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## Peace Through Christ: The Book of Mormon's Divine Perspective on War

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**Abstract:** As war and violence draw closer to our nations, cities, and homes, disciples of Christ yearn for a sense of peace and safety. The Book of Mormon was brought forth in these latter days to provide inspired instruction and hope for disciples of Christ who live during times of war.



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## PEACE THROUGH CHRIST

### THE BOOK OF MORMON'S DIVINE PERSPECTIVE ON WAR

*David Brent Marsh*

LEAD STORIES ON THE EVENING NEWS almost daily report incidents of war and violence. Murder, bloodshed, and other acts of violent aggression are continually displayed in the visual, printed, and electronic media. This never-ending array of local and global hostilities can cause even the most faithful disciple of Christ to stand aghast. Shortly after the tragic events of 9/11/2001, President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “Occasions of this kind pull us up sharply to a realization that life is fragile, peace is fragile, [and] civilization itself is fragile.”<sup>1</sup>

While sobering, these terrible incidents should not be surprising. The scriptures teach that in the last days Satan will “make war” (Revelation 12:17) with the faithful and that “peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion” (D&C 1:35). The Lord has made it clear that because of the abundance of iniquity “the love of men shall wax cold;” and hence those living in the last days will encounter “wars, and rumors of wars”

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(Joseph Smith–Matthew 1:23, 30). Moreover, ever-increasing wickedness emerges as a precursor to the prophesied time when “every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety,” for “it shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another” (D&C 45:68–69). President Hinckley declared, “We live in a season when fierce men do terrible and despicable things. We live in a season of war.”<sup>2</sup>

As war and violence draw closer to our nations, cities, and homes, disciples of Christ yearn for a sense of peace and safety. The Book of Mormon was brought forth in these latter days to provide inspired instruction and hope for disciples of Christ who live during times of war.

### THE BOOK OF MORMON AND WAR

From the first chapters of Nephi, in which Lehi’s life was threatened (see 1 Nephi 1:20), to the final book of Moroni, in which those who would not deny Christ were put to death (see Moroni 1:2), disciples of Christ experienced many episodes of war. Assuredly, each generation experienced times of peace, but, with the exception of the generations immediately following the Savior’s visit to the Nephites, each generation underwent its share of violence, and the righteous were frequently required to defend themselves.

Of the 239 chapters in the Book of Mormon, 164 (68 percent) deal either wholly or partially with some kind of violence, including war, terrorism, murder, political conspiracies, secret combinations, threats, family collusions, and other hostilities.<sup>3</sup> This perspective of the Book of Mormon begs the question: If the Book of Mormon is supposed to bring us to Christ, and if the writers were so concerned about using the space on the plates for “the things which are pleasing unto God,”<sup>4</sup> why is so much of the book devoted to war?

Perhaps the simple answer is that we live in times of war and that we need divine understanding to help us live under those conditions. President Ezra Taft Benson stated, “From the Book of Mormon we learn how disciples of Christ live in times of war.”<sup>5</sup> The Book of Mormon illustrates why wars occur, explains when war is

justified, portrays how the Lord delivers His disciples from war, shows how He provides relief for them during war, and explains why He allows some of His disciples to suffer and die.

### WHY DO WARS OCCUR?

The Book of Mormon teaches that war, captivity, destruction, death, and dangerous circumstances come upon people “because of iniquity.”<sup>6</sup> Lehi prophesied that those who live in the promised land “shall never be brought down into captivity; if so, it shall be because of iniquity” (2 Nephi 1:7). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “The moment we revolt at anything which comes from God, the devil takes power.”<sup>7</sup> When the devil gains power or influence over people, at least two things happen: they seek for power over others, and they allow wickedness to flourish in their communities. Both bid war welcome.

Individuals or groups seeking power over others often engage in war and other forms of violence to accomplish their evil desires. For example, Amlici lost a contentious but legitimate election yet refused to relinquish his desire to reign over others. Consequently, he convinced his constituents to consecrate him king anyway. His first order of business was to command his new subjects to engage in war against their fellow Nephites. The result was a scene of carnage in which tens of thousands were killed. The river Sidon became a watery grave for many lifeless bodies, while the living were driven into the wilderness only to be devoured by wild and ravenous beasts (see Alma 2). Thousands suffered unnecessary violence because one man wanted power over others.

