

## Chapter 3

{Original Chapter 1 – continued}

### The Aftermath of War

#### 1 And **it came to pass**

**that** the **Nephites**  
who were NOT **slain** by the **weapons of war**

**after** having **buried** those **[1<sup>st</sup> Statement]**  
who had been **slain**—

01

**Now** the **number** of the **slain**  
were NOT **numbered**

02

because of the GREATNESS  
of their  
**number**—

**After** **they**  
[the **Nephites**]  
had finished **burying** **their** dead **[Resumptive repetition]**

03

**they**  
[the **Nephites**] ALL **returned** to **their lands**  
**and** to **their houses**  
**and** [to] **their wives**  
**and** [to] **their children**

aa

2 **Now** **MANY** women  
**and** [**MANY**] children  
had been **slain** with the **sword**

bb

**and also** **MANY** of **their flocks**  
**and** [**MANY** of] **their herds**  
[were **slain**]

cc

[Heb. 01 – Break in thought]

[Heb. 02 – Noun and verb with the same root]

[Heb. 03 – Repetition of possessives “their”]

[Par. aa – Enumeration]

[Par. bb – Circular repetition “MANY”]

[Par. cc – Word pair “flocks / herds”]

[Alma 3]

and also MANY of their fields  
of grain

for they were **destroyed**  
were **trodden down**  
by the **hosts**  
of men

3 And now

[A] as MANY \_\_\_\_\_ of the **Lamanites** dd  
and the **Amlicites**

[B] who had been **slain** **upon the bank of the river Sidon** 04

[A] [as MANY ]

[B] were cast **into the waters of \_\_\_\_\_ Sidon**

And **behold** their **bones**  
are \_\_\_\_\_ in the **depths of the sea**

And **[behold]** **they**  
are  
MANY

*Mormon Discusses the Amlicite & Lamanite Curse  
They Set a Mark upon Themselves  
[Comment]*

4 And **the Amlicites**  
were **distinguished**  
from the **Nephites**

for **they** had **marked** **themselves**  
with **red** in their **foreheads**  
after **the manner of** the **Lamanites**

nevertheless **they** had NOT shorn their **heads**  
**like unto** the **Lamanites** 05

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Par. dd – Alternating parallelism]  
[Heb. 04 – Separated prepositions]  
[Heb. 05 – Simile “like”]

5 **Now** the heads  
of the Lamanites  
**and** **they** were shorn  
were naked  
**SAVE** **it** **were** [ ]/^ skin ["a" added by conjecture]  
**which** **was** girded about their loins  
**and also** **their** armor  
**which** **was** girded about **them**  
**and** **their** bows  
**and** **their** arrows  
**and** **their** stones  
**and** **their** slings &c / ["O, P/ 1920]  
**and** so forth

ee 06  
ff

6 **And** the skins of the Lamanites  
were dark  
according to the mark  
which was set upon their **fathers**  
which was a curse upon **them**  
because of their transgression  
**and** [because of] their rebellion  
against their brethren  
**who** consisted of **Nephi**  
[and] **Jacob**  
**and** **Joseph**  
**and** **Sam**  
**who** were **just**  
**and** **holy men**

gg

7 **And** **their** brethren  
sought to **destroy** **them**

[Par. ee – Many “and”s]

[Heb. 06 – Repetition of possessives]

[Par. ff – Enumeration]

[Heb. 07 – Plurals]

[Par. gg – Distribution]

[Alma 3]

<b>therefore</b>	<b>they</b>	were	<b>cursed</b>		
and	<b>[He] the Lord God</b>		<b>set a mark</b>		
			<u>upon</u>	<b>them</b>	hh
		<b>yea</b>	<u>upon</u>	<b>Laman</b>	
		and	<u>[upon]</u>	<b>Lemuel</b>	
		and	also <u>[upon]</u>	<b>the sons of Ishmael</b>	
		and	[also <u>upon</u> ]	<b>the Ishmaelitish women</b>	

[Note: According to Donald W. Parry (1992:200), **Alma 3:6-7** can also be seen as *chiastic parallelism*:

- 6 [A] And the skins of the Lamanites were dark,  
 [B] according to the mark which was set upon their fathers,  
 [C] which was a curse upon them  
 [D] because of their transgression and their rebellion against their brethren,  
 [E] who consisted of Nephi, Jacob, and Joseph, and Sam,  
 [E] who were just and holy men.
- 7 [D] And their brethren sought to destroy them,  
 [C] therefore they were cursed;  
 [B] and the Lord God set a mark upon them,  
 [A] yea upon Laman and Lemuel, [and also the sons of Ishmael and the Ishmaelitish women

(See also Gregory G. Wright, *A Compilation of Large and Small Chiastic Structures in the Book of Mormon*, Unpublished, 1976-1979, p. 40.)]

