

Lesson Highlights

- *Two thousand valiant young Ammonites covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephites.*
- *The young soldiers exercise faith in God and fight courageously.*

A study of this lesson will help us see that the Lord will strengthen us as we follow the example of Helaman's valiant young soldiers.

Next Week:

Lesson 33:

"A Sure Foundation", Helaman 1-5

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Introduction



My Stripling Warrior
- Del Parsons

Read **Alma 57:25-26**, stopping after the word "slain" in verse 26. In the battles between the Nephites and the Lamanites, there were surely other Nephite warriors whose lives were miraculously preserved. However, there were also many righteous Nephites who were killed (Alma 56:10-11; Alma 57:36). Helaman's army of young warriors is the only military army mentioned in the Book of Mormon in which not one soldier was killed in battle.

We, like Helaman's young warriors, are part of a great army. The following statement was made by **President Ezra Taft Benson**. Although the statement was directed to Aaronic Priesthood holders, it applies to all members of the Church. *"You have been born at this time for a sacred and glorious purpose. It is not by chance that you have been reserved to come to earth in this last dispensation of the fulness of times. Your birth at this particular time was foreordained in the eternities. You are to be the royal army of the Lord in the last days. In the spiritual battles you are waging, I see you as today's sons of Helaman. Remember well the Book of Mormon account of Helaman's two thousand stripling warriors"* (Ensign, May 1986, 43.) Note: "stripling" means young man.

Ephesians 6:11-18; 1 Peter 2:9; and D&C 138:55-56 teach what it means to be "the royal army of the Lord". The 'spiritual battles [we] are waging' as part of the Lord's army are the daily battles for the souls of men. This lesson discusses the principles and characteristics that helped the 2,060 Ammonite warriors receive so much strength from the Lord. As we live according to these principles and develop these characteristics, our spiritual strength will increase. We will be more effective as servants in "the royal army of the Lord."

Two thousand valiant young Ammonites covenanted to fight for the liberty of the Nephites.

Alma 24:15-18; Alma 53:10-11 These verses remind us of the covenant of peace that the Ammonites (the Anti-Nephi-Lehies) made at the time of their conversion.

Alma 27:22-24; Alma 53:12 The Nephites had promised to protect the Ammonites from the Lamanites.

Alma 53:13 When they saw the afflictions of the Nephites, the Ammonites wanted to take up arms in defense of their country.

Alma 53:14-15; Alma 56:8 Helaman persuaded the people not to break their covenant because he feared that they might lose their souls.

This teaches us that keeping covenants is a very serious life and death matter and that we must hold our covenants sacred at all costs.

Alma 53:16 The Ammonites' sons, who had not made the covenant, took up arms to help the Nephites.

Alma 53:17 The young Ammonites showed the strength of their commitment to help the Nephites as they entered into a covenant to protect their land even unto death and that they would not give up their liberty. They were determined to keep their covenant "in all cases." We should make and keep sacred covenants.

Ponder how the Lord will strengthen us as we make covenants with Him and keep these covenants "in all cases" as you read the following:

President Ezra Taft Benson said: *"Men and women who turn their lives over to God will discover that He can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace. Whoever will lose his life in the service of God will find eternal life"* (The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson [1988], 361).

Alma 53:19; Alma 56:1, 5 The young Ammonites asked Helaman to be their leader.

Alma 37:1-2, 14; Alma 46:6 Helaman was a prophet and a high priest over the Church. The decision to follow a prophet increased the young Ammonites' effectiveness in the battles they would fight because they would be led by an inspired temporal and spiritual leader. Consider also what kinds of leaders might weaken people in their spiritual battles.

Alma 57:21 The young Ammonites responded to the commands they received by obeying and observing every command with exactness. Obviously, we too should follow the prophet "with exactness."

President Harold B. Lee, explaining why it is important to be exactly obedient to the teachings of the Lord's prophet, taught: *"The power of Satan will increase; we see it in evidence on every hand. Now the only safety we have as members of this church is to do exactly what the Lord said to the Church in that*

In this lesson we review the principles and characteristics that helped the 2,060 Ammonite warriors receive so much strength from the Lord. As we live according to these same principles and develop these same characteristics, our spiritual strength will increase. We will be more effective as servants in *"the royal army of the Lord."*

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the events discussed in Alma 53-63.