Amalickiah, another Nephite traitor, used deception to create war and cause countless deaths in his personal pursuit for power. He “was desirous to be a king,” and those who supported him were also “seeking for power” (Alma 46:4). However, Amalickiah was unable to accomplish his designs among the Nephites because of Moroni’s inspired military strategies (see Alma 46). Subsequently, he fled to the Lamanites with the intent to “place himself at their head and dethrone the king and take possession of the kingdom”

(Alma 47:8). By treachery, fraud, and murder, Amalickiah achieved his evil designs. Using flattery and lies, he incited the Lamanites against the Nephites, “for he was determined . . . to overpower the Nephites and to bring them into bondage” (Alma 48:4). Because of Amalickiah’s wickedness, the Nephite nation suffered war and violence for the next five years. Speaking of Amalickiah, Mormon noted, “We also see the great wickedness one very wicked man can cause to take place among the children of men” (Alma 46:9).<sup>8</sup>

While the Book of Mormon graphically portrays the tragic consequences of despots seeking for power over others, it also shows that war and violence come upon people who allow iniquity to go unchecked in their communities or nations.

Nephi taught that various groups of people were “destroyed from generation to generation according to their iniquities” (2 Nephi 25:9). King Limhi lamented, “Yea, I say unto you, great are the reasons which we have to mourn; for behold how many of our brethren have been slain, and their blood has been spilt in vain, and all because of iniquity. For if this people had not fallen into transgression the Lord would not have suffered that this great evil should come upon them” (Mosiah 7:24–25). Captain Moroni assured his people, “Surely God shall not suffer that we, who are despised because we take upon us the name of Christ, shall be trodden down and destroyed, until we bring it upon us by our own transgressions” (Alma 46:18). Mormon noted, “It has been [the Nephites’] quarrelings and their contentions, yea, their murderings, and their plunderings, their idolatry, their whoredoms, and their abominations, which were among themselves, which brought upon them their wars and their destructions” (Alma 50:21).<sup>9</sup>

Why would God allow war and terror to come upon His own children whom He loves so much? Does He simply want to punish them? Again, the Book of Mormon provides divine insight. Mormon keenly observed, “And thus we see that except the Lord doth chasten his people with many afflictions, yea, except he doth visit them with death and with terror, and with famine and with all manner of pestilence, they will not remember him” (Helaman 12:3). The Lord knows that peace and happiness result when His

children remember Him and follow His ways. When they begin to forget Him, He calls after them. At first He sends prophets to warn them, but if they do not repent and return to Him through these more merciful means, He uses more exacting approaches.<sup>10</sup> In essence, allowing wars among His children can be seen as the Lord's "last resort" to help them repent and return unto Him.

The Book of Mormon distinctly testifies that iniquity invites war. Whether it be a wicked individual seeking for power over others or the general wickedness of a nation forfeiting divine protection, war becomes a reality.

### WHEN IS WAR JUSTIFIED?

The Lord condemned wars of aggression but also explained to the Nephites when they were justified in declaring war against others. He said, "Inasmuch as ye are not guilty of the first offense, neither the second, ye shall not suffer yourselves to be slain by the hands of your enemies. . . . Ye shall defend your families even unto bloodshed" (Alma 43:46–47). Mormon also recorded the following: "Now the Nephites were taught to defend themselves against their enemies, even to the shedding of blood if it were necessary; yea, and they were also taught never to give an offense, yea, and never to raise the sword except it were against an enemy, except it were to preserve their lives" (Alma 48:14). In our dispensation the Lord also explained to Joseph Smith when war is justified:

"Behold, this is the law I gave unto my servant Nephi, and thy fathers, Joseph, and Jacob, and Isaac, and Abraham, and all mine ancient prophets and apostles.

"And again, this is the law that I gave unto mine ancients, that they should not go out unto battle against any nation, kindred, tongue, or people, save I, the Lord, commanded them.

