew 5:29–30). It would have been more convenient for Nephi

and Lehi to separate from Laman and Lemuel earlier in the journey. That separation would not have been difficult as both brothers repeatedly expressed a desire to return to Jerusalem (1 Nephi 2:11, 13; 7:6–7; 16: 36; 17:20–21). If Nephi were solely focused on the success of the journey and his own well-being, he may have decided to abandon his brothers to Jerusalem's fate (1 Nephi 1:13).

Nephi's servant-leader mindset would not allow him to do that. When they decided to return to Jerusalem after enlisting Ishmael's family into their group, Nephi reminded them of the promises of the Lord and related Jerusalem's wickedness and eventual destruction. He then told them what would happen if they returned. "If ye will return unto Jerusalem ye shall also perish with them. And now, if ye have choice, go up to the land, and remember words which I speak unto you" (1 Nephi 7:15). Nephi's bluntness is evidence of his concern for their welfare. If he didn't care about them, he'd simply have let them go. Because he cared for their long-term success, he had to be clear with them. As Elder D. Todd Christofferson (2015) taught "There is no kindness in misdirecting people."[191] Even his declaration that they could return to Jerusalem if they chose was more of an invitation to use their agency than a surrender. He did not want his brothers to return to Jerusalem. Why else would he confront them again after he'd been loosed from the bonds with which they'd bound him (see 1 Nephi 7:18)?

There were other opportunities to abandon Laman and Lemuel if Nephi were more focused on his own welfare than his desire to serve and help them. When their group was starving, Laman and Lemuel did nothing to help the situation. Nephi could have focused on finding food for just his family and his parents. Instead, he took it upon himself to provide for the

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[191] D. Todd Chrisofferson, Interview by Michael Otterson, *Church Newsroom,* Nov. 6, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEEMyc6aZms (accessed April 3, 2019).

entire group, which at that point was made up of at least twenty people. This should not have been Nephi's responsibility, but his desire to serve and help superseded all else.

There are more incidences in which Nephi's care for and desire to serve his brothers was apparent:

- used persuasion in his efforts to help his brothers act appropriately (see 1 Nephi 3:21; 19:23).

- encouraged them to continue trying when things became difficult (see 1 Nephi 3:15, 4:1–2; 16:22).

- forgave them quickly, even after they acted violently against him (see 1 Nephi 7:20–21; 17:55).

- spent time teaching them and helping them to understand things that were difficult, even though he was feeling frustrated and overwhelmed (see 1 Nephi 15:4–6; 22:1–3).

Not only does Nephi show great love and service towards Laman, Lemuel, and the rest of their traveling group, but also toward his people after they separate from the Lamanites. He exerted a great deal of effort in teaching them how to build a new community (see 2 Nephi 5:15, 17), defending them against the Lamanites (see 2 Nephi 5:14), and making sure the word of God was taught (2 Nephi 6–10). Nephi summarized his own efforts to serve his people by saying "I did for them according to that which was in my power" (2 Nephi 5:18).

The type of effort that Nephi put forth to serve and care for his family and followers, particularly Laman and Lemuel, is the hallmark of servant leadership. His focus was on them and their development rather than on his own self-interests. This is likely the reason his entire family was able to make it to the promised land.

Vision and Communication

Scripture frequently describes prophets who received visions from the Lord. These visions were often revelations regarding future events or outcomes. The term vision is also used in organizational settings to describe the outcome that a leader is striving to achieve. Greenleaf believed that vision is critical to the success of a servant leader. He said the servant leader "needs to have a sense for the unknowable and be able to foresee the unforeseeable."[192] That ability to foresee allows a leader to direct a course that leads to the desired outcome. Russell and Stone added that the leader must establish "a strategic vision for the organization."[193] The strategy involves executing the vision effectively, but also communicating it in a way that inspires, empowers, and unites people in the organization. One way to clearly communicate a vision is verbally or in writing. The best way, Stone said, is the behavior of the leader in striving for that vision. The effort, energy, and consistency with which a leader promotes and lives the vision speaks volumes.

Nephi learned much about the importance of vision from his father. Nephi recorded four instances in which Lehi's vision directly impacted the group. The first was received after he prayed "with all his heart, in behalf of his people" and witnessed the potential destruction of Jerusalem, causing him to cry repentance to the people (1 Nephi 1:5–13). The second came after he tried to warn the people of that destruction and they threatened to kill him (see 1 Nephi 1:19–20). The Lord warned Lehi that he was in danger and needed to leave (see 1 Nephi 2:1–2). The third, the Tree of Life vision, came after Nephi and his brethren returned with Ishmael's family.

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[192] Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership,* 21–22.

[193] Russell and Stone, "A Review," 147.

Each of these visions was a powerful manifestation of the Lord's will communicated to a prophet.

The fourth vision was Lehi's vision of what his eldest sons could be like if they kept the commandments. This may have been revealed to him by the Lord, but from the record it seems that he initiated it himself. When they arrived at their first stopping point early in their journey, Lehi took the opportunity to inspire and empower his sons by comparing their surroundings with what he hoped their lives would become.

And it came to pass that he called the name of the river, Laman, and it emptied into the Red Sea; and the valley was in the borders near the mouth thereof. And when my father saw that the waters of the river emptied into the fountain of the Red Sea, he spake unto Laman, saying: O that thou mightest be like unto this river, continually running into the fountain of all righteousness! And he also spake unto Lemuel: O that thou mightest be like unto this valley, firm and steadfast, and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord! (1 Nephi 2:8–10)

Nephi said that Lehi did this because of how stiffnecked Laman and Lemuel were. In an effort to inspire them to live better, he demonstrated what they could be like. Before he died, Lehi again attempted to inspire his sons to live a higher standard by inviting them to "awake from a deep sleep," "shake off the awful chains by which [they were] bound," and "be men" (2 Nephi 1:13, 21). Lehi's care for his sons motivated him to inspire them to a greater vision of what they could be if they chose to act.

