

# Book of Mormon Study – Alma 43-52

Online zoom Sunday School, 9 Aug 2020

(<https://jayball.name/book-of-mormon-study-lessons>)

## Helaman's Life at a Glance

Year	Reign of judges	Event	Possible age of Helaman
Around 91 BC	1	Grandpa Alma the Elder dies at age 82. Alma Younger first Chief Judge (Mosiah 29:44-47)	3-13
Around 87 BC	5	Alma fights Amlici (Alma 2:29-31)	7-17
Around 83 BC	9	Alma gives up judgement seat (Alma 4:16-19)	11-21
Around 74 BC	18	Mission to Zoramites (Alma 31). Alma's teaching to Helaman (Alma 36-37). Zoramite rebellion and Lamanite war. (Alma 43-44)	20-30
Around 73 BC	19	Helaman given records. Alma taken up (Alma 45:18). Moroni & Title of Liberty (Alma 46:12-13). Amalickiah and dissenters join Lamanites. Amalickiah become king of Lamanites (Alma 47). Moroni fortifies cities (Alma 48:7-9). Amalickiah did not obtain his design to conquer Nephites (Alma 49:26).	21-31
Around 72 BC	20	Helaman, Shiblon, Corianton and Ammon preach (Alma 49:30, but also earlier in 45:20-22)	22-32
Around 71 BC	21	Many cities built (Alma 50:15). Happiest time among people of Nephi (Alma 50:23).	23-33
Around 68 BC	24	Morianton defeated (Alma 50:35). Chief judge Nephihah dies (Alma 50:37).	26-36
Around 67 BC	25	King-men try to alter the law (Alma 51:5). Amalickiah takes many cities (Alma 51:26). Amalickiah killed by Teancum (Alma 51:34).	27-37
Around 66 BC	26	Amoron appointed king of Lamanites (Alma 52:3).	28-38
Around 65 BC	27	City of Mulek re-taken by Moroni (Alma 52:26).	29-39
Around 64 BC	28	Helaman raises army of two thousand sons of people of Ammon (Alma 53:18-22).	30-40
Around 63 BC	29	Helaman stripling sons fight with miraculous power (Alma 56:43-56, 57:25-26).	31-41
Around 62 BC	30	Moroni and Pahoran defeat king-men (Alma 62:6-8).	32-42
		Moroni yields command to Moronihah (Alma 62:43). Helaman and his bretheren go forth to regulate the church (Alma 62:44).	
Around 57 BC	35	Helaman dies (Alma 62:52). Shiblon takes charge of records (Alma 63:1).	37-47

[Alma Elder's life at a glance: Lesson 2020.05.31\_BoM-Mos29-Alma4, Alma Younger's life at a glance: Lesson 2020.07.12\_BoM-Alma30-31]

In composing these notes, I questioned myself on the value of guessing at the ages in these “Life at a Glance” sketches. I don’t know if this sort of speculation is a distraction. We see in the above scenario that Helaman appears to have had a very short life. Even if he was born at the time Alma, as a young man, was converted by the angel (100 BC), then Helaman would have died at 57.

But looking at this life sketch gives rise to questions like, when did Helaman have time to raise his son, Helaman? Somewhere in there a family is being raised.

### Why so much about war in Book of Mormon?

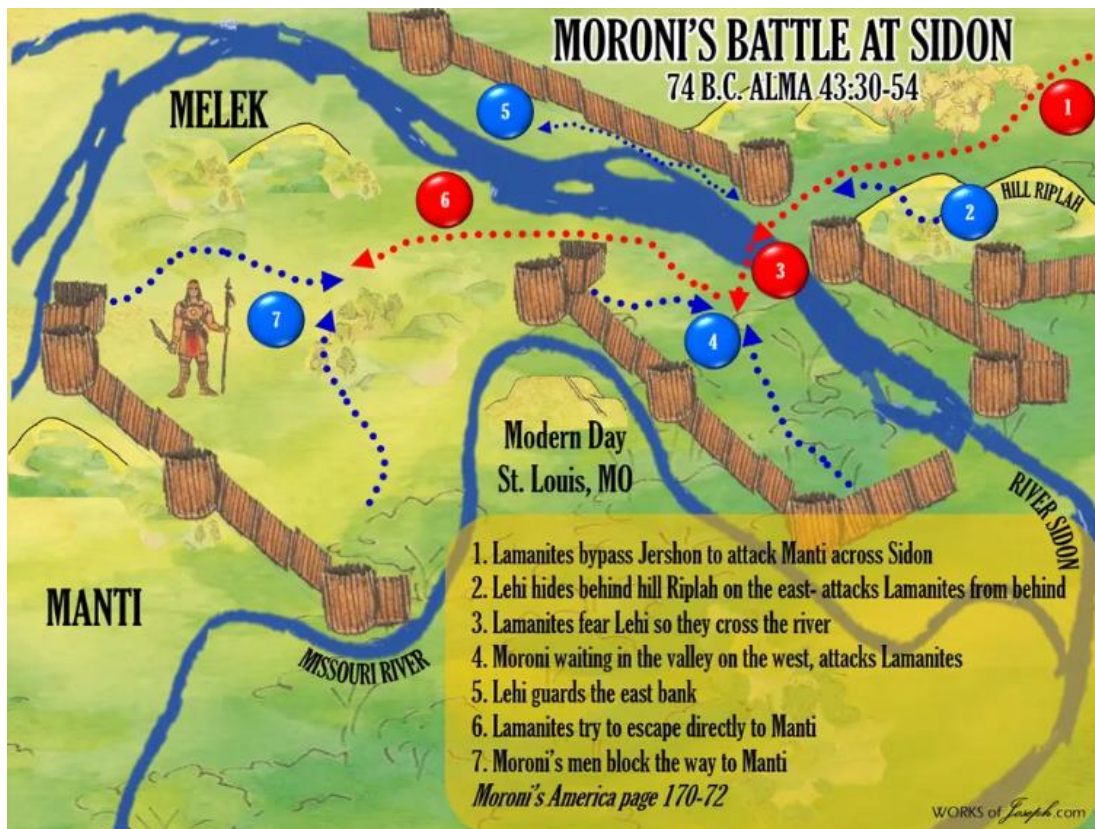
One reason I see for Mormon focusing so much attention on war chapters.

