

TEACHINGS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Semester 2, Lecture 38
Mosiah 20–23
Dealing with Enemies
Kingship

We are on chapters 20 and 21 of Mosiah, on the important subject of how to deal with an enemy in just about every situation that comes up. It's marvelous how these things are analyzed here. You get the impression that it really was carefully edited. You notice in Mosiah 20:6 that the Lamanites were literally up in arms when the girls had been missing and failed to show up. Limhi saw their preparations from the tower; we saw how a little glitter was enough to give it all away. Their dealing with the enemy was a general ambush. They were greatly outnumbered, etc. The general ambush is sometimes very effective; there have been some "beauties." [One of] the best, I suppose, was Zhukov's ambushing of Paulus's sixth army. The entire sixth army was ambushed. It surprised the daylights out of them, but not as bad as we were surprised in the Bulge.

They [Limhi's people] fought like dragons. Then the Lamanite king was wounded and brought in. They immediately wanted to put him to death because of what he had caused them. Limhi said, nothing doing; let's find out what's going on first. He asked reasonable questions; there was no threatening or bullying or righteous indignation here. Then King Laman explained why: We didn't break our oath, but you did. You stole those girls. Limhi's reaction was not "boys will be boys" at all. He said, well, let's find out who did it and they will be severely punished. He immediately launched a full scale investigation to find out who to punish, but old Gideon was at hand. He was the one who had kept check on Noah's crowd, as you know. Although he wasn't there, the men of Gideon had made contact and reported to him about these hiding priests out there in the "sticks." So Gideon said, don't blame your own people until you have checked on your father's immoral priests loose in the jungle. We'd better explain them to the Lamanites in a hurry. Then we get this urgent speech, where he goes "Behold, behold, or *hinneh*."

Verse 19: "And now, behold, and tell the king of these things, that he may tell his people that they may be pacified towards us; for behold they are already preparing to come against us; and behold also there are but few of us [we are in a bad fix]. And behold, they come with their numerous hosts; and except the king doth pacify them towards us we must perish. For are not the words of Abinadi fulfilled, which he prophesied against us [now this is the old fire-eater Gideon speaking; he's a great patriot, but he says, it's our blame—we are responsible. 'We are their author and original,' as Titania says]—and all this because we would not hearken unto the words of the Lord, and turn from our iniquities? And now let us pacify the king, and we fulfil the oath which we have made unto him." Notice that he is being very realistic; these are the steps by which the problem is solved here. It's a very touchy thing, but they solve the problem very sensibly on both sides—a thing people rarely do. He's being a realist, of all people. Where's your Patrick Henry? He says, "For it is better that we should be in bondage than that we should lose our lives [well, that's a terrible thing to say; we have 'sooner dead than red' and all that

sort of thing, our slogans that never get any farther than slogans]; therefore, let us put a stop to the shedding of so much blood.”

Gideon is the last man you would expect to do this. But he had the experience of these things, and he knew. It's the old commander that knows. The most passionate talks I've ever heard against war in the Army have been by generals, without any exception. They know what it is, and boy do they light in! There were some wonderful ones by Omar Bradley, Max Taylor, and others. Eisenhower said some pretty strong things, too. “Therefore, let us put a stop to the shedding of so much blood,” Gideon said, with his rush of excitement. This is the Gideon who chased the king up the tower with a sword, and all that sort of thing. He is the one who is making a plea to put an end to all this bloodshed, whatever they do.

Limhi explained that the priests in the wilderness were the most likely kidnappers. Notice that Limhi took the blame for his father's behavior, and the king was pacified. Everybody did the sensible thing, and Limhi was a realist. Verse 22: “For it is better that we should be in bondage than that we should lose our lives; therefore, let us put a stop to the shedding of so much blood.” Then Limhi had the courtesy to explain everything to the Lamanite king. Then instead of standing tall the king humiliated himself. The Lamanite king humiliated himself before his own people to plead for the enemy. Can we imagine doing such a thing today as that? Both sides were being very reasonable, and they solved their problem that way. Verse 24: “The king was pacified toward his people; and he said unto them: Let us go forth to meet my people, without arms; and I swear unto you with an oath that my people shall not slay thy people. And it came to pass that they followed the king, and went forth without arms to meet the Lamanites. And it came to pass that they did meet the Lamanites; and the king of the Lamanites did bow himself down before them, and did plead in behalf of the people of Limhi.”

There's none of your standing tall here and refusing to make concessions. Then there is the most important element of all—the humanity of it. “And when the Lamanites saw the people of Limhi, that they were without arms, they had compassion on them and were pacified towards them.” You have to have the humanity, too, and that solves it. It's going to appear a number of times here that the Lamanites were always more merciful than the Nephites when they had the upper hand; it's a very interesting thing. The Indians will still spare the whites, and not the other way around. I have some wonderful things on that. The Lamanites “returned with their king in peace to their own land.” Now that's a happy solution to what could have been a long and nasty war, but they were pretty fed up on that by now. Then things were back to normal, but there was still human nature. It only lasted for two years, and the people got restless again. It was an unstable situation. The Lamanites resented the prosperous, defeated Nephites again. They resented them, just as we resent the prosperous, defeated Japanese and Germans. After being beaten, they ran circles around us in the things we excel at, namely making money. It's the same thing here. The Lamanites had always been nervous about these industrious Nephites. They brought the Nephites there in the first place so they would cultivate the land. The country was run down in that particular area, so they let them come in. It was a trick the king played. This man's father played this trick on them to get them to settle there. Then they really began to prosper, and it made the Lamanites worried. So that began to happen again.