Nephi first demonstrated the importance of having a vision by valuing the vision his father had. He took the time to be sure he believed in and could support the vision (see 1 Nephi 2:16) and then shared that belief with his brothers (see 1 Nephi 2:17–18). Nephi later received a

vision similar to his father about the promised land (see 1 Nephi 2:20) and the tree of life (see 1 Nephi 11–14). Nephi frequently reminded his brothers of the purpose of their journey—arriving at the land of promise (see 1 Nephi 3:15–20; 7:13; 17:42). Nephi knew that if they kept the vision as their focus it would affect the decisions they made. Nephi spent significant time and effort trying to obtain a greater vision. "And I, Nephi, did go into the mount oft, and I did pray oft unto the Lord; wherefore the Lord showed unto me great things" (1 Nephi 18:3). Later Nephi reflected on the results of that effort. "And upon the wings of his Spirit hath my body been carried away upon exceedingly high mountains. And mine eyes have beheld great things" (2 Nephi 4:25). The thing the Lord showed Nephi allowed him to move forward with confidence despite obstacles that he knew would come.

Nephi's efforts to teach the vision were effective, but he also demonstrated through his actions that he believed in the vision and knew it was important. After their first attempt to get the plates he did not give up and return home (1 Nephi 3:15–20). When his brothers and some members of Ishmael's family wanted to return to Jerusalem, he made sure they clearly understood his father's vision about what would happen to that city before he allowed them to leave (1 Nephi 7:13–15).

Nephi not only had a vision of events that would occur in the future, he could foresee the outcomes of specific choices and how it would affect the group's ultimate goal. He related to his brothers what would happen if they didn't retrieve the brass plates:

And behold, it is wisdom in God that we should obtain these records, that we may preserve unto our children the language of our fathers; And also that we may preserve unto them the words which have been spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets,

which have been delivered unto them by the Spirit and power of God, since the world

began, even down unto this present time. (1 Nephi 3:19–20)

He understood what would happen to Laman and Lemuel if they returned to Jerusalem (see 1 Nephi 7:15). Leaving Jerusalem was inconvenient but being carried away captive to Babylon would have been even more so. As leaders seek to use their foresight to help in decision making, they need to remember that immediate convenience is not always the goal.

Having an effective vision and communicating it well is critical for people in any organization to succeed. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18), and so do leaders. If a leader is unable to communicate his or her vision effectively, those led will not be inspired to begin the journey. Lehi's visions determined the direction the group decided to travel, but Nephi's support for and communication of the vision determined the success of the journey.

Persuasion and Influence

Russell and Stone taught that persuasion is a critical skill to develop as servant leaders work to inspire those they lead.[194] Effective persuasion allows a leader to determine, to some degree, the type of follower an employee will be. Greenleaf knew the value of persuasion in leadership. "A leader initiates, provides the ideas and the structure, and takes the risk of failure along with the change of success. A leader says: I will go; follow me! while knowing that the path is uncertain, even dangerous."[195] The greater the uncertainty in the journey or the sacrifice required, the more necessary persuasion becomes.

Because of the uncertain nature of their exodus and the poor followership of Laman and Lemuel, Nephi spent a great deal of time persuading his brothers to support their father's vision.

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[194] Russell and Stone, "A Review," 151.

[195] Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership,* 15.

It appears from the text that Nephi had to do very little to persuade his brother Sam to help achieve the vision. Laman and Lemuel required more work because they were "stiffnecked" (1 Nephi 2:11), "swift to do iniquity but slow to remember the Lord [their] God" (1 Nephi 17:45), and "past feeling, that [they] could not feel [the Lord's] words" (1 Nephi 17:45). Nephi therefore had to persuade his brothers to do things they were not thrilled about, and for the most part he was effective. When they wanted to return to their father's tent, Nephi inspired them to keep trying until they did what the Lord had commanded, reminded them of the future destruction of Jerusalem, and the importance of obtaining the plates of brass (1 Nephi 3:15–20). "And it came to pass that after this manner of language did I persuade my brethren, that they might be faithful in keeping the commandments of God" (1 Nephi 3:21). Nephi understood that it was, in part, his manner of language, the way that he spoke to them, that persuaded them to not give up. Effective persuasion requires effective communication, which requires an effective vision to inspire followers. That is why Nephi chose to utilize the words of Isaiah when he wanted to "more fully persuade [his brothers] to believe in the Lord their Redeemer" (1 Nephi 19:23).

One way to measure the effectiveness of a servant leader's persuasiveness is by his or her influence. Maxwell said, "If you can't influence people, then they will not follow you. And if people won't follow, you are not a leader."[196] For all of their objections to Nephi's leadership, Nephi exercised significant influence over his brothers. After the angel departed, Laman and Lemuel complained about how challenging their task was. Nephi tried to persuade them to follow him anyway and even though "they were yet wroth, and did still continue to murmur . . . they did follow [Nephi]" (1 Nephi 4:4). Nephi's influence convinced Laman and Lemuel to act in ways that were for their benefit, even when they couldn't recognize it.

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[196] Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws*, 20.

A later example shows even greater influence. After separating from Laman and Lemuel, those that followed Nephi felt they "should call the name of the place Nephi; wherefore, [they] did call it Nephi" (2 Nephi 5:8). As they began to settle in their new land, the people wanted him to be their king. "But I, Nephi, was desirous that they should have no king" (2 Nephi 5:18). Nephi's hesitation to be their king did not prevent him from serving them, nor did it check the desire they had that he be their king. Jacob made that clear when he began preaching to the people. "I, Jacob, having been called of God . . . and having been consecrated by my brother Nephi, unto whom ye look as a king or a protector, and on whom ye depend for safety" (2 Nephi 6:2). It didn't matter that Nephi wasn't the king. The people considered him as such. That's influence, and it lasted his entire life. After his death, Jacob commented that "the people . . . loved Nephi exceedingly, he having been a great protector for them" (Jacob 1:10).

