

# ZARAHEMLA RECORD

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## Book of Mormon Warfare: *More Than Meets the Eye*

by Raymond C. Treat

**H**ave you heard people say that they don't study the Book of Mormon because they're turned off by all the warfare? One response to this statement is to tell these people not to become offended at anything in the word of God because this is one way Satan steals the word of God from us and makes it of no use in our lives (Mark 4:15).

Another response is to tell them that there is a purpose for everything in the Book of Mormon and therefore, a purpose for the warfare. While one purpose for the warfare is to provide geography information, another purpose of even more practical nature to the individual believer is to provide a type for spiritual warfare.

### Type

What is a type? A type is a pattern from the past which illustrates principles or future events. Alma gives a good example of a type in his counsel to his son Helaman (Alma 17:78-80 [37:43-45]). He tells him that the compass (liahona) that Lehi and his group relied upon to guide them through the wilderness to the promised land is a type or pattern for the words of Christ which will guide us, if we follow them, through the spiritual wilderness to our land of promise (Zion).

In a sense, a type once discovered may become a prophecy. Some propose that most, if not all, stories in the Bible and the Book of Mormon

have been preserved for the purpose of revealing a portion of the plan of God and events in the last days. Therefore, an historic account of warfare in scripture may be viewed as a type for future physical warfare or as a type to illustrate principles of spiritual warfare in all ages.

### Timing

It is important for us to realize that physical warfare is a type or pattern for spiritual warfare. Through this understanding, the Lord is telling us that now is the time for us to become familiar with the principles of spiritual warfare because they will be increasingly needed as we enter into the very last days when the greatest spiritual battles ever will occur. In his tremendous vision of our day, Nephi saw there would be only two churches—one of God and one of the devil. In other words, an all-out battle with no more middle ground. In the same vein, Section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants states that in the days just ahead of us Jesus will have power over his own and the devil will have power over his own. This will be the time of the endowment and therefore, a time of great spiritual warfare.

### Example

The story of Lachoneus in Third Nephi chapter two is an outstanding example of a type for spiritual warfare, as well as a prophecy of

future events. Lachoneus, like chief captain Moroni, is a type for Jesus Christ. The Gaddianton leader, Giddianhi, is a type for Satan. Giddianhi threatens to destroy the Nephites unless they will unite with the robbers. His followers are a type for those who have made a covenant to follow Satan. Those under the leadership of Lachoneus, both Nephites and Lamanites, are a type for those who have made a covenant to follow God. The response of Lachoneus to the Gaddianton threat is to gather all those who are not robbers into one place with provision for seven years (year 16, 3 Nephi 2:1[3:1]). We read in verse 21 [3:16]:

And so great and marvelous were the words and prophecies of Lachoneus that they did cause fear to come upon all the people; And they did exert themselves in their might to do according to the words of Lachoneus.

The fear in this verse is the fear of the Lord. Most people do not understand the phrase "fear of the Lord," but if you have this kind of fear or reverence for God you also have a covenant with him. All those who have a covenant, and are therefore part of the house of Israel in the last days, will be gathered.

The robbers were forced to attack the people of God "for there was no way that they could subsist, save it were to plunder and rob and mur-

Cont'd on pg. 4

# *The Hidden Principle:* **Come Unto Christ**

by Raymond C. Treat

“Come unto Christ” is an important phrase in the Book of Mormon. It is important because it occurs frequently, because Jesus emphasizes it and because it is so closely associated with the principles of the gospel such as repentance and baptism.

To find out just how frequently it occurs we need to include all the variations on the phrase such as “come unto him,” and “come unto me,” referring to Jesus Christ. A preliminary search in the Book of Mormon

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*If “come unto Christ” is a covenant-making step, then what is the purpose of baptism?*

reveals 43 references. In 17 of these references Jesus is speaking, or someone is quoting Jesus. In one case, Jesus is quoting the Father. Another important thing about these 43 references is that 26 of them are directly related to the covenant-making process that we see in the principles of the gospel and that the remainder are indirectly related.

