

LAMANITES WAGE WAR UPON LIMHI AND HIS PEOPLE

(Mosiah 9:108-139)

V108-112

The priests of Noah kidnap 24 Lamanite "daughters", because they are afraid to return to their wives. Mormon doesn't overtly address the underlying issue of the priest's depravity, he only hints at it saying they were too cowardly to return to their wives for fear of being killed by the townspeople. In other words, they were driven by lust to watch, and wait, and kidnap these girls.

V113-119

When the Lamanites discover 24 of their daughters to missing, they assume they were abducted by Limhi's people. The Lamanites prepare for attack, but Limhi is apprized of their attack by virtue of their tower. When the Lamanites approach his people attack the Lamanites viciously.

The element of surprise in conjunction with the ability to attack the flank and rear of the Lamanites was probably a significant factor in the present Nephite success in the conflict. Note in v. 19-20 Gideon states they will be wiped out if the Lamanites come against them in force. Once they have lost the element of surprise and the Lamanites can regroup, this small group of Nephites hasn't got a chance.

"Like dragons", the term "dragon" appears commonly in the KJV OT and typically refers to some kind of venomous snake or lizard, (see Deuteronomy. 32:33, Psalms 91:13, Isaiah 13:22). From the context, one would assume the imagery is intended to convey soldiers who inflict death at every quick strike they make, just as a poisonous serpent would strike and kill.

V120-127

After the initial surprise attack, the Lamanites retreat to regroup. Among the dead and wounded they find the Lamanite king. They bring him up and ask him why they attacked; he tells them it is because they kidnaped their daughters. Limhi insists it was no plot of theirs and says whoever did it will die.

V128-134

When Gideon gets word of the cause of the Lamanite attack he realizes what must have happened, it must have been Noah's priests. He then encourages Limhi to have the king of the Lamanites stop the conflict because the words of Abinadi are about to be fulfilled in their being annihilated if they don't.

"Gideon...the kings captain", this is the first time Gideon's status is explicitly identified. Whether he was Noah's captain as well is debatable.

The implicit message here is that if the Lamanites come against them again they will be annihilated as predicted by Abinadi earlier. Gideon points out that all of his other predictions have been fulfilled, and this one will, too, if they don't choose slavery instead of death.

V135-139

Limhi explains to the king what probably happened concerning the Lamanite daughters (v. 136), so the king promises to stop the conflict (v. 137-138). The king and the Nephites then confront the army without any weapons (v. 137) resulting in a halt to the Lamanite attack, and they subsequently return to their own lands (v. 139).