Someone could argue that Nephi used persuasion in some instances, but at times he responded too forcefully toward his brothers. Frequently his "manner of language" (1 Nephi 3:21) evoked a powerful negative reaction from his brothers (see 1 Nephi 7:16; 16:1; 17:48; 18:10). However, their reaction said more about them than Nephi. When they accused him of speaking hard things to them, he told them that he knew he "had spoken hard things against the wicked, according to the truth . . . wherefore, the guilty taketh the truth to be hard, for it cutteth them to the very center" (1 Nephi 16:1–2).

Nephi's words and actions were purposeful and calculated, like the Savior making a scourge to drive the money changers out of the temple (John 2:15). Most important, they were directed by the Lord. When Nephi chastised his brothers for wanting to return to Jerusalem, he said the Spirit of the Lord constrained him to tell them those things (1 Nephi 7:15). When they rebelled against him at the seashore, the Lord told him to stretch forth his hand so he could shock

them (1 Nephi 17:53). Even though some of these words and actions do not appear to be Christ-like, Nephi was the perfect example of how the Lord said a Christ-like leader should act:

> No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile—Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy. (D&C 121:41–43)

The Lord stated that influence should be exerted by persuasion, but also that reproof is at times necessary, although it should always be followed by increased love. In each of the instances in which Nephi's words or actions could be viewed as too sharp, a demonstration of love immediately followed. He "frankly forgave them" (see 1 Nephi 7:21), felt joy because of their humility (see 1 Nephi 16:5) and responded to their worship with patient humility (1 Nephi 17:55). Nephi's words and actions were always measured to be for his brother's benefit rather than his own. His persuasion was constant, caring, divinely mandated, at times forceful, and always motivated by love, which is why his influence was so great.

Trust, Competence, and Humility

Servant leaders frequently go out of their way to serve those they lead. However, if a leader has not developed a trusting relationship with those he or she leads, the follower could question the leader's motives and the service rendered would be ineffective. Yukl said that when a servant leader is viewed as trustworthy, followers' confidence in the leaders decision-making increases.[197] If a leader wants to build a reputation of trustworthiness, he or she must be

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[197] Yukl, *Leadership*, 24.

consistent in his or her integrity. De Pree added that "trust grows when people see leaders translate their personal integrity into organizational fidelity."[198] The law of emulation would hopefully induce followers to do the same thing. Joseph and Winston performed a study that demonstrated that one way to build trust and improve organizational performance is to practice and develop the functional servant leadership attributes mentioned earlier, or in other words, become a better servant leader.[199]

Leader competence is essential to establishing trust. De Pree said "For trust to be maintained over time, leaders must demonstrate competence in their jobs—just like everyone else."[200] Laman and Lemuel's belief that Nephi was attempting to usurp power caused them to mistrust his motives. In addition to his persuasiveness and caring, Nephi's competence eventually increased Laman and Lemuel's trust in his decision-making.

Competence is "the quality or state of having sufficient knowledge, judgment, skill, or strength."[201] Early on Nephi demonstrated that he was qualified and able to resolve a number of difficult situations. He retrieved the plates from Laban when Laman was unable to (see 1 Nephi 3:11–14; 4:18–24). He possessed the knowledge necessary to make his own bow and arrow to provide food for the entire group (see 1 Nephi 16:23, 31).

The incident in which Laman and Lemuel demonstrated the least amount of trust in Nephi concluded with Nephi demonstrating incredible competence. After arriving at the seashore, Nephi was commanded by the Lord to construct a ship that would carry their party

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[198] Max De Pree, *Leading Without Power: Finding Hope in Serving Community,* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997), 127.

[199] Joseph and Winston, "A Correlation," 16.

[200] De Pree, *Leading*, 321.

[201] Merriam Webster Online Dictionary. Accessed 6/5/19. https://www.merriam-webster.com.

across the sea to the promised land. The Lord promised to show Nephi how to build it (see 1 Nephi 17:8). When Nephi's brothers discovered what he was attempting, they mocked him, saying "Our brother is a fool, for he thinketh that he can build a ship; yea, and he also thinketh that he can cross these great waters" (1 Nephi 17:17). Nephi added that his brothers would not help him because they did not believe he could build a ship or that the Lord was instructing him (1 Nephi 17:18). Their trust in him was low.

As previously discussed, Nephi was able to persuade his brothers to help him build the ship. As it was being constructed, his brothers noticed that it was unlike any ship they had ever seen, for "it was not after the manner of men" (1 Nephi 18:2). This did not concern his brothers because they "beheld that it was good, and that the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine" (1 Nephi 18:4). Nephi's competence in ship building had been proven, and as a result his brother's trust in him increased. Not only were Laman and Lemuel impressed with how the ship looked, but when the Lord commanded them to enter the ship and sail to the promised land, they were confident enough in its construction that they "did all go down into the ship, with [their] wives and [their] children" (1 Nephi 18:6). Without trust they never would have allowed their families to enter the ship.

Throughout all of these experiences, Nephi could have developed an egotistical view of himself. His success, strength, and ability could have led to pride. This is a real danger in any leadership position. As servant leaders seek to demonstrate competence before their followers, they must remember the need for humility. Van Dierendonck (2011) described how a humble leader doesn't seek the spotlight or take credit for accomplishments.

Nephi was keenly aware of what he was able to do and where he was lacking. Rather than taking full credit for his remarkable strength, Nephi described how he was able to do

physically difficult things because he was "large in stature, and also . . . received much strength of the Lord" (1 Nephi 4:31). He did not allow his brothers to worship him, but directed their fealty toward their parents and to God (1 Nephi 17:55). Because Nephi's focus was on doing the Lord's will and serving others, humility came easier. When our focus is on ourselves, humility becomes difficult.

