Aaron, Son of Mosiah

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**Abstract:** Aaron chose missionary service over the opportunity to serve as king and suffered hardship and inhumane treatment to preach the gospel to the Lamanites. Though little is known about him, the Book of Mormon sets forth the greatness of his character.
The Earl of Warwick was scarcely a less important personage in his time than the justly beloved Alfred was in his, or the more or less mystical Arthur in the chivalrous and romantic period graced by him.

He who is best known as the Earl of Warwick was by no means the first to bear the title. He won it, in fact, by his marriage with the heiress of the powerful Beauchamps, to which family the title and lands of the earldom had long belonged. Himself of the illustrious Neville family, his coming into the world was fortunately, perhaps, for his fame, at a time when his early manhood witnessed the most tempestuous period in English history. He became the most conspicuous figure in the War of the Roses, and by his daring courage as well as his strong and influential following he was soon more powerful than the king himself; he had the power not only to tear down but also to set up the king. Hence his proud title of King-maker. His success in the field soon brought him to the height of his power; a career so meteoric could not fail to terminate as suddenly as it grew. His influence began to wane with the installation and coronation of the monarch who owed his throne to Warwick's prowess; and when the inconstant Edward allowed himself to be captivated by the charms of Elizabeth Woodville, instead of contracting the diplomatic marriage with the princess of Savoy which the wily Louis XI. of France and the Earl of Warwick had arranged, the latter set about pulling down the sovereign he had raised to power. He accepted foreign embassies which were in truth nothing but honorable exile, and for a time was seemingly content. But his ambition again spurred him to activity, and, gratified at the prospect of a marriage between his daughter Anne and the Lancastrian prince, he was fickle enough to take up arms against the Yorkist sovereign. The latter was compelled to flee, and Henry resumed the crown. But the Flemings and Dutch, to whom Edward now appealed, responded warmly to his call, and at their head he rallied his followers and advanced bravely upon London. Warwick came forth to stop him. The hostile forces met at Barnet, April 4th, 1471, and there one of the most decisive battles of history was fought. The earl was defeated, and he and his brother were left dead on the field. Here ended the glory of the house of Warwick, and with the battle of Tewksbury, which shortly afterwards occurred, terminated the bloody and disastrous War of the Roses. It is a singular coincidence that every individual of two generations of the great families of Warwick and Somerset died either on the scaffold or fell in battle.

Warwick is immortalized by Bulwer-Lytton as "the last of the barons" in his great work of that name,—one of the classics of the English language. Even in romance a more illustrious figure is difficult to find; in history his fame, notwithstanding his unholy ambition and his treasonable dealings, will endure as long as the English tongue is spoken or the English nation survives. John Q. Cannon.

Aaron, Son of Mosiah.

It is generally supposed that Aaron was the eldest son of his father, the second Mosiah, as it is said that the sovereignty of the people rightly belonged to him on the death of the latter, but he refused this great honor on purpose to fulfill a mission to the Lamanites, upon which he and his brothers had set their hearts.

Aaron was born in the land of Zarahemla probably not earlier than B. C. 125, as his father would then have been about thirty years old. During his youth he was wayward and uncontrollable, and joined with those who persecuted the people of God. In fact he and his brothers and the younger Alma were leaders among those who harassed the church. The conduct of the young princes in this regard cannot be ascribed to the corrupting influence of lives of pomp and luxury spent at their father's court, for that was a model of simplicity and frugality, and the
king himself labored with his hands to lighten the burdens of the people. But it may more justly be attributed to the want of thought, self-conceit and stubbornness so frequently shown in the lives of the young, until maturer years and wider experience teach them humility and reverence. From this sad course of life Aaron and his associates were rescued by the direct interposition of heaven. He was traveling in the company that was stopped on the way by the angel of the Lord, who, in tones of thunder, which caused the solid earth to tremble, reproved its members for their sins and commanded them to molest the saints no more. From this moment Aaron was a changed man, he gave to God and heaven his undivided life. Where he had done evil he sought to make amends and where he had incited to turbulancy he became a peacemaker. Shortly afterwards he and his brothers commenced to labor as missionaries among the Nephites. They next determined to lay their lives on the altar of sacrifice and go up to the land of Nephi into the midst of the Lamanites and bear to them the message of God's condescension and love. From this seeming rash resolve most of their friends sought to dissuade the young princes. They pictured to them the perils of the venture, the hopelessness of the task. But it availed not. The Spirit of the Lord was burning within them, they were oppressed with the thought of the value of human souls that were perishing for lack of knowledge. The good king himself, had scarcely the fervor of his sons, he hesitated to give his consent, for he doubted, as from past experience he had good cause to doubt, that they would be able to reclaim from their savage ways the benighted children of Laman. However, he inquired of the Lord. The answer was full of assurances of success, and of Divine protection for his sons. Thus strengthened he sent them forth with his blessing. But as he was growing old the question of who should succeed him on the Nephite throne filled his mind. He sent among the people to inquire who would be their choice. The people answered Aaron. But Aaron would not accept the crown, his mind was on other objects fully bent. So, lest he should ever change his mind and demand the kingly authority as his right, his father decided, with the consent of the people, to change the form of the government of the nation from a monarchy to a republic; which change was made by unanimous consent.