"And if any nation, tongue, or people should proclaim war against them, they should first lift a standard of peace unto that people, nation, or tongue;

"And if that people did not accept the offering of peace, neither

the second nor the third time, they should bring these testimonies before the Lord;

“Then I, the Lord, would give unto them a commandment, and justify them in going out to battle against that nation, tongue, or people.

“And I, the Lord, would fight their battles, and their children’s battles, and their children’s children’s, until they had avenged themselves on all their enemies, to the third and fourth generation.

“Behold, this is an ensample unto all people, saith the Lord your God, for justification before me” (D&C 98:32–38).

President Hinckley declared, “The terrible forces of evil must be confronted and held accountable for their actions,” and then he explained, “There are times when we must stand up for right and decency, for freedom and civilization, just as Moroni rallied his people in his day to the defense of their wives, their children, and the cause of liberty.”<sup>11</sup> Elder Russell M. Nelson also confirmed that the scriptures “strongly condemn wars of aggression but sustain obligations of citizens to defend their families and their freedoms.”<sup>12</sup>

In the Book of Mormon, the Lord clearly condemned wars that were intended to conquer others, but He also supported the right of His children to defend themselves against evil aggressors. The Book of Mormon also shows that when the people were righteous they were delivered by the power of God.

### BEING DELIVERED BY THE POWER OF GOD

The Book of Mormon teaches that God delivers His disciples from war if they trust in Him and follow His ways.<sup>13</sup> Nephi taught “that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance” (1 Nephi 1:20). He then proceeded to show how the Lord delivered his father from people who wanted to kill him (see 1 Nephi 2:1–3), delivered his family from the destruction of Jerusalem (see 1 Nephi 2:11–14), delivered him and his brothers from Laban’s attempt to kill them (see 1 Nephi 3–4),

and delivered him from Laman's and Lemuel's attempts to cause him pain and suffering (see 1 Nephi 3:28–30; 7:16–19; 18:9–23).

Alma counseled Shiblon, “I would that ye should remember, that as much as ye shall put your trust in God even so much ye shall be delivered out of your trials, and your troubles, and your afflictions, and ye shall be lifted up at the last day” (Alma 38:5). After gaining advantage over the Lamanite army, Moroni testified to Zerahemnah:

“But now, ye behold that 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. And now ye see that ye cannot destroy this our faith.

“Now ye see that this is the true faith of God; yea, 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).

During his abridgment, Mormon observed that “those who were faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord were delivered at all times, whilst thousands of their wicked brethren have been consigned to bondage, or to perish by the sword” (Alma 50:22).

Shortly after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington D.C., President Hinckley declared, “Our safety lies in repentance. Our strength comes of obedience to the commandments of God.”<sup>14</sup> Nephi stated, “But, behold, all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel if it so be that they will repent” (1 Nephi 22:28). While the Book of Mormon demonstrates the Lord's ability and willingness to deliver those who repent and remember Him, it also shows how He provides relief for them when they are required to experience war.

### RECEIVING RELIEF DURING WAR

A young Bosnian student who recently immigrated to the United States described what it was like growing up in her war-torn

country. She said, “You wouldn’t be able to walk down the street and be safe, or be in your house and be safe. When you’re sleeping, you’re just thinking that . . . you could just die any second.”<sup>15</sup> Fear and anxiety naturally grip us during times of war and terror. Thoughts of violence and death can cause even the most affable person to become gloomy. But the Book of Mormon shows that disciples of Christ can receive relief and live with inner peace, happiness, and prosperity during times of war.

Perhaps in an effort to emphasize God’s tender care for His disciples, Mormon placed two stories of relief and deliverance side by side. King Limhi and his people were brought into subjection to the Lamanites because of their own wickedness. During their captivity, the Lamanites “would smite them on their cheeks, and exercise authority over them; and began to put heavy burdens upon their backs” (Mosiah 21:3). But after Limhi’s people humbled themselves and prayed to the Lord, He “began to soften the hearts of the Lamanites that they began to ease their burdens; yet the Lord did not see fit to deliver them out of bondage. And it came to pass that they began to prosper by degrees in the land” (Mosiah 21:15–16). The Lord’s incremental relief came as they turned to Him, and eventually they were freed from their captors.

