

ESCAPE FROM THE LAMANITE BONDAGE

(Mosiah 10)

The people of Limhi had a royal form of government not a democratic one. Still, we see that Limhi was interested in the voice of the people. The effort to break free from the bondage of the Lamanites would require the combined energies of all the people. This effort was an early form of democracy in action.

V1-4

There is no way out of their bondage except to flee. They have tried military might three times, and each has resulted in defeat and the dreadful loss of men. The city now finds itself with a smaller population, and a much-diminished population of fighting men. Military might is simply no longer an option. There is nothing to negotiate, and all negotiation favors the Lamanites. There is only escape.

V5-9

Gideon's knowledge of the drunkenness of the Lamanites tells us that Gideon has had spies in the field. He would need to know the state of the various Lamanite encampments. Mesoamerican cultures appear to have had a long-time difficulty with the excesses of alcohol.

V10-13

This plan has two parts. The first is to assure an even more drunken Lamanite guard, and the second is to use the "secret pass." The term "secret" certainly presupposes that it was little known, and certainly unknown to the Lamanites. The plan therefore was to diminish the Lamanite awareness, and then to escape from an unexpected outlet. We may be assured that the Lamanite camp was created to guard any obvious path out of the land. To be effective, this plan relied upon the Lamanite ignorance of the secret pass.

Upon arrival in Zarahemla, Limhi recognizes Mosiah's superior right to rule, and he and his people become subjects of Mosiah. This would be logical in that Zarahemla would have the greater population, the greater claim to rule, and the recognition that Zarahemla was saving the Limhites.

V14-19

The naming of this record as the record of Zeniff, even though it encompassed the reign of three different kings, is analogous to the situation suggested for the Book of Lehi. The official lineage record would be named for the lineage ancestor, and the name of the "ancestor book" would not be changed until a change in dynasty.

While Mosiah received the Limhites "with joy," they were also certain to have been a difficult task of integration. Since they were an entire community come complete with their own structures and experiences, they would probably remain together. Thus Mosiah is faced with finding a way to include a new city inside his jurisdiction. The Limhites would therefore probably be sent to add to a small population, or to begin a new location in the land of Zarahemla, but not specifically in the city of Zarahemla.