

Helaman's "Scouts"

by Donna Orme

The prophet Mormon, seeing our day and wanting to write those things which would be of the greatest worth to us, included a detailed account of the sons of Helaman. Did he hope that we would see the similarities between Helaman's "young men" and our Eagle Scouts today? Is it a mere coincidence that the sons of Helaman manifest all of the 18 attributes taught in our modern-day scouting program? Take a moment now, and compare our Eagle Scout sons of today, with the sons of Helaman in 66 to 60 B.C. and you be the judge.

Scout Law

A Scout is...

TRUSTWORTHY

A Scout tells the truth. He keeps his promises. Honesty is a part of his code of conduct. People can always depend on him. "...they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever things they were entrusted...they were men of truth..." (Alma 53:20-21)

LOYAL

A Scout is true to his family, friends, Scout leaders, school, nation and world community. "...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 rehearsed unto me the words of their mothers, saying: We do not doubt our mothers knew it." (Alma 56:47-48)

HELPFUL

A Scout is concerned about other people. He willingly volunteers to help others without expecting payment or reward. "...they did assemble themselves together at this time...and they entered into a covenant to fight for the liberty of the Nephites, yea, to protect the land unto the laying down of their lives...to protect the Nephites and themselves from bondage." (Alma 53:16- 17)

FRIENDLY

A Scout is a friend to all. He is a brother to other Scouts. He seeks to understand others. He respects those with ideas and customs that are different than his own. "...sixty of the sons of the Ammonites who had come to join their brethren...and to our great astonishment, and also the joy of our whole army, there was not one soul of them who did perish." (Alma 57:6,25)

COURTEOUS

A Scout is polite to everyone regardless of age or position. He knows that good manners make it easier for people to get along together. "For as I had ever called them my sons...they said unto me: Father... (Alma 56:46)

KIND

A Scout understands there is strength in being gentle. He treats others as he wants to be treated. He does not harm or kill anything without reason. "...we would not slay our brethren if they would let us alone. (Alma 56:46)

OBEDIENT

A Scout follows the rules of his family, school, and troop. He obeys the laws of his community and country. If he thinks these rules and laws are unfair, he tries to have them changed in an orderly manner rather than disobey them. "...they did obey and observe to perform every word of command with exactness." (Alma 57:21)

CHEERFUL

A Scout looks for the bright side of life. He cheerfully does tasks that come his way. He tries to make others happy. "...they did not fear death...they had been taught by their mothers that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them." (Alma 56:47)

THRIFTY

A Scout works to pay his way and to help others. He saves for the future. He protects and conserves natural resources. He carefully uses time and property. He can live very well with no more possessions than the clothes he is wearing and the gear in his pack. He volunteers his time and energy, and shares them with others. "...as they never had hitherto been a disadvantage to the Nephites, they became now at this period of time also a great support; for they took their weapons of war...there was brought unto us many provisions from the fathers of those my two thousand sons...we did wait to receive provisions and strength...we did wait in these difficult circumstances for the space of many months, even until we were about to perish for the want of food." (Alma 53:19;56:27; 58:4-7)

BRAVE

A Scout can face danger even if he is afraid. He has the courage to stand for what he thinks is right even if others laugh at him or threaten him. "...they were exceedingly valiant for courage...never had I (Helaman) seen so great courage, nay, not amongst all the Nephites...Now, they never had fought, yet they did not fear death...fought most desperately; yea, they were firm before the Lamanites, and did administer death unto all those who opposed them...were firm and undaunted...we did go forth with all our might..." (Alma 53:20; 56:45,47; 57:19,20; 59:13)

CLEAN

A Scout keeps his body and mind fit and clean. He goes around with those who believe in living by these same ideals. He helps keep his home and community clean. "...and they would that Helaman should be their leader...they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity...for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him...and their minds are firm..." (Alma 53:19-21; 57:27)