“After many days the Lamanites began again to be stirred up in anger against the Nephites, and they began to come into the borders of the land round about” (Mosiah

21:2). They started harassing; that's the way it starts. They couldn't kill them because they had made an oath to King Limhi. (Isn't that nice they observed their oaths? We observe oaths, too, as long as it is convenient. Our treaties with the Indians, for example; there are some "beauties.") But they did bother them and do what Indians would do. They were brutal. They would hit them in the face, boss them around, and then "put heavy burdens upon their backs, and drive them as they would a dumb ass." That was the prophecy—they started bullying them. "Yea, all this was done that the word of the Lord might be fulfilled." They had brought it on themselves.

This should cause us concern here. This is not a blessed land unconditionally. The promise is the same for every people that shall inhabit the promised land. I'm going to read chapter 2 of Ether on that, which is very good. That's getting slightly ahead of the game, as you'll see. But this is what the promise is. Notice that these people have been good for a long time. They've been valiant and saved themselves, but the time isn't up. They still have to pay a price here. So we have this situation. "And he had sworn in his wrath unto the brother of Jared, that whoso should possess this land of promise, from that time henceforth and forever, should serve him, the true and only God, or they should be swept off when the fulness of his wrath should come upon them" (Ether 2:8). Until then everything is [apparently] fine; it's business as usual, as it was in the days of Noah. They bought and sold, gave in marriage, ate and drank. They did all the normal things, and then suddenly it hit them. That's what the Lord says it's going to be like. "And now, we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise; and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity" (Ether 2:9). Notice *fulness* and *ripened*. When the cup is full, you can't add anything else. You can't dilute it or do anything about it. And when the fruit is ripe, if you let it go on ripening, it will just get rotten. So when the fruit is ripe, it is plucked. But he waits until it is ripe, and he waits until the cup is full. How soon is it going to be full now? You see things going on.

Again he repeats it the third time in verse 10: "For behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands [true]; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God or shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God. And it is not until the fulness of iniquity among the children of the land, that they are swept off [so he's going to let them go all the way; this is a very interesting pattern]. And this cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God—that ye may repent and not continue in your iniquities [the assumption here is that they are wicked] until the fulness come, that ye may not bring down the fulness of the wrath of God upon you as the inhabitants of the land have hitherto done. Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ, who hath been manifested by the things which we have written."

That's the condition, and it's a very close thing in that case. You have to do more than we are doing if you are going to serve the God of this land. It's very clearly stated there the way it happens, and it happens all of a sudden. Notice that this is unique. They are still writing all sorts of studies about the disappearance of the Toltecs, the Mayans, the Aztecs, etc. There are some theories, but nobody has the vaguest idea why they disappeared. The point is that we have ruins and we have remnants of people, some Aztecs and especially Mayans. Everywhere we have the scattered remnants of these [civilizations] after they have broken up, but the civilizations have gone completely. But in the Old World it

doesn't happen that way at all. The people sin and go on sinning. They suffer and pay for it, but it's a going concern. They pay as they go. The Greeks, the Arabs, the Chinese, the Hindus, the Egyptians were ancient civilizations when Lehi left Jerusalem, and they are still there. Their languages, customs, and everything are still there; they were not swept off. But what they suffer and go through! The Russians, for example—suffer, suffer, suffer—like the Moscow Art Theatre. They have to go through that, but we don't. It's different here—we prosper. We are powerful, free, and everything else. Then we take advantage of that and start misbehaving. It's a hard test. Who can stand prosperity? Nobody has stood it yet, as we see in the Book of Mormon. Why does this [the Book of Mormon] come to us? All the others have fouled up, but we never shall! In that case, why have such pains been taken to give us the warning? Not that we will be saved, but, as the Lord says, "that they may be left without excuse" when they get hit. We can't complain that we didn't hear it.

Now here, for example, with their advantage and after fighting like dragons, they are going to do the thing again. But they don't pull it off at all. "And now the afflictions of the Nephites were great [they couldn't stand it very much longer], and there was no way that they could deliver themselves out of their hands, for the Lamanites had surrounded them on every side [as I said, they were in a trap, an enclave]. . . . The people began to murmur with the king because of their afflictions; and they began to be desirous to go against them to battle" (Mosiah 21:5–6). They said, we're not going to stand this anymore. They kept pestering the king until he couldn't take it anymore. Notice verse 6: "And they did afflict the king sorely with their complaints; therefore he granted unto them that they should do according to their desires." All right go against them; fight like dragons and see what happens this time. "And they gathered themselves together again, and put on their armor, and went forth against the Lamanites to drive them out of their land [it didn't happen at all]. . . . The Lamanites did beat them, and drove them back, and slew many of them. And now there was a great mourning and lamentation among the people of Limhi. . . . Now there were a great many widows in the land [the widows started raising a rumpus and stirring up patriotic fervor], and they did cry mightily from day to day, for a great fear of the Lamanites had come upon them [we've got to do something about it] . . . their continual cries did stir up the remainder of the people of Limhi [and himself] to anger against the Lamanites [they said, all right we'll go out and do it this time]; and they went again to battle, but they were driven back again, suffering much loss."

