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Next Weeks Lesson: Lesson 32 "They Did Obey ... Every Word of Command with Exactness" ([Alma 53-63](#))

Today's Lesson: Lesson 31 "Firm in the Faith of Christ" ([Alma 43-52](#))

Why do you think Mormon included so much information about war in the Book of Mormon?

1. Mormon knew that the Book of Mormon would be read and studied in a time when war would be common throughout the world. These writings teach us how to remain Christlike during times of conflict.
2. Mormon recorded Nephite history preceding the Savior's appearance in great detail. We can read of the Nephites' experiences and be prepared for similar events occurring in our day prior to the Second Coming of Christ.

This lesson will discuss what the battles between the Nephites and their enemies can teach us about how to handle earthly conflicts and how to defend ourselves and our families in the battle against Satan.

### 1. The Nephites fight to defend their families and their liberty. ([Alma 43-44](#))

- A. Why did the Nephites fight against the Lamanites? (See [Alma 43:3-4](#), [Alma 43:9-11](#), [Alma 43:45-47](#); [Alma 48:14](#).) Under what circumstances does the Lord approve of people going to war?

President Charles W. Penrose, who was a member of the First Presidency, said: "It is not right for us to engage in the shedding of human blood, for vengeance or retaliation. But when the Lord commands or inspires his servants to counsel the sons and daughters of Israel to lend their aid in the work of righteous warfare, that is different. ... We are to arise in our might and in our strength and go forth to victory; not with a desire to shed blood, not with the desire to destroy our fellow creatures, but in self defense and because we do want to maintain and hand down to our posterity those sacred principles of liberty that have been revealed from on high" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1917, 21).

Elder David O. McKay said: "There are ... two conditions which may justify a truly Christian man to enter—mind you, I say *enter*, *not begin*—a war: (1) An attempt to dominate and to deprive another of his free agency, and, (2) Loyalty to his country. Possibly there is a third, [namely], Defense of a weak nation that is being unjustly crushed by a strong, ruthless one" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1942, 72).

- B. When Moroni confronted Zerahemnah, to what did he attribute the Nephites' success in battle? (See [Alma 44:3–4](#).) How had the Nephites demonstrated their faith in Christ? (See [Alma 43:23](#), [Alma 43:49–50](#).)
- C. What can we do in our families and communities to help preserve the freedoms the Nephites cherished?
- D. Below are principles that governed the attitudes and actions of the righteous Nephites in times of war. How might understanding and applying these principles today help bring about greater peace in the world? How can we apply these principles in dealing with conflict in our personal lives?

- (1) Fight only for righteous reasons, such as self-defense ([Alma 43:8–10](#), [Alma 43:29–30](#), [Alma 43:45–47](#); [Alma 48:14](#)).
- (2) Have no hate toward your enemies; seek their best interests as well as your own ([Alma 43:53–54](#); [Alma 44:1–2](#), [Alma 44:6](#)).
- (3) Live righteously and trust in God ([Alma 44:3–4](#); [Alma 48:15](#), [Alma 48:19–20](#)).
- (4) Follow righteous and wise leaders ([Alma 43:16–19](#); [Alma 48:11–13](#), [Alma 48:17–19](#); see also [D&C 98:10](#)).

2. Captain Moroni raises the “title of liberty” to inspire the people. ([Alma 45:20–24](#); [Alma 46](#))



After the battles with the Lamanites, Helaman and his brethren went throughout the land, preaching and reestablishing the organization of the Church ([Alma 45:20–22](#)). However, some of the Nephites grew proud and rebelled against the Church. The leader of this group of dissenters was Amalickiah, who wanted to be king over the Nephites ([Alma 45:23–24](#); [Alma 46:1–4](#)).

- A. How was Amalickiah able to persuade others to follow him? (See [Alma 46:1–7](#), [Alma 46:10](#).) What was the motive of the people who supported him? (See [Alma 46:4–5](#).) What can we learn from the account of Amalickiah and his followers? (See [Alma 46:8–9](#).)