In our day I personally lament that we know so much in our recent history of something like Hitler and the 3rd Reich, yet our nation as a whole seems to be oblivious to it or chooses to deliberately ignore it as we march steadily in a direct course of repeating it to our collective demise. Absolutely shameful.

Mormon would be able to see a similar thing in his own people's history comparing it to his own present day. Not only that, but he has also seen the present and future of our day on the very land upon which he stands. We’ll explore this more in depth in this lesson.

### Alma 43:5-6

Makes me wonder if Zerahemnah was himself a Zoramite. We know Amalickiah had to have been (Alma 54:23). And Zoram, the leader of the Zoramites (Alma 30:59), mixed with the Lamanites and stirred up his people to anger against the people of Ammon (Alma 35:10-11).



*Alma 43:48-50*

When Moroni perceives the intent of the Nephites to shrink and flee from the fierceness of the Lamanites, he "sent forth and inspired their hearts with these thoughts—yea, the thoughts of their lands, their liberty, yea, their freedom from bondage."

Notice the words "*perceiving* their intent" and "sent forth and inspired their hearts with these *thoughts*".

How did he do this in the heat of a raging hand to hand battle? It's not like he can stop everything for a minute and make a speech. He can't just send a group text out to everybody.

*Alma 44:6*

*Yea, and this is not all; I command you by all the desires which ye have for life, that ye deliver up your weapons of war unto us, and we will seek not your blood, but we will spare your lives, if ye will go your way and come not again to war against us.*

The history of the era we live in is filled with examples of religious violence. Consider the Crusades where the great battle lines were drawn between Islam and Christianity over geography considered holy to both. These conflicts continue to carry over to our current time. We also see religious violence between Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants. Jewish settlements in Palestine has become the catalyst for religious violence between Palestinians and their supporters against the Jewish State and its followers.

For many years, Sikhs have been involved in religious violence in India and Pakistan. Even the normally passive Buddhist followers of some cultic leaders have been responsible for religious terrorism in Japan. Abortion doctors have been killed by fundamentalist Christians, whose violence was viewed as a justifiable response to abortion.

The Book of Mormon comes into this era with the longest and most robust scriptural treatment of violence of any other scriptural record, including the Koran. The numerous "war chapters" of the Book of Mormon provide us with greater instruction on this subject than any other single source of God's word on violence.

When violence broke out in Nauvoo and Joseph and Hyrum were killed in neighboring Carthage, the Nauvoo Legion (largest militia in Illinois) did nothing to either prevent the violence or to retaliate in its wake.

The first leadership of the Church set a powerful example of how to meet violence when they submitted and died without organizing any defensive or retaliatory military action. Although there was a military organized and ready at their command, they elected not to use it. They died as a result. This early example, however, has been dwarfed in the popular imagination by a later event in Utah.

When Latter-day Saints in the Southern Utah Territory killed all but eighteen small children of the Fancher Company in September, 1857, the Latter-day Saints joined the ranks of religious organizations whose members have attacked and killed others. Juanita Brooks' book *The Mountain Meadows Massacre*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970, puts this incident into its historical context. She

makes the violence of that day almost inevitable, and the Latter-day Saints' motivation something understandable.

The Fancher Company provoked anger throughout their migration across the Utah Territory. They claimed to have been involved in earlier mobbings of the Latter-day Saints in Missouri, and even boasted of having been complicit in the deaths of Joseph and Hyrum Smith. Contemporaneously, there was an army marching against Utah to quell a reported rebellion by the Latter-day Saints. The Church was in a defensive mode, and its leaders were preparing the Saints for potential conflict. In this setting, it was not difficult for the anger felt by the Saints to become the seedbed for rationalizing violence against these migrants.