They were beaten again. Well, how long can this go on? Verse 12: "Yea, they went again even the third time, and suffered in the like manner." So the Lord said, have you learned your lesson? You're not going to take it by force. It's not going to be done that way [paraphrased]. So three vain attempts to free themselves by war were not the answer. God is in charge of these things. So what happened? They did the very opposite of marching forth in their might. "And they did humble themselves even to the dust, subjecting themselves to the yoke of bondage [not just to the Lord, but to the Lamanites, their enemies], submitting themselves to be smitten, and to be driven to and fro, and burdened, according to the desires of their enemies." You can't go lower than that. But the point here is this: Was their spirit completely broken? No, God doesn't break anyone's spirit. To be humble before him is only to be honest. Everyone must be humble before something. This is a very interesting thing. In the first volume of Miller's great work on Islam, he talks about the ferocious khans of the Steppes, who ruled the universe. I mean they were the *cosmocrators*. They ruled everything with blood in absolute power—the grand khans, Kublai Khan and Genghis Khan, etc. They accepted Islam eagerly so that

they would have a god, someone before whom they could be humble without losing face. They couldn't be humble before anyone without losing face, but you can be humble before God without losing face.

The Book of Mormon tells us in Ether, the brother of Jared said, God talked to me in all humility, as one man to another. To be humble is not to bow down to somebody who is above you, not to lick the boss's boots, not to be subservient to higher rank, but to be equal with all. That's to be humble. Our thing is usually to be arrogant to those below you and subservient to those above you. That's the way you get success in this world, but that's not to be humble at all. Remember, the Lord himself is humble, as the brother of Jared said. The Lord said he was meek and humble. Everybody has to humble themselves to something; the idea is, what are you going to humble yourself to? Before God it is easy. That's no test at all. If someone has overpowering might and glory and all the splendor of a Spielberg production, or Paul Lucas and the glories of space, you can be humble with that sort of thing. But that isn't to be humble at all. If somebody knocks you down, you can be humble. No, to be humble is to speak to one as you would to another. The person who was really that way was President George Albert Smith. There was a man who was really humble. Never subservient or looking down on anyone, but he would get up at 3:00 o'clock in the morning and go down to the lower part of town. (My mother knew him very well.) If some poor old bum had been picked up at the police station, he would come down and try to help him out, bail him out, etc. He put himself out all the time, and nobody knew about it. I know some stories like that. As President of the Church, he was on a big business trip in Portland. Brother Westergard was a Dane and a poor carpenter in our ward, with a lot of girls. His little girl was sick, and the President sat up with him and his little girl all night. He let the business go and everything else. That little sick child and sitting with Brother Westergard were more important to him. The President stayed with my grandfather who founded the Oregon Lumber, Western Pacific, and all that stuff. But all business had to wait so that he [President Smith] could sit with a sick child. And, of course, he never told anybody about a thing like that. It was Brother Westergard who told me about that years later. He said, "He stayed up with me all night when my little daughter was so sick."

You have to humble yourself to somebody, and who is it to be? Remember Mosiah 4:11: "And always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long-suffering towards you, unworthy creatures, and humble yourselves even in the depths of humility." And Helaman said, "How great is the nothingness of the children of men; yea, they are even less than the dust." Here it says, "And they did humble themselves even to the dust, subjecting themselves . . . to the desires of their enemies." Now that is humility, but is it abject humility? No, it was their own sins that lay heavily on them. The Lamanites were merely an instrument; they knew that. They had beaten the Lamanites badly on other occasions when they were greatly outnumbered by them. Pray that one may never become such an instrument because, after all, to be an oppressor is far worse than to be oppressed, as we learn later on in Mormon 4:5 where he says, "But, behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished." Your business isn't to dominate or punish anyone; it's the wicked that do the punishing, as well as the wicked who are punished. The Lord sees to that.

Then there was no military solution. Verse 15: "And now the Lord was slow to hear their cry because of their iniquities [which had been building up for a long time. There is no military solution but this]; nevertheless the Lord did hear their cries, and began to soften

the hearts of the Lamanites that they began to ease their burdens.” There must be a softening and a yielding on both sides. This is sort of an anti-climax. You might say, “Where are the heroics?” The Lamanites themselves began to yield now under those circumstances. Compare the long and foolish war between Iran and Iraq, in which they practically destroyed each other—near exhaustion accomplishing nothing. After all the mighty boasting and the unconditional damnation of the other side, they accomplished nothing. It has been absolute idiocy, and they are still at it. And in Lebanon it’s even worse. That’s the only way that will do. And even our huge naval force solved very little; they didn’t do anything there.

