

## Chapter 23

{Original 1830 Chapter XI}

### [Preface]

An account of Alma and the people of the Lord  
who were driven into the wilderness by the people of king Noah [“was” – P] [AG]

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- 1 **Now** [he] **Alma**  
having been **warned of the Lord** 01  
**that** the armies of king Noah would come  
upon **them**  
**and** having made it \_\_\_\_\_ **known** to **his people**  
**therefore**  
**they** gathered together **their flocks** aa  
**and** [**they**] took of **their grain**  
**and** [**they**] departed into the wilderness  
before the armies of king Noah
- 2 **And** **the Lord** **did** strengthen **them**  
**that** the people of king Noah  
could NOT overtake **them**  
to destroy **them**
- 3 **And** **it came to pass** [deleted in 1837]  
**that** they [the people of **Alma**] **fled eight days' journey\*** [see the note at the end of the chapter]  
into the wilderness
- 4 **And** they [the people of **Alma**] **came** to \_\_\_\_\_ **a land**  
**yea** **even** a very beautiful  
**and** pleasant land  
**a land** of pure **water**  
[see Mosiah 18:5-8, 12, 14-16, 30]
- 5 **And** **it came to pass**  
**that** they [the people] pitched \_\_\_\_\_ **their tents**  
**and** **began to** till the ground  
**and** **began to build buildings** &c [deleted in 1920] 02

[Heb. 01 – Use of “of” meaning “by”]

[Par. aa – Like beginnings “they”]

[Heb. 02 – Verb and noun with the same root “build”]

[Mosiah 23]

**yea** **they** [the people] were industrious  
and [they] the people did labor exceedingly 03

6 And **it came to pass** [deleted in 1837]  
that [they] the people were desirous  
that **Alma** should be their **king** bb  
for he [Alma] was beloved by **his people**

*Alma Warns Against Unrighteous Kingship*

7 **But** he [Alma] **said** unto **them** cc

[A] **Behold** it is **NOT expedient** dd  
that **we** should have \_\_\_\_\_ a **king**

[B] **for** **thus** **saith** **the Lord** [Poetic Language] PL

[C] **Ye** shall **NOT** esteem **one** flesh ee  
above **another**

[C] **or** **one** man shall **NOT** think himself  
above **another**

[B] **Therefore** **I** [Alma] **say** unto **you**

[A] it is **NOT expedient**  
that **ye** should have \_\_\_\_\_ a **king**

[Note: According to Avraham Gileadi, Alma's *chiastically* structured statement emphasizes human inequality as the reason his people should have no king:

- A Behold, it is not expedient that we should have a king;
- B for thus saith the Lord:
  - C Ye shall not esteem one flesh above another,
  - C or one man shall not think himself above another;
- B therefore I say unto you
- A it is not expedient that ye should have a king.

*Alma nonetheless qualifies that statement. He says, "If it were possible that ye could always have just men to be your kings it would be well for you to have a king" (Mosiah 23:8). (Avraham Gileadi, The Last Days: Types and Shadows from the Bible and the Book of Mormon, p. 209.)]*

[Heb. 03 – Use of “exceedingly”]

[Par. dd – Repetition of NOT, ALWAYS]

[Par. bb – Like endings “king”]

[Par. ee – Simple alternating]

[Par. cc – Like paragraph beginnings]

8 Nevertheless

**if** it were possible  
**that** **ye** **could** ALWAYS have just men  
to be **your** kings

**[then]** it **would**[ALWAYS] be well for **you**  
to have a king

9 **But** [I Alma say unto you]  
remember the **iniquity** of king Noah  
**and** **his** priests

**and** **I** Myself was caught in a **snare**  
**and** [I Myself] **did** MANY things  
which were **abominable**  
in the sight  
of **the Lord**  
which caused **me** sore **repentance**

10 Nevertheless

**after** MUCH tribulation  
[He the Lord] **did** hear **my** cries  
**and** [He the Lord] **did** answer **my** prayers  
**and** [He the Lord] has made **me**  
an instrument \_\_\_\_\_ in **His** hands  
in bringing so **MANY**  
of **you**  
to a **knowledge** of **His** truth

11 Nevertheless \_\_\_\_\_ in this  
**I** [Alma] **do** NOT \_\_\_\_\_ glory  
**for** **I** [Alma] am unworthy to glory  
of **myself**

12 **And** **now** I [Alma] say unto you

**Ye** have been **oppressed** by king Noah  
**And** **[ye]** have been in **bondage** to **him**  
**and** **his** priests

ff

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[Par. ff – Like beginnings]

[Mosiah 23]

and [ye] have been brought  
into iniquity by them  
therefore ye were bound  
with the bands of iniquity [Should "bands" read "bonds"?]