Mark Jurgensmeyer explored how religion and violence seems to be so often linked together in his book *Terror in the Mind of God*. He notes: "What puzzles me is not why bad things are done by bad people, but rather why bad things are done by people who otherwise appear to be good - in cases of religious terrorism, by pious people dedicated to a moral vision of the world."

Commenting of the Mountain Meadows Massacre, LDS Church News article (for week ending June 2, 2007, Salt Lake City: *Deseret News*; p. 3.) calls it "what may be the most troubling event in the Church's turbulent 19th century past." It is "the most troubling event" because it exposes the Saints vulnerability to troublesome group behavior. As a body of religiously committed believers, the Latter-day Saints have control over whether they will ever again join in religious-based killing.

It is little wonder a volume of scripture saved up for publication until the latter-days would address this issue so directly, and with so many chapters. The "war chapters" of the Book of Mormon are distressing to some readers. They wonder why so much of the book is devoted to descriptions of the ways in which violence began and the manner in which the violence was conducted. Yet, the prophet writers and abridgers claimed to have seen our day and been acquainted with our times. They concluded these descriptions of religious violence were necessary to inform us about how to live out our days.

Alma 44:6 arises out of religious warfare. The victims of religious violence acted defensively in the battle. The tide of the fight had turned, and the victims gained the upper hand. The aggressors were terrified by the change in the tide of battle. Sensing their terror, Moroni stopped the fight and withdrew a pace from engaging the enemy. He then assured them their lives would be spared if the violence ended.

Under any other scenario from the examples we've discussed above, continuing violence would be justified by the view of the participants. "Victims" of warfare claim to be acting defensively, and therefore appropriately. They view themselves as "victims" and not aggressors. They think they can resort to violence because they didn't "start" the violence. Every example from Mountain Meadows and the Latter-day Saints, to the Christian abortion clinic bombers, to the persecuted Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Mormons and Buddhists, used rationalizations to justify their killing of those they claimed were the aggressors. But in this verse in Alma, the Book of Mormon teaches us to end violence as soon as the aggressors end their aggression. There is no need to continue killing to exterminate the enemy. Rather, allowing the enemy the chance for life is required by Christ's teachings. The aggressors are told all they need to do to end the violence is agree to "go your way and come not again to war against us." There is no authorization for preventative war. There is no approval for retaliation. The only kind of violence justified is purely defensive, not some rationalized "defensive" attack. Defensive struggle is limited to

the time in which the aggressor is actively aggressive. Once the aggressor is willing to end the violence, the violence should end.

*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 never to give an offense, yea, and never to raise the sword except it were against an enemy, except it were to preserve their lives. (Alma 48:14)*

President Spencer W. Kimball warned us about trusting violence for deliverance. Although his remarks were addressed to the greater culture, it applies to the Saints, doubly. For the Saints, of all people, should know better. His landmark talk included these warnings:

*We are a warlike people, easily distracted from our assignment of preparing for the coming of the Lord. When enemies rise up, we commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications—and depend on them for protection and deliverance. When threatened, we become anti-enemy instead of pro-kingdom of God; we train a man in the art of war and call him a patriot, thus, in the manner of Satan’s counterfeit of true patriotism, perverting the Savior’s teaching:*

*“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

*“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:44–45.)*

*We forget that if we are righteous the Lord will either not suffer our enemies to come upon us—and this is the special promise to the inhabitants of the land of the Americas (see 2 Ne. 1:7)—or he will fight our battles for us (Ex. 14:14; D&C 98:37, to name only two references of many). This he is able to do, for as he said at the time of his betrayal,*

*“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. 26:53.)*

*We can imagine what fearsome soldiers they would be. King Jehoshaphat and his people were delivered by such a troop (see 2 Chr. 20), and when Elisha’s life was threatened, he comforted his servant by saying,*

*“Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them” (2 Kgs. 6:16).*

*The Lord then opened the eyes of the servant,*

*“And he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” (2 Kgs. 6:17.)*

*Enoch, too, was a man of great faith who would not be distracted from his duties by the enemy:*

*“And so great was the faith of Enoch, that he led the people of God, and their enemies came to battle against them; and he spake the word of the Lord, and*

*the earth trembled, and the mountains fled, even according to his command; and the rivers of water were turned out of their course; and the roar of the lions was heard out of the wilderness; and all nations feared greatly, so powerful was the word of Enoch.” (Moses 7:13.)*

*What are we to fear when the Lord is with us? Can we not take the Lord at his word and exercise a particle of faith in him? Our assignment is affirmative: to forsake the things of the world as ends in themselves; to leave off idolatry and press forward in faith; to carry the gospel to our enemies, that they might no longer be our enemies.*

*We must leave off the worship of modern-day idols and a reliance on the “arm of flesh,” for the Lord has said to all the world in our day, “I will not spare any that remain in Babylon.” (D&C 64:24.) (Kimball, Spencer W. The False Gods We Worship; Ensign, June, 1976, pg 3-6)*

In a conversation on this subject with a co-worker earlier this week I asked:

Am I being too idealistic? Everything since the beginning of this world, all the major prophecies that point to us in our day. We are physically living in the time where Zion is supposed to come before the end of all things, and here we sit - where Enoch and Melchizedek had the faith to stop the mouths of lions, quench the violence of fire, have the dead restored back to life, etc. - and we are relying on the 2nd Amendment and our guns to save us?