8	<b>And</b>	this	was	done	
	<b>that</b>		<b>their</b>	<b>seed</b>	
			<b>might</b>	be	distinguished
		from	the	<b>seed</b>	of their <b>brethren</b>

ii

that thereby **[He] the Lord God**

	<b>might</b>		<b>preserve</b>	<b>His</b>	<b>people</b>
that	they	_____			<b>[His</b>
	<b>might</b>	NOT	<b>mix</b>		<b>people]</b>

and [that they **might** NOT] believe in **incorrect traditions**  
 which **[incorrect traditions]**  
 would **prove** **their destruction** [rightly result in] {AL}

[Par. hh – Distribution]

[Par. ii – Circular repetition “might”]

9 And **it came to pass**

that **whosoever** did mingle his seed  
 with **that**  
 of the Lamanites  
did bring the same curse  
 upon his seed

jj

10 **Therefore**

**whosoever** suffered **himself**  
 to be led away by the Lamanites  
were /was called under that head ["Lamanite"] [O, P/ 1920] {AG}

and there was a mark set  
 upon **him**

11 And **it came to pass**

that **whosoever** would **NOT** believe in the tradition  
 of the Lamanites

but [who] [1] believed those records  
which were brought out of the land of Jerusalem

08

and [who] also [2] [believed] in the tradition  
 of their fathers  
which were correct

[and] who [3] believed in the commandments  
 of God  
 and kept them

were called the Nephites  
 or the people of Nephi  
from that time \_\_\_\_\_ forth

[Note\* Once again we find a definition of what the term "Nephite" means. See Jacob 1:14 and Alma 2:11.]

\_\_\_\_\_  
 [Par. jj – Like beginnings "who"]

[Heb. 08 – Compound prepositions "out of"]

[Alma 3]

12 **And** it is **they** [the **Nephites**] **who** have **kept** the **records**

**and also** **which** are **true** / of **their people** kk  
**[which** are **true**] / of the **people of the Lamanites**

\* \* \*

13 **Now** we will return **again** to the **Amlicites**

**for** [A] **they** also had **a mark set** [Resumptive repetition – see v. 4] LL  
 [B] upon **them**

**Yea** [A] **they** **set the mark** mm  
 [B] upon **themselves**

**Yea** [A] **[they]** even **[set] a mark of red**  
 [B] upon their **foreheads**

14 **[And] thus** the **word** of **God** 09  
 is **fulfilled**

**for** these are the **words**  
**which** **He [God]** **said** to **Nephi** [Quotation]

**Behold** \_\_\_\_\_ the **Lamanites**  
 have

**and** **I [the Lord]** **cursed**  
**I [the Lord]**  
 will **set a mark** on **them** [Prophetic Promises] PP

**that** **they**  
**and** **their seed**  
 may be **separated**  
 from **thee**  
 and **thy seed** **from this time hence forth**  
**and forever**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 [Par. kk – Alternating parallelism]  
 [Par. LL – Alternating parallelism]

[Par. mm – Circular repetition “set a mark”]  
 [Heb. 09 – Two nouns connected by “of”]

EXCEPT they repent of their **wickedness**  
**and** turn to **Me** nn  
**that** I [the Lord]  
 may have mercy upon **them**

15 And again [the Lord] oo  
 will set a mark  
 upon **him**  
**that** **mingleth** his seed pp  
 with thy **brethren**  
**that** they may be cursed also

16 And again I [the Lord]  
 will set a mark  
 upon **him**  
**that** **fighteth**  
 against thee  
 and thy seed

17 And again I [the Lord] say  
 he that **departeth**  
 from thee  
 shall NO more  
 be called thy seed

**and** I [the Lord]  
 will **bless** thee &c [deleted in 1920 – see note]  
**and** **whomsoever** shall be called thy seed **hence forth**  
**and forever**

**and** these were the **promises** of **the Lord**  
 unto **Nephi**  
**and** to his seed

[Par. nn – Like beginnings “I the Lord”]

[Par. oo – Like initiators “And again”]

[Par. pp – Like endings “seed”]

[Alma 3]

[Note\* It is important here that one understand the meaning of "setting a mark," and also the "&c" ("etc."). According to Verneil Simmons,

close examination of 2 Nephi 5:21-25 and Alma 3:6-17 reveals that Alma (also Mormon) is quoting from a prophetic statement by Nephi, which is the original basis of the curse. Because the statement is presumably lengthy, Mormon deletes any further quoting with an *etc.* (1830 edition, p. 229--now Alma 3:17). The "*etc.*" has since been deleted from our present editions.

