



The Stripling Warriors



It was in about the year 65 B.C. that a great Book of Mormon Prophet named Helaman fought and won a ferocious battle against the Lamanites using a small army of young men called the stripling warriors.

A few years before, many Lamanites had been converted to the church by another great prophet whose name was Ammon. These humble people became known as the Anti-Nephi-Lehies and together they vowed that they would never again raise their weapons against their brothers. They buried all their swords and arrows and lived in peace for twenty-six years.

With so much unrest in the land which was caused by the wicked Lamanites, the Anti-Nephi-Lehies were very concerned that they were not doing their part in protecting the people of the church and the land and asked Helaman if they should break the oath they had previously made. The Prophet told them to hold strong to their vow. The Lord would strengthen them and would not cause them to suffer because of their commitment to living peacefully. A miracle happened.

Two thousand sons of the Anti-Nephi-Lehies came, taking Helaman as their leader. They said that they could fight against their enemies, as they did not take the oath their parents had taken.

Helaman marched at the head of his young army to the city of Judea to assist Antipus, who was the leader of the people in that part of the land. Antipus was overjoyed at the arrival of the young men, as his army had been reduced greatly because the wicked Lamanites had killed so many. The Lamanite armies had taken over the cities of Manti, Zeezrom, Cumeni and Antiparah. Antipus and his army were trying to strengthen the city of Judea so that it would not fall.

Antipus and his army were very depressed, both spiritually and physically because they had been fighting during the day and working to fortify the city by night. They had suffered great afflictions of every kind. You can imagine that Antipus and his people were so happy to see Helaman and his little army! Helaman called his warriors his "sons," because he had such great love for them and they were so young.

When Ammoron, the Lamanite leader, saw that the city had been strengthened by Helaman's sons, he backed off and waited. During the next year, the city of Judea was prepared for defense. Other Nephite armies joined the army of Antipus and some of the fathers of the sons of Helaman even brought food to the city. This caused Ammoron to become restless, so he sent spies to watch the city of Judea. Helaman and Antipus devised a strategy to fool the Lamanites.

Helaman took his two thousand stripling warriors and marched as if they were taking supplies to

a neighboring city just beyond Antiparah, the city where the strongest and largest army of the Lamanites lived. When Ammaron's spies returned and warned the Lamanites, they marched against Helaman and his sons.

The stripling warriors fled northward, leading away the great Lamanite army. At the same time, Antipus began marching with his army after the Lamanites. He hoped that the two armies could surround them, but night came and all the armies made camps and slept.

At dawn, Helaman marched his army into the wilderness, still followed by the Lamanite army, who were being followed by Antipus and his army. They marched all day again, and then slept. When they awakened in the morning, the Lamanite army was upon them and they fled again. But soon, the Lamanites fell back and Helaman wondered if Antipus had caught up with them and attacked. or if the Lamanites were planning some kind of surprise that would catch them in a trap. He knew that he would have to prepare his little army to attack.

When Helaman asked the young men if they would go against the Lamanites to battle, their reply was: "Father, behold our God is with us, and he will not suffer that we should fall; then let us go forth; we would not slay our brethren if they would let us alone; therefore let us go, lest they should overpower the army of Antipus."

"Now they never had fought, yet they did not fear death; and they did think more upon the liberty of their fathers than they did upon their lives; yea, they had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them." And they did not doubt that their mothers knew it.

Helaman returned with his two thousand and found that the army of Antipus had overtaken them and a terrible battle was raging. Antipus and all of the leaders had been killed and the Nephite army was weary and confused. This had caused the Lamanite army to gain confidence and fight even harder, but when Helaman and his little army came upon them, the Lamanites turned their attack on them. The army of Helaman fought with great courage as the remaining army of Antipus surrounded the Lamanites from the rear and the Lamanites surrendered.