Now notice what Limhi does in verse 17. His people were living under oppression, but they are now forced to live the Law of Consecration. That’s the only way we’ll ever live it, if we’re forced to live it. “Now there was a great number of women, more than there was of men; therefore king Limhi commanded that every man should impart to the support of the widows and their children, that they might not perish with hunger; and this they did because of the greatness of their number that had been slain [slain in vain]. Now the people of Limhi kept together in a body as much as it was possible [that was the strategy], and secured their grain and their flocks; And the king himself did not trust his person without the walls of the city.” This is going to finish up the story and take us back to Ammon, where he meets the king outside the gates. The king was out there with a patrol at night; nobody trusted anybody else. The Lamanite king kept constant watch over them, and they were paying for the watch with the grain he took from them. And they kept watch over the Lamanites because they were constantly patrolling the borders there. “And the king himself did not trust his person without the walls of the city, unless he took his guards with him, fearing that he might by some means fall into the hands of the Lamanites. And he caused that his people should watch the land round about.”

They were keeping a check on everything here, and always on the defensive. It was a very tense situation there; you can see that. They were going to watch the land round about and keep an eye open and do some scouting and patrolling, I suppose, to see if they could catch those priests because there would be the solution. They were the troublemakers who had stolen the daughters. The priests had been robbing and plundering. There was rather a small scale thing going on, like the Apaches or the Navajos and the Hopis. The Navajos are constantly stealing sheep and things from the [Hopis]; they are always going over the boundary and taking them. Verse 21: “For they had come into the land of Nephi by night, and carried off their grain and many of their precious things.” For their supplies, they were stealing horses, etc. First Nephi lists the four things, and 2 Nephi lists the same four. People are after power, gain, popularity, and the lusts of the flesh.

Anyway, they would come and loot them, just as the Zunis do and the One-Horn Society does. There’s all sorts of looting that goes on and these tricks. It’s very dangerous if you go around in some parts, such as the Four Corners country. I was with a couple of characters a couple of years ago, and we had some touch-and-go. Verse 22: “And it came to pass that there was no more disturbance between the Lamanites and the people of Limhi, even until the time that Ammon and his brethren came into the land.” Things were quiet for the time being. The fire-eating Gideon had urged peace through concessions. Then Ammon comes in, and that takes us up to where we were before; the story resumes at this point.

Here was the king outside the gates with his patrol, and he discovered Ammon. He supposed them to be the priests of Noah; they had been keeping an eye out for them all

along. What would be more natural? So that's why he hauled him away and brought him into court to see who he was. When he found out who he really was, that he actually came from Zarahemla, "he was filled with exceedingly great joy. Now king Limhi had sent, previous to the coming of Ammon, a small number of men to search for the land of Zarahemla." Now how would Zarahemla get lost? Well, as I said, there were the Seven Cities of Cibola, etc. People are always getting lost. Anciently there are some good examples of lost cities in Asia. The legends of lost cities are numerous, "A Thousand and One Nights" sort of stuff. We won't go into that. When the story resumes here, Limhi's search parties can't find Zarahemla! On what scale are they operating? Well, a good example is the Siwa Oasis, where the great shrine of Amon was. It was a large oasis with a great temple; in fact, the most important temple in all of Africa, more important than anything in Egypt. Some people think the Egyptians originally came from there—that they were Libyans who came to Egypt. But anyway, Alexander the Great looked for it, and his whole army would have perished if they hadn't been guided miraculously, according to one story, by two snakes, according to another by two birds. But Cambyses, the mad Persian king, went out to find it, and his whole army disappeared in the desert. They never could find it. Finding *Siwa* was a big thing. It was the most important oracle of the ancient world in Hellenistic times. The people missed it very often, and yet it was this huge settlement out there in the desert. It was only four days journey from the Nile, if you kept going in the right direction. But you can lose things like this. It may have been the desert. All you can do is guess the type of terrain, the sort of thing that was going on, and think of like things that have happened.

Anyway, just before the arrival of Ammon the search party returned. They had missed Zarahemla, but they had found a land of dry bones. When Ammon and his party came in, he [the king] said, strange that you should mention it; we just had another party come in, too, a party we sent out to look for Zarahemla. They didn't find anything but a lot of dry bones and a record [paraphrased]. This finding of dry bones and a record! If you ever visit Awatobi, you'll know what I mean. Awatobi was destroyed in October 1700. All the villages zeroed in on the great city. It was a real city. You can walk around on that mesa now and see bones and pottery scattered everywhere for miles around. You wonder, what kind of a thing was this? It's immense, and where the old part was there are ashes, etc. Of course, you are not supposed to go there. There's a curse, and the Hopis are ashamed of it. They won't go there. But there's a city of bones still lying out there. Since it has been discovered in recent years, there has been lots of plunder. The Hopis keep guards over it now to keep people from going in there and plundering because it's just picking up. A surprising place! In 1938 Harvard spent a million dollars just excavating one corner. They found beautiful murals, the first murals ever found in that part of the country. And they found sacred shrines. I got a crystal from one of the sacred shrines there.

