

## ENGAGING GOSPEL DOCTRINE (Episode 205)

### LESSON 31: ALMA 43-52

#### Firm in the Faith of Christ

Goal	Class members will come to appreciate the lessons about character and life in these often underappreciated chapters.
Hook	Apart from the record of Jesus' ministry, these chapters would likely receive our editor Mormon's endorsement as his favorite chapters. His voice and interpretations certainly permeate them, and these chapters are populated by his heroes.
Overview	<p>Cover 10 chapters this lesson! Lots to go through. Often readers wear down in the latter chapters of the longest book in the Book of Mormon (interestingly, Grant Hardy makes the astute comment that Alma should end at Alma 44 and Alma 45-63 should be 1 Helaman).</p> <p>43:1-44:24: Zoramite War (year before chapters 36-42) 44:24: End of Alma's record (-73) 45:1 Beginning of Helaman's record 45:1-19: Alma's last blessings and prophecies 45:20-24 Attempt at reform, Nephites grow rich and prideful 46:1-62:41 (Amalickiahite Wars) 46:1-8: Introduction to Amalickiah 46:11-41 Moroni's response, Helaman and high priests efforts to put church in order, aside about fevers and herbs 47: Rise of Amalickiah with betrayal at every turn 48:1-6 Amalickiah incites Lamanites to war 48:11-19 Praise of Moroni, Ammon, Alma, his sons, Helaman and others 48:21-25: Nephites reluctantly prepare for war 49-50: Nephites preparations and fortifications four years of peace (72-68) 50: 25-36: Revolt of Morianton (-68 years) 51: Internal dissent, king-men and free men 51:22-37: Lamanite invasion, Teancum's Black Ops solution 52: Lamanites fight the forces of Teancum (East) and Moroni (West)</p>

Main Points

- Point 1: Captain Moroni vs. Amalickiah (and what we learn about character)
- Alma 48:7 Captain Moroni one of greatest heroes of Book of Mormon, Amalickiah one of its greatest and most clever villains. Much to be gained from a close comparison of these men (taking one step back, it is interesting to ask how Mormon's veneration of Moroni influences his narration) start with Alma 48, contrast with Amalickiah, then move on
- Close reading of Alma 48
- Contrast story of Amalickiah (close reading of 46:1-6; 47)
- Did they know each other before Amalickiah's dissension?

Point 2: Motivations (Title of Liberty)

Mormon's reasons for Nephites fighting (look at Alma 48, then lists of motivations, then go back to other key points)

43:9-support lands, houses, wives, children, preserve them from enemies, preserve rights, privileges, liberty, to worship God according to desires

43:26- defend lands, country, rights, liberties

43:45-46: inspired by better cause: homes, liberties, wives, children, their all, rites of worship, their church, doing duty they felt they owed to God

43:48- defend themselves, families, lands, country (?), rights, religion

49: for their liberty, freedom from bondage

46:12 (Title of Liberty) In memory of our God, our religion and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children

47:10: support liberty, lands, wives, children, peace, that they might live unto the Lord their God, maintain "cause of the Christians"

king men: 51:5-8

Lamanites

usurp power, bring into bondage (43:8)

Discussion: What are our most powerful motivations?

Point 3: Preparation

Preparation and lack thereof is a primary theme of these chapters. Word shows up 11 times in Alma 49 alone

Close reading of 47:7 and following, 49, including life application, 50

Point 4: Covenants, Forgiveness, and Trust

End of Alma 43 and 44, close reading (note the honesty and integrity) (44:8)

Chapter 46: The Hebrew word for covenant, "brit", means cut, and the way the Nephites covenant resonates with ancient practice (cf Gen. 15:10)

Irony: dissenters "covenant of peace" enforced on pain of death (46:35)

47:2- most of the Lamanites kept their covenants and would not fight the Nephites, had to be compelled

50:36: dissenting followers of Morianton covenant to keep peace and are united with people of Lehi

Point 5, opening of discussion point. What are the ethics of war?

43:30- no sin to defend by strategem

<p>Other Com ments/ Discu ssion Starter s</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Endogamy vs. Exogamy, descendents of priests of Noah as numerous as all Nephites (43:14)</li> <li>· Comparing Mormon and Captain Moroni (Mormon clearly idolized him, named his son after him) “only 25 years” (See Mormon 2:2, Mormon was 15)</li> <li>· Does Mormon skew his description of his hero?</li> <li>· How do these chapters fit in with the history of weapons, military fortifications, government?</li> <li>· Unnamed heroes, 44:12-14 (he has dialog but not name. Also, effectiveness of object lessons); Teancum’s servant who joins him in his “black ops” mission (51:33)</li> <li>· 45:16 (cf D&amp;C 1:31), what does not look upon sin with least degree of allowance mean?</li> <li>· Alma’s translation!! 45:19; see Alma 29:1 and 3 Nephi 1:3</li> <li>· term “Christian” (Christ and Messiah same term, one Greek one Hebrew, cf 2 Ne 25:19)</li> <li>· Reading between the lines: Nephihah was Alma’s brother!! 50:37-38</li> <li>· 52:1- superstition on first day of year</li> </ul>
<p>Concl uding Points</p>	<p>What are our motivations and how can we prepare? What can we learn from the character of the people in these chapters? Defend that which is most precious, prepare continually, know our strengths and weaknesses and humbly act accordingly.</p>