Nephi's humility allowed him and others to view his accomplishments with a correct perspective. This only augmented their view of his competence and the trust they had in him. Because they trusted him, they were more willing to accept his help and direction, to the benefit of the entire group.

Conflict Management

No matter how effective a leader is, he or she will at some point deal with conflict, whether that is external or internal to the organization. At times, the leader must mediate between two followers. Sometimes a follower will have an issue with something the leader has done. A leader must be prepared to effectively resolve the conflict. Mdletshe (2019) believed that the way a leader responded to challenges and conflict was the true test of character. Servant leaders are uniquely qualified to handle conflict because of their focus on the interests of others and the attributes they possess.

Jit, Sharma, and Kawatra studied how servant leaders responded to conflict and found they were extremely adept at handling it.[202] This was because the leader's focus on *others* versus *self*-determined the style of conflict resolution that was employed. Based on the work of Rahim and Bonoma they described how those with a low concern for others and a low concern for self

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[202] Jit, Sharma, and Kawatra, "Servant Leadership," 606.

will use an Avoiding Style.[203] Those with a high concern for self but low concern for others will use a Dominating Style. Because servant leaders are highly concerned about others they will utilize an Obliging, Compromising, or Integrating Style, depending on how concerned for self they are.[204] As a result of their study, Jit, Sharma, and Shekhar discovered key elements of conflict resolution that servant leaders typically employed:

- Because servant leaders view themselves as servants, they will approach the conflict with a desire to help and repair.

- In test studies, they found that servant leaders "exercised self-restraint and retained composure and patience" when resolving conflict. They also "turned insubordination into understanding and lasting relationship of positivity."[205]

- Listening and discussion, they found, were utilized to great effect in resolving the issue.

- Whether they are mediating between two people or responding to conflict directly, the attributes of persuasion, humility, and being employee-focused were prevalent.

The same pattern is obvious in Nephi's efforts to resolve conflict in his group. The conflicts he faced were multi-faceted, although they always involved Laman and Lemuel. The major point of conflict was Nephi's leadership, which he had to resolve directly. Two other points involved his brothers' reaction to the decision to leave Jerusalem and the difficulty of not finding food in the wilderness. The food issue was a response to an external situation, the other two were directed towards individuals in the group, Nephi and Lehi. Nephi's attempts to resolve the conflict in each of these situations reflected a deep desire to serve and care for others.

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[203] Afzalur Rahim and Thomas V. Bonoma, "Managing Organizational Conflict: A Model for Diagnosis and Intervention," *Psychological Reports* 44 no. 3 (1979): 1327.

[204] Rahim and Bonoma, "Managing," 1327.

[205] Jit, Sharma, and Kawatra, "Servant Leadership," 609.

A few of Nephi's conflict resolution tactics were worth noting. First, when providing feedback and chastisement, which is necessary even for servant leaders, it should be based on true principles and established policies. When Laman and Lemuel were offended because of the things Nephi said to them, he reminded them that all he had done was teach the truth, "wherefore, the guilty taketh the truth to be hard, for it cutteth them to the very center" (1 Nephi 16:2). In this way, there is less room for residual anger or resentment directed at the leader. It also provides a more authoritative source for the feedback than merely the leader's preference.

Second, Nephi had the challenge of reorienting his brothers, who had a very negative perspective. One of their arguments against leaving Jerusalem was that their father had misjudged the Jews. "We know that the people who were in the land of Jerusalem were a righteous people; for they kept the statutes and judgments of the Lord, and all his commandments, according to the law of Moses; wherefore, we know that they are a righteous people" (1 Nephi 17:22). A leader will at times work with people with incorrect perceptions. The skillful leader not only will correct them but help them adjust their perspective. Because Laman and Lemuel referenced the Law of Moses to describe the righteousness of the Jews, Nephi used the story of Moses and the children of Israel to help them understand what righteousness does and does not look like (see 1 Nephi 17:23–43).

Earlier in that same chapter, Nephi described his group's experience as they traveled through the wilderness. "And so great were the blessings of the Lord upon us, that while we did live upon raw meat in the wilderness, *our women did give plenty of suck for their children, and were strong*, yea, even like unto the men; and they began to bear their journeyings without murmurings" (1 Nephi 17:2; italics added). When they refused to help Nephi build the ship, Laman and Lemuel described the same experience in completely different terms. "We have

wandered in the wilderness for these many years; and *our women have toiled, being big with child; and they have borne children in the wilderness and suffered all things*, save it were death; and it would have been better that they had died before they came out of Jerusalem than to have suffered these afflictions (1 Nephi 17:20; italics added). Regardless of who is right in this instance, part of conflict resolution involves understanding that two sides may be viewing the same event differently. Patience, listening, persuasion, and humility will allow those two sides to gain greater understanding of truth.

Third, an effective leader is honest about consequences when giving feedback. In an effort to be kind, a leader may choose to not mention where a challenging situation may lead. Such a leader is showing that he or she does not care about the other person. If Nephi didn't care about his brothers, he would have allowed them to return to Jerusalem with no reservation. Because of his concern for their welfare, he had to let them know where it would lead. "Now behold, I say unto you that if ye will return unto Jerusalem ye shall also perish with them" (1 Nephi 7:15).

Finally, despite all of a servant leader's efforts to resolve conflict in ways that benefit both parties, there may be times when the only appropriate resolution is to separate. In an organizational setting, that may mean someone loses a job. For Nephi, it meant splitting the group apart. Nephi had patiently endured his brothers murmuring and hostility for years. When it became obvious that things were going to become worse, he separated himself from that negativity (2 Nephi 5:5). Because Nephi cared about those he served, including all the people not named Laman and Lemuel, he chose a path that was difficult, but right.

Nephi was effective at handling conflict because of his servant-leader focus. He possessed the necessary attributes to not escalate the situation, but to seek a peaceful resolution,

even when the people he led were acting in hostile ways. Following Nephi's example when dealing with disenchanted followers would create more space for understanding in organizations today.