So they did find these dry bones, an impressive thing. Ammon's people mourned for Abinadi who had been put to death and for the departed Alma, who left King Noah's people. This isn't Zarahemla; these are the Nephite people who were in bondage to the Lamanites. They were found by Ammon who did come from Zarahemla. They come together now. It says that they mourned for both of them. Verse 31: "Yea, they did mourn for their departure, for they knew not whither they had fled. Now they would have gladly joined with them, for they themselves had entered into a covenant with God to serve him and keep his commandments. And now since the coming of Ammon, King Limhi had also entered into a covenant with God, and also many of his people, to serve him and keep his commandments [remember, Ammon did not have the priesthood, as Alma did; a direct descendant of Zarahemla, he was a Mulekite, not a Nephite]. And it

came to pass that king Limhi and many of his people were desirous to be baptized [but you notice that Ammon wouldn't do it; he refused to do it because he didn't have authority or wasn't worthy] but there was none in the land that had authority from God. And Ammon declined doing this thing, considering himself an unworthy servant [we learn in Mosiah 7:3 that he was a Mulekite]. Therefore they did not at that time form themselves into a church, waiting upon the Spirit of the Lord [well, that's what the people were doing at Qumran—waiting upon the Spirit of the Lord, but they did form a church]. Now they were desirous to become even as Alma and his brethren, who had fled into the wilderness. They were desirous to be baptized as a witness and a testimony that they were willing to serve God with all their hearts.”

What did they know about Alma? Remember, Alma had left this community; he had fled from King Noah. He had been a priest of King Noah and had preached among them. They knew about this thing. And a lot of them came back. Those who had gone out with the priests came back to the city again. Alma's story was familiar to these people, and they wanted to be like Alma who had gone now. Verse 36: “And now all the study of Ammon and his people, and king Limhi and his people, was to deliver themselves out of the hands of the Lamanites and from bondage.” Well, that's the first problem. So there was more dealing with the enemy. They held a general conference to discuss the matter, now that Ammon was there. Ammon and King Limhi consulted together. They could see only one way out, the Rechabite recourse—to do the same thing that Lehi, Nephi, Mosiah, and Alma had done; namely, to take off with as many of your people as will go with you. That's a standard pattern which happens regularly. I always come back to the Hopis. There are at least twenty instances in which a group or a clan from a village has gone out and settled in another place, or gone out and joined another village, or gone up to Canyon de Chelly, or gone down to Azteca, or gone down to the Little Colorado and settled in colonies, or come back there. They are always moving around in these groups and settling, and resettling, and fighting, and coming together again. It's the most amazing picture. It's fluid, going on all the time. This is the sort of thing we seem to have happening here, maybe on a larger scale, or maybe on a smaller. It doesn't make any difference. So that is what they are going to do. “Even they did cause that all the people should gather themselves together; and this they did that they might have the voice of the people concerning the matter” (Mosiah 22:1).

In *Lonesome Dove* there is a body of people, a group of men with an awful lot of cattle, supposedly moving from the Mexican border almost to the Canadian border, up to Montana. That's the way they moved around, following the Indian pattern. Everywhere they were running into Indians on the move the same way. They would say, “It's dangerous—the Cheyennes are on the move now.” When they were on the march, they would march against each other and burn each others' villages back and forth. Some of them were big nations—ten, twenty, or fifty thousand people moving like that. It was a very impressive thing. So this is a reflection of that sort of thing. This is a prologue to that sort of thing, we might say. This is the type of thing that's happening; it's not as fantastic as you might think.

They gathered themselves together and took a vote concerning the matter. Again, “And it came to pass that they could find no way to deliver themselves out of bondage, except it were to take their women and children, and their flocks, and their herds, and their tents, and depart into the wilderness [the Rechabite act again]. . . . Now it came to pass that Gideon went forth and stood before the king, and said unto him, you've listened to me before. Gideon was a very savvy character, a leader, and the man of greatest experience

among them. He offered to submit and execute a plan of escape; he had devised a plan for escape. He would not only submit it, but he would execute it. Verse 4: "I will be thy servant and deliver this people out of bondage [hand it over to me]. The king granted unto him his wish and said, do what you want to. So Gideon said, "Behold the back pass, through the back wall, on the back side of the city [everything is the back side here]. The Lamanites, or the guards of the Lamanites, by night are drunken [this is the famous ploy]. . . . And I will go according to thy command and pay the last tribute of wine to the Lamanites, and they will be drunken [notice that ironic, humorous touch; the Lamanites don't know it, but this is the last tribute of wine they are going to get from the Nephites]; and we will pass through the secret pass on the left of their camp when they are drunken and asleep."

