

Captain Moroni: Defending Your Liberties



Alma 43-44

Lesson 100 Part 1

Suggested Hymn #246
Onward Christian
Soldiers

Background

The Zoramites dissented from the Nephites

Alma feared the dissenters would join with the Lamanites, so he endeavored to preach the word of God to them

Those who believed in Alma's preaching were cast out by the unbelieving Zoramites, who feared the loss of their wealth and power if conversion were widespread

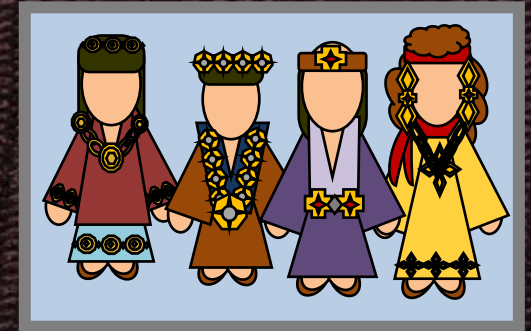
These castaways were given asylum by the "People of Ammon" and lived in the land of Jershon

The wicked Zoramites protested this action and threatened the people of Ammon

The dissenting Zoramites mixed with the Lamanites in an attempt to stir them up to war against the people of Ammon

The Ammonites and the converted Zoramites were evacuated to the land of Melek, and the Nephite armies occupied the land of Jershon

There was a possibility of war



Teaching and Preparation

18th Year of the Reign of the Judges



A Review

Alma sent his sons among the Nephites to call them to repentance

The apostate Zoramites became Lamanites

The Lamanites moved into the land of Antionum in preparation for an attack upon the Nephites

The Lamanite leader was Zerahemnah

Zerahemnah

He was a Lamanite general around 74 BC

He was offered an ultimatum to surrender his weapons and enter into a covenant to desist from warfare, or be killed

He wanted to deliver up their weapons but not take the oath to never come and war again

Moroni, a Nephite Captain, would not save them unless he would surrender his weapons and take the oath of covenant

One of Moroni's men scalped Zerahemnah with the sword

The protector raised the scalp of Zerahemnah with the point of the sword and demanded peace

Many Lamanites surrendered their weapons and made a covenant of peace and retreated to the wilderness

Later he retracted his claim and swore an oath of peace and Moroni disarmed the enemy and sent them into the wilderness



Zerahemnah's Army

The army was made up of Lamanites, Zoramites, and Amalekites

Because the Amalekites were more wicked than the Lamanites Zerahemnah made them chief captains over the Lamanites, even the Zoramites

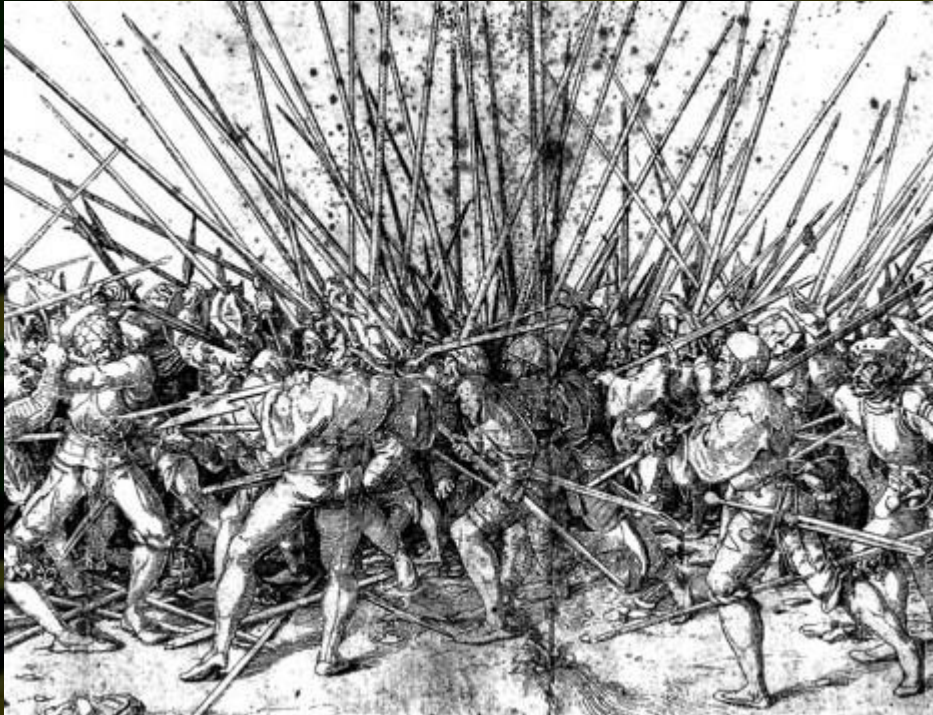
They fought for their hatred toward the Nephites in hopes of bringing them into subjection--bondage