By his use of the "*etc.*," Mormon was assuming that the reader was acquainted with the original reference. In other words, Mormon knew that the full quote had already been inscribed in the early part of his abridgment of the large plates of Nephi. But he apparently did not know about the 116 pages of manuscript that would be lost, and thus deprive us of that full account.

The account contained on the small plates (2 Nephi 5:21-25) is not a full account. The words here in the book of Alma refer to a mark set upon the Lamanites rather than a change of color of skin or race; yet no mention of a mark is found in 2 Nephi 5:21-25. Interestingly, neither 2 Nephi 5:21-25 or Alma 3:6-17 quotes the Lord's exact words on the matter of "blackness"; rather, the case hangs on Nephi's comment that the Lord "did cause" a "skin of blackness" to come upon the ones who were "cut off from his presence." (2 Ne. 5:20-21) Alma (also Mormon) says they placed a mark upon themselves, thus fulfilling the curse.

Verneil Simmons subscribes to Alma's interpretation of the curse because Alma (also Mormon) had access to the full prophetic statement on the large plates of Nephi, and knew those things which distinguished Nephites from Lamanites better than anyone today. He identifies the red mark on the foreheads of the Amlicites as a fulfillment of the curse. He also says that the red mark on their foreheads was "after the manner of the Lamanites." (Alma 3:4). He goes on to affirm the principle that although the Lord is in charge, each person puts the curse upon himself, by his own choice. In other words, (and a point that is often misunderstood), while every child inherits his race, and no one can self-induce racial transformation, it is theoretically up to an individual to consent to adopt marks applied to the skin or the body which have cultural significance.

The text states that the skins of the Lamanites were dark, according to the mark which was set upon them. Alma (also Mormon) observes that the curse was a product of the incorrect and improper traditions of the Lamanites which were handed down from generation to generation because they refused to believe in the Nephite records and tradition.

Mention should also be made here of 2 Nephi 30:2-8. In this passage, Nephi prophesies that when the "scales of darkness" begin to fall from the Lamanites' eyes in a few generations, they shall become a "white and delightsome people." The same promise is spoken concerning the Jews (3 Ne. 29:8) Thus, belief in Christ and faithfulness to the covenant bring about the condition of a "white and delightsome people," whether Lamanite or Jew, whatever the skin color. Those not enjoying the blessings of the covenant through gross disobedience or being born into such a situation through false traditions come under the "curse." Mormon writes that when the Lord remembers his covenant with the house of Israel, no longer shall anyone "hiss, nor spurn, nor make game" of them (3 Nephi 29:8). They are under the curse until they accept the covenant with Christ; the color of their skin is not a factor. In symbolic scriptural phraseology, "dark," "loathsome," and "filthy" are equated with unrighteousness; white "fair", and "delightsome" are equated with righteousness. (Verneil W. Simmons, *Peoples, Places, and Prophecies*, p. 278-279.)]



18 **Now** **the Amlicites** knew NOT  
**that** they were **fulfilling** the **words** ["s" added in P]  
**of God**  
**when they began to** **\*mark** **themselves**  
in their **foreheads\*** 10  
**nevertheless**  
**they** had **come out**  
in **open rebellion** [see Note]  
against **God**  
**therefore** it was expedient  
**that** the **curse**  
should fall upon **them**

[Note: What does it mean to "come out in **open rebellion** against **God**" (Alma 3:18)? It is very worthwhile to compare what the various writers in the Book of Mormon associate with rebellion. From verses in the Book of Mormon containing the word "rebel," I have compiled a progressive list of actions regarding those that come out in "open rebellion against God." I will leave it up to the reader to decide just when the rebellion becomes "open."

They "harden" their hearts and will not hear (Alma 10:6).

They "listeth to obey the evil spirit" (Mosiah 2:37).

They know the commandments of God and will not keep them (Mosiah 15:26; 3 Nephi 6:18).

They persist in their "own carnal nature" (Mosiah 16:5).

They are "cut off from the presence of the Lord" (1 Ne 2:21).

They are cursed "even with a sore curse" (1 Nephi 2:21).

They "mark themselves" (Alma 3:18).

They teach their children "that they should not believe" (4 Nephi 1:38).

They "joy in your afflictions" (Alma 61:3).

They build up secret combinations "to get power and gain" (Ether 11:15).

They heap up for themselves "wrath against the day of judgment" (Helaman 8:25).

They become "an enemy to all righteousness" (Mosiah 2:37).

They seek to "destroy the liberty of the people" (Helaman 1:8).

They "take up arms" against the people of God (Alma 24:2).

They will "be destroyed from off the face of the earth" (Alma 9:24).

