

PREFACE TO LESSON Alma 53-63

Before beginning this lesson, please watch this video

<https://youtu.be/IBV0Okknhk> Lessons from the War Chapters, John Bytheway (2006 Education Week)

- We are always studying the Book of Mormon in the year a president is elected.
- We are always in the war chapters in the months and weeks prior to the actual election. The week of the general election we will be in Mormon 9 which covers the destruction of the Nephite civilization.
- Why did the Lord inspire Mormon to write down the things that he did?
- These chapters are our primer (PRIMER: The word also is used more broadly to refer to any book that presents the most basic elements of any subject.) for the season we are currently experiencing
- There are spiritual lessons and temporal lessons in today's lesson that we are able to use to measure our spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical preparation for the events leading up to the return of the Savior to the earth.
- The Self Reliance Initiative covers
 - Personal Finances
 - Starting and growing My business
 - Education for Better Work
 - Finding a Better Job
 - Emotional Resilience "NEW"
 - This group is for educational purposes only. It is not group therapy or professional treatment for mental health issues. If you believe you are experiencing chronic issues with depression, stress and anxiety, anger, addiction, or other mental health issues you should seek professional help.

Now we will review the spiritual and temporal lessons the Lord had Mormon provide for us in these war chapters.

Spiritual Lessons from the War Chapters (Alma 1-61)

- Repent
- Prepare for attacks on your faith
- Be aware of the nature of Satan's stratagems (see Helaman 3:33-34) (What are stratagems?)
- a plan, scheme, or trick for surprising or deceiving an enemy. any artifice, ruse, or trick devised or used to attain a goal or to gain an advantage over an adversary or competitor
- Overcome fear with Faith in Christ (D&C 6:36)
- Being taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him produces men of truth and soberness. True at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted. (Alma 53:20-21)
- Do not be slow to remember the Lord our God in times of affliction and you will not be taken in the snares of the evil one. (Alma 55:31)
- Do not break covenants and the Lord will strengthen us in our circumstances. We will not suffer by allowing others to fulfill the oaths which they have taken. Alma 56:8
- Console ourselves that those who die in the cause of their country and their God are happy. Alma 56:11
- The Lord will strengthen us beyond our own abilities (physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually) when we are fighting for righteous causes. Alma 56:56
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- We need to remember to put our whole trust in God continually, regardless of what else is happening around us. Alma 57:27
- You may be wounded, but you will not perish when you have exceeding faith in the miraculous power of God. Alma 58:25-26
- Therefore, hold on thy way, and the priesthood shall remain with thee; for their bounds are set, they cannot pass. Thy days are known, and thy years shall not be numbered less; therefore, fear not what man can do, for God shall be with you forever and ever. D&C 122:9
- Be filled with exceeding joy in the knowledge that righteous souls who have been slain have entered into the rest of their God. Alma 57-36
- Pour out our hearts in prayer to God that He will strengthen us and deliver us out of the hands of our enemy. Alma 58:9-10

- God will visit us with assurances that He will deliver us. He speaks peace to our souls and grants us faith, hope, and courage that our deliverance will come from Him. Alma 58:11
- Remember the Lord during times of adversity and prosperity. Alma 62:39-41 and 48-51

Temporal Lessons from the War Chapters

- Military strength without spiritual strength is weakness
- Proper attitude toward War – sorrow to take up arms (Alma 48:22-23)
- Importance of Righteous Leaders (vote in righteous people)
- When the World gets you down, let Christ lift you up (See Moroni 9:25)
- As we look to the Lord, there is no storm that can defeat us and we will not be driven by the fierce winds of the adversary. Alma 26:6
- Understand the value of using stratagems to avoid bloodshed when your liberty is threatened. (Alma 55)
- Stratagems: a plan, scheme, or trick for surprising or deceiving an enemy. any artifice, ruse, or trick devised or used to attain a goal or to gain an advantage over an adversary or competitor
- Only valid reason to go to war is to save people from destruction. Do not delight in murder and bloodshed. (Alma 55)
- Dissensions among ourselves, our families, contending with church leaders...will put us in more dangerous circumstances than any outside influence. Alma 53:9
- Never go to the bargaining table that you aren't prepared to walk away from with nothing. (Alma 54)
- Understand the weaknesses of your enemy. Use stratagem to gain advantage over their wicked designs. Alma 55: 1-16
- Do not delight in murder or bloodshed. Delight in saving people from destruction. Alma 55:19
- Prisoners are easier to guard when they are put to work. Alma 55:25
- Be quick to remember God even (especially) in the midst of trials. Alma 55:31
- When we are depressed in body and in spirit, we need to continue to fight valiantly and maintain our fortifications knowing that help is on the way and we will be preserved. Alma 56:16-19