When the young men left Zarahemla (B.C. 91) they plunged into the wilderness that divided the possessions of the Nephites from the Lamanites, and amidst its discouragements they almost lost heart, but were animated to renewed endeavor by Divine manifestations. When they reached the borders of the Lamanites the missionaries separated. Aaron journeyed towards a land called Jerusalem, in which was built a great city of the same name, peopled largely and controlled by Nephite apostates of the order of Nehor. Aaron entered into their synagogues and preached, he proclaimed the word wherever he had opportunity. But they would not accept it. Finding his efforts in their behalf useless after a time he left them and went over to a village called Ani-Anti. There he found some of his brethren zealously ministering, but the people hardened their hearts against the gospel message. So they all departed and journeyed to the land of Middoni. Here again they preached to many though but few believed. The hardened unbelievers treated the brethren with much cruelty so that some of them fled, while the rest, among whom was Aaron, were taken and cast into prison where they were abused with great inhumanity; their lives were preserved by the power of God alone. In prison they remained until they were delivered by Ammon, Aaron's brother, and King Lamoni. The latter had influence enough with Antiono, the king of Middoni, to secure the release of the brethren. Sometime after their release Aaron left the land of Middoni and was led by the Spirit to the land of Lehi-Nephi, where was the abode of the chief king over the Lamanites. Aaron and his
brethren repaired to the palace, bowed before
the king, told him who they were and offered
to be his servants. To this he would not consent. He had already learned something
of the gospel from Ammon, and now desired
to hear more. At his request Aaron explained
to him many things relating to the nature of
God and the plan of salvation; for, though
he recognized the power and might of the
Great Spirit, he was altogether ignorant of
things concerning the Deity.

His words were gratefully received by the
king, who besought Aaron to teach him how
he might obtain the eternal life of which he
spoke. Aaron instructed him to bow down
before the Lord in prayer, and then in faith
ask for the blessings he desired.

The aged king did so. He prostrated
himself on the ground and cried mightily,
saying, “O God, Aaron hath told me there is
a God; and if there is a God, and if thou
art God, wilt thou make thyself known unto
me, and I will give away all my sins to know
thee, and that I may be raised from the dead,
and be saved at the last day.” So great was
his emotion, that when he had said these
words, he was struck as if he were dead.

When the king thus fell his servants ran
and told the queen what had happened.
She
at once came in to the room where he lay,
and seeing Aaron and his brethren standing
by she became very angry, as she supposed
that they were the cause of the evil that had,
in her estimation, befallen her husband. She,
without hesitation, ordered the king’s ser­
vants to take the brethren and slay them; but
they dared not, for they feared the power
which was in Aaron. The queen was also
afraid, but she seemed to think that the best
way to get rid of the trouble was to destroy
those who she imagined brought it. As the
king’s servants refused to obey her command,
she ordered them to go out into the streets
and call upon the people to come in and kill
Aaron and his companions.

When Aaron saw the temper of the queen,
he feared lest the multitude, in the hardness
of their hearts, would raise a great commo-
tion, and be a cause of hindering the work
of God, which had so auspiciously com­
menced with the king. Therefore he put
forth his hand and raised the monarch from
the earth, and at the same time said unto
him, “Stand.” The king at once received his
strength and stood upon his feet, at the sight
of which the queen and her servants won­
dered greatly and were filled with fear.

