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## Chapter LXXVI

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**Abstract:** Nephite Apostates—The Order of Nehor—Amalekites—Amalickiahites—Amulonites—Abinadi's Prophecy—The Gadiantons

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nal Father, Only Begotten of the Father, Creator, 'The Eternal Father of Heaven and Earth, King, King of Heaven, Heavenly King, King of all the Earth, God of Israel, God of the whole Earth, Most High God, Lord Omnipotent, Lord God Omnipotent, Mighty God, Holy One, Holy One of Israel, Mighty One of Jacob, Wonderful Counsellor, Prince of Peace, and several others.

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## CHAPTER LXXVI.

NEPHITE APOSTATES—THE ORDER OF NEHOR—AMALEKITES  
— AMALICKIAHITES—AMULONITES—ABINADI'S PROPHECY—THE GADIANTONS.

NO PEOPLE seem to have been more given to apostasy from the truths of the gospel than were the Nephites in certain periods of their history. In the historical portions of this work we have drawn attentions to the defections of Nehor, Amlici, Korihor, Zoram and others; therefore we need not go over that ground again. Yet there is one thing that stands out very prominently in the annals of all these backslidings. It is that the heresies of Nehor, the murderer of Gideon, were more or less adopted by succeeding false teachers, and that those who embraced his teachings and became associated therewith were always among the most bitter and vehement, the most bloodthirsty and hardened of all the enemies of the church of God. They are often spoken of as being after the order of

Nehor; and we imagine to belong to that order required the Nephite to conform to certain unholy covenants and make certain vicious and immoral paths. Many, if not all, of the Amlicites, Amalekites, Amulonites, Ammonihahites and Zoramites belonged to this iniquitous order.

Of the apostate sects, of whom we have previously said but little, the most prominent were the Amulonites and Amalekites.

**AMALEKITES:** A sect of Nephite apostates whose origin is not given. Many of them were after the order of Nehor. Very early in the days of the republic they had affiliated with the Lamanites and with them built a large city, not far from the waters of Mormon, which they called Jerusalem. They were exceedingly crafty and hardhearted; and in all the ministrations of the sons of Mosiah among them only one was converted. They led in the massacres of the Christian Lamanites or people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi; and in later years the Lamanite generals were in the habit of placing them in high command in their armies because of their greater force of character than the real descendants of Laman, their intense hatred to their former brethren, and their more wicked and murderous disposition. In the sacred record they are generally associated with the Zoramites and Amulonites.

**AMALICKIAHITES:** The followers of Amalickiah in his efforts to destroy the church, to uproot the Nephite commonwealth and establish a monarchy in its stead. Their leader, finding that they were not as numerous as those who wished to maintain the republic, and that many of them doubted the justness of their cause, led those who would follow him towards

the land of Nephi, with the intention of joining the Lamanites. Moroni, the general of the Nephites, by rapid marches, reached the wilderness, where he intercepted them in their flight, when Amalickiah and a few others escaped to the Lamanites, while the great majority were taken prisoners and carried back to Zarahemla. The Amalickiahites were then given the opportunity to make covenant to sustain the cause of liberty or be put to death. There were but very few who denied the covenant of freedom.

AMULONITES: The descendants of Amulon and his associates, the corrupt priests of king Noah. They were Nephites on their fathers' side and Lamanites on their mothers', but by association and education were of the latter race. Many of them however were displeased with the conduct of their fathers, and took upon them the name of Nephites, and were considered among that people ever after. Of those who remained Amulonites, many became followers of Nehor, and were scattered in the lands of Amulon, Helam and Jerusalem, all of which appear to have been limited districts in the same region of country. In latter years the sons of Mosiah and their fellow-missionaries preached to them, but not one repented and received the gospel message; to the contrary, they became leaders in the persecutions carried on against the suffering people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi, and were those who, with the Amalickites, slew the greater number of that unoffending people who suffered martyrdom. In the succeeding war with the Nephites (B. C. 81), when Ammonihah was destroyed, nearly all the Amulonites were killed in the battle in which Zoram, the Nephite general, defeated the Lamanites. The remainder of

the Amulonites fled into the east wilderness, where they usurped power over the people of Laman, and in their bitter hatred to the truth caused many of the latter to be burned to death because of their belief in the gospel. These outrages aroused the Lamanites and they in turn began to hunt the Amulonites and to put them to death. This was in fulfilment of the words of Abinadi, who, as he suffered martyrdom by fire at the hands of Amulon and his associates, told them, What ye shall do unto me, shall be a type of things to come, by which he meant that many should suffer death by fire as he had suffered.