*Stick of Joseph footnote Alma 44:24*

Rosh Hashanah, the 1st of Tishrei, the “head of the year,” is followed by “prayer and fasting” at Yom Kippur and “great joy” at Sukkot (see footnote to Alma 21:1 [45:1])

*Stick of Joseph footnote Alma 45:1*

Prayer and fasting for Yom Kippur, the 10th of Tishrei (see footnote to Alma 20:19 [44:24]). Rejoicing at Sukkot (Lev. 23:40) on the 15th through the 21st of Tishrei.

*Alma 45:2-8*

This exchange between Alma and Helaman has a ceremonial feel to it.

Alma's prophecy

*Alma 45:10-12*

"dwindle in unbelief"

What is unbelief?

*Unbelief: As used in the Book of Mormon, it means one does not understand and has not accepted true doctrine. The word unbelief means to accept false doctrine or to have an incomplete and inaccurate understanding of correct doctrine. Unbelief is*

*often used in conjunction with losing truth, forsaking doctrine, and “dwindling.” The phrase dwindling in unbelief is the Book of Mormon’s way to describe moving from a state of belief, with true and complete doctrine, to a state of unbelief, where the truth has been discarded. Miracles end because men dwindle in unbelief.*

Nibley points out that the word *destruction* or *destroy* appears 354 times in the Book of Mormon.

*Destroy: In the vernacular of the Book of Mormon, to destroy did not mean annihilation. It merely meant to end the organized existence of a people or to terminate their government, deprive them of a land, and end their cultural dominance. In the Book of Mormon, a people were destroyed when they lost control over their government and land. Their ability to preserve their own values and choose the way they were governed was taken over by others. Most often it was from a different ethnic group, though not always. Once people were destroyed, they were oppressed and suffered. Often they were oppressed with grievous taxes and had religious liberties removed. Then they faced a choice: either repent, in which case they came through the period of oppression with another chance; or if they were angry and rebellious, they would then be “swept away.” Being destroyed is not at all the same as being “swept away.” It is possible for people to have been destroyed and not even realize it. But when they are “swept away,” they face extinction and cannot help but notice it.*

#### *Stick of Joseph footnote Alma 45:19*

According to Jewish tradition, as recorded in both the Talmud and the Zohar, Moshe did not actually die, but was taken up by YHWH: “...Others declare that Moses never died; it is written here, ‘So Moses died there’, and elsewhere it is written: ‘And he was there with the Lord.’ As in the latter passage it means standing and ministering, so also in the former it means standing and ministering.” (b.Sotah 13b) “Moses did not die, but he was gathered in from the world...” (Zohar 1:37b-38a) “For Moses did not die. But is it not written, ‘And Moses died there’? The truth is, however, that although the departure of the righteous is always designated ‘death,’ this is only in reference to us. For over him who has attained completeness, and is a model of holy faith, death has no power, and so he does not, in fact, die” (Zohar 2:174a).

#### *Alma 46:1-8*

Notice that those who are not hearkening to the words of Helaman (v 1) are those in a higher class (and probably wearing costly apparel) who have been led by the flatteries of Amalickiah, and many of whom were in the church (v 7).

We see the same attitude in leaders in high positions in our nation today. Their attitude is the same, they consider themselves above common folk over whom they rule, giving only lip service to the ideas of equality.



I'm reminded of the classes of people that Bret Weinstein identifies. Those who are sincere in thinking they are joining a movement with best of intentions, but then there are those who are secretly actually running the agenda.

*Were it the objective of this social justice movement to confront the much more difficult problems and to confront them at the full level of nuance, I would be interested in seeing those problems addressed...*

*So what is it that this movement is actually trying to achieve? Now remember I'm arguing that there are actually two groups embedded in one movement. One of those groups is really hoping to achieve some kind of equality... But then there's the other faction. The faction that I'm arguing is actually driving the agenda of the movement. (Bret Weinstein, How the Magic Trick is Done, starting at 29:09 min, <https://youtu.be/bz0oxlZ3xlg>)*

*"Am I alleging a conspiracy? No. What I have seen functions much more like a cult in which the purpose is only understood by the leaders, and the rest have been seduced into a carefully architected fiction. Most of the people involved in this movement earnestly believe that they are acting nobly to end oppression. Only the leaders understand that the true goal is to turn the tables of oppression. Something is seriously and dangerously amiss. At this moment in history the center does not hold. Partisan polarization and political corruption have rendered government ineffective, predatory, and often cruelly indifferent to the suffering of American citizens. Tribalism is the natural result." (Bret Weinstein Testifies to Congress on The Evergreen State College riots, Free Speech & Safe Spaces, <https://youtu.be/uRIKJCKWla4>)*