War

Nearly 1/3 of the Book of Mormon is about war

Mormon knew that we would live in a day of “wars and rumors of wars.” D&C 45:26



“There are, however, two conditions which may justify a truly Christian man to enter—mind you, I say enter, not begin—a war.

1. An attempt to dominate and to deprive another of his free agency;
2. Loyalty to his country.



Possibly there is a third, viz, Defense of a weak nation that is being unjustly crushed by a strong, ruthless one.”

David O. McKay

“War is an ugly thing...It causes men to do things they might not normally do. It breaks up families and causes hatred, immorality, and cheating. Those who have been involved in war are usually reluctant to recall or even to speak of what they have witnessed.”

Captain Moroni

He was chief commander of the Nephite armies from around 74 BC until his retirement, not long before his death in 56 BC

He was a strong and mighty man with a 'perfect understanding'

He was 25 years old when he was appointed chief captain

He did not 'delight in bloodshed'

He believed in liberty and freedom of his country

He is known in connection with the "title of liberty"

Because of his leadership the people were able to take an effective stand against the Lamanites

He planned many years of action and sought the guidance and blessings of God

Eventually there was a peace for the Nephites for about 18 years

In about 56 BC he yielded up the command of his armies to his son, Moronihah, and spent his remaining years in peace



Nephite Army

The army was made up of Nephites, yet the “People of Ammon” did not join the army

Moroni was appointed to be chief captain over the Nephites



They fought for their land, houses, wives, and children...they were fighting for liberty

Attitudes of War



War is basically selfish

War impels you to hate your enemies

War originates in the hearts of men

War is rebellious and seeks to destroy morality



War is Incompatible with Christ's teachings

Justifying War



I fight for
my land

I fight for
my home

I fight for my
wife and
children

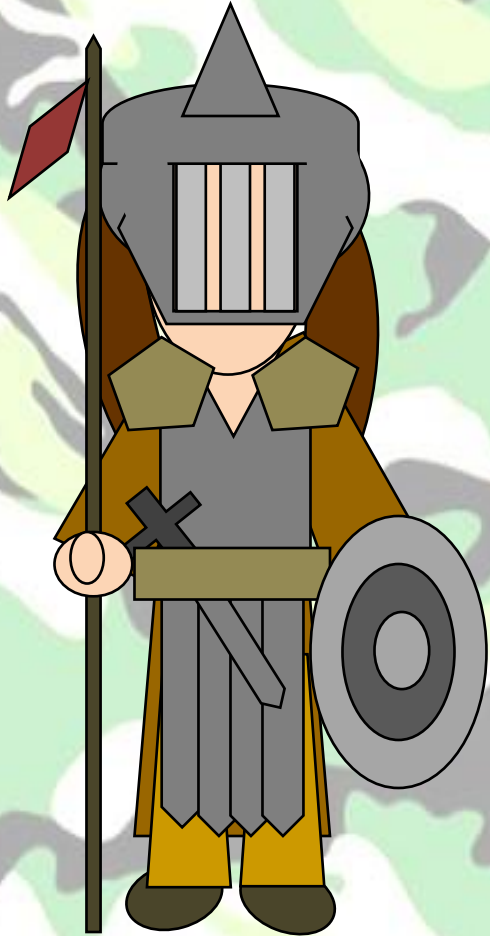
I fight for my
freedom

It is our duty to
defend our
families, our
religion, and our
liberties

“Without freedom of thought, freedom of choice, freedom of action within lawful bounds, man cannot progress.” --David O. McKay

Preparations

The Nephites had:
Breastplates, arm-
shields, shields for their
heads, and thick clothing



The Lamanites:
Swords, cimeters, bows and arrows, stones
for their slings.