The very next chapter relates how Alma and his converts were relieved of their burdens and miraculously freed through God’s power. Amulon, one of the former wicked leaders of Noah’s priests and a tributary monarch under the Lamanites, was angry at Alma for his religious conversion through Abinadi’s teaching (see Mosiah 24:9). Amulon persecuted Alma and his people by putting tasks on them and prohibiting them from praying. The record then states:

“And Alma and his people did not raise their voices to the Lord their God, but did pour out their hearts to him; and he did know the thoughts of their hearts.

“And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came to them in their afflictions, saying: Lift up your heads and be of good comfort, for I know of the covenant which ye have made unto me; and I will covenant with my people and deliver them out of bondage.

“And I will also ease the burdens which are put upon your

shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, even while you are in bondage; and this will I do that ye may stand as witnesses for me hereafter, and that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions.

“And now it came to pass that the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light; yea, the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord” (Mosiah 24:12–15).

Before long, “the Lord caused a deep sleep to come upon the Lamanites,” and Alma’s group departed for Zarahemla and freedom (see Mosiah 24:16–25).

The Nephites believed that “if they were faithful in keeping the commandments of God that he would prosper them in the land; yea, warn them to flee, or to prepare for war, according to their danger; and also, that God would make it known unto them whither they should go to defend themselves against their enemies, and by so doing, the Lord would deliver them” (Alma 48:15–16). Referring to survivors of deadly natural disasters, Mormon again noted that “it was the more righteous part of the people who were saved, and it was they who received the prophets and stoned them not; and it was they who had not shed the blood of the saints, who were spared” (3 Nephi 10:12; see also 3 Nephi 9:13). In juxtaposition, Mormon also noted that people perished “by thousands in the more wicked parts of the land” (Helaman 11:6).

Jacob told the pure in heart that if they looked unto God with firmness of mind and prayed with faith that the Lord would “console you in your afflictions, and he will plead your cause, and send down justice upon those who seek your destruction.” He then added that they could “feast upon” God’s love (Jacob 3:1–2). Elder Neal A. Maxwell taught, “Though living in a time of violence, we can have that inner peace that passeth understanding. Perplexing things will still happen, but, like Nephi, we can still know that God loves us, a felicitous and fundamental fact which can and will sustain us through so much!”<sup>16</sup> Elder Russell M. Nelson said, “Peaceful—even prosperous—living can come to those who abide His precepts and

follow His pathway to peace.”<sup>17</sup> Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin testified, “While [God] allows all of us to make choices that may not always be for our own or even others’ well-being, and while He does not always intervene in the course of events, He has promised the faithful peace even in their trials and tribulations.”<sup>18</sup> President Ezra Taft Benson stated, “The Lord has made it very clear in the revelations that even though times become perilous, even though we be surrounded by temptation and sin, even though there be a feeling of insecurity, even though men’s hearts may fail them and anxiety fill their souls, if we only trust in God and keep his commandments we need have no fear.”<sup>19</sup> In the midst of the “war on terrorism,” President Hinckley also promised “that whatever happens in the world, and I think none of us can foretell what might happen at this time, that God will be with us. He will watch over us. He will protect us. He will see that we are provided for. And we shall endure under His watchful care if we will be true and faithful and obedient and harken to His word.”<sup>20</sup>

The Book of Mormon teaches that God blesses the faithful during episodes of affliction. It illustrates that God is merciful and, like a compassionate parent whose attention is amplified when a child is afflicted, He is anxious to succor His children during times of war.<sup>21</sup> It is comforting to know that the Lord will bless His disciples with inner peace during war, but perhaps one of the most difficult things to understand is why some faithful disciples suffer and die as a result of war and other tragedies.

#### SUFFERING AND DYING AS A RESULT OF WAR AND OTHER TRAGEDIES

Suffering and death that result from war and other tragedies are harsh realities not easily accepted or understood, especially when they involve faithful disciples of Christ. Elder Maxwell reminded us that “the faithful will not be totally immune from the events on this planet.”<sup>22</sup> President Hinckley also acknowledged that some of us “may even be called on to suffer in one way or another.”<sup>23</sup> The Book of Mormon preserves a few episodes of inhumane abuse and savage

slaughtering to help us understand why the Lord sometimes allows His disciples to suffer and die.

