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## Stories from the Book of Mormon: Lesson 6— Conversion of Lamanites by Ammon and His Brethren

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**Abstract:** This lesson's objective was to show that the arm of the Lord is extended to all people who will repent and believe on His name.

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miss the old ways of doing things and try the new. This accounts for much of our progress today in doing things with machinery. Of all the characteristics of Americans, the most important is the acceptance of freedom of opportunity for the individual, which provides the nation with a supply of leadership in every line. This is the reason why America today leads the world in many of the educational and industrial ideals and activities. "America is learning the greatest lesson of all," says Count Herman Keyserling, "they are proving that the spirit is truly the master of nature and of all life."

#### Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. It is interesting to know that geographically, the United States is

- about the size of the continent of Europe. Taking a bird's eye view of America, what are its principal rivers, principal mountains, its natural vegetation, its largest lakes, etc.?
2. What are some of the natural resources of this country, in minerals, vegetation, etc.?
3. Read and briefly relate something about the history of maize or Indian corn.
4. What were some of the inventions of the nineteenth century that changed the economic and social lives of the American people?
5. What has been the influence of the foreign-born upon American culture?
6. What are the five principal institutions of the United States?
7. Why are we naturally interested in the Indians? Have we Indians who are citizens of this country?

(Many hundreds of Indians have become citizens, particularly those living in fixed abodes on reservations. They must know how to read and write, and swear allegiance to our Government.)

## Stories from the Book of Mormon

For optional use of Relief Societies in stakes and missions in countries other than the United States, in lieu of social science lessons.

### Lesson 6—Conversion of Lamanites by Ammon and His Brethren

Tuesday, April 25, 1944

Note: For the full effect of this lesson it is imperative that the teacher and the class have at hand the Book of Mormon.

Lesson Objective: To show that the arm of the Lord is extended to all people who will repent and believe on His name.

"JESUS answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I

said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto

him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" (John 3:5-12)

Things of the Spirit cannot be fully understood except by the Spirit, as is here spoken by the Savior. And truly did He add "If I have told ye of earthly things, and ye believed not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"

The heart of today's lesson, which deals with the conversion of a Lamanite king and hundreds of his followers, may well be centered around this pointed saying of the Savior.

For the sake of emphasis and enlargement of the text, the writer will give one of his personal experiences on being told earthly things and believing them not:

The country which at present surrounds my home is one of steep rolling hills. When winter comes, driving by automobile over unimproved roads is hazardous. A short pull over a hill in dry weather is misleading—it may instill confidence for driving the same hill when blanketed in snow. I was warned by friends, whose judgment I respected, that in winter it was best to stay with the main highway. Somehow I did not accept completely this statement they gave me, with the result, one snowy night, of almost serious consequences. Fortunately, my car stayed on the road, and no one with me was hurt beyond the point of

being cold and anxious during the long wait until things were righted.

I had failed to heed earthly advice when first offered, and so had to learn the value of friendly counsel the hard way. All of us have known times when it was hard to accept a simple truth from those who have been along a road before, and we have regretted our unwillingness to have more trust and faith in the words of good men.

The story of the conversion of King Lamoni, the Lamanite, reads stranger than fiction. A complete understanding of this story is to be found through an appreciation of the ways of God, and for an explanation of it one must turn to the things of the Spirit. There are deep values of satisfaction in this story. It is good to learn concretely the extending mercy of the Lord even to the point of His preparing the way for the bestowing of that mercy. You will remember in an earlier lesson how Laman and Lemuel, the elder sons of Lehi, through their hardened hearts, and strong wills, lead many souls away from the presence of the Lord into darkness. Over the years, this night into which they and their followers had fallen grew ever more dark until the Lord knew that it would take long-suffering, great kindness, and even sore afflictions on the part of any who would seek to bring His word again to their hearts.

It was once during the reign of Mosiah, a righteous Nephite king, some ninety-one years before Christ, that the Lord found four courageous young men upon whom He could place the charge of preaching His gospel again to the Lamanites. These men were the sons of Mosiah, and

they were present at the conversion of Alma when an angel appeared. Aaron, Ammon, Omner, and Himni they were called. So converted were they to the cause of Christ that they chose to forego their rightful claim to the kingship of their father in order to take upon themselves the hazards of preaching the Gospel to a savage race. Endowed with the Spirit from on high, they set forth into the wilderness. In order to reach more souls they decided to separate, each going to a different part of the Lamanites' country. We have but time in this lesson to follow Ammon.