They were naked save a 'skin girded about
their loins'



Amalekites and
Zoramites:

Did not have
breastplates, or shields



Defending Ourselves

Having Faith
in Jesus Christ

Seeking guidance of
our Prophets

Pray continually

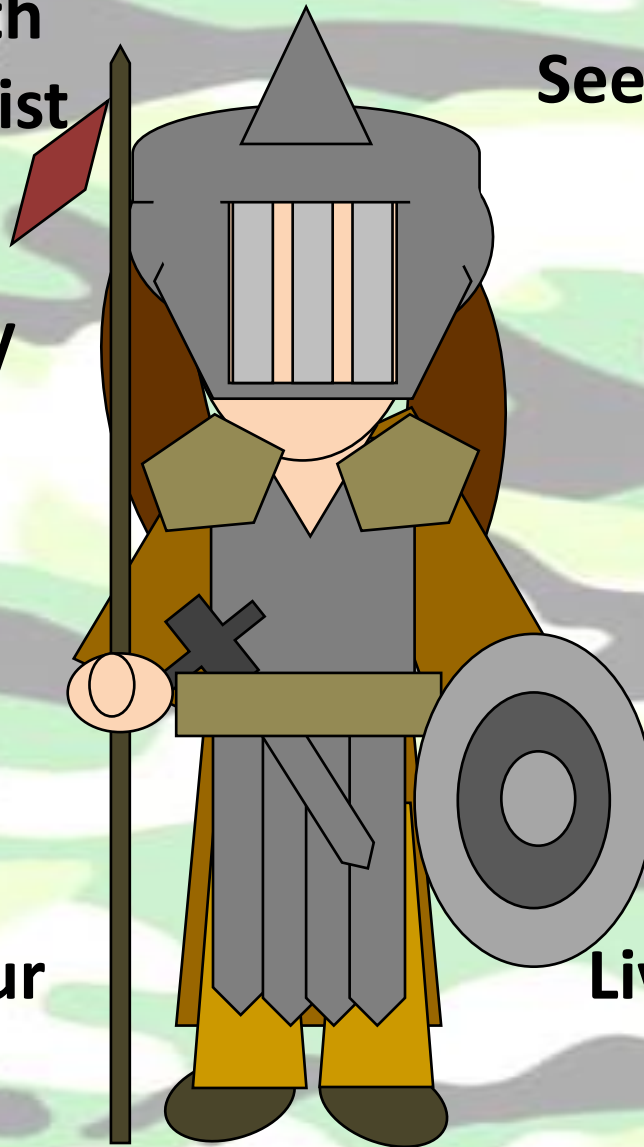
Repenting of
wrongdoing

Applying the
scriptures in
our lives

Living righteously

Having Peace in our
hearts

Living the Gospel to
the fullest

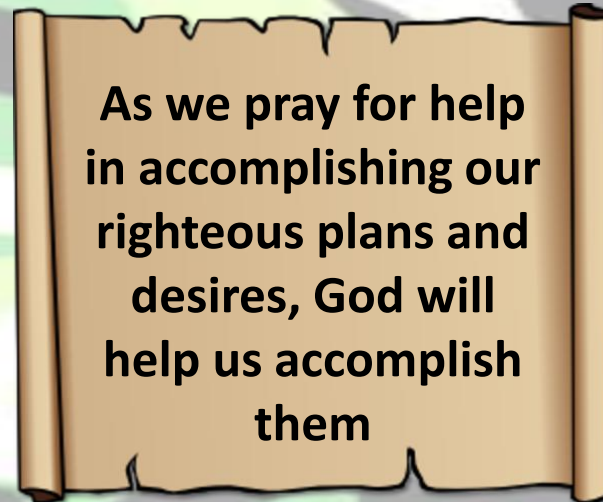


Prayer For Inspiration

Moroni sent spies to the camp
of the Lamanites

Moroni sent a messenger to Alma to
inquire of the Lord whether to defend
themselves or not