By contrast, a preliminary search of the Bible reveals only 14 “come unto Christ”-type phrases, of which three (two are quotes by Jesus) are directly related to the covenant-making process in the principles. The rest are related indirectly.

These facts—frequency of occurrence, many quotes by Jesus and a close association with the principles—tell us that “come unto Christ” is an important phrase in the Book of Mormon.

What does “come unto Christ” mean? After looking at the “come unto Christ”-type verses such as Omni 1:47 [1:26], we learn that to “come unto Christ” means to “offer your whole souls as an offering unto him.” This describes a covenant relationship. In other words, to “come unto Christ” means making a covenant with the Father through belief in and obedience to the words of Jesus Christ.

How does “come unto Christ” relate to the principles of the gospel? It comes after repentance and before baptism in many references (3 Nephi 9:92 [21:6]; 12:33 [27:20]; 14:2-3 [30:2]; Mormon 1:65 [3:2]; Moroni 7:36 [7:34]). If “come unto Christ” is a covenant-making step,

then what is the purpose of baptism? Most of us believe that we make our covenant in the waters of baptism. However, Alma 5:27 [7:15] tells us that water baptism is a physical witness of a spiritual covenant already made:

Yea, come and go forth and show unto your God that ye are willing to repent of your sins and enter into a covenant with him to keep his commandments,  
And witness it unto him this day by going into the waters of baptism.

In this verse the principle of repentance is followed by “enter into a covenant,” which is followed by baptism. The phrase “enter into a covenant” follows the same pattern as “come unto Christ.”

Because they are sandwiched between the same two principles of the gospel in various references, we believe that “enter into a covenant” and “come unto Christ” are synonymous.

This pattern reveals that upon turning our lives around, we come unto Christ by entering into a covenant relationship prior to water baptism. Then we are baptized in water as a physical witness of a spiritual cov-

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enant already made. In Mosiah 9:41 [18:10] we also find that our covenant is made prior to baptism. Alma extends this invitation to his people at the waters of Mormon:

Now I say unto you,  
If this be the desires of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him,  
That ye will serve him and keep his commandments,  
That he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?

Notice that baptism is a witness that “ye have” (already) “entered into a covenant.” In Alma’s charge to Helam in Mosiah 9:44 [18:13], he repeats this same sequence: baptism is a testimony of a covenant already made. These three verses have shown us that there is a covenant-making step after repentance and prior to baptism which is to “come unto Christ.”

Perhaps an even better example that the covenant comes before baptism is found in the story of King Limhi and his people in the land of Nephi after they were discovered by Ammon and his search party from Zarahemla:

And now since the coming of Ammon, King Limhi had also entered into a covenant with God, and also many of his people,  
To serve him and keep his commandments;  
And it came to pass that King Limhi and many of his people were desirous to be baptized,  
But there was none in the land that had authority from God.  
Mosiah 9:175-176 [21:32-33]

Here we see clearly that the covenant is made before baptism. In this case, Limhi and his people were not

become as a little child and be baptized. To become as a little child is a synonym for coming unto Christ and making a covenant. We find confirmation of this in Third Nephi 4:51 [9:22] where we read, “whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive.” Little children ask many questions, believe readily and are teachable.

In the second sequence above, the second and third items are reversed: repent, be baptized and become as a little child. These verses tell us that repentance and baptism are not enough to inherit the kingdom of God but that we must become as a little child. In other words, we must make a covenant. This makes sense when we realize the significance of the covenant-making step (see *Recent Book of Mormon Developments* vol. 2:34-39) and that baptism in water should be a witness of a covenant already made prior to baptism as we are told above in Alma 5:27 [7:15].

This sequence is also important for those who were baptized and did not understand the significance of making a covenant prior to baptism. Jesus is saying re-baptism is not required; you can make your covenant with him now.

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baptized until they gathered to Zarahemla, long after they had made their covenant with God in the land of Nephi.