We can blame those in authority who are driving the show, as it tells us that look at the damage one man, referring to Amalickiah (v 9), can have. But in this verse (v 7-8) there is no excuse given for those led by Amalickiah's flatteries, and this because they wouldn't be being sucked into such delusions if they had remained true in their faith. So regardless of the sincerity of your intentions when you joined this cult, you wouldn't be there if you hadn't abandoned God in the first place. Those remaining true to their faith will not be inclined to be joining in with such things.

*Stick of Joseph footnote Alma 46:3*

Amalickiah: Probably from a form of the Hebrew root M-L-K ( מלך ) "to rule" from which we get the word Melek "king."

*Title of Liberty*

*Alma 46:11-13*

Notice that it is not after Amalickiah has joined with Lamanites and things have gotten out of hand that Moroni raises the title of liberty, but at the beginning when the dissensions first occurred. He's trying to nip it in the bud.



From Hamlet's Mill by Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Dechend, Appendix 11:

*The predestined dragon-slayer, and much expected savior, Faridun—Avestan Thraethona—a true pre-decessor of Kai Khusrau, had been saved from the snares of Dahak as a baby, and hidden away in the mountains. When the archdevil Dahak claimed the sacrifice of the last son of Kaweh—seventeen sons had already been fed to the dragon-heads—the smith started the revolution for the sake of Faridun:*

*He took a leathern apron, such as smiths  
Wear to protect their legs while at the forge,  
Stuck it upon a spear's point and forthwith  
Throughout the market dust began to rise. . .*

*He took the lead, and many valiant men  
Resorted to him; he rebelled and went  
To Faridun. When he arrived shouts rose.  
He entered the new prince's court, who marked  
The apron on the spear and hailed the omen.*

[The above passage of the smith's apron on a spear head reminds me of Captain Moroni's title of liberty and Moses as a deliverer (or savior). Appendix 11 goes on to elaborate on a number of ideas that give rise to thoughts about living water, resurrection, and the idea that there is additional meaning in the name Joseph "Smith".]

Dead Sea Scrolls, War Scroll (1QM)

*Rule of the banners of the whole congregation according to their formations. On the grand banner which is at the head of all the people they shall write, "People of God," the names "Israel" and "Aaron," and the names of the twelve tribes of Israel according to their order of birth. On the banners of the heads of the "camps" of three tribes they shall write, "the Spirit [of God]," and the names of three tribes. On the banner of each tribe they shall write, "Standard of God," (The Dead Sea Scrolls A New Translation, Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, JR., & Edwards Cook, pg 154)*

Hugh Nibley talked about the Banner of Kawe, or Flag of Kawe, from stories from Jews from stories from the Persian Empire. Jewish mysticism, a legendary founder of the Magi. He also talks about how this story is related to the Battle Scroll in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Very interesting discussion starting on page 41, lecture 60 (and 61), *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, Semester 3: Transcripts of Lectures Presented to an Honors Book of Mormon Class at BYU, 1988-1990)

[Alma 46:15](#)

Book of Mormon is often criticized in this verse for the word Christians before there even were Christians. Its helpful to remember this is a record preserved from before any influence from Babylon. It contains the words of Zenock and Zenos who were more bold about Christ/Messiah/Machicach, terms that offended Deuteronomists and for which prophets were killed and Lehi's life was sought.

### [Alma 46:16-27](#)

In Lecture 62, Nibley discusses at length the garment of Joseph (*Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, Semester 3: Transcripts of Lectures Presented to an Honors Book of Mormon Class at BYU, 1988-1990). I recently heard a good summary here:

*The garment came out of the garden where there was not death. Although death was required to produce the garment, the label on the tag said 'made in Eden', (not made in the lone and dreary world). So why did that garment made out of dead animal skins last as many hundreds or thousands of years as it did, before it was destroyed. And then the legends that it still carried the scent of the garden, that you could smell the Garden of Eden in this garment, and that there was a piece that was torn off. This legend is recorded in the Book of Mormon, it's recorded in ancient Jewish tradition, that this piece, when they tore it up, that Joseph kept a piece with him. He carried it into Egypt, and that when he finally was reconciled to his brothers and told them to go get their father Jacob and bring him, he (Joseph) sent them with the piece of the coat. And that when they were yet far-off, miles away, Jacob smelled it. He could smell the garden. And said 'that's my son. Joseph yet lives!'" So there was something about the garment that was eternal in some way. (Adrian Larsen, *The Stick of Joseph and the Marvelous Work*, <https://youtu.be/scPdxqeajHo> 61:07 min)*

I will not take time to go into length on this today, but I recommend reading the lecture from Hugh Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, Semester 3, Lecture 62, Alma 46, The Garment of Joseph, Religious Brotherhoods. (download from lesson links)

### [Stick of Joseph footnote Alma 46:22](#)

This is an example of a vow made by way of a euphemism or analogy. As we read in the Talmud, “All euphemisms [used to express vows] are equivalent to vows...[and] for oaths are equivalent to oaths...” (m.Nedarim 1:9; b.Nedarim 2a). For example, “[if he said, ‘...may it be to me] like the lamb [of the daily whole-offering]...” (m.Nedarim 1:3; b.Nedarim 10b). In Talmudic language, the essential thought is, “if we shall fall into transgression may we be even as these garments.”