Conclusion

The servant leadership model has helped managers to focus their efforts on the people they lead more than the organizations they lead. This has created more of a mindset of service that is benefitting organizational cultures worldwide. The concepts of servant leadership, as explained here, are only a few decades old, but the over-arching principles of servant leadership have been practiced for hundreds of years. Nephi didn't know the details of servant leadership, but he did understand why a leader should serve, and that changed the way he chose to lead.

Someone could argue that Nephi was not an effective servant leader because of his inability to create a permanent change in Laman and Lemuel. Our focus has been on Nephi's interactions with Laman and Lemuel. However, they represent only two members of the group. Nephi was leading and serving more than just the two of them. When the relationship became too toxic, he was commanded to cut ties with that part of the group. That may be viewed as a failure, but the results were successful for those who followed him. "And the Lord was with us; and we did prosper exceedingly; for we did sow seed, and we did reap again in abundance. . . . And it came to pass that we began to prosper exceedingly, and to multiply in the land. . . . And we lived after the manner of happiness" (2 Nephi 5:11, 13, 27). Looking at the entire group, Nephi experienced great success, and as discussed before, his influence speaks for itself. Nephi was able to create a society that experienced great prosperity and happiness, in part because of the way he led. Sendjaya, Sarros, and Santora said that the purpose of servant leadership is to

"elevates leaders and followers both morally and ethically."[206] Nephi strove for that and for the

majority of his group, succeeded.

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[206] Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora, "Defining," 403.

Chapter Three: Transformational vs. Servant Leadership

Analyzing the character and leadership of Nephi and Captain Moroni reveals a surprising number of similarities. This is unsurprising for two reasons. First, both men were devoted followers of Christ and adhered to the same moral principles. Second, both of the leadership philosophies I have compared to these Book of Mormon leaders, transformational and servant leadership, are considered "high-order evolutions in leadership paradigms" and "emphasize a high concern for people and for production."[207] The primary difference between the two philosophies stems from the priority given to each emphasis. This chapter analyzes the similarities and differences between transformational and servant leadership and how those similarities and differences are demonstrated in Moroni and Nephi's leadership.

Similarities

Transformational and servant leadership "have relatively analogous characteristics" because they both strive "to define and explain people-oriented leadership styles."[208] Both leadership styles understand the capacity of followers and endeavor to help followers recognize the value they have. Transformational and servant leaders expect their efforts to cause a change to take place with their followers that will benefit the follower and the organization.

Each of the four components of TFL—the Four I's—can be paired with one of the functional and/or accompanying attributes of servant leadership. Idealized influence, like modeling and visibility, encourages followers to emulate a leader because of his or her integrity. Moroni and Nephi were both role models their people loved and looked up to (see 2 Nephi 33:15; Jacob 1:10; Alma 48:11–13, 17; 53:2). Moroni (inspirational motivation) and Nephi

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[207] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 356.

[208] Ibid., 354.

(vision and communication) encouraged their people to work toward a shared vision (see Alma 46:12–13; 1 Nephi 2:20). Both leaders used what looked like intellectual stimulation and pioneering and influence to help their people do things that had never been done before (see 1 Nephi 18:2; Alma 49:9, 11).

The transformational component of individualized consideration is where these leadership styles are the most similar. Both emphasize the importance of responding to the needs of followers in ways that demonstrate their value to the organization. Moroni's individualized concern for each city he was trying to fortify (see Alma 49:14) and Nephi's care for Laman and Lemuel (see 1 Nephi 7:20–21) reveal their desire to respond to their followers needs on an individual basis.

<div align="center">**Differences**</div>

While many of the outcomes and behaviors of transformational and servant leaders are similar, their focus is entirely different. Transformational leaders care about their followers, but their primary objective is to achieve the goals of the organization they belong to. "His or her behavior builds follower commitment toward the organizational objectives through empowering followers to accomplish those objectives."[209] When Moroni created a culture of innovation among the Nephites, he wasn't doing it to help his followers be innovative. He knew it would help them meet the ultimate objective of the Nephite people.

This does not mean that transformational leaders neglect their followers. Even though the focus is not on follower development, their efforts to help followers achieve the objective of the organization results in "enhanced follower performance."[210] The best transformational leaders

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[209] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 354.

[210] Ibid., 355.

care deeply about the progress of those they lead. However, if a decision has to be made between the needs of the organization and those of the follower, a transformational leader's choice is clear. Moroni cared a great deal about the welfare of his people. However, when their actions interfered with the success of the group, Moroni did not hesitate to support the organization (see Alma 51; 60).

Some have praised the morality and selflessness of the transformational leader's efforts to empower their followers to become more than they could be otherwise, while critics have viewed the transformational focus on organization as a deficiency that could lead to egotism and have suggested that servant leadership—because of its selfless motivation—is the cure.[211]

Transformational and servant leaders view their roles differently. "The role of servant leaders is to serve followers, whereas the role of transformational leaders is to inspire followers to pursue organizational goals."[212] For servant leaders, the leading takes place in their interactions with their followers, which they view as more important than the goals of the organization.[213] "The servant leader does not serve with a focus on results; rather the servant leader focuses on service itself."[214] If Nephi's focus was on the organization he was leading rather than the people, then it would have been better to allow Laman and Lemuel to go back to Jerusalem. However, he cared more about them than he did about the inconvenience they were causing him and continued to reach out to and serve them.

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[211] Jeanine Parolini, Kathleen Patterson and Bruce Winston, "Distinguishing Between Transformational and Servant Leadership," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 30 no. 3 (2009): 275. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730910949544 (accessed April 4, 2019).

[212] Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora, "Defining," 403.

[213] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 355.

[214] Ibid., 355.