The message of the Lord was
to go into battle with the
Lamanites



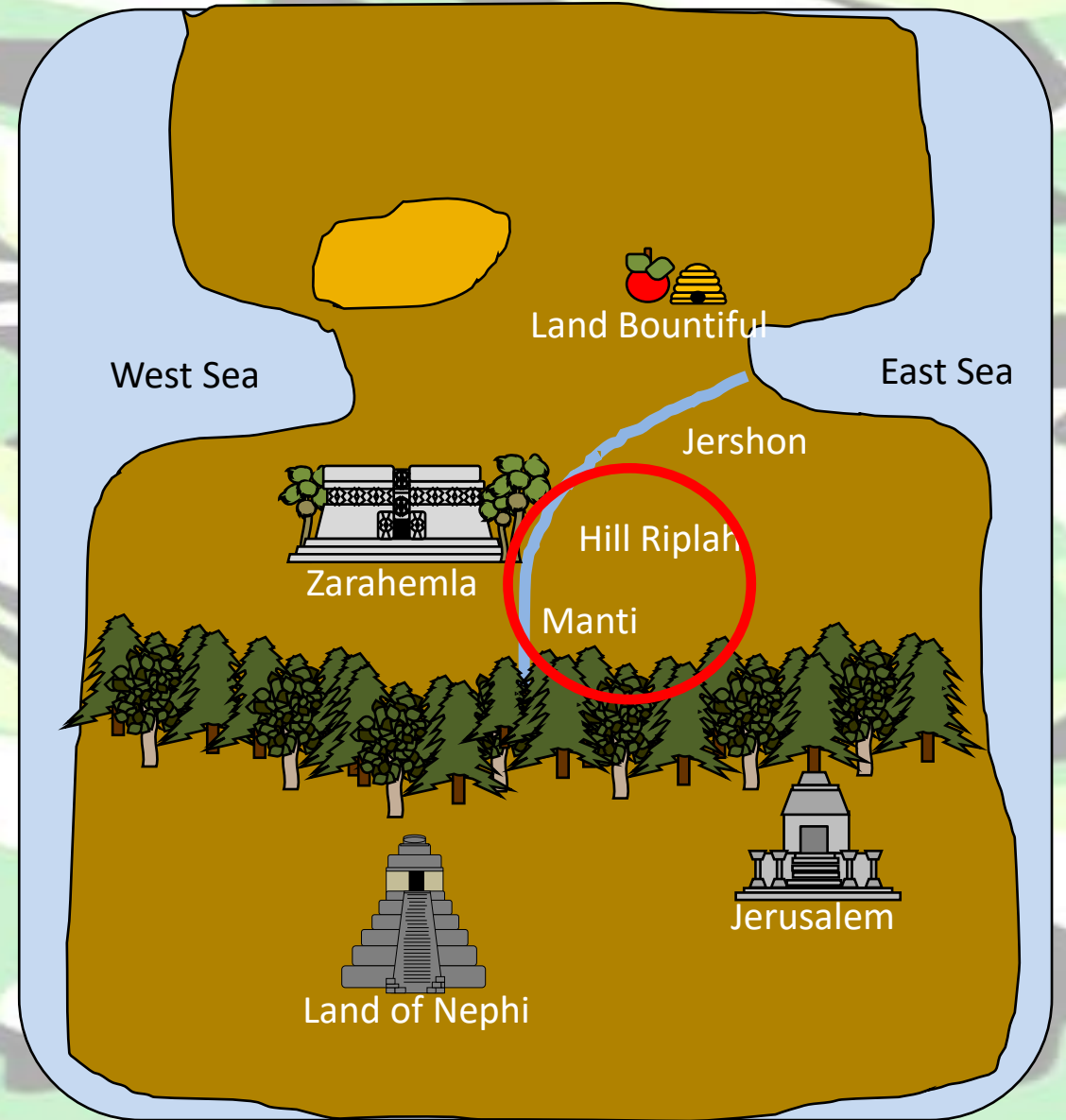
Moroni's Strategy

Moroni left part of the army in the Land of Jershon and took the remaining army to Manti