### [Stick of Joseph footnote Alma 46:23](#)

Compare with the Sefer HaYashar (The Book of Jasher) “And they [his brothers] hastened and took Joseph’s coat and tore it, and they killed a kid of the goats and dipped the coat in the blood of the kid, and then trampled it in the dust, and they sent the coat to their father Jacob by the hand of Naphtali, and they commanded him to say these words:” (Jasher 43:13)

### [Alma 49:18-23](#)

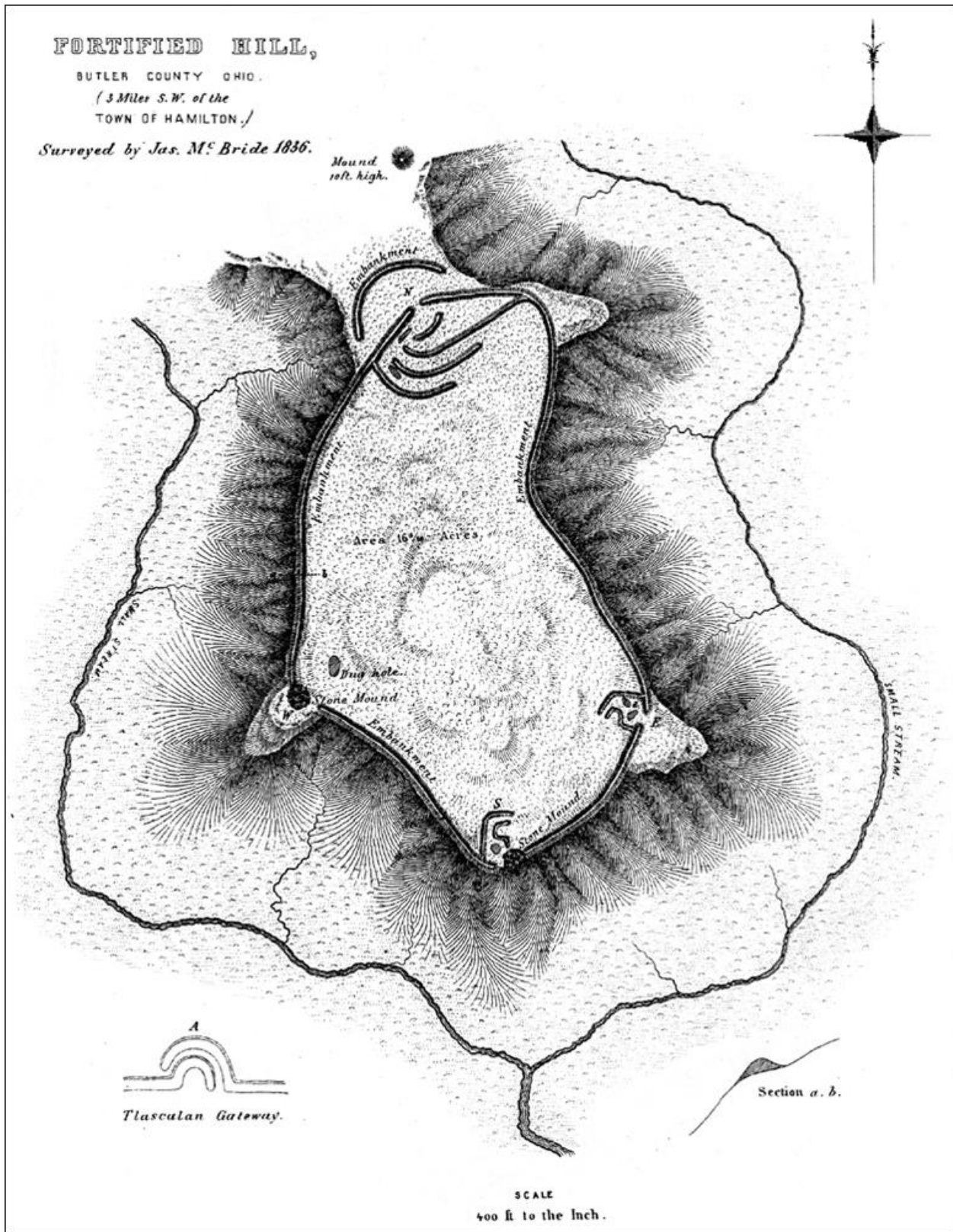
See example of Fortified Hill Works, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fortified\\_Hill\\_Works](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fortified_Hill_Works)

# FORTIFIED HILL,

BUTLER COUNTY OHIO.

