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## Chapter XXII

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**Abstract:** Review of the Mission of the Sons of Mosiah—Its Importance and Great Length—Its Results to Both Races—The Dates of its Leading Occurrences

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persecuted hosts they had left behind. The people, by united voice, gladly welcomed their co-religionists and set apart the land of Jershon as their inheritance. Thither the Ammonites with happy feet repaired, and there they dwelt until the breaking out of war made it desirable that they should remove to the land of Melek, and many thousands in after years emigrated to the land north. Of their future history we shall speak, from time to time, when it connects with that of the Nephites.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

REVIEW OF THE MISSION OF THE SONS OF MOSIAH—ITS IMPORTANCE AND GREAT LENGTH—ITS RESULTS TO BOTH RACES—THE DATES OF ITS LEADING OCCURRENCES.

SO FAR as we can gather from the records, the great mission of Ammon and his brethren to the Lamanites was productive of results new to the history of the Nephites. On many previous occasions dissenters from the latter had gone over to the Lamanites, until that nation consisted of a mixed race. But the Nephite people appear to have been, almost without exception, the literal descendants of the first founders of the monarchy, Nephi, Sam, Jacob, Joseph and Zoram, and of the people of Zarahemla. But now a large body of Lamanites was incorporated in the Nephite nation and became partakers of the liberties accorded to all other citizens. As the history of the two nations proceeds,

the original distinctions of descent become less and less observable, as defections from both people were constantly occurring, so that in process of time a Nephite was not so much a literal descendant of Lehi's greatest son, as one who recognized the Nephite government, was an observer of the law of Moses and a believer in the gospel; while the Lamanite was he who dwelt in the dominions of that people, rejected the law and the gospel, and adopted the false traditions of that race.

The mission of Ammon and his brethren was not only important but it was of great length. They left Zarahemla in the first year of the Judges (B. C. 91) and returned in the fourteenth (B. C. 78). It seems altogether probable that the conversion of king Lamoni took place in the first year of their ministry, unless Ammon was detained in prison a lengthened period before he was brought before the king (for which suggestion we find no warrant), as it was only the third day of Ammon's service when his conflict occurred with the cattle thieves at the waters of Sebus. The conversion of Lamoni was the immediate result. Yet we judge that the establishment and organization of the church in the land of Ishmael was a work of considerable time. We are strengthened in this opinion by the account of the labors performed by Aaron and others during this same period.

In the fifth year of the Nephite Judges (B. C. 87) the Lamanites invaded Zarahemla and were disastrously defeated, about which time we suggest Aaron and his fellows were confined in prison in the land of Middoni, and the results of the war would measurably account for the great cruelty with which they were treated by the exasperated Lamanites, as well as for

the ferocity of the old king when he found his son in the company of the hated Nephite. After the incidents of that eventful meeting the king was not in a frame of mind to go to war with the Nephites; the generous words and magnanimous conduct of Ammon had produced such a deep influence, that though not yet converted, his heart had experienced a great change. Probably a year or two passed before Aaron and his fellow laborers brought him to a full knowledge of the true plan of redemption. For these reasons we consider the meeting of Lamoni and his father did not take place earlier than B. C. 87. The old king's conversion was followed by the issuance of his proclamation of protection and unqualified religious liberty to the Nephite missionaries and to all his subjects; of which proclamation Aaron and his co-laborers took the fullest benefit by preaching from city to city throughout the wide Lamanite territory, establishing churches and ordaining officers therein. This labor occupied some years. As the church grew the spirit of rebellion developed amongst the unconverted, until they declared open war against the king, and massacred their gospel-believing brethren.

Immediately after the massacre of the 1005 Anti-Nephi-Lehies the angry Lamanites broke out in war with the Nephites, under the idea that the latter were the cause of their internal troubles. They made a sudden incursion into the land of Zarahemla and destroyed the city of Ammonihah, which event took place in the eleventh year of the Judges (B. C. 81), and after that they had many battles with the Nephites, in which they were driven and slain. After their return from this inglorious campaign they wreaked

their vengeance on their unoffending brethren, and again commenced to massacre them, which murders, we suggest, took place during the thirteenth year of the reign of the Judges (B. C. 79), as in the year following the whole of the believing Lamanites migrated to the land of Jershon, as before narrated (B. C. 78). These dates are simply suggestive as far as the history of the mission is concerned, but those that relate to the Nephites are distinctly stated in the annals of that people.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DAYS OF THE JUDGES—THEIR NAMES AND REIGNS—  
THE HERESY OF NEHOR—HE SLAYS GIDEON AND IS  
EXECUTED—AMLICI'S REBELLION—THE BATTLE OF  
AMNIHU—THE CONFLICT AT THE CROSSING OF THE  
SIDON—A THIRD BATTLE.

FOR A period of about one hundred and twenty years succeeding the death of king Mosiah, the Nephite commonwealth was governed by judges. These were chosen by the united voice of the people, as provided in the constitution framed under Divine inspiration by the last king, and acknowledged as the supreme law of the nation, through its unanimous acceptance as such, by the entire people. At the end of this period the republic was overthrown through the great wickedness of all classes of the community, and the people divided themselves into numerous independent tribes.

It is not actually certain that the Book of Mormon