Moroni placed spies near the bank of the river Sidon



Then he divided the army and placed them on the southeast side of Hill Riplah



Lehi— A Nephite General

He was an excellent field general around 74 BC

As Moroni crossed the River Sidon...Lehi and his army came up behind the Lamanites

There was a severe battle between the Nephites and the Lamanites. Lehi held his army firm on the east of the River Sidon's shore

In around 72 BC Lehi was appointed captain over the city of Noah

The Lamanites attacked the city of Noah...however they were driven back

Lehi assisted in the defeat of the Lamanites near Bountiful (Alma 52:27-40)

He was placed in charge of the city of Mulek...one of the chief cities of the Lamanites in the land of Nephi

After the insurrection in Zarahemla...Moroni left Lehi and Teancum in charge of the forces in the field in about 61 DC and returned to claim the capital

He was also victorious in the battle in the land of Moroni and peace was restored in around 60 BC

He later assisted in defeating the Lamanite armies in Zarahemla (Helaman 1:28-30)



The Fate of the Lamanites

The forces of the Nephite army came from the front of them and behind them

Death was brought to them in almost every stroke (vs. 37)

Loss of Blood

They tried to shield themselves better

There was great destruction and they began to flee towards the River Sidon

They were pursued by Lehi's army and they wouldn't let the Lamanites cross the river

They tried to flee towards the land of Manti and met with Moroni's army

They fought like dragons



Jody Livingston

The Fate of the Nephites

There was a great many lost

They were inspired by a better cause

They fought for their freedom

“Ye shall defend your families even unto bloodshed.”

They began to stand against the Lamanites with power

They encircled them about at the river Sidon

When Moroni saw the terror of the Lamanites he caused his men to stop shedding their blood



**The Lord will help us
fulfill our duty to
defend our families,
our liberty, and our
religion**



What About Today?

“Youth today are being raised in enemy territory with a declining standard of morality. But as a servant of the Lord, I promise that you will be protected and shielded from the attacks of the adversary *if* you will heed the promptings that come from the Holy Spirit.

“Dress modestly; talk reverently; listen to uplifting music. Avoid all immorality and personally degrading practices.

Take hold of your life and order yourself to be valiant. Because we depend so much on you, you will be remarkably blessed. You are never far from the sight of your loving Heavenly Father”

Boyd K. Packer

Making a Covenant—Laying down swords

Moroni knows the Lamanites are angry with them because of their religion and faith in Christ

Moroni desires not to fight. They also don't want to be overpowered and 'come into bondage'



Moroni commands that Zerahemnah make a covenant and deliver up their weapons, to not fight anymore and leave and never come back

Moroni returns the weapons that Zerahemnah gave to him and said, "Behold, we will end the conflict."

Zerahemnah knows his army is surrounded

Zerahemnah is willing to give up their weapons but will not take the oath and they would not believe in their God



Zerahemnah knows the Lamanites would break the oath and come back and fight

The Lord Delivers — The Lord Takes away

One of Moroni's soldiers
"smote it even to the earth,
and it broke by the hilt"



*"...and he also smote
Zerahemnah that he
took off his scalp and
it fell to the earth"*



The Lamanites had been warned
that they would die unless they
give up their weapons and make a
covenant of peace

Alma 44:12-15

Zerahemnah was
angry with Moroni
and rushed forward
that he might slay
Moroni

Zerahemnah withdrew from
before them into the midst
of his soldiers



Many were 'struck with fear' and threw down
their weapons and entered into a covenant of
peace...then departed into the wilderness

Making a Covenant—Laying down swords

Moroni commands his army to slay the Lamanites that had remained



Moroni caused the work of death to be ceased and he took their weapons

Zerahemnah continues to fight

They fight with all their might, but to no avail



When Zerahemnah saw that they were about to be destroyed he did promise he would make the covenant and never come to war against them again

They departed into the wilderness

The War Goes On

“There is [a] war that has gone on since before the world was created and which is likely to continue for a long time yet to come. ...

