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The Alma Family (A Book of Mormon Sketch)

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Abstract: This series presents a life sketch of the Alma family, many of whom became prophets. The life of Alma the Younger is compared to the Apostle Paul—both were called upon to repent and became great missionaries for the Lord. The prophecies of Alma are among the most numerous, important, and interesting in the Book of Mormon, and his inspired advice to his sons contains many doctrinal matters. Helaman the son of Helaman, grandson of Alma, carried on the work of righteousness in spite of the Gadianton robbers. His son Nephi was a great prophet who paved the way for the visit of Christ in America. Nephi's brother Lehi and Lehi's son Nephi were also great leaders. The fourteenth part covers Nephi, the son of Nephi, Jonas, and Amos the Elder.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles; these are the beginnings of sorrows."—MARK xiii, 8.

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THE ALMA FAMILY.

(A Book of Mormon Sketch).

BY ELDER GEO. REYNOLDS.

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NEPHI, THE SON OF NEPHI THE DISCIPLE.

This holy man appears to have arrived at the age of manhood when the Messiah visited the Nephites, as (if we get a right understanding of the sacred records,) the plates, with the other holy things, were taken charge of by him very shortly after that glorious appearing. It is presumable he was then a young man, as he retained them seventy-six years, or until A.D. 110, when his son Amos received them. His duty, as the recorder of the doings of his people, was a most happy one; he had nothing but good to relate of their lives and actions, and to record that perfect peace prevailed on all the vast continent. The Nephites increased in numbers (and Lamanites there were none), they prospered in circumstances, they grew in material wealth, all of which was held in common, according to the order of God; they

colonized and spread far abroad; they rebuilt their ancient capital and many other cities, and founded many new ones; but above all, they were rich in heavenly treasures, the Holy Spirit of God reigned in every heart and illumined every soul. It was a foretaste of the Millennium to the whole people of half the world, and when Nephi died (A.D. 110) this inexpressibly happy, heavenly state still continued in undiminished warmth of divine and brotherly love and strength of abiding faith. All the generation to which Nephi belonged entered in at the straight gate, and walked the narrow way to the eternal city of God, not one of them was lost.

JONAS THE DISCIPLE.

The name of Jonas, the son of Nephi the Disciple, and himself a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, is but once mentioned in the Book of Mormon, and then only in the list of

those chosen by the Messiah to form that august body, where it occupies the third place, coming next after Nephi his father, and Timothy his uncle, consequently all that we can say of him is inferential. It is altogether probable that by following the virtuous examples of his eminent forefathers, he had rendered himself worthy of the glorious position to which the Savior called him, as amongst a generation who were all righteous, we cannot imagine that Jesus would select any but the most worthy and illustrious to be the teachers of the whole people and the heads of the Church. He was one of those of whom it was directly said by the angel to Nephi (the son of Lehi): "Behold, they are righteous forever, for because of their faith in the Lamb of God, their garments are made white in His blood."*

AMOS THE ELDER.

Amos was the son of Nephi, the son of Nephi the Apostle. For eighty-four years (from A.D. 110 to A.D. 194) he was the custodian of the sacred records and the other holy things. He lived in the days of the Nephites' greatest prosperity and happiness. The perfect law of righteousness was still their only guide. But before he passed away to his heavenly home, a small cloud had appeared upon the horizon, fatal harbinger of the approaching devastating hurricane. A few, weary of the uninterrupted bliss, the perfect harmony, the universal love that everywhere prevailed, seceded from the Church and took upon them the name of

* Book of Mormon, page 24, New Ed.

Lamanites, which ill-boding name had only been known to the Nephites by tradition for more than one hundred years. It may be asked, how it was possible that men and women should withdraw from such a holy order of society, where all was perfect peace, where every man dealt justly with his neighbor, where none inflicted wrongs and none suffered from injustice done them—where angels ministered to the children of mortality, and heavenly revelations were their constant guides? If the enquirer will answer why Lucifer, the son of the morning, in heaven itself, rebelled against the Almighty Father, and led astray one-third of the angelic hosts, we will reply by saying that he, Satan, tempted the dissenting Nephites with this same rebellious spirit to the Divine power, and he succeeded in ensnaring them, and leading them away captives to his will.

There is one thing very noteworthy with regard to the descendants of Alma at this period, it is their longevity. Amos and his two sons (Amos and Ammaron) kept the records for the space of two hundred and ten years. This is a testimony, to all believers in the Book of Mormon, to the highly beneficial results arising to the body as well as to the soul of every one who gives undeviating, continued obedience to the laws of God. Those laws not only save man in eternity, but bring him health, strength and long life whilst he is tabernacled in mortality. No people since the deluge, of whom we have any record, lived nearer to the Lord than did the Nephites of this generation; no people have had the average of their earthly life so marvelously prolonged.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

All great things are done little by little. Atoms make worlds. The greatest fortunes consist of farthings. Life is made up of moments.

A great man under the shadow of defeat is taught how precious are the uses of adversity; and, as a tree's roots are strengthened by its shadow, so all defeats in a good cause are but resting-places on the road to victory at last.

No one is truly rich who has not wealth of love, wealth of sympathy, wealth of good-will for men. No one knows what luxury is who has not enjoyed the luxury of doing good. No one has real happiness who has not the happiness of making others happy.