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## Moroni, A Sketch of the Nephite Republic, VI

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**Abstract:** Roberts sets out Alma the Younger as one of the great exemplars of the scriptures, saying “there is scarcely any condition of life that Alma’s life will not instruct.” He discusses the demoralizing effect of war upon communities and details Amalickiah’s attempted rebellion amongst the Nephites, Captain Moroni’s response with the Title of Liberty, and Amalickiah’s flight and subsequent and unbelievable rise to the Lamanite throne.

back to his sorrowing wife and children. Guided by the moccasin tracks of his murderers, they found the place where he had been killed, and where still lay the remains of the ox. They found, too, the trail of his horse, where, all unsuspecting of danger, he had turned from the road and ridden up to a place occupied by supposed friends, but instead, he rode into the gloom of death. Who may know his thoughts, when, suddenly assailed, wounded and beaten to earth, he knew the hour of his death had come—his beloved wife and children to be evermore deprived of his loving, helping hand! But his was not a solitary case; in this beautiful southern clime, such has been the fate of hundreds!

After some days it was decided to abandon Show Low. The people there were too few to hold the place; and other settlements near it were not strong enough to furnish constant aid. So willing hands and teams helped move the

settlers to places of greater safety, some of whom never saw their homes again. Mrs. Johnson says that so it was with her and her husband; they abandoned home, farm, crops, a shingle mill and almost all they had, and were suddenly brought into a state of destitution. But with that innate, irrepressible vitality, so characteristic of Mormonism, they yielded not to discouragement, but again set to work with stout hearts and industrious hands to repair their fortunes. And as it was with them, so has it been with very many Mormon pioneers. They have indeed made the desert bloom, but its thirsty soil has been moistened by their tears, and their weary sighs have stirred in pity the leaves of the lone mesquite. But now the dawn begins to appear—the beginning of the end approaches; and soon shall the words of Father Jacob be fulfilled, and the seed of his beloved son possess the land he gave him.

*Santiago.*

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## MORONI.

### A SKETCH OF THE NEPHITE REPUBLIC.

#### VI.

THE nineteenth year of the Nephite Republic is one crowded with important events. It began in peace, but its close saw the Nephites engaged in dubious strife with their old enemies, the Lamanites. But before I recount the events of this new war, there is a peaceful event that claims our attention; we here take leave of an important character in our sketch, the man who was first chief judge of the republic, Alma. Early in the year of which I write, he came to his eldest son, Helaman, and sounded him as to his faith in Christ and in those records that had been kept by the Nephites, and which Alma had delivered to Helaman some years before. Being satisfied with the answers which Helaman made to his questions, Alma blessed him and predicted his prosperity. He furthermore prophesied that four hundred years after Christ should appear among them, the Nephites would dwindle away in unbelief

and become extinct. He then blessed the land for the righteous' sake, and uttered this prophecy: "Cursed shall be the land, yea, this land, unto every nation, kindred, tongue and people, unto destruction, which do wickedly, when they are fully ripe; and as I have said, so shall it be; for this is the cursing and blessing of God upon this land, for the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance."\*

Having made these predictions and blest his sons, he departed from Zarahemla and was never afterwards heard of. Whether he died, or was taken from the earth by translation as Elijah was, the Nephites never knew, but it was commonly believed by the church that he was translated or buried by the hand of the Lord as was Moses.

Alma's life and character are very instructive. The reader will, perhaps, remember that this man in his youth was an

\* Alma 45 : 16.