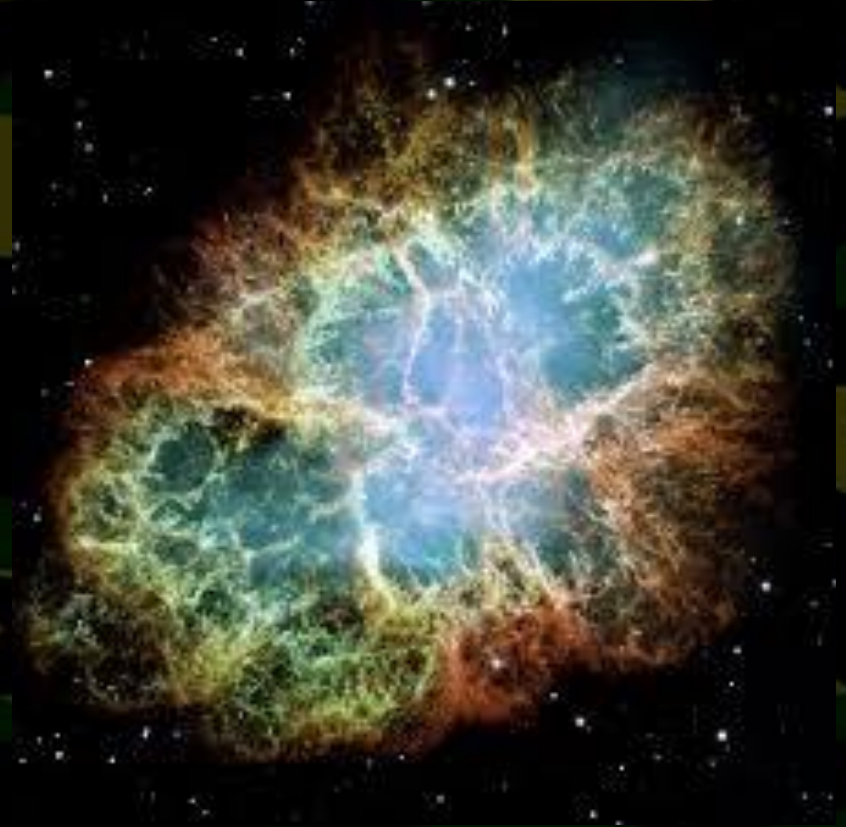
“That war ... is the war between truth and error, between agency and compulsion, between the followers of Christ and those who have denied Him. His enemies have used every stratagem in that conflict. ...

“... It is as it was in the beginning. ... The victims who fall are as precious as those who have fallen in the past. It is an ongoing battle. ...

“The war goes on. ... It is waged in our own lives, day in and day out, in our homes, in our work, in our school associations; it is waged over questions of love and respect, of loyalty and fidelity, of obedience and integrity. We are all involved in it.

... We are winning, and the future never looked brighter”

--Gordon B. Hinckley



Sources:

Videos:

Fight For Families (1:43)

Captain Moroni: Firm in the Faith (time codes 2:48-11:04)

What is Religious Freedom



David O. McKay Conference Report, April 1942 pg 72

Book of Mormon Who's Who Ed J. Pinegar and Richard J. Allen pg. 124-125, 197-198

"Lamanite" Warrior from Apocolypto [source: Icon Distribution]

Boyd K. Packer ("Counsel to Youth," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 18).

Gordon B. Hinckley ("The War We Are Winning," *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 42, 44-45).