(3 Miles S.W. of the  
TOWN OF HAMILTON.)

Surveyed by Jas. M. Bride 1836.



*The character of this structure is too obvious to admit of doubt. The position which it occupies is naturally strong, and no mean degree of skill is employed in its artificial*

*defences. Every avenue is strongly guarded. The principle approach, the only point easy of access, or capable of successful assault, is rendered doubly secure. A mound, used perhaps as an alarm post, is placed at about one-fourth of the distance down the ascent; a crescent wall crosses the isthmus, leaving but narrow passages between its ends and the steeps on either hand. Next comes the principal wall of the enclosure. In event of an attack, even though both these defences were carried, there still remains a series of walls so complicated as inevitably to distract and bewilder the assailants, thus giving a marked advantage to the defenders. (Squire and Davis, Ancient Monuments of the Mississippi Valley, pg 17-18)*

#### *Alma 50*

Mormon in his abridgment is being quite particular about the layout of the land. If the locations are not important, then why is so much space taken up in the precious plates with this sort of information?

*In my view, there are two categories of Book of Mormon maps:*

*Those that show Cumorah in New York, and those that don't.*

*I see this as a clear binary choice.*

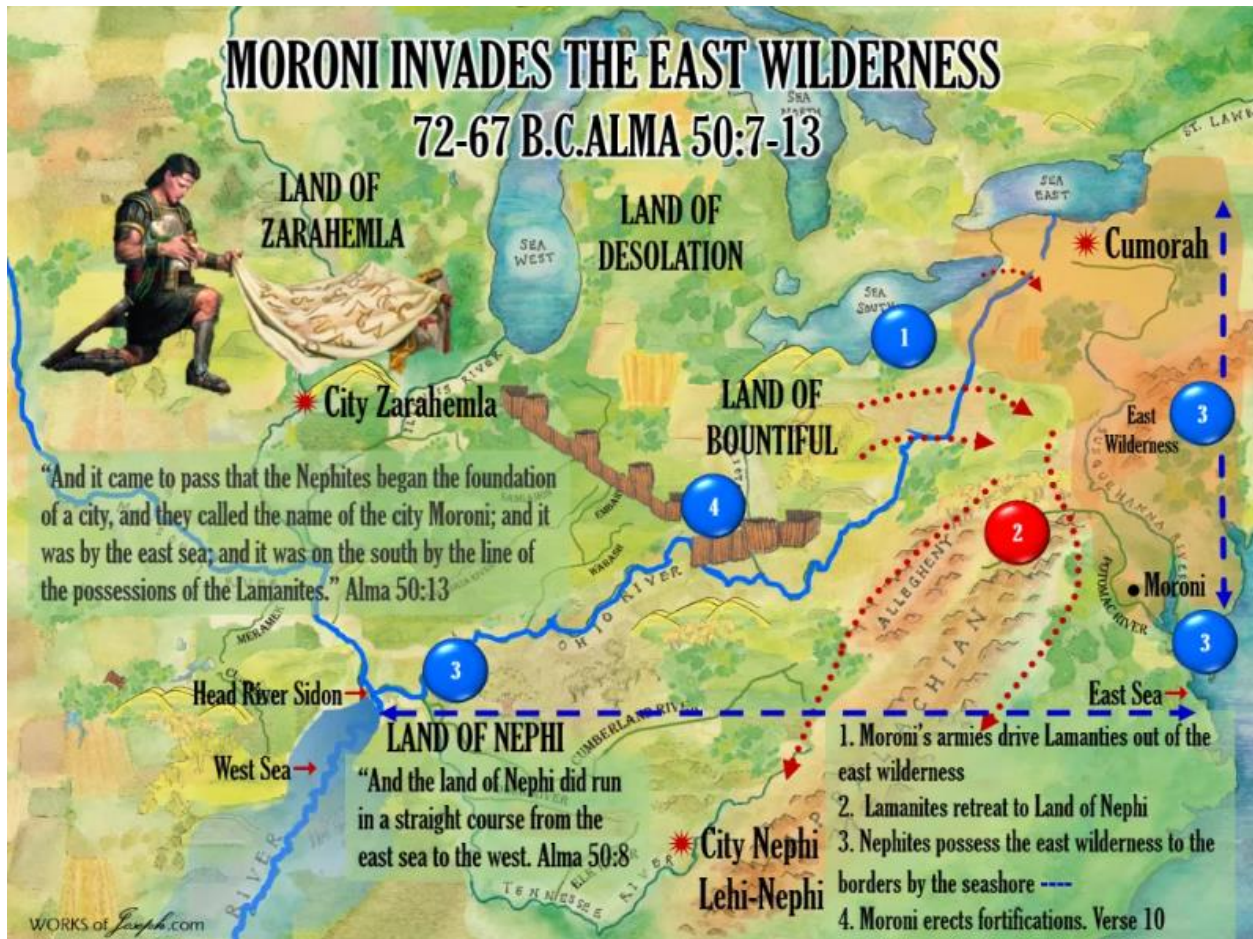
*For me, any map that doesn't put Cumorah in New York is not useful or even relevant. But I emphasize, that's because I think knowing the real-world setting is important. If you don't think it's important—and again, I emphasize that's a perfectly reasonable and faithful approach—then you can find value in non-New York maps.*