13 And now  
as ye have been delivered by the power of God  
out of these bonds

yea even out of the hands of king Noah  
and his people  
and also from the bonds of iniquity [Should "bands" read "bonds"?]

even so  
I [Alma] desire [Poetic Language] PL  
that ye should stand fast [See Alma 1:25, 58:40, 61:9, 21]  
in this liberty  
wherewith ye have been made free [with which] {AL}

and that ye trust NO man to be a king  
over you gg

*Alma Warns Against Unrighteous Priesthood*

14 And also trust NO one to be your teachers [deleted in 1837]  
NOR \_\_\_\_\_ your ministers  
EXCEPT he be a man of God  
walking in His ways  
and keeping His commandments

*The Command to Love One Another*

15 [And] thus did Alma teach his people  
that EVERY man  
should love his neighbor  
as himself

[Par. gg – Repetition of NO, NOR, EVERY, NONE, ALL]

[and] that there should be NO contention  
among them

*The Necessity of Order and Authority*

16 And **now** Alma was their high priest  
he [Alma] being the founder of their church

17 And **it came to pass**  
that NONE received authority to preach  
or to teach  
EXCEPT it [the authority]  
were by him from God

**Therefore** he [Alma] consecrated ALL their priests  
and ALL their teachers  
and NONE were consecrated  
EXCEPT they were just men

04

18 **Therefore** they [ALL their priests  
and their teachers]  
did watch over their people  
and did nourish them  
with things pertaining to righteousness

*The Lord Tries the Patience and Faith of His People*

19 And **it came to pass**  
that they began to prosper exceedingly in the land  
and they called \_\_\_\_\_ the land Helam

*[Note: According to Hugh Nibley, the meaning of "Helam" (Mosiah 23:19) is "prosperity and hope" . . . Helam means "to become suitable, to be well established." You could name a land Helam if it was a new colony. The word "Helam" also means "to be healthy, to recuperate, to restore, to revive a place, to prosper." A better name you couldn't give to a new settlement than prosperity, or restoration, or health, or revival, or suitability, or happy land. ([Hugh W. Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Semester 2, p. 154.])*

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Heb. 04 – Repetition of possessives]

[Mosiah 23]

20 And **it came to pass**

that they did multiply  
and [they did] prosper **exceedingly** in ***the land of Helam***

and they built ***a city***  
which they called \_\_\_\_\_ ***the City of Helam***

[“the city of” on P, deleted in 1830, but put back in 1837]

21 **Nevertheless**

yea [He the Lord] seeth fit to chasten **His people** [Poetic Language] PL  
yea He [the Lord] trieth **their patience**  
and **their faith**

22 **Nevertheless**

whosoever putteth **his trust**  
in **Him**  
the same shall be **lifted up at the last day**  
Yea and thus it was with **this people**

[Comment]

23 For **behold**

I [Mormon] will **show** unto **you**  
that they were brought  
into **bondage**

and NONE could **deliver** **them** [see Mos. 11:23; 24:21]  
but **The Lord Their God**

yea even **The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob** [del. In 1837] 05

24 And **it came to pass**

that He [the Lord] did **deliver** **them**  
and He [the Lord] did **show forth** **His** mighty power  
unto **them**  
and **GREAT** were **their rejoicings**

06

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~~~ *The Lamanites Follow Limhi – They Discover Helam*

[Note: This story is a continuation of Mosiah 22:16.]

