

{Original 1830 Chapter VI}

[Preface]

THE RECORD OF ZENIFF

An account of his people, from the time they left the land of Zarahemla until the time that they were delivered out of the hands of the Lamanites

* * *

[Note* The story of Zeniff is alluded to in Omni 1:27-30.]

Chapter 9

~~~ Zeniff is Part of a Failed Bid to Return to Lehi-Nephi

The Seeds of Bondage Are Sown by Disobedience

[Quoted from 1<sup>o</sup> source - Mosiah 9:1—10:22]

1 I Zeniff aa  
having been taught in ALL the language of the Nephites  
and having had a knowledge of the land of Nephi bb  
or of the land of our fathers' first inheritance  
and having been sent as a spy among the Lamanites 01

that I [Zeniff] might spy out their forces  
that our army might come upon them  
and [might] destroy them

but when I [Zeniff] saw  
that which was good among them  
I [Zeniff] was desirous  
that \_\_\_\_\_they [the Lamanites]  
should NOT be destroyed

2 Therefore  
I [Zeniff] \_\_\_\_\_ contended  
with my **brethren** in *the wilderness*

for I [Zeniff] would  
that [he] our ruler **should** make a treaty with them

[Par. aa – Like beginnings “I Zeniff”]

[Heb. 01 – Noun and Verb with the same root “spy”]

[Par. bb – Clarification]

[Mosiah 9]

but he [our ruler]  
 being an austere\* [man] [KJV = harsh, rough] {AL}  
 and [being] a bloodthirsty man commanded  
 that I [Zeniff] should be slain  
 but I [Zeniff] was rescued by the shedding of MUCH blood [Irony] 02

[Note: Ironically, in order to counter Zeniff's desire to NOT shed blood, MUCH blood was shed.]

for father fought against father  
 and brother [fought] against brother  
 until the greatest/^greater number [P, 1830 / ^1920]  
 of our army was destroyed in the wilderness  
 and we returned  
 those of us that were spared to \_\_\_\_\_ the land of Zarahemla  
 to relate that tale  
 to their wives  
 and [to] their children

~~~ Zeniff Returns from Zarahemla to Lehi-Nephi

3 And yet I [Zeniff]
 being over zealous to inherit the land of our fathers

[Note: This is the same wording as in Mosiah 7:21.]

collected as many as were desirous
 to go up
 to possess the land [of our fathers]
 and [we] started again on our journey into the wilderness
 to go up
 to [possess] the land [of our fathers]
 but we were smitten
 with famine
 and [with] sore afflictions

[Heb. 02 – Use of active participle + “of”]

for we were slow to remember
the Lord our God

4 Nevertheless

and after MANY days wandering in the wilderness
we pitched our tents in the place
where
our brethren were slain
which [place]
was near to the land of our fathers

5 And **it came to pass**

that I [Zeniff] went again with four of my men
in to the city
in unto the king

cc

03

that I [Zeniff] might know of the disposition
of the king
and that I [Zeniff] might know
if I [Zeniff] might go in
with my people
and possess the land in peace

6 And I [Zeniff] _____ went in unto the king
And he [the king] covenanted
with me

that I [Zeniff] might possess the land of Lehi Nephi
and [that I [Zeniff] might possess] the land of Shilom

7 And he [the king] also commanded
that his people
should depart out of the land

And I [Zeniff]
and my people went in to the land
that we might possess it

**

[Par. cc – Like beginnings “I Zeniff”]
[Heb. 03 – Compound preposition “in unto”]

[Heb. ** -- Reversal of order of persons in a compound subject]

[Mosiah 9]

8 And we began to build buildings 04
and [we began] to repair the walls of the city

yea even the walls of the city of Lehi Nephi
and [even the walls of] the city of Shilom

9 And we began to till the ground
yea even with ALL manner of seeds dd

with seeds of corn 05

and [with seeds] of wheat ee

and [with seeds] of barley

and with [seeds of] neas

and with [seeds of] sheum

and with seeds of ALL manner of fruits *

[Note* Unlike modern interpretation, the OED dictionary defines "fruit" as "any product of plant life."]

and we did begin to multiply [did?] 06
and [to] prosper in the land

10 Now _____ it was the cunning
and the craftiness
of king Laman
to bring my people _____ into bondage

that he [king Laman]

yielded up the land

that we might possess it

11 Therefore it came to pass

that after we had dwelt in the land

for the space of twelve years

that [he] king Laman

began to grow uneasy

lest by ANY means

my people should wax strong

in the land

and that they [the Lamanites] could NOT overpower
them [my people]

[Heb. 04 – Verb and noun with the same root]

[Par. ee – Many "and"s]

[Par. dd – Circular repetition "seeds"]

[Heb. 06 – Use of "begin to"]

[Heb. 05 – Repetition of a preposition "with"]

and [that they the Lamanites could NOT] bring them [my people] _____ into bondage

Idleness Fosters Wickedness

12 **Now** _____ they [the Lamanites] were a lazy [people] and an idolatrous people

therefore _____ they [the Lamanites] were desirous to bring us _____ into bondage

[A] **that** they [the Lamanites] ff
[B] might glut themselves
[C] with the labors of our hands

yea [A] **that** they [the Lamanites]
[B] might feast themselves
[C] upon the flocks of our fields