infidel, a blasphemer against God, a scoffer against the Church; and that through the prayers of his father he was visited by an angel of the Lord, and how after that visitation he devoted his life to the service of God and his fellowmen; and how, through his faithfulness, he won the love of his countrymen; and whether he was translated or died he passed away with the assurance of life eternal in the kingdom of his God. In his life may be seen the effectual workings of God's grace when associated with honest endeavor on the part of man. In his reformation may be seen the efficacy of a parent's earnest prayer for a wayward son. The very errors of his early life seem to have been turned to good account in forming his character, for they wore into his very nature a strain of humility, and made him charitable to others that strayed from the path direct. Would the sinner learn how to repent and find the exquisite sweetness of forgiveness, let him read the experience of Alma as he relates it to his son Helaman. Would the theologian learn more of the plan of salvation, and understand how in it the relative claims of justice and mercy are balanced and each satisfied, let him read the simple exposition of these high things in Alma's writings. Would the Saints, harrassed on every hand by their enemies and mocked and derided until their souls are bowed in grief, find encouragement and consolation, let the patience and faith of Alma under like circumstances instruct them; and let his wonderful deliverance from the power of his enemies support their sinking spirits, for that God who so vindicated Alma and delivered him, still lives in heaven and may be approached by his Saints. If the parent would learn how to encourage and commend a worthy son, let him read Alma's praise and instructions to his sons Helaman and Shiblon; if he would know how to bear with an erring son and lead him into paths of peace and virtue, let the gentle remonstrance, the wise counsel, the tender sympathy and loving kindness which Alma employed to save his son Corianton, be an example for him. Indeed there is scarcely any con-

dition of life that Alma's life will not instruct; the parent, the judge, the statesman, the priest, the sinner, may all learn of him, and find new impetus given to all those qualities within them which are best and noblest.

War must ever have a demoralizing effect, even on the best communities. It begets a spirit of recklessness and throws the reins of desire loose upon the neck of gratification. Moreover, the general turmoil it creates within the state, leads to an indifferent execution of the laws, by reason of which abuses creep in almost unobserved; and hence it happens, at the end of a war, when the state has time to note the condition of things internal, it would be a wonder if much were not found that needed amending. Such was the condition of the Nephite community at the close of the war in the eighteenth year of the Republic; and Helaman, then the presiding High Priest over the Church, since his father had departed, began this needed reformation by a thorough preaching of the Gospel throughout the land. He set the Church in order by appointing local priests to preside over the various cities and allotted districts; and by calling the people to repentance, accomplished much good. But the disorders in the state were such as to require more vigorous treatment than preaching. They were beyond the power of persuasion, be it never so eloquent. The lower order of judges thirsted for more power and for larger reward for their services than the economical administration of the affairs of the republic allowed them. One Amalickiah, an ambitious traitor, plotting to reestablish the kingdom on the ruins of the republic, with himself as king, fanned their discontents and flattered them with promises of a fulfillment of all their ambitious desires if they would make him king. So persuasive were the powers and cunning of this arch traitor that he not only created a faction in the state in his favor, but even invaded the Church and seduced many of its members from their faith, and aimed at its destruction. So deep was this plot and so widespread that Helaman's

preaching could not arrest its growth nor set aside the mischief that it threatened. The insurrectionists, or "king men" were ready to appeal to arms and threatened the lives of those who opposed them.

On the eve of this civil conflict Moroni heard of it; his righteous indignation knew no bounds. Stripping from his shoulders his toga-like mantle he wrote upon it:

"IN MEMORY OF OUR GOD, OUR RELIGION AND FREEDOM, AND OUR PEACE, OUR WIVES, AND OUR CHILDREN!"

This improvised ensign of liberty he fastened upon a pole; and having invoked the blessings of God upon his enterprise, and dedicating the whole continent to liberty, he buckled on his armor, and taking his standard of liberty in his hand, marched forth, calling aloud upon all those who would maintain their freedom, of which the standard he bore was the ensign, to come forth and enter into a covenant that they would maintain their rights and their religion. That trumpet-tongued voice of the young military patriot sounded not in vain in the streets of Zarahemla. The souls of true men were stirred to their very depths by its call to arms in defense of freedom, religion, and home. An ever increasing throng of warlike men, armed *cap-a-pie*, graced the heels of young Moroni. He went to every city, and everywhere the people rallied about his ensign of liberty and entered into a covenant to sustain it. Amalickiah saw the storm approaching, and he knew that it would burst upon him with irresistible fury. It cannot be said that he lacked courage, but he saw that his faction were outnumbered by those that gathered about Moroni; and among those he counted on as friends, many there were who doubted the justice of his cause. To hasten a crisis under these circumstances, Amalickiah was wise enough to see, meant disaster; so gathering his staunchest supporters about him, he departed southward, with the evident intention of reaching the land of Nephi and joining his forces to those of the Lamanites.