Not only did Satan remove many covenants from the Bible (1 Nephi 3:169 [13:26]), he also attempted to remove the covenant-making step essential to the life of every believer. When Jesus Christ appeared to the believers in Land Bountiful, he emphasized the importance of this covenant step:

And again I say unto you,  
Ye must repent,  
And become as a little child,  
And be baptized in my name,  
Or ye can in nowise receive these things.

And again I say unto you,  
Ye must repent,  
And be baptized in my name,  
And become as a little child,  
Or ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God.  
3 Nephi 5:39-40 [11:37-38]

The preferred order is in the first sequence: repent,

If the covenant-making step is so important why have we not seen it in Hebrews 6:1-2, the famous reference to the six gospel principles? The obvious answer is found in Nephi’s vision in First Nephi 3:168-169 [13:26]:

For behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious;  
And also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away;

Perhaps we could have suspected the existence of seven principles had we pondered the symbolic meaning of the number six versus the number seven in the word of God. Six is the number of man whereas seven is symbolic of perfection and completion. Certainly we all agree that the purpose of the gospel is to perfect and complete us.

The message of the Father to Book of Mormon believers today is “repent and come unto my beloved Son” (3 Nephi 9:106 [21:20-21]) and enter into a covenant relationship to serve him and keep his commandments. If we do, we will find out just how precious the covenant relationship is. We will also be prepared to assist in restoring the knowledge of the covenant to the house of Israel, beginning with the Lamanites. ZRF

der" (v. 46 [4:5]). The same pattern is described in John 10:10: "The thief [Satan] cometh not but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy . . ."

The Gaddianton robbers were beaten in the greatest battle in the history of the Nephite nation (v. 56 [4:11]). Mormon notes that this battle occurred in the nineteenth year and the sixth month (vv. 49, 55 [4:7, 10]), which places it at the halfway point of the seven-year sequence, which began in year 16. The fact that this specific year is given is unusual in light of the fact that so few dates are given throughout the Nephite history. It is even more unusual that the exact month is given not once but twice.

The greatest battle in the history of the Nephite nation which occurs at the midpoint of a seven-year period and which was preceded by a gathering of all believers to stand against the forces of Satan (the Gaddianton robbers) is no doubt a type or prophecy of end-time events.

The Gaddiantons were finally defeated for good in the seventh year. All of the robbers who would not enter into a covenant to murder no more were killed (vv. 87-88 [5:4-5], see also Alma 21:70 [46:35]). The forces of Satan were completely

removed, which is also a prophecy or type for end times.

This end-time type or prophecy teaches the necessity of making a covenant with God and gathering together with those who have also made their covenant with God.

The Book of Mormon has many

more examples of spiritual warfare. As you read the passages containing warfare, ask the Lord to enlarge your understanding of principles of spiritual warfare as well as types which are prophetic for our day. There are many types waiting to be discovered and shared. ZRF

## Attention Restoration MS-DOS Users

We have learned that Infobase Press of Provo, Utah has made available the *Scriptures of the Restoration*, a complete database containing the Inspired Version of the Bible, 1908 Book of Mormon and the 1970 edition of the Book of Doctrine & Covenants (1-144).

This program uses the newest runtime version of Folio® Infobase Software, on three high density 3.5 disks.

The cost is \$39.95. A Macintosh version is planned. Both 3.5 & 5.25 formats are available.

To order please contact:

Brian Ferrel  
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17 East 200 North, #210  
Provo, Utah 84606

A new Bible edition featuring the King James Version with quick access to all changes made by Joseph

Smith using icons and screen windows will be available early in 1993.

Beginning with this issue, we will accommodate the many readers of the *Zarahemla Record* who use the LDS system of chapter and verse by placing their reference in brackets immediately following the 1908 reference. For example, the first reference on page one is Alma 17:78-80 [37:43-45]. Alma 17:78-80 is the 1908 reference and [37:43-45] is the LDS reference.

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