13 And **it came to pass** _____ **that** _____ king Laman
began to stir up _____ his people
that they [his people]
should contend
with my people

therefore there began to be _____ wars 07
and contentions
in the land

~~~ The Lamanites Invade Shilom On the North & South

14 **For** in the thirteenth year
of my reign _____ in the land of [] Nephi [note the change]
away on the south of the land of Shilom

[Par. ff – Extended alternating]
[Heb. 07 – Use of “began to be”]

[Mosiah 9]

when my people were watering
and feeding their flocks
and tilling their lands

a numerous host of [the] Lamanites
came upon them
and began to _____ slay them

and [began] to take ~~of~~/off their flocks [changed in 1837]
and [began to take off] the corn
of their fields

15 Yea

And it came to pass

that they [my people] fled
ALL that were NOT overtaken
even into the City of [] Nephi

and [my people] did call upon me for protection

*In the Strength of the Lord, Zeniff's People Fight
For Deliverance from Bondage*

16 And it came to pass

that I [Zeniff] did arm them
with bows gg
and with arrows hh
and with swords 08
and with cimeters
and with clubs
and with slings
and with ALL manner of weapons

which we [my people] could invent

And I [Zeniff] 09
and my people did go forth against the Lamanites to battle {AG}

[Par. gg – Enumeration]

[Heb. 09 – Reversal of order of persons in a compound subject]

[Par. hh – Many “and”s]

[Heb. 08 – Repetition of a preposition]

17 **Yea** _____ in the **strength** of **the Lord**
did we **go forth** _____ to battle
 against **the Lamanites**

for **I [Zeniff]** 10
and my people did cry mightily to **the Lord** 11
that He [the Lord]
 would **deliver us**
 out of **the hands**
 of **our enemies**

for **we** were **awakened** to a **remembrance** [Poetic Language] PL
 of the **deliverance of our fathers**

18 **And [He] God** did hear **our cries** ii
And [He] God] did answer **our prayers**

and we _____ did **go forth** in **His might** {AG}
yea we _____ did **go forth** against **the Lamanites**

And in one day
and a night

we _____ did **slay** three thousand **and** forty three 12
we _____ did **slay** them
 even **until**
we _____ had driven them out
 of **our land**

19 **And I [Zeniff] my self** 13
 with **mine own hands**
did **help to bury** **their dead**

And behold _____ to **our** GREAT **sorrow**
 and **lamentation**
two hundred and seventy nine of **our brethren**
 were **slain**

[Heb. 10 – Reversal of order of persons in a compound subject]

[Heb. 12 – Use of “and” between number units]

[Heb. 11 – A wish or a prayer]

[Heb. 13 – Duplication]

[Par. ii – Circular repetition “did”]

[Mosiah 9]

[Note: While the word “again” is used multiple repetitive times in Zeniff’s record (these are easy to spot because I have recorded them with a green font), Grant Hardy writes that the word ‘again’ in Mosiah 9:5 (“I went again with four of my men in to the city in unto the king”) “suggests that Zeniff had already entered into negotiations with the Lamanite king before fighting broke out among the members of the first expedition.” (Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide, p. 301.)

[Note: In a 6-page paper, Matthew Bowen provides literary and scriptural details on how the Book of Mormon does an amazing wordplay on the actual meaning of the place-name “Shilom” (Mosiah 9:6) and the phrase “possess the land in peace” (Mosiah 9:5).

The toponym Shilom likely derives from the Semitic/Hebrew root š-l-m, whence also the similar-sounding word šālôm, “peace,” derives. The first mention of the toponym Shilom in Zeniff’s record — an older account than the surrounding material and an autobiography — occurs in Mosiah 9:6 in parallel with Zeniff’s mention of his intention to “possess the land in peace” (Mosiah 9:5). The language and text structure of Mosiah 9:5–6 thus suggest a deliberate wordplay on Shilom in terms of šālôm. Zeniff uses the name Shilom as a point of **irony** throughout his brief royal record to emphasize a tenuous and often absent peace between his people and the Lamanites.

Zeniff’s use of parallelistic language in Mosiah 9:5–6 strongly suggests his correlation of the šlm-derived name Shilom with “peace” — Hebrew šālôm. Since the Nephites were a Hebrew-speaking/writing people, this correlation makes good sense. We further note Zeniff’s covenant use of the verb know (cf. Hebrew yāda’) in correlation with “he covenanted with me.” Zeniff seeks a bērit šālôm — a “covenant of peace,” or what we would today call a “peace treaty.”

Mosiah 9:5

- A. And it came to pass that I went again with four of my men into the city, in unto the king
- B. that I might know the disposition of the king,
- C. that I might know if I might go in with my people
- D. and **possess the land in peace [šālôm]**

Mosiah 9:6

- A’ And I went in unto the king
- B’ and he covenanted with me
- C’ that I might possess the land of Lehi-Nephi,
- D’ and **[possess] the land of Shilom**

(Matthew L. Bowen, “‘Possess the Land in Peace’: Zeniff’s Ironic Wordplay on Shilom,” Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture 28 (2018): 115–120.)

[Note: According to H. Clay Gorton, **Mosiah 9:16-18** can be viewed as a conceptual **chiastic parallelism**. A brief outline of the pertinent elements is as follows:

16 And it came to pass that I did arm them with bows, and . . . with all manner of weapons which we could invent,

A and **I and my people did go forth against the Lamanites to battle.**

17 B Yea, **in the strength of the Lord did we go forth** to battle against the Lamanites

C for I and my people **did cry mightily to the Lord** that he would deliver us out of the hands of our enemies,

D **for we were awakened to a remembrance of the deliverance of our fathers**

18 C And **God did hear our cries** and did answer our prayers;

B and **we did go forth in His might;**

A yea, **we did go forth against the Lamanites,** . . . until we had driven them out of our land.

(H. Clay Gorton, *A New Witness for Christ: Chiastic Structures in the Book of Mormon*, 1997, p. 63.)]

[Mosiah 9]