



Type: Magazine Article

---

## The Alma Family (A Book of Mormon Sketch)

Author(s): George Reynolds

Source: *The Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 42, No. 10 (8 March 1880)

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Page(s): 145–147

---

**Abstract:** This series presents a life sketch of the Alma family, many of whom became prophets. The life of Alma the Younger is compared to the Apostle Paul—both were called upon to repent and became great missionaries for the Lord. The prophecies of Alma are among the most numerous, important, and interesting in the Book of Mormon, and his inspired advice to his sons contains many doctrinal matters. Helaman the son of Helaman, grandson of Alma, carried on the work of righteousness in spite of the Gadianton robbers. His son Nephi was a great prophet who paved the way for the visit of Christ in America. Nephi's brother Lehi and Lehi's son Nephi were also great leaders. The eighth part covers Helaman, the son of Helaman.

# THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

*"For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles; these are the beginnings of sorrows."*—MARK xiii, 8.

No. 10, Vol. XLII.

Monday, March 8, 1880.

Price One Penny.

## THE ALMA FAMILY.

(A Book of Mormon Sketch).

BY ELDER GEO. REYNOLDS.

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 131.]

### HELEMAN THE SON OF HELEMAN.

The life of this patriarch is not given with the same detail in the inspired record, as are those of his father, and his illustrious son Nephi. His public life was but a short one compared with theirs, nor were there as many events of overshadowing importance during his reign and ministry, as occurred during theirs. In the year B.C. 53, he was entrusted with the care of the sacred plates by his uncle Shiblon, the son of Alma, and three years later (B.C. 50) he was elected by the Nephite people to be their chief judge, in which office he administered the law with justice and equity until the year B.C. 39, when he died. He had two sons, whom he named after the first fathers of his people—Nephi and Lehi. It was his eldest son, the righteous and faithful Nephi, who succeeded him on the judgment seat, and who also took charge of the sacred plates, and the

other holy things that accompanied them.

The few years that preceded the elevation of Heleman to the judgment seat, were among the most important in Nephite history, for at that time arose that terrible and devilish organization, the Gadianton robbers, who for so long cursed the inhabitants of ancient America, and tended so materially to the ultimate destruction of the Nephite race. In the year B.C. 52, Pahoran, the chief judge, died, which event gave rise to serious contention amongst the Nephite people. Three of his sons, named Pahoran, Pacumeni and Paanchi, were ambitious to fill the exalted position left vacant by their father's death. Each had his adherents and following, but, according to the national law, the matter was decided by the voice of the people, and Pahoran was chosen. Pacumeni assented to the decision of the citizens, but Paanchi attempted to raise a rebellion, for which crime

he was arrested, tried by the law, and condemned to death. Still the more wicked part of the community supported his unlawful claims. These determined to slay Pahoran, which resolve they carried into effect, and the chief judge was slain by an assassin named Kishkumen. This foul murder was committed whilst the chief magistrate was sitting in the judgment seat administering the law, but through the connivance of the murderer's associates in iniquity he escaped. These lawless men bound themselves together by a secret oath and covenant, that they would never divulge who was the murderer of Pahoran, and they swore, with the most horrible oaths, one to another, to conceal each other's crimes, to aid and sustain each other in their villainies, and to carry out the designs and directions of their leaders. Over this band of conspirators and traitors, assassins and robbers, Gadianton stood as the head.

The next year after Pahoran's assassination, the Lamanites invaded the lands of the Nephites. Their descent was sudden, their advance was rapid, their tactics were new. The Nephites everywhere gave way before them. They marched through the centre of the country, ravaging its most populous and richest districts. Before the astonished Nephites could collect their forces, the enemy had assaulted and captured their beautiful and strongly-fortified capital, the city of Zarahemla, on which occasion the chief judge, Pacumeni, was slain. Intoxicated with his uninterrupted successes, the Lamanite General crowded yet further north, neglecting to keep up his line of communication in the rear; as a consequence, he pushed far beyond his base of supplies, was out-generated by the Nephite commander, Moronihah, his forces were utterly routed, he was slain, and but few of the invading host ever returned to gladden the eyes and hearts of their families and friends in the southern land of Nephi. After peace was restored, there was considerable contention amongst the turbulent Nephites as to who should be the next chief judge. Party spirit ran high, but eventually Heleman was chosen

by the voice of the people, the more righteous providentially being still in the majority.