Now, how could they do that and escape notice? It has been done time and again with whole armies. Do you realize that an army of 200,000 was mobilized within a couple of miles of the front in the Bulge. For months it went on. I was in charge and had to keep the situation up at Mourmelon. The reports were coming in from scouts, and peasants would come in and tell us the story. We knew what was happening. The roads to the north were crowded all night long with bicycles, wagons, anything that could move from the south—all coming to a particular point. He collected six divisions there right under our noses and caught the men completely by surprise. There was no need why they should have been surprised at all because it was very obvious what was happening. I even said it would happen the night of December 17, 1944, and it did. They hit and completely overran everything. They were there all the time; for months you could see what was happening. A couple of our fellows went down to the Seventh Corps. The new Lion Head Division had just come in from Normandy. They had only been in Europe a week and had no experience at all. They put them on this most sensitive place because nothing was going to happen there. They said, "This is a place for them to rest and get used to things."

They said, "Have you sent out any patrols?"

"No, we're moving tomorrow." They were packing up their maps and things.

"Well, you don't know what's happening there?"

"No."

Well, the Lion Head Division was spread on an eight-mile front, and it should have been a quarter of a mile at most to cover that. They had spread it over eight miles, so all they [the Germans] had to do was just walk right through. A captain came staggering in all black, dirty, and exhausted. "They completely overran us," he said. So we had to get in these big gondolas in a hurry and get there in no time. That's when they went to Bastogne. The point is that they caught our intelligence and everything else by surprise, although we knew what was going on. Because of this wishful thinking, it's amazing what you can get away with.

Here these people had the Nephites under their thumbs. Then life got to be a bore; everything was going on the same as ever month after month. Guard troops have nothing to do but see that nothing happens. If nothing happens, they've fulfilled their duty. It gets very boring, and they welcome a little nip now and then. The wine was so welcome to them. They took it joyfully and passed out, and the people just went out. This sort of thing has happened again and again. I had a whole list of cases like that—like Singapore

on the Malay Peninsula. The British couldn't point their guns in that direction because they never expected anyone to come by the Malay Peninsula. But as the famous General Surorov said, "Where a deer can go, a man can go. And where a man can go, an army can go." Well, that was the Japanese policy in the Malay Peninsula. They came down the whole Malay Peninsula. The British said that an army could never come down there, but the Japanese did. As I said, the British guns weren't even made to face in that direction. They could do nothing to stop them, so the Japanese just overran them. That happens again and again. Especially the British are that way; they are so smug and let themselves get overrun every time.

Then there was Washington at Trenton. Remember, he caught the Hessians having Christmas Eve at the time. They were drunk and completely at his mercy. They didn't expect anyone to cross the river on Christmas Eve of all times, and especially on a night like last night [a very cold one]. Who would ever do that? Well, it caught them completely off guard. They should have expected it at that very time. There's also the Exodus [of the Israelites] and that of Chief Joseph. And the wine trick works. It worked with the Cyclops; that's how Odysseus got away. I've seen whole headquarters get drunk under great tension. That really happens.

And here's the paradox. The bigger the operation, the more likely it is to escape detection. Remember, the classic example is Normandy. We caught them by surprise because Hitler insisted it was going to be LeHavre Peninsula and not Cherbourg. That went on for months. He had ten tank divisions at Paris, and he wouldn't release them. Any one of them could have pushed us back with the greatest of ease. We didn't have a chance, hanging on by our fingernails there. But Hitler wouldn't let a single tank division go because he thought we would go somewhere else. See how easy it is to fool people when they have their minds made up about something? The same thing is happening here [in the Book of Mormon]. The first day, immediately upon landing, I picked up a mimeograph. They had been having a CPX on the coast there to practice for the invasion, and they had it all correct. The first man that came out had his hands up and a look of surprise. He said, "We thought you were coming yesterday." Well, the fifth was the day we had planned, but there was the storm that postponed it to the sixth. They were expecting us and had the whole thing lined up. That's the very reason we were able to fool them because they expected we would do it just that way. We did it just that way, but the thing that saved us was that everything went wrong with theirs. There was a whole company of the 502nd that landed 55 miles away from their target. Well, nothing could have been better for us than that because the Germans said, "What on earth are they doing? Are these people crazy?" They didn't know where to counterattack; they didn't know what to do. They didn't know where to group their forces or anything else because we were in complete confusion, scattered everywhere under the sun. It was the best thing that could have happened. So that's the way the Lord takes care of things.

To say that they [the Nephites] could have walked out on them in the middle of the night [is not farfetched]. It would have been the easiest thing in the world. For two years this had been going on, and the tension was built up now. They had the Nephites where they belonged; they were completely submissive now. If you were at a guard post, you wouldn't be worried about them. [Someone would say], "Oh, forget it; get some sleep for heaven's sake!" Before you know it, they are all gone. So they paid their last tribute of wine. Verse 10: "And king Limhi caused that his people should gather their flocks together; and he sent the tribute of wine to the Lamanites; and he also sent more wine, as a present unto them; and they did drink freely of the wine which king Limhi did send

unto them. . . . And they went round about the land of Shilom in the wilderness, and bent their course towards the land of Zarahemla. . . . And after being many days in the wilderness they arrived in the land of Zarahemla, and joined Mosiah's people, and became his subjects." That was a short one; they finally got there. It was like the Exodus—they took all their gold and silver and everything else. [Their becoming Mosiah's subjects] was like the alliances of the Latins and Greeks.