The wicked priests of Noah bound Abinadi “and scourged his skin with faggots, yea, even unto death” (Mosiah 17:13). Before dying, Abinadi testified, “I will suffer even until death, and I will not recall my words, and they shall stand as a testimony against you. And if ye slay me ye will shed innocent blood, and this shall also stand as a testimony against you at the last day” (Mosiah 17:10).

The wicked lawyers and judges of Ammonihah took the wives and children of religious converts and burned them and their scriptures. Alma and Amulek were bound and brought to the place of martyrdom so they could witness this savage massacre. “When Amulek saw the pains of the women and children who were consuming in the fire, he also was pained; and he said unto Alma: How can we witness this awful scene? Therefore let us stretch forth our hands, and exercise the power of God which is in us, and save them from the flames.” Alma responded, “The Spirit constraineth me that I must not stretch forth mine hand; for behold the Lord receiveth them up unto himself, in glory; and he doth suffer that they may do this thing, or that the people may do this thing unto them, according to the hardness of their hearts, that the judgments which he shall exercise upon them in his wrath may be just; and the blood of the innocent shall stand as a witness against them, yea, and cry mightily against them at the last day” (Alma 14:10–11). In his letter to Pahoran, Moroni makes this pointed remark: “For the Lord suffereth the righteous to be slain that his justice and judgment may come upon the wicked; therefore ye need not suppose that the righteous are lost because they are slain; but behold, they do enter into the rest of the Lord their God” (Alma 60:13).

After a devastating battle that left the bodies of thousands “moldering in heaps upon the face of the earth,” including some faithful disciples of Christ, the Book of Mormon records that the survivors “truly mourn for the loss of their kindred, yet they rejoice and exult in the hope, and even know, according to the promises of the Lord, that they are raised to dwell at the right hand of God, in a state of never-ending happiness” (Alma 28:11–12). Helaman

lamented the loss of “a vast number” of soldiers and tenderly declared, “We may console ourselves in this point, that they have died in the cause of their country and of their God, yea, and they are happy” (Alma 56:10–11; see also Alma 24:26).

We may not always understand why faithful disciples die during war and other tragedies, but the Book of Mormon makes it clear that, whether they die or survive, the righteous are happy. Modern technology allows us to witness the suffering and death of people all over the world. As we weep over the innocent and the righteous who are caught in destructive and deadly forces of war, violence, and natural disasters, perhaps we can appreciate even more the divine perspective the Lord provides in the Book of Mormon. It teaches hope, furnishes eternal perspective, and gives comfort to disciples of Christ.

### CONCLUSION

The Book of Mormon was brought forth to bless those who live in a dispensation of worldwide violence. It explains why wars occur and when war is justified. It also testifies in unmistakable terms that the Lord delivers His disciples from war or provides relief for them during war, and it explains why some disciples are allowed to suffer and die. Ultimately, the Book of Mormon teaches disciples of Christ how to receive peace in their hearts, homes, and nations (see 2 Nephi 3:12). It is the preeminent instrument to bring us to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. By reading and pondering its divine teachings, we come to know the Savior and learn how to invite Him into our daily lives. The more Jesus Christ becomes the focus of our attention, the more peaceful our lives become. As President Howard W. Hunter promised, “If our lives and our faith are centered on Jesus Christ and his restored gospel, nothing can ever go permanently wrong.”<sup>24</sup>

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### NOTES

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Times in Which We Live,” *Ensign*, November 2001, 73.

2. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Living in the Fulness of Times," *Ensign*, November 2001, 6.

3. The following is a list of chapters in the Book of Mormon that mention various kinds of violence: 1 Nephi 1–4, 7, 10–15, 17–19, 22; 2 Nephi 1, 4–10, 12–21, 23–28, 30; Jacob 2–4, 7; Enos 1; Jarom 1; Omni 1; Words of Mormon 1; Mosiah 1–3, 7, 9–14, 17–24, 27, 29; Alma 1–5, 7–11, 14–22, 24–31, 33, 35–38, 43–63; Helaman 1–16; 3 Nephi 1–10, 16, 21–22, 25, 27–28, 30; 4 Nephi 1; Mormon 1–8; Ether 2, 7–11, 13–15; Moroni 1, 9.

