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## Moroni the Faithful

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**Abstract:** Moroni was a man who was faithful in life, in death, and as a resurrected being. Under the most difficult circumstances during and after the Nephite civil war, he lived as an outcast rather than deny his testimony.

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# Moroni the Faithful

*By Nora A. Davis*

ONE of the choicest gifts anyone can bequeath to the world is himself at his best. Each of us gives this contribution according to his opportunities, and to his ideas of values and ideals. Moroni thought more of his testimony of the Savior and of preserving the sacred plates of the Book of Mormon than he did of his own life. That was one way he gave himself in a super-gift. Everything else was secondary to these spiritual duties. No precaution or effort was too great for him to take in protecting the holy records. He was faithful in his care of them in life, in death, and in resurrection.

Moroni was born and grew to manhood in the terrible civil war time previous to the final struggle between the Nephites and Lamanites. He was an officer under his father Mormon, and commander of a corps of ten thousand men in the last battle. In this war of annihilation all the Nephites were killed save twenty-four strong men, and a small number who escaped southward, and a few dissenters who joined the Lamanites. Moroni and his father were among the twenty-four survivors.

Living in that wicked age and passing through the blood and destruction of the final battles it was singular for Moroni to place emphasis on spiritual things above all else. In spite of every opposition he was determined to obey the teachings of his faithful father, and always be true to his calling and testimony. He had the insight and vision of the value the records would be to a future generation and

forgot himself in his resolute efforts to preserve them.

Moroni's last days were anything but pleasant. The rigor of the northern winters, and the necessity of supplying himself with clothing, food, and shelter, added greatly to his difficulties. Then his very existence was in jeopardy. In fact, for the most part, his life was filled with great personal danger, and constant anxiety for the safety of the records. At first he had his father and companions for company, but sixteen years after the last battle he was the only faithful Nephite living.

In 400 A. D. he wrote: "After the great and tremendous battle at Cumorah, behold, the Nephites who had escaped into the country southward were hunted down by the Lamanites until they were all destroyed, and my father also was killed by them and I even remain alone to write the sad tale of the destruction of my people." Mormon 8:2-3.

During the next twenty years he lived alone, finishing up the Nephite history and abridging the Book of Ether. After he had finished this he wrote: "Now I, Moroni, after having made an end of abridging the account of the people of Jared, I had supposed not to have written more, but I have not as yet perished, and I make not myself known to the Lamanites, lest they should destroy me.

"For behold, their wars are exceeding fierce among themselves; and because of their hatred, they put to death every Nephite that will not deny Christ.

"And I, Moroni, will not deny Christ; wherefore I wander withersoever I can, for the safety of my own life." Moroni 1:1-3.

Rather than sacrifice his testimony he lived as an outcast, his life in constant peril for those last twenty years. During this time alone he must have longed for human companionship. But he refused to sell his soul for this association. He chose the harder but wiser course of remaining faithful and protecting the records at all hazards.

His loneliness must have been trying at times and yet it was not as depressing as it could have been, as he realized he was sacrificing for a great cause. He knew what he was doing was tremendously worthwhile. Then he was sustained spiritually from heaven. On one occasion he and his father had a visit from the three Nephite Apostles. Then most of the time he was occupied in literary work connected with the plates. I wonder if he could have stood his solitude without an occupation, and without great spiritual fortitude and vision.

In 420 A. D. Moroni sealed up the records and hid them away in a stone box in the Hill Cumorah. His earthly work was then done. In speaking of his passing he once wrote: "And whether they will slay me I know not.

"Therefore I will write and hide up the records in the earth, and whither I go it mattereth not."

How he met the final end we do not know, but we are sure he was always faithful to his trust as custodian of the holy things in his care; and although he died the last representative of a fallen race, his tenacity in giving his best to safeguard the sacred records in his charge makes one marvel at his great

strength of character and spiritual endurance.

In the dramatic restoration of the Gospel in this dispensation, Moroni, as a glorious angel and resurrected being, was just as careful with the plates and the other articles with them. He wouldn't even allow Joseph Smith to touch them at first. Before he permitted the Prophet to remove them he required him to wait four years, during which time he yearly instructed him concerning their sacredness. He warned the boy many times that the plates could not be used for financial gain, that their value was greater than money, because they contained the fulness of the Gospel, and that he should make every endeavor to preserve them or he should be cut off.

Joseph heeded the warnings and used many successful strategies in keeping the plates safe during their translation. After this was accomplished the angel appeared to the Prophet and received back the plates in his care.

Moroni's watchful care over the plates fully tested him. It required more than his time in mortality. On this earth he gave his life to the cause, and now in a resurrected state still functions as custodian.

But glorious has been his reward, for to him came the well earned honor of being the angel to fly from heaven bearing the everlasting Gospel to the earth in the last days.

Like Moroni, we are all faced with problems and ideals that test us, and to which we have to be faithful even though we stand alone.

We all have sacred things entrusted to our keeping. Our lives, and the way we live them are holy charges. We also have our dear ones, our friends, our testimonies of the Gospel, and our ideals to protect from evil at all times.