[Heb. 05 – Repeated use of “of”]

[Par. 06 – Plurals]



And [he] **Alma**  
 and **his** brethren                    **went forth**  
                                                  **and delivered**                    **themselves up**                    07  
                                                                                                                          **into**    their hands  
                                                  **and the Lamanites** took possession  
                                                                                                                          of    *the land of Helam*

30    **Now**                    the **armies** of    **the Lamanites**  
                                                  which had followed after                    **the people** of **king Limhi**  
                                                  had been                    lost                    *in the wilderness*  
                                                                                                                          **for MANY days**

31 **And behold**  
                                                  they [the **armies** of    **the Lamanites**]  
                                                  had found **those priests** of king Noah  
                                                                                                                          in    a    **Place\***                    [\*word pair]                    ii  
                                                  **which** they [the **priests**] called                    **Amulon**  
                                                  **and**    they [the **priests**] had **begun** to possess                    [had begun – P] {AG}  
                                                                                                                          **the Land\***  
                                                                                                                          **of Amulon**  
                                                  **and**    [they **the priests**] had begun to till the ground

32    **Now**    the name of the leader  
                                                                                                                          of **those priests** was \_\_\_\_\_ **Amulon**

33 **And it came to pass**  
                                                  **that** [he] **Amulon**    **did**    plead  
                                                                                                                          with    **the Lamanites**                    jj  
                                                  **he** [**Amulon**] also    sent forth                    their **wives**  
                                                  **who were**                    **the daughters**  
                                                                                                                          **of the Lamanites**  
                                                  to    plead    with    their brethren  
                                                  **that**                    they    [**the Lamanites**]  
                                                  should **NOT**    **destroy**                    their **husbands**

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[Heb. 07 – Compound preposition “up into”]  
 [Par. ii – Word pair “Place / Land”]  
 [Par. jj – Circular repetition “the Lamanites”]



- 34 And **it came to pass** [deleted in 1837]  
 that [they] **the Lamanites**  
 had compassion on **Amulon**  
 and **his brethren**  
 and [they] **the Lamanites**  
did NOT destroy them  
because of **their wives**
- 35 And [he] **Amulon**  
 and **his brethren** did join **the Lamanites**  
 and they **the Lamanites** were traveling  
*in the wilderness*  
in search of *the land of Nephi*  
 when they **the Lamanites** discovered *the land of Helam*  
which was possessed  
by **Alma**  
and **his brethren**
- 36 And **it came to pass**  
 that [they] **the Lamanites** promised  
unto **Alma**  
and **his brethren**  
 that **if** they would show **them** **the way** which led to *the land of Nephi*  
 that [then] they **the Lamanites** would grant  
unto **them**  
**their** lives  
and **their liberty**
- 37 But **it came to pass** [deleted in 1837]  
 that **after** [he] **Alma** had shown **them** **the way** that led to *the land of Nephi*  
**the Lamanites** would NOT keep  
their promise  
 but they **the Lamanites**  
set guards **round about**  
*the land of Helam*  
 [and they **the Lamanites**  
set guards  
over **Alma**  
and **his brethren**

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[Heb. 08 – Compound prepositions “round about”]

[Mosiah 23]

38 And the remainder of **them** went to the land of Nephi  
And a part of **them** returned to the land of Helam  
and [this part] also brought  
with **them** the wives  
and the children  
of the guards  
who had been left  
*in the land*

39 And the **king** of **the Lamanites** had granted  
unto **Amulon**  
that he [**Amulon**] should be a king  
and a ruler over **his people**  
who were *in the land of Helam*

nevertheless

he [**Amulon**] should have NO power to do ANY thing  
contrary to the will  
of the **king** of **the Lamanites**

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[Note: According to David Lamb, Hebrew people attached special significance to individual numbers. Knowing the significance of the numbers serves as an emphasis for points which might otherwise go unnoticed. Alma's people fled from the armies of king Noah into the wilderness. They traveled **eight days** (Mosiah 23:3) and established themselves in the land of Helam, which was "a very beautiful and pleasant land." The number **eight** is associated with "new beginnings" (Bullinger 1894:200). The "new beginnings" for the people of Alma was marked by a journey of eight days. (David Lamb, "What's in a Number?," in Recent Book of Mormon Developments, Vol. 2, p. 41.)]

[Note: Hugh Pinnock writes that a common element in Hebrew poetry is the use of word pairs. The word pair **place . . . land** is attested in these two simple alternates from the Bible:

(A) Am I now come up without the Lord against **this place**

(B) to destroy it?

(A) The Lord said to me, Go up against **this land**,

(B) and destroy it. (2 Kings 18:25)

The word pair **place . . . land** is also found in the Book of Mormon: "they had found those priests of king Noah, in a **place** which they called **Amulon**; and they had begun to possess the **land** of **Amulon** (Mosiah 23:31). (Hugh W. Pinnock, Finding Biblical Hebrew and Other Ancient Literary Forms in the Book of Mormon, FARMS, 1999, p. 52-54.)]