- What principles can you apply to your life from the story of Helaman's two-thousand young soldiers?

day when the Church was organized. We must learn to give heed to the words and commandments that the Lord shall give through his prophet, 'as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;...as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.' (D&C 21:4-5.) *There will be some things that take patience and faith. You may not like what comes from the authority of the Church. It may contradict your political views. It may contradict your*

The young soldiers exercised faith in God and fought courageously.

Alma 56:34-43 The first army that the young Ammonites faced was the Lamanites' strongest and most numerous army.

Alma 56:44-47 The young soldiers, when Helaman asked if they wanted to go against this army, responded that they knew God would be with them and they testified that He would not suffer them to fall; they valued the liberty of their fathers more than their own lives.

Alma 56:47-48; see also **Alma 53:21**; **Alma 57:21** These warriors had learned to have such great faith and courage from their mothers. As parents, we must teach our children to believe in God.

The following statement by **President Spencer W. Kimball** emphasizes the influence that mothers can have on their children: *"To be a righteous woman during the winding-up scenes on this earth, before the Second Coming of our Savior, is an especially noble calling. The righteous woman's strength and influence today can be tenfold what it might be in more tranquil times. She has been placed here to help to enrich, to protect, and to guard the home...which is society's basic and most noble institution. Other institutions in society may falter and even fail, but the righteous woman can help to save the home, which may be the last and only sanctuary some mortals know in the midst of storm and strife"* (The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 326-27).

Alma 56:48 The young soldiers did not doubt their mothers' testimonies. It is important for children to know the strength and certainty of their parents' testimonies so that they can go forth with confidence. Consider ways in which parents can share their testimonies with their children.

Alma 57:20; see also **Alma 57:12-19** During one difficult battle, many Nephites *"were about to give way"*.

Alma 57:19-20 records the response of the young Ammonites during this battle--they stood firm and undaunted. As parents, we need to teach our children to be *"firm and undaunted,"* even when others *"give way."*

Alma 57:22-25; **Alma 58:31-33, 39** *While they suffered wounds, the results of the young Ammonites' faith and courage was that all of them were preserved and they were victorious.*

social views. It may interfere with some of your social life. But if you listen to these things, as if from the mouth of the Lord himself, with patience and faith, the promise is that 'the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name's glory.' (D&C 21:6)" (Improvement Era, Dec. 1970, 126).

Consider how we can remain *"firm and undaunted,"* even when our friends, associates, and others are *"about to give way,"* and, consider ways in which we can strengthen those who are *"about to give way"*.

Alma 53:20-21; **Alma 57:26-27**; **Alma 58:40** The young Ammonites were *"firm and undaunted"* in the following ways:

- "They were exceedingly valiant for courage"* (Alma 53:20).
- "They were...true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted"* (Alma 53:20)
- "They were men of truth and soberness"* (Alma 53:21).
- They had *"exceeding faith in that which they had been taught to believe"* (Alma 57:26).
- They *"put their trust in God continually"* (Alma 57:27).
- They *"[stood] fast in that liberty wherewith God [had] made them free"* (Alma 58:40).
- They were *"strict to remember the Lord their God from day to day"* (Alma 58:40).
- They kept God's *"statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments continually"* (Alma 58:40).
- "Their faith [was] strong in the prophecies"* (Alma 58:40)

The young Ammonites had developed these characteristics in their youth, before they became soldiers. As parents, we need to help our youth develop righteous qualities in their youth.

Alma 58:1-9 In one battle, the Nephite armies led by Helaman, Gid, and Teomner faced *"an enemy which was innumerable,"* but they received very little assistance from the land of Zarahemla.

Alma 58:10 The source the Nephites turned to for strength was God. We too should pray for strength and deliverance.

Alma 58:11-12 The Lord answered the Nephites' prayers by visiting them with assurances of deliverance, speaking peace to their souls, and granting them great faith and hope.

Think about the ways such answers to prayer can help us *"take courage"* in our daily struggles.