Heleman being a God-fearing, just man, his election was very distasteful to the Godianton band and its sympathizers. They resolved to slay him as they had before slain the younger Pahoran, and place Gadianton on the judgment seat in his stead. To accomplish this, the same vile instrument was chosen—Kishkumen. But the protecting hand of the great Jehovah was over and round about Heleman, and He preserved him from the assassin's knife. A servant of Heleman (possibly a detective commissioned in such times of peril to watch the movements of the dangerous classes,) by disguise became acquainted with the doings of the robber band, and of their intentions towards his master. As Kishkumen was on his way to fulfil his bloody work, this servant, whose name is not recorded, met him, and gave him one of their secret signs. This admitted him into the confidence of the assassin, who explained his errand, and asked to be conducted privately into the judgment hall, where Heleman was then sitting in the performance of his duties. This was agreed upon; the two proceeded to where the murderer expected to find his victim. The strategy of the servant had disarmed suspicions—he was off his guard. At the opportune moment the servant stabbed Kishkumen, and so adroitly did he perform his work, that the robber fell dead without a groan. The servant immediately ran to the judgment hall, and informed Heleman all that he had heard, seen and done. Without delay, orders were issued for the arrest of the band, but its members finding that Kishkumen did not return, and fearing he had miscarried in his unholy work, under the guidance of their leader, fled precipitately into the wilderness by a secret way, and, in the depths of its luxuriant vegetation, hid in a place where they could not be found.

The succeeding years were of peculiar prosperity, though not of great righteousness, amongst the Nephite people. They spread out and colonized in every direction.

Many thousands emigrated to the northern continent, among them great numbers of the Ammonites, who were originally Lamanites. Numerous new cities were built, and old ones repaired; ship building was largely carried on, and the arts and manufactures encouraged. Temples, tabernacles and sanctuaries were erected in great numbers; in fact, the people spread out and covered both continents north and south, east and west. The sacred historian states that he has not recorded one hundredth part of the doings of the people—their wickedness and righteousness, their wars and contentions, their peace and prosperity; but many records were kept upon which the history of these things were engraved, all of which that are necessary for the world's good will be brought to light in Heaven's own time.

The annals of the remainder of Heleman's rule are very short. In the years B.C. 45 and 44, there were

many contentions in the land, but in the latter portion of the succeeding year they measurably ceased, and tens of thousands were baptized unto repentance. So great was the prosperity of the Church at this time, that even the priesthood were surprised thereat, and at the multiplicity of blessings that were poured out upon the people. This happy state of affairs continued until the death of Heleman, though somewhat marred by the increasing pride and vanity that long-continued prosperity had begotten in the hearts of many of the Christians.

Heleman himself was a righteous man: "He did observe to keep the judgments, and the statutes, and the commandments of God; and he did do that which was right in the sight of God continually, and he did walk after the ways of his father, insomuch that he did prosper in the land." So writes the historian of Heleman; what more can be said of any man?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

---

#### PRESENT CONDITION OF JERUSALEM.

---

A Jerusalem correspondent of the *Jewish Chronicle* gives a rather melancholy picture of the present condition of that city. Supposing it would be interesting to our readers, we present an extract from the description. Another reason for its publication is our unqualified faith that, as predicted by the Prophet Joseph Smith, the return of the "remnants" will take place in this generation. Hence, not many years shall pass away before the aspect of the Holy City will be completely changed, assuming something like its former splendor and importance. When that day comes, descriptions like that now presented, of the past desolation, will be instructive reading, as compared with the then existing grandeur of the city of sacred memories:

"Standing on the Mount of Olives, above the Jewish cemetery, we look upon the domes and minarets, and flat-topped roofs of the compact city.

One quarter of its whole space is occupied by the *Haram* or Mosque of Omar, which stands on what was certainly the place of the Temple. In a line with the black dome of the central building is the white dome of the Ashkenazim Synagogue, and near it is the green cupola of the Synagogue of the Hasidim. Not far distant are the Jewish *Pilger-wohnungen* or alms-houses, and, hard by, the Rothschild Hospital can be distinguished. In the centre of the town rises the Church of the Sepulchre, and a relief to the monotony of the numerous domes is afforded by the square towers of the citadel, near the Jaffa gate. Outside this is the new, bright and clean suburb, which includes the houses of the Jewish Building Societies, which bids fair to grow in size, and to prove a great boon to the overcrowded and unhealthy city. On the other side of the valley, not far from the Damascus gate, are visible the Judah Touro Alms-houses