*To me, without that pin in the map and all that goes along with it (Letter VII, etc.), it makes no difference what you do with the geography. Whether you create an abstract map, or a map in Baja, Central America, Peru, Thailand, or anywhere else, every non-New York based map rejects what Oliver Cowdery wrote (and what Joseph endorsed). (Jonathan Neville, <http://www.moronisamerica.com/maps/>)*

From Mormon's perspective:

*It's important to remember that these events took place about 62-57 B.C., with centuries of Nephite civilization and warfare yet ahead before the final battles that culminated in Cumorah. Even by the time Mormon and Moroni wrote, these sites would have been historical locations with little evidence of the original battles, the way Revolutionary and Civil War sites are to us today. (Neville, Jonathan. Moroni's America: The North American setting for the Book of Mormon . Digital Legend. Kindle Edition.)*





*Alma 50:23*

*But behold there never was a happier time among the people of Nephi, since the days of Nephi, than in the days of Moroni, yea, even at this time, in the twenty and first year of the reign of the judges.*

*Alma 50:38*

**Nephihah refuses Alma the records?**

*Here's a puzzling thing in verse 38. Here was a very righteous judge. Nephihah had served in perfect uprightness before God, but he refused to let Alma take possession of the records. Why would he do that? Well, because Alma had given them to his son Helaman six years before. His son was head of the church. Alma had a different calling. Alma had laid down his commission to become a missionary. The point is why would he refuse to let Alma the great take possession of the records? Alma was an important government official, but if we go back to Alma 37:2 it tells us how Alma had conferred the whole thing upon his son Helaman six years before. There's no mystery there. You might think you find catches in the Book of Mormon and say, Joseph Smith must have slipped up here. Why would a great judge refuse the records to a great man like Alma who was responsible for them? Because Alma had passed*

*them on. That was legal now. (Hugh Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Semester 3, Lecture 69, pg 154)*

#### *Alma 51:7-8*

The descriptions between the freemen and the king-men are described in very few words here in this chapter. Compared with the complexity of our own day where we have our factions between left and right, progressive vs conservative, republican vs democrat, etc.

I'm sure in Helaman's day the details were similarly complex, yet in both his day and ours, we can sum it all up as simply as a difference between those seeking freedom and liberty and those seeking inequality, class distinction, and nobility.

#### *Alma 51:9, 13*

Amalackiah as a Zoramite appears to be in correspondence with king-men in Zarahemla. There is conspiracy going on. After all, it was with nobles and king-men that helped him rise to power while he was among the Nephites (Alma 46:1-7).

#### *Alma 51:11*

*Now his armies were not so great as they had hitherto been, because of the many thousands who had been slain by the hand of the Nephites; but notwithstanding their great loss, Amalickiah had gathered together a wonderfully great army, insomuch that he feared not to come down to the land of Zarahemla.*

But earlier we read about Amalickiah's army's last battle in Alma 49:23:

*Thus the Nephites had all power over their enemies; and thus the Lamanites did attempt to destroy the Nephites until their chief captains were all slain; yea, and more than a thousand of the Lamanites were slain; while, on the other hand, there was not a single soul of the Nephites which was slain.*

When were "many thousands... slain by the hand of the Nephites", if in the last battle we read about it says there was only "more than a thousand" slain?

#### *Alma 51:20*

*And the remainder of those dissenters, rather than be smitten down to the earth by the sword, yielded to the standard of liberty, and were compelled to hoist the title of liberty upon their towers, and in their cities, and to take up arms in defense of their country.*

This sounds quite harsh. Here's what Nibley comments about this:

*That sounds like an oxymoron, doesn't it? They were compelled to be free. They were compelled to have liberty. No, the point is here that it must be one flag or another.*

*They had chosen decision by arms and they had lost. Well, the winning side hoists its flag. They were supposed to have been Nephites. These were the ones who had agreed and given up. This was the policy Moroni always followed. They had gone back to being supposedly good Nephites. How reliable, I don't know. Their officers were kept under guard. Those that were slain were all slain in battle as they raised their arms to fight. So the victor's flag goes up, of course. "And thus Moroni put an end to those king-men . . . and thus he put an end to the stubbornness and the pride of those people who professed the blood of nobility; but they were brought down to humble themselves like unto their brethren, and to fight valiantly for their freedom from bondage." They joined in after that. This has happened before too. (Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Semester 3, Lecture 69, pg 155)*