Moroni divined his enemy's intention and proceeded to thwart it. Hastily

forming an army of men he plunged into the wilderness and intercepted Amalickiah before he reached the land of Nephi; but though he captured the greater part of his army, Amalickiah himself and a few of his followers escaped.

According to the Nephite laws the will of the commander-in-chief in the army was absolute, and accordingly Moroni by that authority proposed to these "kingmen" the oath of freedom, and those who would not enter into that covenant were put to death. Happily the number that refused was small.

Moroni marched his own forces and the army he had captured back into the Nephite country, and proceeded to complete the work he had begun, by placing the standard of liberty on every city and town in the land, and to place the country in a state of defense. Leaving our hero in that occupation let us follow the fortunes of his lately escaped enemy.

Amalickiah with his few followers made his way through the wilderness to the City of Nephi, the home of the Lamanite king, and of course the chief city of the Lamanites. He was received gladly by the half savage king, who, like many other leaders more civilized and perhaps more wise than he, committed the fatal error of receiving too willingly and trusting too implicitly a traitor to his country and to his religion. Usually man is fortified against the wiles of such characters; something within the human breast whispers him an admonition to beware of the man who once has betrayed his country or his God; and such are seldom trusted. But sometimes it happens that this instinctive warning is outweighed by other considerations. It may be that superior cunning in the art of hypocrisy helps the apostate or traitor to glaze over his perfidy, and even give to it a seeming cloak of virtue. So no doubt did Amalickiah. At any rate he succeeded in so fanning the flame of hatred of Nephites in the breast of the Lamanite king that he induced him to send out a proclamation for the raising of an army again to invade the Nephite country. His people, however, were not so ready to respond as usual. It must be remembered that

ever since the establishment of the Republic, in all their wars with the Nephites, the Lamanites had met with defeat. Only the year before a large army had been well nigh annihilated, and the people had no stomachs for this new war. The perplexity of the Lamanites was great; they feared to disobey their king and were more fearful of the Nephites, and that led the greater part of them to refuse obedience to the king's proclamation for the raising of an army. Nothing so incenses those accustomed to wielding arbitrary power as to find themselves suddenly confronted with disobedience; and so it happened in this case. The Lamanite king placed Amalickiah in command of the forces that were obedient and gave him power to compel the obedience of the others.

The rebellious subjects had hastily organized and placed themselves under the leadership of one Lehonti, and assembled at a mount known as Antipas, near the city of Onidah, not far distant from Nephi, and most probably a sort of arsenal, as it is spoken of as "the place of arms." Here they awaited the coming of the forces under Amalickiah. That arch fiend saw in the distracted condition of the Lamanite kingdom his opportunity to dethrone the reigning monarch and take his seat.

Instead of proceeding at once against the rebels under Lehonti, he surrounded the mount whereon they were camped; and when black night veiled his movements, he sent several messengers to Lehonti proposing a conference. But as that wily leader suspected treachery, it was not until Amalickiah drew near his encampment and told him to bring with him his generals that he obtained his wish. He then proposed that during the night the rebel forces surround his own army, and in the morning he would surrender them on the condition that he be made second to Lehonti in command. This arrangement was accepted by Lehonti, and during the night his forces surrounded the opposing army, and when the morning light revealed the work accomplished during the darkness, fear seized upon the forces of Amalickiah and

they pleaded with him to surrender that they might not be destroyed. Since it comported with the very plans he had laid, he assented joyfully to their demands, and received his reward—he was made second in command of these united forces. Second in command! It was an easy step from second to first for such an unscrupulous man as Amalickiah.

According to Lamanite usage, when the chief in command was killed, the second to him in authority took his place. This Amalickiah well knew; and no sooner did he see the forces united under Lehonti, than he set one of his servants at work to administer poison to him by degrees until he died. This accomplished, he succeeded to the position of commander-in-chief of the united forces, and began his return march to Nephi.