Scholars have identified positive aspects about both styles of leadership. Servant leaders seem to "demonstrate the natural inclination to serve marginalized people."[215] Organizations experiencing dramatic changes would benefit from being led by a transformational leader.[216] On the other hand, Schneider and George suggested that because of its voluntary workforce, non-profit organizations would benefit from servant leadership rather than TFL.[217]

As the pros and cons of each leadership style are considered, it is important to keep in mind that "transformational leadership and servant leadership are not antithetical, nor is either paradigm inherently superior to the other."[218] Despite the fundamental difference in their focus, these theories are "similar, complementary but distinctly different concepts."[219] A leader may incorporate aspects into their leadership style that reflect different philosophies. Some of Nephi's actions, for example, appear very transformational. However, I maintain that Nephi acted as a servant leader because these are made based on "the extent to which the leader is able to shift the primary focus of his or her leadership from the organization to the follower."[220] Moroni and Nephi were different in their approach to leadership, yet both were effective and successful leaders and achieved the goal shared by both philosophies—leading their followers to "higher levels of motivation and morality."[221]

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[215] Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora, "Defining," 403.

[216] Parolini, Patterson and Winston, "Distinguishing," 278.

[217] Sherry K. Schneider and Winnette M. George, "Servant Leadership Versus Transformational Leadership in Voluntary Service Organizations," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 32 no. 1 (2011): 63. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437731111099283 (accessed March 14, 2019).

[218] Stone, Russell, and Patterson, "Transformational," 356.

[219] Ibid.

[220] Ibid., 354.

[221] Sendjaya, Sarros and Santora, "Defining," 403.

Chapter Four: Followership

After asking who the greatest leader and who the greatest follower was, Stephen Owen said the answer to both questions was Jesus Christ. "He is the greatest leader because He is the greatest follower—He follows His Father perfectly, in all things. . . . In God's eyes, the greatest leaders have always been the greatest followers."[222] Followership has only recently become a serious focus of academic study, but the principle is recognizable in the lives of leaders in the Book of Mormon. Much like the Savior they served, Nephi, Moroni, and other righteous Book of Mormon leaders were acting simultaneously as leaders and followers. As disciples of Jesus Christ they were committed to following His will while leading their people. This commitment to Christ determined their leadership decisions. In order to understand what made Nephi and Moroni effective leaders, we need to understand what made them effective followers.

Effective Followership

Essential characteristics of effective followership are exemplified by Book of Mormon leaders and will be discussed below as I analyze the actions of Nephi and Captain Moroni.

Highly Participative

When given a difficult assignment to fulfill, Nephi responded that he would "go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded" (1 Nephi 3:7). Moroni knew the danger that his people would soon face and strengthened "the armies of the Nephites and . . . did fortify and strengthen the land" (Alma 48:8-9). Both leaders were proactive and took initiative in response to challenges, choosing "to act" rather than "to be acted upon" (2 Nephi 2:14).

A Critical Thinker

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[222] Stephen W. Owen, "The Greatest Leaders are the Greatest Followers," *Ensign,* (May 2016), 70, 75.

As Nephi was being taught by the Holy Ghost and angels, his responses to questions demonstrated a sincere effort to learn and a deep level of contemplation. Even when he did not fully understand, he responded by expressing confidence in what he did know and admitting his lack of understanding: "I know that [God] loveth his children; nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things" (1 Nephi 11:17). This attitude allowed him receive answers he needed and to share what he had learned with his family.

Courageously Dissents

Nephi was following his father and the Lord, yet cultural norms would have had him being led by Laman and Lemuel. When they failed to live up to their familial obligations, he called them out. "Behold, ye are mine elder brethren, and how is it that ye . . . have need that I, your younger brother, should speak unto you, yea, and be an example for you?" (1 Nephi 7:8). Even when asked by the Lord to kill Laban, Nephi did not immediately obey. Rather, he openly expressed his concern. This gave the Lord an opportunity to explain why that action was necessary. Nephi gained understanding and "therefore, [he] did obey the voice of the" Lord confidently (1 Nephi 4:10-18). Had he not questioned how killing Laban could be right and had simply obeyed, he may have always wondered if he had done the right thing.

Shares Credit

Moroni's enemies believed that he was victorious in his first recorded battle because of his cunning and the armor he provided his army (Alma 44:9), but he publicly expressed that it was because of God's intervention (Alma 44:3–5). Nephi recorded that his father Lehi "had fulfilled all the commandments of the Lord which had been given unto him" even though it was Nephi who had done much of the work to accomplish them (1 Nephi 16:8).

Admits Mistakes

Nephi could have left out any reference to his own weaknesses in his record, yet he admitted how often he grieved "because of the temptations and sins which . . . so easily beset" him (2 Nephi 4:18). He humbly confessed his own faults while expressing his confidence that God would assist him.

Habitually Exercises Superior Judgment

Moroni knew that his armies would be unable to gain any ground while there was unrest among the Nephites, so he made the difficult but correct decision to focus his efforts on the rebellion in the capital rather than on the Lamanite armies (Alma 53:7–8). Although in the short term it meant that they lost ground to their enemies, it eventually led to victory.

Nephi was not the official leader in any of the examples given above, but because he was such a good follower, he proved to the Lord and his people that he could lead effectively. Effective followers become natural choices in an organization when leadership positions must be filled. These individuals develop closer relationships with those in leadership roles because of their trustworthiness and dependability. Because they have proven they can follow effectively, they are frequently selected to fill "formal leadership positions over time. More than any other measurable attribute" Latour and Rast said, "this phenomenon clarifies the interactive nature of the leader-follower relationship."[223] Importantly, Latour and Rast said that effective followers soon find themselves in "*formal* leadership" situations. That formality acknowledges the reality that they are already fulfilling leadership roles even without official positions by virtue of their effective followership. "Followership" Kelley stated, "is not a person but a role, and what distinguishes followers from leaders is not intelligence or character but the role they play."[224]

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[223] Latour, "Dynamic Followership," 105.

