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Nine Generations of Spiritual Leaders 3-4

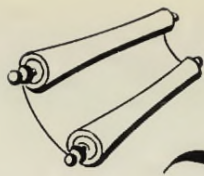
Author(s): Archibald F. Bennett

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Abstract: This series identifies a number of well-known Book of Mormon spiritual leaders, many of whom consisted of fathers and their sons (i.e., Alma/Alma the Younger, Mormon/Moroni). The second part covers Helaman the son of Alma and Helaman the son of Helaman.



Genealogy

NINE GENERATIONS OF SPIRITUAL LEADERS

By Archibald F. Bennett
General Secretary, Genealogical Society

(Continued)

3. HELAMAN, SON OF ALMA

HELAMAN proved a worthy successor to a truly great father. As the new head of the Church, Helaman went forth preaching the word of God among all the people, perfecting and regulating their organizations in every city.

But now a wicked dissenter, Amalickiah, a large and strong man, ambitious for power and seeking to become king, boldly spoke false and flattering words, leading away "the hearts of many people to do wickedly." Factions formed who would not give heed to the teachings of Helaman and Shiblon and Corianton and other faithful men of God. Others grew proud of their exceeding great riches. Amalickiah and his adherents finally determined to slay the righteous. He promised the lower judges who supported him to make them rulers over the people, and to destroy the foundation of liberty.

Then it was that the valiant general, Moroni, raised his "title of liberty," summoning all who would be true to their God, their families, and their freedom, to dedicate their lives to this sacred cause. Outnumbered, Amalickiah and his followers fled to the Lamanites. By treachery, within a short time he made himself king of the Lamanites, and led them in bitter warfare against his former people and kindred.

Helaman was likened by the chronicler to Moroni in faithfulness. While war clouds gathered, he and the high priests preached the word of God; the people humbled themselves; and again good order prevailed in the Church. Aiding him in this missionary work were his brothers, Shiblon and Corianton, and the sons of the former King Mosiah—Ammon and his brethren. Never was there a happier time among the people of Nephi.

As the Lamanite onslaught overran one after another of the great cities of the Nephites, the converted Lamanites, called the people of Ammon, felt they must break their oath never to take up arms again in bloodshed. Helaman persuaded them not to do so, but instead he enlisted two thousand of their young sons who had never taken the oath. They called upon their beloved high priest, Helaman, to be their leader, entering into a covenant to fight for their liberty and help to protect the Nephites and themselves from bondage. So valiant were they that they proved a great support to the hard-pressed

Nephites. Helaman loved them and called them his sons, and they addressed him as father. "Never," declared he, "have I seen so great courage!" They "fought as with the strength of God," with mighty power and miraculous strength. More than once their fearless attack turned defeat into victory, and when other veterans fled these remained firm and undaunted. In some bitterly contested engagements every one of the two thousand was wounded with many wounds, but not one was slain.

Helaman proved to be a gifted and resourceful general, adept at stratagem in capturing strongly fortified cities with small loss of life, and always displaying a sublime faith in God. When peace and victory came at the end of the long war, Helaman and his brethren resumed their preaching to reestablish the Church in all the land. He died in the 35th year of the reign of Judges, B.C. 57.

Shiblon, his brother, was given charge of the records and sacred things. He was a just man, walking uprightly and doing good continually, "and also did his brother," Corianton. At this time Hagoth built his ships to carry colonists to the land northward. Shiblon died, B.C. 53. Corianton having gone into the land northward in a ship, the records passed to Helaman, son of Helaman.

4. HELAMAN, SON OF HELAMAN

IN his day a powerful Lamanite army captured the chief city Zarahemla. Their leader, Coriantumr, impetuously pressed his attack into the center of the Nephite land, only to be slain and to bring disastrous defeat upon his army, who were forced to surrender. In the 41st year of Judges, Helaman was appointed chief judge by the voice of the people.

ADVENTURE

By Alfred I. Tooke

WHEN I am called to take my final leave. Do not be sad, or else I, too, shall grieve. Toll not a bell, nor solemn dirges sing. Beyond the winter lies another spring; Beyond the darkest night, another dawn Heralds the coming glory of the morn.

Beyond the far horizon other lands Await the voyager who, eager, stands Steering his craft across the Unknown Sea. When we have said farewell, then, think of me

As one to great adventure newly freed. Wish me a pleasant voyage, and Godspeed!

Again conspiracy was formed, and the powerful Gadianton band was organized. One of their chieftains was Kishkumen, notorious for having already murdered the previous chief judge. Kishkumen now attempted to slay Helaman also. But one of Helaman's servants mingled among the conspirators as one of them, learned of their wicked plot, and, pretending to guide Kishkumen to where the chief judge was, stabbed Kishkumen and put an end to his murders. The rest of the Gadianton band fled.

Again there were great migrations to the northland, and the new settlers in this time of expansion began to cover the face of the whole land, building many cities. This high tribute is paid to Helaman, high priest and chief judge:

... Helaman did fill the judgment-seat with justice and equity; yea, he did observe to keep the statutes and the judgments, and the commandments of God; and he did that which was right in the sight of God continually; and he did walk after the ways of his father, insomuch that he did prosper in the land.

And it came to pass that he had two sons. He gave unto the eldest the name of Nephi, and unto the youngest, the name of Lehi. And they began to grow up unto the Lord. (Helaman 3:20-21.)

Years of peace followed, and tens of thousands joined the Church. So many blessings were poured out upon the Nephites that even the high priests and teachers were astonished, and there was continual rejoicing.

One of the truly choice passages of the Book of Mormon relates Helaman's admonition to his sons, Nephi and Lehi:

Behold, my sons, I desire that ye should remember to keep the commandments of God; and I would that ye should declare unto the people these words. Behold, I have given unto you the names of our first parents who came out of the land of Jerusalem; and this I have done that when you remember your names ye may remember them; and when ye remember them ye may remember their works; and when ye remember their works ye may know how that it is said, and also written, that they were good.

Therefore, my sons, I would that ye should do that which is good, that it may be said of you, and also written, even as it has been said and written of them. . . .

And they did remember his words; and therefore went forth, keeping the commandments of God, to teach the word of God among all the people of Nephi. . . . (Helaman 5:6-7, 14.)

Does not this eloquent and powerful appeal of a faithful father to his sons explain in large part this long succession of righteous men for nine generations?

Helaman died B.C. 39; and Nephi succeeded as Church leader and chief judge.

(To be continued)