- Prepare your strongholds instead of attacking the adversary's strongholds. Alma 56:21
- Again, use stratagem to out maneuver the designs of the adversary. Alma 56:30
- What influence did/does your mother have in your life? Alma 56:47-48
- Observe to perform every word of command with exactness and according to your faith it shall be done. Alma 57:20-21
- "Lose lips sink ships" Do not allow your fears to override your judgment and access to critical thinking. Alma 57:31-32
- Once your enemy has experienced your stratagem, they will not fall for it again...be creative and trust in the promptings of the Lord. Alma 58:1
- Do not fall for the stratagems of the enemy (the adversary). Have a plan ahead of time how you will survive when he seems to cut off all your options. Alma 58:6-8
- We can be overcome with fear that the judgments of God will cause the overthrow and utter destruction upon our land. Alma 58:9-10
- Be fixed in our determination that we will conquer our enemies and maintain our lands, possessions, wives, children, and the cause of our liberty. Alma 58:12
- Seek assurance that our government is supporting our efforts to maintain our freedoms. 58:34-36
- Moroni writes to Pahoran..."reproving betimes with sharpness (clarity) when moved upon by the Holy Ghost and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love towards him whom though hast reproved lest he esteem thee to be his enemy. (D&C 122:43-44) Alma 59
- We have a responsibility to lift those around us (ministering as the Savior did) Alma 60:7-14
- We can choose to think the best of others and not be offended. Alma 60

"Through the strengthening power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, you and I can be blessed to avoid and triumph over offense.... In some way and at some time, someone in this Church will do or say something that could be considered offensive.... You and I cannot control the intentions or behavior of other people. However, we do determine how we will act. Please remember that you and I are agents endowed with moral agency, and we

can choose not to be offended.... One of the greatest indicators of our own spiritual maturity is revealed in how we respond to the weaknesses, the inexperience, and the potentially offensive actions of others.

In the grand division of all of God's creations, there are things to act and things to be acted upon (see 2 Nephi 2:13–14). As sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father, we have been blessed with the gift of moral agency, the capacity for independent action and choice. Endowed with agency, you and I are agents, and we primarily are to act and not just be acted upon. To believe that someone or something can make us feel offended, angry, hurt, or bitter diminishes our moral agency and transforms us into objects to be acted upon. As agents, however, you and I have the power to act and to choose how we will respond to an offensive or hurtful situation.” “And Nothing Shall Offend Them” Elder Bednar. <https://youtu.be/2l6jL1XOVtE>

- Cleanse the inner vessel. Alma 60:24
- Those who seek the judgment seat use great flattery (and deceptions) and lead away the hearts of many people. Alma 61:4
- Righteous people do not seek for power, save only to retain the ability to preserve the rights and the liberty of the people...that liberty in which God hath made us free. Alma 61:9
- No desire to shed blood of enemies if they would stay in their own land and not rise up in rebellion and take the sword against us. Alma 61:10-11
- If the Lord commanded it we would subject ourselves to the yoke of bondage if God should command us to...but he has not. So we put our trust in Him and He will deliver us. Alma 61:12-13
- If we cannot resist evil with our words (rebellions and dissensions) let us resist them with our swords that we may preserve our freedom, our faith, our Redeemer and our God. Alma 61:14
- Do not initiate battles...do not go against your enemies unless you are commanded by God to do so. Alma 61:19-20
- Fear not for God will deliver all those who stand fast in that liberty wherewith God hath made them free. Alma 61:21

Of course, the Lord has been telling us for generations how we can prepare for the events leading up to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Repent
- Study (not just read) the scriptures
- Keep the Sabbath Day holy
- Redeem our dead
- Be worthy of a temple recommend
- Attend the temple
- Have a prayer in your heart – always
- Follow the Prophet
- Be self reliant...physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally.
- Go forward without fear. This is my most current blog...
<https://ldsblogs.com/47723/go-forward-without-fear>

I invite you to do your own study and add any insights you find about the spiritual/temporal lessons in the war chapters.