- B. Why did Moroni create the title of

liberty? (See [Alma 46:11–13](#), [Alma 46:18–20](#).) How did the people respond to the title of liberty? (See [Alma 46:21–22](#).) How does making and keeping covenants affect our lives?

**3. Amalickiah becomes king of the Lamanites and incites them to battle. ([Alma 47–48](#))**

**A.** What did Amalickiah do when he failed to become king over the Nephites? (See [Alma 46:33](#); [Alma 47:1](#), [Alma 47:4](#). [Alma 47:1–35](#).)

**B.** Some of the strongest opponents of the Nephites had once been Nephites themselves, including the Amalekites ([Alma 24:29–30](#); [Alma 43:6–7](#)), the Zoramites ([Alma 30:59](#); [Alma 31:8–11](#); [Alma 43:4](#)), Amalickiah ([Alma 46:1–7](#)), Morianton ([Alma 50:26](#), [Alma 50:35](#)), and Amalickiah’s brother Ammoron ([Alma 52:3](#)). Why do those who have left the Church often fight so strongly against it? (See [Mosiah 2:36–37](#); [Alma 47:35–36](#).)

The Prophet Joseph Smith made the following statement to a man who wondered why those who had left the Church often fought so fiercely against it: “Before you joined this Church you stood on neutral ground. When the gospel was preached good and evil were set before you. You could choose either or neither. There were two opposite masters inviting you to serve them. When you joined this Church you enlisted to serve God. When you did that you left the neutral ground, and you never can get back on to it. Should you forsake the Master you enlisted to serve it will be by the instigation of the evil one, and you will follow his dictation and be his servant” (in “Recollections of the Prophet Joseph Smith,” *Juvenile Instructor*, 15 Aug. 1892, 492).

**C.** Contrast Amalickiah and Moroni ([Alma 48:1–17](#)). Just as one wicked person can cause much wickedness among the people ([Alma 46:9](#)), one righteous person, like Moroni, can inspire much righteousness. How can we encourage and support righteous leaders? How can each of us inspire righteousness among others?

**4. War continues between the Nephites and the Lamanites. ([Alma 49–52](#))**

These chapters continue the account of the ongoing battles between the Nephites and the Lamanites. This account can help us in our ongoing battle against Satan and his hosts, who are waging a war against truth and righteousness, fighting to destroy our opportunities for eternal life.

**A.** How can the accounts of war in the Book of Mormon apply to our fight against the influence of Satan?

**(1)** The Nephites built walls to protect their cities from the Lamanites’ attacks ([Alma 48:7–9](#); [Alma 49:2–4](#), [Alma 49:13](#), [Alma 49:18](#)). What defenses can

protect us from Satan's influence?

- (2) The Nephites continually strengthened their defenses ([Alma 50:1–6](#)). Why must we continually strengthen our defenses against Satan?
- (3) The Nephites kept the commandments of God and followed their Church leaders ([Alma 44:3–4](#); [Alma 49:30](#); [Alma 50:20–22](#)). How do the commandments of God and the counsel of our Church leaders help us fight wickedness?
- (4) The Nephites thanked God for protecting them in battle ([Alma 45:1](#); [Alma 49:28](#)). How can gratitude to the Lord protect us against Satan?
- (5) Contention caused the Nephites to fight among themselves and allowed the Lamanites to gain power over them ([Alma 51:2–7](#), [Alma 51:12–23](#); [Alma 53:8–9](#)). How does contention allow Satan to gain power over us? How can unity and support from other people help us as we fight against wickedness?
- (6) The righteous Nephites were prosperous and happy even in times of war ([Alma 49:30](#); [Alma 50:23](#)). How can we find peace and happiness even during times of terrible wickedness?

The principles taught in these chapters of the Book of Mormon can help protect us and our families from the onslaught of evil. They can also help us have peace in our souls during times of war and tribulation.