And he said unto the priests of Noah, that their seed should cause many to be put to death, in the like manner as he was, and that they should be scattered abroad and slain, even as a sheep having no shepherd is driven and slain by wild beasts; and now behold, these words were verified, for they were driven by the Lamanites, and they were hunted, and they were smitten.

**GADIANTONS:** Of all the factions that separated themselves from the Nephites none worked so much injury to that people as did the bands of Gadianton robbers. The very fact of their organization shews the deplorable condition of Nephite society, while their continuance and growth proclaims yet more loudly and emphatically how debased the community had become.

The Gadiantons were at first (B. C. 52) apparently a band of robbers and murderers bound together by the most horrible oaths of secrecy and satanic covenants to aid and shield each other in whatever sins and iniquities they might commit. These covenants did not originate with Gadianton or any of this crew. They

were as old as the days of Cain, into whose ear the Son of Perdition whispered these bloodthirsty and infernal suggestions. These same secret societies flourished among the Antediluvians; and had place with the Jaredites and other peoples of antiquity. In the end they invariably wrought ruin and destruction wherever they found a foothold. To their abominations can be traced the fall and extinction of both the Jaredite and Nephite races.

As time went on, the Gadiantons among the Nephites aspired to rule the republic. When, by their combinations, they could not carry their points at the elections, they would murder, or attempt to murder, any judge or other officer who was distasteful to them, and place a more acceptable man in his seat. So fell more than one of the Nephite chief judges. But they frequently had no need to do this, for as the people increased in iniquity they could easily carry the majority or the voice of the people with them. In this way several of their number were elected to the chief judgeship.

After the times of the conversion of the Lamanites by Lehi and Nephi (B. C. 30) the Gadianton robbers took their place in the history of ancient America. The divisions then became the righteous Nephites and Lamanites on one side, and the Gadiantons on the other. And, strange as it may appear, these robber bands received greater encouragement and attained to greater power among the Nephites than among the Lamanites; but the fact is, that at that era the Lamanites were a growing race, while the Nephites were a decaying one.

Many wars ensued between these two divisions, ending sometimes in the temporary suppression of the

robbers, as in the year B. C. 17. But they soon reappeared, as they did five years after the instance here mentioned (B. C. 12). The most momentous of all these wars was the one that was waged during the earthly life of our Savior. It virtually commenced in the second year of his mortal existence and continued with slight intermissions until the twenty-first. So powerful and arrogant had the robbers grown in that age that Giddianhi their leader, in A. C. 16, wrote an epistle to Lachoneus, the chief judge, calling upon the Nephites to submit themselves to the robbers and their ways; to accept their oaths and covenants; and in all things become like unto them. The presumption of the robber chief does not appear to have been without foundation, for so desperate had the condition of the people become that Lachoneus devised and carried out the stupendous movement of gathering them all, both Nephites and Lamanites, to one land, where they would be safe by consolidation, and be able to wear out the robbers by masterly inactivity. In this he succeeded, and the robber bands were destroyed by privation, famine and the sword.

After the days of Jesus the Gadiantons again appeared when iniquity began to prevail; and by the year A. C. 300 they had spread over all the land. To their baneful influence may be attributed many of the atrocities and abominations that disgraced the last wars between the Nephites and Lamanites.

At certain periods of their history the Jaredites, Lamanites and Nephites were all idolaters. The Lamanites, as early as the days of Enos, are represented as bowing down to idols. This statement is repeated with regard to those of the times of Zeniff

and of Ammon. The Nephites are sometimes called an idolatrous people, when the inference seems to be that they worshiped their gold and silver and the vain things of this world. On the other hand, it appears that some of them were actual worshipers of idols. Such a charge is plainly made against the Zoramites in the land of Antionum; and we are of the opinion that they were not the only ones.

In later times, during the final series of wars between the Nephites and Lamanites, the latter were idolaters, and had descended so far in savagery as to offer human sacrifices. They were in the habit of offering up in this way the Nephite women and children they captured in war. Special mention is made of this fact at the taking of the cities of Desolation and Boaz.

Still more horrible was the fate of some of the Lamanite women who fell into the hands of the Nephites; and it would seem that before the war was finished both peoples had sunk to the degradation of eating human flesh. Well might the prophet say: There never had been so great wickedness among all the children of Lehi, nor even among all the house of Israel, according to the words of the Lord, as were among this people.