Then the king began to explain to them
what he had learned with regard to God and
the gospel, and he spoke with such great
power that his whole household was converted.
The multitude also that had gathered at the
call of the queen were pacified by his words,
and when he saw that their hearts were soft­
ened he caused that Aaron and his brethren
should teach them the word of God.

After the king was converted he sent a
proclamation throughout the land forbidding
any and all from persecuting Aaron and his
fellow-missionaries, giving them liberty to
preach anywhere and everywhere that they
desired. Our readers may be sure that this
privilege was not neglected. Nor was the
result of their labors trifling, but glorious in
the saving of many thousand souls; for unto
the Lord were converted the people of the
Lamanites who dwelt in the lands of Ishmael,
Middoni, Shilom and Shemlon, and in the
cities of Nephi, Lemuel and Shimnilon; and
they became a righteous, peaceful, God-serv­
ing people, and from faithful obedience to
His law they never fell away. But the vari­
ous bodies of Nephite apostates who dwelt
among the Lamanites universally rejected the
gospel message, with the exception of one
single Amalekite.

The renegade Amalekites, Amulonites and
others were not willing to be ruled by a
Christian monarch. They had rejected
Christianity altogether, and would not have
it as the ruling power, either in Nephi or
Zarahemla. With the old sophistries and
falsehoods they raised a mutiny in the hearts
of their associate Lamanites and urged them
on to rebellion against the rightful king and
his believing subjects. But the converted
Lamanites made no preparations to resist them; they felt that in times past with unholy hands they had spilt blood as water on the land; blood that they could never atone for, but they would do it no more. Passive non-resistance for the future should be their policy, but the blood of a fellow-being they would never again shed, no matter how great the peril, how intense the aggravation. As a witness of the completeness of this resolve, they took their weapons of war and buried them deep in the earth with an oath and covenant that they would never dig them up again. When the maddened hosts of their embittered brethren rushed upon them, they came forth unarmed, bowed down before their assailants, and submitted to their fate. With them to live was Christ, to die was salvation. The vengeful Nephite apostates led the inglorious charge and shed most of the blood that flowed that day, when one thousand and five unresisting martyrs glorified the Lamanite race by the tribute of their lives to God and the truth. A thousand ransomed souls, washed white in the blood of the Lamb, that day entered the gates of heaven to stand among the saviors on Mount Zion in the great day of the redeemed.

After a disastrous war with the Nephites a year or so later, the disappointed Lamanites again attacked their Christian brethren, who, as before, permitted themselves to be slain without making the slightest resistance. Seeing the murderous temper of their assailants, it was determined, by the permission of the Lord, to remove all the believers to the land of Zarahemla. This was successfully accomplished, and by the consent of the Nephites these persecuted people occupied and established themselves in the land of Jershon; the four sons of Mosiah accompanying them.

After the return of the sons of Mosiah to the land of Zarahemla we have little account of Aaron, except incidental references to his virtues, nor do we know anything of his death. He was alive in the year B.C. 75, for in that year he accompanied Alma to the land of Antionum on the remarkable mission to the Zoramites, and there labored with his usual faithfulness and zeal. When that mission was ended he appears to have accompanied the rest of the missionaries to the land of Jershon, after which we hear no more of him or of his labors.

George Reynolds.

A LIFE'S EXPERIENCE.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 603.]

On January 3rd, 1857, we received orders to proceed at once to Malta. Arriving there we loaded with all kinds of stores and a large amount of money and on the 12th of February sailed again for England. On the 28th, we arrived at Spithead and discharged all stores. We then received orders to go at once to Plymouth and refit. After doing this we sailed, on March 16th, for the South Pacific—the part of the world I hoped to visit when I first joined the navy.

In a few days we were in close proximity to the Equator and there began to be great preparations made to receive Old Neptune and his family on board to take part in the initiation of all “green horns” into the Neptune family. The whole crew had to appear before a committee of examination and they decided who should be shaved. As a matter of fact all who had not crossed the line had to undergo the ordeal, and their