[224] Kelley, "Praise," 146.

When Nephi questioned the command to kill Laban, he was given clarification, but that does not always happen. A leader may not always choose or be at liberty to give all the reasons for his or her requests. This is one of the true tests of followership. Maroosis explained how "there is something the follower does not know, that the follower cannot or will not see, that leadership brings to the relationship."[225] For example, when the Lord commanded Nephi to make a second set of plates recording the history of his people, Nephi acknowledged that "the Lord [commanded him] to make these plates for a wise purpose, which purpose [he knew] not. But the Lord knoweth all things" (1 Nephi 9:5–6). This does not mean that followers blindly obey every request of their leaders. Effective followers are also critical thinkers. However, it does mean that the followers understand that there is certain information that leaders will not be able to share.

Chaleff said that what is needed in every organization is the courageous follower. This is someone who has the courage to stand up to their leaders but also to stand up for them.[226] When Nephi's brothers questioned whether the Lord was capable of helping them retrieve the brass plates (1 Nephi 3:31), Nephi defended the Lord and extolled his strengths (1 Nephi 4:1). Followers who fear their coworkers more than their leader are bound to make wrong decisions in critical moments. Nephi did not fear his brothers and made the faithful choice to trust the Lord. Chaleff added:

> It is important for a group to remember its leader's strengths, which sometimes are forgotten or taken for granted. Whatever flaws a leader may have, her strengths may be holding the organization together or contributing significantly to the organization's

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[225] James Maroosis, "Leadership: A Partnership in Reciprocal Following," in *The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations*, (Edited by Ronald E. Riggio, et al. San Francisco: Wiley & Sons, 2008): 18. http://ebookcentral.proquest.com (accessed November 30, 2017).

[226] Ira Chaleff, *The Courageous Follower: Standing up to and for Our Leaders,* (Oakland: Berrett-Koehler, 2009), 62. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com (accessed June 20, 2019).

purpose. A courageous follower who encounters chronic complaining challenges the group to remember the leader's strengths.[227]

Lehi, as the leader of his family, must have been grateful to have someone like Nephi on his team. Nephi's response to the command to return to Jerusalem not only showed a willingness to follow his father, but a confidence that the Lord is really the one leading (1 Nephi 3:7). When his brothers complained about the difficulty they were experiencing while trying to retrieve the plates, Nephi informed them that they would "not go down" to their father until they had followed the Lord to the fullest (1 Nephi 3:15). Musselwhite explained that as followers become more reliable, they become more of an asset to their organization. "Doing what needs to be done" he said, "shows you understand and work toward the bigger picture."[228] Nephi was an asset to his father and also the Lord because he was such an effective follower. His reliability allowed the Lord to use him again and again.

There are four other types of followers in Kelley's model, each with lessening degrees of effectiveness. Passive followers, or sheep, do what they are asked, but no more. They lack the motivation or ability to proactively contribute. Conformists, or yes-people, are anxious to follow the leader, detrimentally so. They give no helpful council but are merely content to not contradict their superiors. Alienated followers, the disgruntled, think independently but are unmotivated because they have become disenchanted with the leader and/or organization. The Pragmatics (depicted in the center of the chart) are prepared to be the follower that best fits the situation. Motivated often by a desire to not have to put forth too much effort, their effectiveness, as well

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[227] Chaleff, *Courageous Follower*, 62.

[228] Chris Musselwhite, *Why Great Followers Make the Best Leaders* (Boston: Harvard Business School, 2006), 3. http://content.ebscohost.com (accessed on November 29, 3017).

as their loyalty, is transient.[229] Followers in each category exist in every business, team, religious group, etc., but can also exist simultaneously in the same person. Each of these types of followers is exemplified in the Book of Mormon. Future research could explore how Laman and Lemuel, the priests of King Noah, the king-men, and others fit into this model.

The characteristics exhibited by each type of follower have far more to do with choice than ability. Therefore, even a sheep or disgruntled follower can become an effective one simply by responding in the appropriate fashion. Conversely, an effective follower can fall to the ranks of the disgruntled follower if he chooses to respond in a negative way. Lehi would certainly be labeled an effective follower through the first 15 chapters of the Book of Mormon, but when his family was faced with starvation, he complained against the Lord (1 Nephi 16:20). Nephi, facing the same difficulties, continued to demonstrate trust in his leader and proactively worked to solve the problem.

Acting as a follower and leader simultaneously can be difficult. "It is an art," Chaleff said, "to move fluidly between these roles and remain consistent in our treatment of others."[230] For Moroni, the challenge of followership made all the difference. As leader of the Nephite armies, he had every right to claim his initial victory for himself. Instead, he recognized how God was responsible for their success (Alma 44:3–4). Knowing that his ability to lead well was determined by how well he followed the Lord, he focused on developing faith as much as fighting. While Amalackiah had "been obtaining power by fraud and deceit," Moroni was "preparing the minds of the people to be faithful" to God (Alma 48:7). Musselwhite would applaud that effort: "When we lose sight of [our followership]" he said, "we diminish our

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[229] Kelley, "Praise," 137.
[230] Chaleff, *"Courageous Follower,"* 37.

leadership effectiveness. Why? Simply put, the qualities of great followers share much in common with those of great leaders."[231] Moroni was better able to lead because he was so good at following the Lord.

Discipleship vs. Followership

Followership is obvious throughout the Book of Mormon and other scriptures. Although the term *follower* is used in both the New Testament and the Book of Mormon to describe man's relationship to the Lord, the more common word used is *disciple*. President James E. Faust pointed out that the word *disciple* "emphasizes practice or exercise . . . It is primarily obedience to the Savior."[232] Both followers and disciples participate in a mentoring process and each involves an element of discipline and work. These terms can be used interchangeably, but there are some significant differences. Understanding these differences will clarify the role of followership in the scriptures

First, being a disciple of Jesus Christ includes an element of worship that is crucial in a religious context and is (generally) absent from leader-follower relationships. Second, effective followers should courageously dissent when it appears their leader is taking an inappropriate course and explain to their leader why what is happening is wrong. When God is in the position of leader, such dissent reflects a lack of understanding about who God is. Seeking for understanding through questioning is encouraged. Refusal to follow His counsel is spiritually dangerous.