4. See 1 Nephi 6:3–5; 19:18; 2 Nephi 25:23, 26; 33:3–4; Jacob 1:2–4; Words of Mormon 1:3–9; Mormon 3:17–22; 5:12–15; Ether 8:26; Moroni 10:1.

5. Ezra Taft Benson, "The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion," *Ensign*, November 1986, 7.

6. See 2 Nephi 1:7; 25:9; Mosiah 7:24; Alma 45:14; 46:18, 21–22; 49:3; 50:21; 53:8–9; 59:11–13; 60:15–16; Helaman 4:6–11, 13; 11:6, 32–34; 13:30; 3 Nephi 9:2, 12.

7. Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 181.

8. Incidents where someone sought for power over others through violent means: Alma 61:3–8; Helaman 1:1–13.

9. Scriptures that show wickedness invites war: Mosiah 11:20–25; Alma 46:21–22; 49:3; 53:8–9; 59:11–13; 60:15–16; Helaman 4:6–11, 13; 11:6, 32–37; 13:30; 3 Nephi 9:12.

10. Scriptures that teach how the Lord allows war and natural disasters to help us remember Him: 1 Nephi 17:33–40; 19:11; 2 Nephi 6:14–15; 25:9; 28:15–17; Mosiah 1:17; 7:20, 25, 29–33; 11:20–25; 23:21; Alma 62:39–41; 3 Nephi 9:1–13; 16:8–15; Ether 2:8–12; Deuteronomy 28:15–68; Leviticus 26:14–33; 1 Kings 9:1–9; 11:9–14; 24:2–3; 2 Kings 19:7; 24:2; Psalm 78:34; Jeremiah 1:15–16; 25:9, 16; 36:31; Ezekiel 20:26; Amos 4:6–11; Haggai 2:17; D&C 43:20–25; 88:81, 88–90; 98:19–22; 101:2–5.

11. Hinckley, "Times in Which We Live," 72.

12. Russell M. Nelson, "Blessed Are the Peacemakers," *Ensign*, November 2002, 40.

13. Scriptures that teach how the Lord delivered people from war and other dangerous circumstances: 1 Nephi 4:1–3; 13:16–19; 14:2; 2 Nephi 6:17; Omni 1:6–7; Mosiah 2:4; 7:33; 9–22; 11:26; 23:18; 24:10–25; 25:16; 27:16; Alma 5:4, 9; 9:10, 22; 14:12–29; 19:27; 26:29; 29:12; 31:38; 36:3, 27–29; 38:5; 43:48–53; 44:3–5; 45:1; 48:7–9, 14–16; 49:23, 28–30; 50:12–24; 53:10–15; 55:31; 56:6–8, 47–48; 57:21–27, 35; 58:9–12, 39–40; 60:20; 62:50; Helaman 7:20–23; 12:1–3; 13:12–14; 3 Nephi 3:15; 4:33; 9:13; 10:12–13; 22:14–15, 17; 28:20; Mormon 3:13, 15; Ether 2:12.

14. Hinckley, "Times in Which We Live," 74. See also Helaman 4:10–18, 20–26; 5:48–52 for incidents when repentance brought success to military maneuvers.

15. Channel 4 News interview by Chris Vanocur, aired 10 January 2003; written transcript in author's possession.

16. Neal A. Maxwell, "Encircled in the Arms of His Love," *Ensign*, November 2002, 18. See also 2 Nephi 2:2; Mosiah 24:14–15; Alma 31:38; 33:23; 36:3, 27; 50:22.

17. Nelson, "Blessed Are the Peacemakers," 41.

18. Joseph B. Wirthlin, "Finding a Safe Harbor," *Ensign*, May 2000, 59.

19. Ezra Taft Benson, in Conference Report, October 1950, 145–46.

20. Gordon B. Hinckley, "God Will Protect Us in These Perilous Times," *LDS Church News*, 22 February 2003, [www.desnews.com](http://www.desnews.com).

21. See Mosiah 15:9; Alma 7:12; 3 Nephi 17:6–7.

22. Maxwell, "Encircled," 17.

23. Hinckley, "Times in Which We Live," 74.

24. Howard W. Hunter, *The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997), 40.