They will "remain in a fallen state and the Devil hath all power over" them (Mosiah 16:5). ]

19 **Now** **I** **[the Lord]**  
**would**  
**that ye should** **SEE**  
**that they** brought upon **themselves**  
the **curse**

[Heb. 10 – Metaphor symbolism]

[Alma 3]

and even so  
doth EVERY man that is **cursed**  
bring upon himself  
his own **condemnation**

~~~ *Lamanites Come Again to Battle*

20 **Now** **it came to pass**

that NOT **many days after** the battle  
which was fought *in* *the land of Zarahemla*  
by the **Lamanites**  
and the **Amlicites**

that there was another army  
of the **Lamanites**  
[that] *came in*  
*upon* the **people**  
of **Nephi**  
*in* *the same place*  
*where*

11

**the first army** *met*  
the **Amlicites** [see Alma 2:15-38]

21 **And** **it came to pass**

that there was an army  
[of the **Nephites**]  
*sent forth* [deleted in Q]  
to drive *them out of*  
*their* \_\_\_\_\_ land

22 **Now** [he] Alma  
himself being afflicted with a wound  
*did* NOT go up to **battle** **at this time** {AG}  
against the **Lamanites**

23 **But** he [Alma] sent up a **numerous army**  
against **them**

[Heb. 11 – Compound prepositions “in upon”]

and they went up  
 and slew MANY  
 of the Lamanites  
 and drove the remainder  
 of them out of *the borders of*  
*their land*

24 And **then** they [the Nephites] returned again  
 and began to establish peace *in* *the land*  
 being troubled NO more *for a time*  
 with their **enemies**

25 [A] **Now** ALL these \_\_\_\_\_ things qq  
 [B] were done

[A] **yea** ALL these \_\_\_\_\_ wars  
 and contentions  
 [B] were **commenced**  
 and **ended**

in the fifth year of the reign of the judges [over the people of Nephi] rr

26 And **in** **one year**  
 were **thousands** [see Note]  
 and **tens of thousands** of souls 12  
sent to the eternal world [euphemism]

**that** they might reap their rewards  
according to their works

whether they [their works] ss  
 were **good**  
 or whether they [their works]  
 were **bad**

to reap \_\_\_\_\_ **eternal happiness**  
 or [to reap] \_\_\_\_\_ **eternal misery**  
according to the \_\_\_\_\_ spirit

**which** they listed to \_\_\_\_\_ **obey** [were inclined] {AL}

[Par. qq – Alternating parallelism]

[Par. ss – Alternating contrast parallelism]

[Par. rr – Like “paragraph” or chronological beginnings or endings]

[Heb. 12 – Amplification of numbers]

[Alma 3]

or whether it be a good spirit  
[whether it be] a bad one

27 \*For EVERY man receiveth wages  
of Him  
whom  
he listeth to obey\*\* [Poetic Language] PL

and this according to the words  
of the spirit of prophecy

therefore let it be  
according to the truth

And thus ended / eth [^P/ 1830]

the fifth year of the reign of the judges [over the people of Nephi]

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[Note on "thousands and tens of thousands": According to Donald Parry, in Semitic languages, numbers have no synonyms, with the exception of the number twenty meaning "score." Equivalents in English like twelve (a dozen) do not exist. "Therefore, semitic numbers are parallel only when the same number is repeated within the passage, (fifty/fifty, thousand/thousand, and so on), or when the a foriori ("how much more so") principle is in effect." One such example of this "how much more so" principle is found in **Alma 3:26**. (see also Alma 60:22) (Donald W. Parry, The Book of Mormon Text Reformatted according to Parallelistic Patterns, F.A.R.M.S., p. xxiv-xxvii.)]

[Note: According to H. Clay Gorton, **Alma 3:25-27** can be viewed as a conceptual **chiastic parallelism**. A brief outline of the pertinent elements is as follows:

- 25 Now all these things were done, yea, all these wars and contentions  
A were commenced **and ended in the fifth year of the reign of the judges**
- 26 B And in one year were thousands and tens of thousands of souls sent to the eternal world, **that they might reap their rewards according to their works**  
C **whether they were good or whether they were bad,**  
D to reap eternal happiness or eternal misery, according to the spirit which they listed to obey,  
C **whether it be a good spirit or a bad one.**
- 27 B For **every man receiveth wages of him whom he listeth to obey**, and this according to the words of the spirit of prophecy, therefore let it be according to the truth.  
A **And thus endeth the fifth year of the reign of the judges.**

(H. Clay Gorton, *A New Witness for Christ: Chiastic Structures in the Book of Mormon*, 1997, p. 353.)]

*[Alma 3]*