When the Lord is the one being followed, certain attributes of effective followership are amplified, like accountability. No matter your position in life, you are always outranked by the

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[231] Musselwhite, *Why Great Followers*, 3.

[232] James E. Faust, "Discipleship," *Ensign,* (November 2006): 20.

Lord which creates a constant state of accountability. That accountability is crucial to successful leaders and followers. Followers who are held accountable for their efforts are more productive, effective, and generally more satisfied in their work experience. Not only does it keep you humble, but it allows you to remember from where authority and power come. As the Lord explained to Joseph Smith, "It is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion," (Doctrine and Covenants 121:39). Appropriate followership protects us from unrighteous leadership practices.

The Lord constantly encourages His followers to develop qualities that He knows will help them to become better disciples. Many of those attributes are recognized as key components of followership and leadership. For example, Hyatt found that obedience, loyalty, and humility are key characteristics for any effective follower to develop. Humility in particular has become a popular component of leadership study. Collins' research has found that the difference between great leaders and good ones has much to do with their level of humility.[233] Modesty may not seem like a desirable trait for leaders or followers, but God's model for leadership is different from the world. He chooses weak things to do His work (Doctrine and Covenants 1:23). Collins' research revealed that there are five levels of leadership, and very few executives achieve a level five status. Collins found that the most successful companies were led by level five leaders, and one of the common traits they all possessed was "a compelling modesty."[234] These leaders possessed the unusual combination of "personal humility and professional will" that allowed them to be great followers to their boards and stockholders.[235] The contrast between the fourth

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[233] Jim Collins, *Good to Great*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 21, 27–28.

[234] Collins, *Good to Great*, 27.

and fifth levels of leadership was significant. Those at a level four tended to hurt the continued prosperity of their organizations because of their prideful pursuits. The most effective leaders have a degree of humility that is absent in good leaders.[236]

Conclusion

As stated earlier by Owen, Christ is the perfect example of a great leader and a great follower. He submitted to the will of the Father from the beginning (Moses 4:1–2). He did only those things which he saw the Father do (John 5:19). He gave credit to God rather than taking it for himself (Mark 10:18). Because He followed His Father with such fidelity, He could ask the same thing of His followers. "No one should be allowed to give orders who can't obey orders" Hyatt said. "This is how great leaders model the standards of acceptable behavior to their own followers."[237] In fact, Christ was so good at modeling this that someone seeking to follow the Savior would have to follow the Father also. "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father?" (2 Nephi 31:10). Nephi and Moroni were remarkable leaders because they were willing to follow the Savior and the Father. Their discipleship influenced the way that they chose to lead, and their leadership was more effective for it.

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[235] Ibid., 21.
[236] Ibid., 20–21.

[237] Hyatt, "Great Followers."

Conclusion

The Book of Mormon has great significance for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Recent prophets have taught the importance of daily studying the Book of Mormon.[238] Its importance resides in its testimony of the divinity of Jesus Christ and the reality of His restored church. However, there is also great value in using the Book of Mormon to learn how to effectively lead diverse groups under differing circumstances.

The purpose of this paper was to identify leadership lessons found therein and compare them to proven modern leadership patterns. I have found that the actions and leadership decisions of Captain Moroni and Nephi followed many of those patterns. Moroni's attitude towards leadership reflected a transformational mindset and his actions matched the four components of TFL. Nephi's servant-first mentality caused him to make decisions consistent with a servant leader philosophy. That neither of these men had access to the leadership scholarship available today suggests that the principles supporting these theories have not been recently invented but are fundamental leadership characteristics that have been followed for hundreds of years but have only recently been articulated and researched.

Captain Moroni and Nephi were not perfect leaders. Different decision may have led to more favorable outcomes. Similarly, TFL and servant leadership are not perfect models. Recent leadership literature has criticized TFL because its components do not work together in a clear manner and some of its reasoning seems inconsistent. Servant leadership lacks clearly defined characteristics and requires more empirical evidence to support its claims. Despite these

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[238] see Russell M. Nelson, "The Book of Mormon: What Would Your Life Be Like Without It?" October 2017; Thomas S. Monson, "The Power of the Book of Mormon," April 2017.

shortcomings, TFL and servant leadership practices are employed in business, military, and religious settings today because of the positive outcomes they achieve.

I suggest that a careful reading and study of the leadership behaviors detailed in the Book of Mormon can improve leadership capacity, especially within a Church setting. Recognizing what decisions leaders made, their motivation, and their focus can reveal why they were successful or not.

The lack of scholarship about leadership principles in the Book of Mormon is surprising. Future research could explore additional leadership patterns represented in the Book of Mormon, including charismatic, humble, ethical, and authentic leadership, as well as focus on other leaders in the book, such as King Benjamin, Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, Mormon, King Noah, Amlici, Korihor, and Gidianhi. Additional research could also determine whether a study of the leadership principles in the Book of Mormon has a measurable effect on leadership capacity.

In a growing international church, the Book of Mormon could be better utilized to prepare and train volunteer and unpaid leaders. They may not always have access to leadership training and resources, but they have and love the Book of Mormon. Even if they don't know the modern leadership theories, these leaders can learn from the example of righteous leaders in the Book of Mormon. It is the tool for gathering. It is the evidence that Joseph Smith was a prophet. It is proof we can hold in our hands that God and Jesus live and direct this work. Perhaps it can also be a tool to prepare and strengthen the leaders who play such a vital role in moving the work forward.

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