What happened then? After two days the tracks gave out, and their enemies couldn't chase them. They couldn't be found. That makes us wonder what kind of terrain it was if the tracks gave out. Of course, through the woods everything would be broken and smashed as they went along. It's obviously desert, and there could have been a strong wind. You can lose tracks very easily. How can you lose track of an army? Well, it has often happened. We were fooled at the Bulge and a whole army was gathered within just a couple of miles of where we were. I was making out reports every day and screaming to the general, "What's going to happen? Look, this is what they're doing. They are obviously going to do this. Hitler is very fond of this particular time. Because of astrology, he's going to try to make it then." He did—that's when they tried to break through.

Anyway, they couldn't follow their tracks. Now the story resumes, and we go back to Alma in chapter 23. "Now Alma, having been warned of the Lord that the armies of king Noah would come upon them . . ." Remember, this is his company that fled to the wilderness. They followed the Rechabite routine. They fled eight days. This is another repetition of the same motif. But this is the very nature of this civilization, this mobility, even though they were settled people. It's like the Asiatic peoples and the Americans, especially on the America frontier. We've always been on the move. How many people are living now in the houses your grandparents lived in? In Germany we held our meetings in Bruchsal in Baden, an old Roman street. Old Sister Glück had lived in that house, and her parents and grandparents before her. The house was almost a thousand years old, and that's where we lived. We don't do it that way. Those are stable civilizations. Can anyone think of staying in Provo or in California more than a few years? You have to become mobile and go somewhere else if you are going to survive now. Can you live without a car now? How could you make it here today without a car? Well, you walk.

Verse 3: "And they fled eight days' journey into the wilderness. And they came to a land, yea, even a very beautiful and pleasant land, a land of pure water." How could a land very beautiful and inviting like that have gone unsettled all that time? When the Saints came, Jim Bridger went into ecstasies about Utah Valley. He said, forget about all the rest of it—Utah Valley is the best. There were Indians living in Utah Valley. You can go down to Lincoln Beach and see some marvelous houses and everything else there in those caves. There's the most beautiful collection of glyphs I've ever seen, but they have been plundered all over the place. Right after the war, Princeton came out and dug there for a couple of years and then left. That settlement out on the point is dated back to the eleventh century. When the lake was way up, you could see it was a fishing place. It had a ritual center with magnificent things. There was one I was particularly fond of called the "blue goat," a beautiful thing. I took Bill Russell, who was President of Westinghouse Electric. He was a big dignitary, so I showed him around the sites. We went out there, and it was very interesting. He was impressed by the blue goat, too. A couple of years later, somebody came from New York where he saw Bill Russell. He said, "Isn't it marvelous, that thing with the blue goat he has in his office there?" He sent some man out to fetch it. He liked it and so that was that. Of course, the law of 1906 says that it's strictly against the

law to plunder those, but everybody does. As you know, it's a big problem in Utah now. The best thing we can do is to keep those places away from the roads.

There was this beautiful land that had not been settled before, so they [Alma's people] went in and settled it. Verse 5: "And they pitched their tents, and began to till the ground, and began to build buildings [see, they started right in here]; yea, they were industrious, and did labor exceedingly [the thing that most surprised the settlers in the early days of America was that the Shenandoah valley had never been exploited by the Indians; they said, 'It's the most beautiful place in the world; why aren't there more people there?']. And the people were desirous that Alma should be their king." Now this little group wanted a king. The word is obviously *chief* throughout here. A *king* is a *chief*. A chief is on the same scale as the Anglo-Saxon kings were—the Edwards, the Eldreds, the Harolds, and all the rest of them. It was small stuff, but they were kings, and we'll see that's exactly the way it was. We are going to get that marvelous story now [about] Amulon and Alma. There is a real scenario there, and what a character study between these two men here. They want Alma to be their king, so he gave them a speech on being king. "Behold, it is not expedient that we should have a king; for thus saith the Lord: Ye shall not esteem one flesh above another, or one man shall not think himself above another [that is equality—he says there should be no racism and no elitism]; therefore I say unto you it is not expedient that ye should have a king. Nevertheless, if it were possible that ye could always have just men to be your kings [like Benjamin or Mosiah] it would be well for you to have a king." That would be a dandy thing.

As a matter of fact, just as *rex* means *king*, as far as that goes. *recte facere* is *judgment*; the *Cynung* is "the one who knows." According to Horace, "You will be king if you do what is right, but who doesn't do right will never be a king." *Rex* means *king*, and *rex* means *right*. With the same meaning, we have *rule*, *regulation*, *right*, and *righteous*. All those words go together. The *rex* is "the one who knows and understands." That's why in Zion we can accept an absolute monarchy because God is the king there. He doesn't make the mistakes that men do. Anything else won't do. We don't have *dominants* and *submissives* here, or the usual achievers.

