

CHAPTER 48

Amalickiah incites the Lamanites against the Nephites—Moroni prepares his people to defend the cause of the Christians—He rejoices in liberty and freedom and is a mighty man of God. About 72 B.C.

1 And now it came to pass that, as soon as ^aAmalickiah had obtained the kingdom he began to ^binspire the hearts of the Lamanites against the people of Nephi; yea, he did appoint men to speak unto the Lamanites from their ^ctowers, against the Nephites.

2 And thus he did inspire their hearts against the Nephites, insomuch that in the latter end of the ^anineteenth year of the reign of the judges, he having accomplished his designs thus far, yea, having been made king over the Lamanites, he ^bsought also to ^creign over all the land, yea, and all the people who were in the land, the Nephites as well as the Lamanites.

3 Therefore he had accomplished his design, for he had hardened the hearts of the Lamanites and blinded their minds, and stirred them up to anger, insomuch that he had gathered together a numerous host to go to battle against the Nephites.

4 For he was determined, because of the greatness of the number of his people, to ^aoverpower the Nephites and to bring them into bondage.

5 And thus he did appoint ^achief captains of the ^bZoramites, they being the most acquainted with the strength of the Nephites, and their places of resort, and the weakest parts of their cities; therefore he appointed them to be chief captains over his armies.

6 And it came to pass that they took their camp, and moved forth toward the land of Zarahemla in the wilderness.

7 Now it came to pass that while Amalickiah had thus been obtaining power by fraud and deceit, Moroni, on the other hand, had been ^apreparing the minds of the people to be faithful unto the Lord their God.

8 Yea, he had been strengthening the armies of the Nephites, and erecting small ^aforts, or places of resort; throwing up banks of earth round about to enclose his armies, and also building ^bwalls of stone to encircle them about, round about their cities and the borders of their lands; yea, all round about the land.

9 And in their weakest fortifications he did place the greater number of men; and thus he did fortify and strengthen the land which was possessed by the Nephites.

10 And thus he was preparing to ^asupport their liberty, their lands, their wives, and their children, and their peace, and that they might live unto the Lord their God, and that they might maintain that which was called by their enemies the cause of ^bChristians.

11 And Moroni was a ^astrong and a mighty man; he was a man of a perfect ^bunderstanding; yea, a man that did not delight in bloodshed; a man whose soul did joy in the liberty and the freedom of his country, and his brethren from bondage and slavery;

12 Yea, a man whose heart did swell with thanksgiving to his God, for the many privileges and blessings which he bestowed upon his people; a man who did labor exceedingly for the ^awelfare and safety of his people.

13 Yea, and he was a man who was firm in the faith of Christ, and he had ^asworn with an oath to defend his people, his rights, and his country, and his religion, even to the loss of his blood.

14 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 ^anever to

give an offense, yea, and never to raise the sword except it were against an enemy, except it were to preserve their lives.

15 And this was their ^afaith, that by so doing God would ^bprosper them in the land, or in other words, 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;

16 And also, that God would make it known unto them ^awhither they should go to defend themselves against their enemies, and by so doing, the Lord would deliver them; and this was the faith of Moroni, and his heart did glory in it; ^bnot in the shedding of blood but in doing good, in preserving his people, yea, in keeping the commandments of God, yea, and resisting iniquity.

17 Yea, verily, verily I say unto you, if all men had been, and were, and ever would be, like unto ^aMoroni, behold, the very powers of hell would have been shaken forever; yea, the ^bdevil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men.

18 Behold, he was a man like unto ^aAmmon, the son of Mosiah, yea, and even the other sons of Mosiah, yea, and also Alma and his sons, for they were all men of God.

19 Now behold, Helaman and his brethren were no less ^aserviceable unto the people than was Moroni; for they did preach the word of God, and they did baptize unto repentance all men whosoever would hearken unto their words.

20 And thus they went forth, and the people did ^ahumble themselves because of their ^bwords, insomuch that they were highly ^cfavored of the Lord, and thus they were free from wars and contentions among themselves, yea, even for the space of four years.

21 But, as I have said, in the ^alatter end of the nineteenth year, yea, notwithstanding their peace amongst themselves, they were compelled reluctantly to contend with their brethren, the Lamanites.

22 Yea, and in fine, their wars never did cease for the space of many years with the Lamanites, notwithstanding their much reluctance.

23 Now, they were ^asorry to take up arms against the Lamanites, because they did not delight in the shedding of blood; yea, and this was not all—they were ^bsorry to be the means of sending so many of their brethren out of this world into an eternal world, ^cunprepared to meet their God.

24 Nevertheless, they could not suffer to lay down their lives, that their ^awives and their children should be ^bmassacred by the barbarous ^ccruelty of those who were once their brethren, yea, and had ^ddissented from their church, and had left them and had gone to destroy them by joining the Lamanites.

25 Yea, they could not bear that their brethren should rejoice over the blood of the Nephites, so long as there were any who should keep the commandments of God, for the promise of the Lord was, if they should keep his commandments they should ^aprosper in the land.