As he approached that city, the Lamanite king, with a few guards, came out to meet him, supposing that the adroit Nephite had subdued his rebellious subjects. Amalickiah now saw his opportunity to remove the king from his path, and as he was as prompt to act as he was bold to conceive, he at once dispatched some of his own Nephite followers as if to salute the king, but in reality to slay him. The manner of salutation to the king was for the subject to fall prostrate at his feet; and the king, if pleased, stretched forth his hand to raise the subject up. So fell the servants of Amalickiah at the feet of the unsuspecting Lamanite king, but as the king raised them up, one stabbed him to the heart, then raised the cry that the king's servants had slain him. Consternation and confusion seized upon those who beheld the deed, and then prompted by instinct they fled, and that gave color of truth to the cry that the king's own servants had assassinated him. When Amalickiah came up to where the king lay dead in his own gore, his well-feigned wrath threw off all suspicion of his complicity in the atrocious deed. He called on all who loved the king to pursue his servants that they might be slain. This action served two purposes. It at once took from his presence the most faithful adherents of the late king; and went far to establish his own innocence;

and if the servants of the king were caught their immediate execution would seal up the mouths of the only witnesses to the assassination. Those servants, however, were not overtaken. They succeeded finally in joining the people of Ammon in the land of Jershon.

Amalickiah now riding on the high wave of fortune was not slow in following up the advantages he had gained. He dispatched messengers to the queen of the man he had murdered, who repeated the lie he had put in their mouths and which was then passing current for truth; viz : That the king's own servants had slain him. The queen, however, was not so quick to accept the story; and instinctively fearing the bold man who had so suddenly risen to power in their kingdom, she begged he would spare the people of the city. But smooth-tongued villainy was to gain another triumph; it was to quiet even her woman's fears, and so far cause her to forget her deep sorrow as to wed her husband's assassin. By what means he won the queen's consent to marry him, whether he loved her, and possession of her was one of the motives that prompted his deep laid schemes, is not stated in any of the Nephite annals now in our possession; but that he did marry her, and succeeded in having himself proclaimed king of all the Lamanites, which also included all the factions that had dissented from the Nephites, is true.

Kingly power this ambitious man had

now obtained. By methods so remarkable that they seem to belong to the realm of fiction rather than fact, he had mounted the steps of a throne and wore its crown. But the pinnacle of power at which he aimed was not yet reached, and his vaulting ambition was not yet satisfied. It was his fixed determination to reign as monarch over the entire continent, and as he could only hope to win that high place by conquering the Nephites and overthrowing their republic, he set himself at work to prepare for the conflict. The dissenters from the Nephites, in his dominions, he employed to arouse the sleeping hatred of the Lamanites against their traditional enemies. In this he was successful, and soon was able to organize a powerful army, which he officered with apostate Nephites. He also took the precaution to have his soldiers protected by armor, and to have them better equipped with offensive weapons than was usual among the Lamanites. This fact he knew would give them increased confidence, and with that and their superior numerical strength he hoped to gain an easy conquest. But while he sent his army to invade the Nephite possessions, he remained in the land of Nephi to enjoy his new found fortunes—to bask in ease and luxury, and revel in the love of his queen. *B. H. Roberts.*

The harm which we do to others does not excite so much persecution and hatred as our good qualities.

## EDINBURGH AND THE BRIDGE OF FORTH.

THE old town of Edinburgh, about which Scott, Burns, and Carlyle have written so much, can be better appreciated, probably, by reading the glowing description given by the above-mentioned noted writers, than by a visit.

The great street running from the Holyrood Palace to the Castle—in various portions of its length called the Lawnmarket, the Highstreet and the Cannongate, is the most interesting part of the town. In that street the houses still re-

tain their ancient appearance. Story upon story reaches heavenward—with outside stairs, wooden panelings, and all conceivable shapes of peaks and gables—everything breathing of the antique world, except the inhabitants who exist amidst squalor and filth and evil smells undeniably modern.

If you penetrate the narrow ways that run at right angles from it, you see traces of ancient gardens, and an increase of degradation. Occasionally the original