The people of Ephesus were equalitarian all right. They had a rule that if anybody wanted to excel in anything, let him go to some other town and excel over somebody else. They said, "We're not going to have anything like that." So if you were particularly good at anything, the Ephesians would always throw you out. They were the ones who threw Paul out. They all cheered together, "Great is Diana of Ephesus!" They stood there cheering all day long, the idiots. But they made an imperfect union, and they threw anybody out who excelled in anything, they said. "Let them go and excel over somebody else." That was a law with them.

"Nevertheless, if it were possible that ye could always have just men to be your kings it would be well for you to have a king [that's the only problem, of course; but here was a thing vivid in their memories]. But remember the iniquity of king Noah and his priests; and I myself was caught in a snare, and did many things which were abominable in the sight of the Lord, which caused me sore repentance." Because of his association with Noah, Alma himself did abominable things. He was one of the bad priests of Noah, so obviously he went along. That's why he had Noah's ear, and that's why there was this understanding. When Alma defended Abinadi, Noah decided he would have to get rid of him. He knew too much. He [Alma] went along there, and he is ashamed of it now. "Nevertheless, after much tribulation, the Lord did hear my cries, and did answer my prayers, and has made

me an instrument in his hands in bringing so many of you to a knowledge of his truth.” His prayer shows what you should ask for when you pray. He said that his prayer had brought many to a knowledge of the truth. Darkness covers the earth. Why? Because people don’t ask for truth. Remember, the Lord commands us to ask for certain thing, and then we will receive them.

Verse 11: “Nevertheless, in this I do not glory, for I am unworthy to glory of myself. And now I say unto you, ye have been oppressed by king Noah [they remembered that], and have been in bondage to him and his priests, and have been brought into iniquity by them; therefore ye were bound with the bands of iniquity.” Now there is the great threat to freedom. You are bound in the bands of iniquity; it’s not somebody who is going to take over and put you in jail and things like that. That’s not it, of course. “And now as ye have been delivered by the power of God out of these bonds; yea, even out of the hands of king Noah and his people, and also from the bonds of iniquity, even so I desire that ye should stand fast in this liberty [this is what liberty really is—to be rescued from the bonds of iniquity] wherewith ye have been made free, and that ye trust no man to be a king over you [no *man* to be a king over you; the emphasis is on that. Who must you fight to be free?] And also trust no one to be your teacher nor your minister, except he be a man of God, walking in his ways and keeping his commandments.”

Now here’s the catch. How do you decide who is a “man of God, walking in his ways and keeping his commandments”? Nobody who puts himself forth for that is going to qualify. But it’s actually rather easy, isn’t it, to find out whether a man is doing this. A TV evangelist is obviously a fraud in most cases, not always. They [men of God] can be easily distinguished by what they do not do. For example, ask any one of them about a project. *The Wall Street Journal* recently made a survey of several hundred top executives on whether they thought it was necessary to cheat to prosper in business—if from time to time you had to cut corners and to cheat. Seventy-nine percent of them said, “Yes, it is necessary to cheat if you are going to stay in business.” You can find out if a man is worthy or not by suggesting a project and seeing what kind of solution you will get. It’s just like handing somebody a questionnaire. You can soon find out whether the person is a rascal or not, though we often prefer them that way.

Verse 15: “Thus did Alma teach his people that every man should love his neighbor as himself, that there should be no contention among them.” Well, how could you avoid that? He is going to tell us that. Ephraim is always under stress. Ephraim is always the overachiever, the scriptures tell us. (We’re Ephraim, not Manasseh.) Ephraim is always making himself obnoxious, always pushing people around, etc. That’s a temptation, and one has to control those things. Brigham Young used to say, “A wild horse is easier to control than these people.” Anything would be easier to control than such people. But how do you get people to love their neighbors as themselves? How can you avoid contention? Alma was their high priest, and this is the way he did it. He had this plan, the same one that was used at Qumran. Verse 17 “He consecrated all their priests and all their teachers [they were personally consecrated by him; he had that authority which Ammon didn’t have]; and none were consecrated except they were just men.” He saw to that, like Samuel of old. Remember, he was a direct descendant of Nephi. The priesthood was patriarchal, and he had the power to bestow it. “Therefore they did watch over their people, and did nourish them with things pertaining to righteousness [Nourishment is increment, of course, as we learn in verse 10. It was necessary for them to have high visibility. To nourish is to improve the condition of a thing]. And it came to pass that they began to prosper exceedingly in the land; and they called the land Helam.”

Now that's a most interesting thing because you have the soft *h* Helam in Hebrew and Arabic. It means *sweet*, a *dream* and various things. But the meaning of *Helam* is *prosperity* and *hope*. It's like the name *phoenix*, which means *new colony*. I have it down here from Smythe, actually. *Helam* means "to become suitable, to be well established." You could name a land *Helam* if it was a new colony. But I like this one better. It's the word in all Semitic languages for *dream*. It means "to be healthy, to recuperate, to restore, to revive a place, to prosper." A better name you couldn't give to a new settlement than *prosperity*, or *restoration*, or *health*, or *revival*, or *suitability*, or *happy land*. Helam was a good name, a name of good omen. So we'll end here. But then we come to that marvelous story of Alma and Amulon. What a study in character that is!