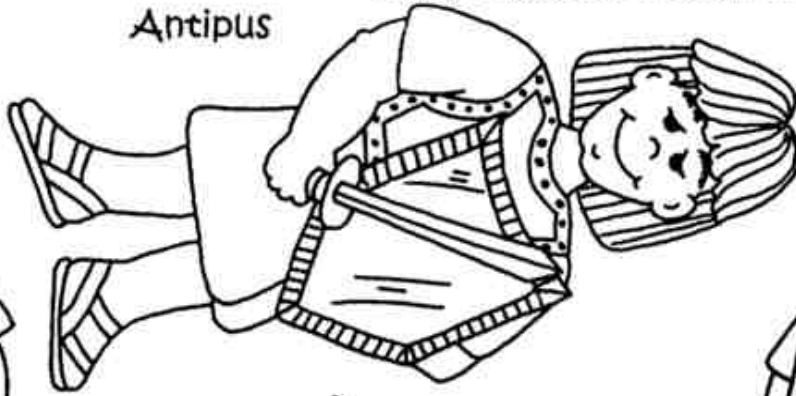
When the battle was over, Helaman hurriedly counted his men, fearing that many of them had been killed, but to his great joy, not one of the young men had fallen to the earth. "They had fought as if with the strength of God yea, never were men known to have fought with such miraculous strength; and with such mighty power did they fall upon the Lamanites, that they did frighten them; and for this cause did the Lamanites deliver themselves up as prisoners of war."

What great mothers the stripling warriors had! They had taught their sons of God, that having great faith in Him would save them. The Sons of Helaman were obedient to their mothers in exercising that great faith, and the Lord spared all of them. What a miracle!

DISCUSSION:

- How can we show the Lord that we have this kind of faith in Him?
- Do we live our lives having this kind of faith?
- What can we do to learn this kind of faith?

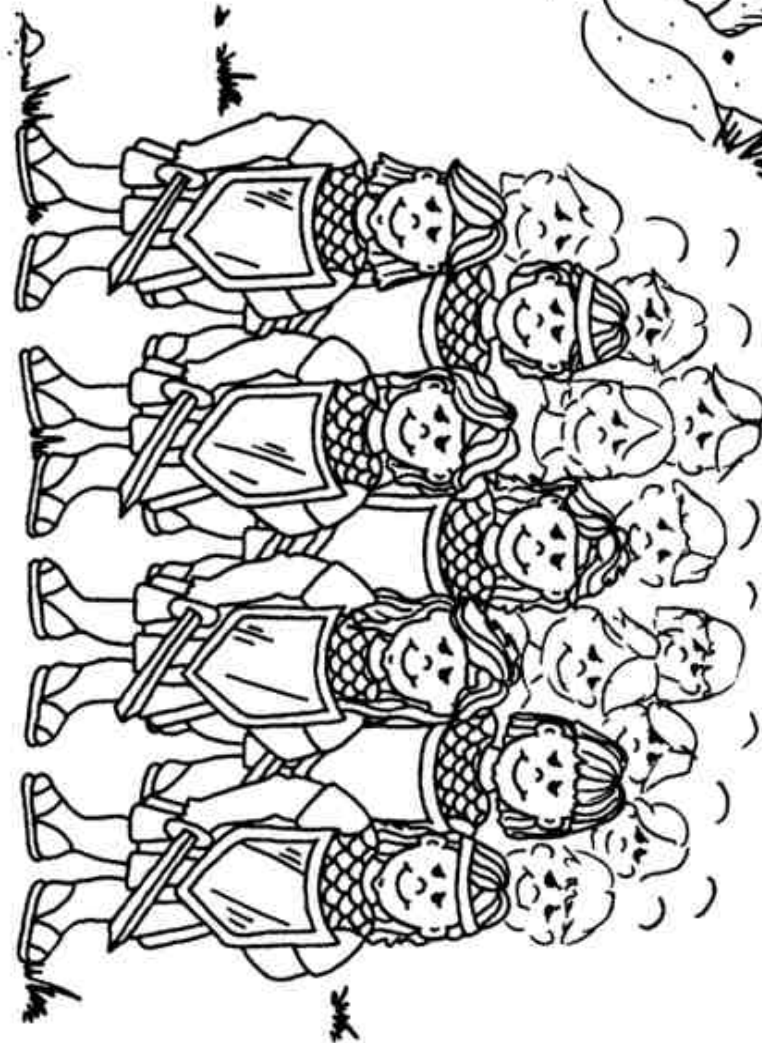
Antipus



Ammaron



Helaman



Stripling Warriors



Stripling warrior + mother