As Ammon approached his assigned land known as Ishmael, he was seized by the servants of King Lamoni, bound with cords, and conducted to the presence of the king. The law of the Lamanites gave their king absolute powers. Had Lamoni wished he could have put Ammon to death. But Ammon found favor in Lamoni's eyes. When asked if it was his wish to remain among his people, Ammon said, "Yea, I desire to dwell among this people for a time; yea, and perhaps until the day I die." Lamoni then offered Ammon one of his daughters to wife, but Ammon courteously declined, saying he would prefer to become the king's servant. And this wish did the king grant.

Ammon carried on his duties faithfully, winning friends among his fellow associates, and waiting patiently for some opening to come wherein he could demonstrate the power of the Lord.

Such an occasion did present itself one day while he and others of the herdsmen were tending the

king's flocks. A band of robbers scattered the cattle and were about to do away with them. Much afraid, the other herdsmen sat down and wept. It was the rule of the king to kill his herdsmen for the loss of cattle, rather than to kill those who did the stealing.

Ammon set his friends to rounding up the flocks while he set out to contend singlehanded with the robbers. This was so rash a deed in the eyes of the thieves that they thought it would be easy to overcome him. But Ammon put to naught all their efforts, killing several and stopping others who struck at him with clubs by cutting off their arms with his sword.

In triumph, the herdsmen returned with these grim trophies to King Lamoni to proclaim the great strength of Ammon. The king, awed by the strength and power of this man, believed him to be the Great Spirit of whom his forefathers had spoken. Though trembling with fear, Lamoni still commanded Ammon to come before him; but when this man of God appeared, the king was speechless. Ammon then added to the mystery of his power by reading the very thoughts of the king, who finally admitted belief in the sacred things of life. Ammon then expounded to him the principles of life and salvation. Touched to the heart, the king prayed to the Lord for forgiveness for himself and his people, and then overcome by the intensity of his emotions he sank to the earth as if dead. For two days and nights he remained thus until those about him, thinking him dead, desired to bury him. Ammon knew he was in the Spirit with the Lord

and instructed the queen of King Lamoni not to place him in the grave, saying that on the morrow he would rise. This faithful woman obeyed, and it came to pass as Ammon had predicted. Lamoni arose filled with great joy and proclaimed to his people the glad tidings of salvation to the end that many did believe, and as many as did believe were baptized; and they became a righteous people. And they did establish a church among them (Alma 19:35). There are other interesting details of this conversion which may be found by reading chapters 18 and 19 of Alma.

### Questions for Active Reading and Discussion

With the help of the suggested reading given below have the class carry on the discussion as follows: first, answer the question; second, read the passage given to dis-

cover plain and precious truths of the Gospel brought to light in the Book of Mormon. If time permits, have each member of the class add a passage of her own selection from within the Book of Mormon (Alma, chapters 17 to 22)—a passage that has brought new meaning to a Gospel truth.

1. Why does it take superior strength to become a true servant of the Lord? Read Alma 17:11.
2. The Lord has said that to serve Him in carrying His message of salvation one must be "as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove." How does Ammon fulfill this requirement? Read Alma 18:10.
3. Read the conversation between Ammon and Lamoni. Note the brevity of Lamoni's replies and also his forthright acceptance of the truth once he sees it. Alma 18:12-43.

The next question may be used if needed for class activity, or it may be assigned for home study.

4. Read chapter nineteen of Alma, and point out the little touches that indicate the sweet effects that come to one born again by the Spirit.

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## Tomorrow's Cup

(Concluded from page 37)

"It's the cup you fill today," Paul Morgan answered, smiling into Janet's eyes.

"It's what?" Jerry was plainly puzzled.

"Skip it, Goof!" Paulette called bluntly from her room across from Jerry's. "Mom and Dad are dating. Where's your finesse?"

"Think you're smart!" from Jerry. "So what!" from Paulette, and the house was still.

"About tomorrow, Paul." Janet brought the conversation back. "It's twenty-three years ago tomorrow since we came to El Toro—togeth-

er." She looked into the fire, saw the years ahead in swift review, then she laughed dubiously. "Twins are a responsibility, Paul. I feel perfectly antiquated beside my amazing daughter. Does Jerry dwarf you?"

"I'll say he does. I have to stand on tiptoe all the time to keep abreast of him. We must be getting old!"

"Not until they're as old as we are, Paul!" Janet protested.

"Twenty-three years," Paul mused. "We sat alone by the fire then, too. Remember, Jan?"

"And the embers glowed long after the flame was gone . . . ."

The End