REVERENT

A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others. "...they had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, God would deliver them...and even according to their faith it was done unto them...their preservation was astonishing...and we do justly ascribe it to the miraculous power of God, because of their exceeding faith in that which they had been taught to believe that there was a just God, and whosoever did not doubt, that they should be preserved by his marvelous power...and they do put their trust in God continually...we did pour out our souls in prayer to God...the Lord has supported them, yea, and kept them from falling by the sword, insomuch that even one soul hasnot been slain...we trust God will deliver us, no withstanding the weakness of our armies..." (Alma 56:47; 57:21,26,27;58:10,11,39,40;59:37)

Scout Motto:

"Be Prepared"

A Scout prepares for whatever comes his way by learning all he can. He keeps himself strong, healthy, and ready to meet the challenges of life. "And they were all young men, and they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity...and their faith is strong in the prophecies concerning that which is to come...Helaman and his men, have suffered exceedingly great sufferings; yea, even hunger, thirst, and fatigue, and all manner of afflictions of every kind..." (Alma 53:20; 58:40; 60:3)

Scout Slogan:

"Do a good turn daily"

"(66 B.C.) in the twenty and sixth year, I Helaman, did march at the head of these two thousand young men...(63 B.C.) this is the twenty and ninth year...And those sons of the people of Ammon...are with me...in the latter-end...(62 B.C.) in the thirtieth year...strengthen Helaman, or the armies of Helaman...(60 B.C.) And thus ended the thirty and first year of the reign of the judges...and thus they had had wars..." (Alma 56:9;8:38,39; 59:1,3; 62:39) (Note: The Sons of Helaman served approximately 5-6 years.)

Scout Oath:

**On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.**

Duty to God -

"for they had been taught to keep the commandments of God and to walk uprightly before him...and they do put their trust in God continually...they are strict to remember the Lord their God from day to day; yea, they do observe to keep his statutes, and his judgments and his commandments continually..." (Alma 53:21;57:27; 58:40)

Duty to Country-

"...entered into a covenant and took their weapons of war to defend their country..." (Alma 53:18)

Obey the Scout Law-

(See "Scout Law")

Help Other People at All Times-

"they would fight in all cases to protect the Nephites and themselves from bondage." (Alma 53:17)

Physically Strong-

"and they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity...never were men known to have fought with such miraculous strength; and with such mighty power did they fall upon the Lamanites..." (Alma 53:20; 56:56)

Mentally Awake-

"and their minds are firm...they are strict to remember the Lord their God from day to day..and their faith is strong in the prophecies concerning that which is to come." (Alma 57:27;58:40)

Morally Straight-

"Yea, they were men of truth and soberness..." (Alma 53:21)

The sons of Helaman were men of truth and righteousness. They were committed to the defense of their country, were fearless in the face of death, and courageous in battle. They were selfless, and men of great faith and God rewarded their faith with amazing protection, as none of them died in the many battles they fought in.

- NOTES -

"Stripling Warrior" - this title is not mentioned in the Book of Mormon. Instead, this is the title Arnold Friberg gave to his painting. However, "stripling Ammonites" is mentioned in Alma 56:57.

Helaman - was a prophet and a military commander. Helaman's grandfather Alma was also a prophet. Helaman led his sons from 66 B.C. to 60 B.C. He died about 4 years after the wars were over in 57 B.C., and was probably less than 40 years old. (Alma the Younger spoke to his oldest son Helaman in 74 B.C. and said, "thou art in thy youth..." Alma 36:3) Helaman's son later wrote the Book of Helaman.

"Young men" - Helaman called his sons "young men" (Alma 53:20). Today, we often call our Aaronic Priesthood boys "young men." Alma 56:46 "for they were all of them very young" Alma 53:20 "and they were all young men" Alma 57:27 "they are young" Alma 56:30 "my little sons"

Mothers of the sons of Helaman - most likely taught their young sons an incredible, faith-promoting story one which would soon be repeated in their own lives. A battle was fought at the city of Noah about 72 B.C., twelve years before the sons of Helaman were organized. In that battle, more than 1,000 Lamanites, including all of their chief captains, had been killed. However, the Nephite army, led by Lehi, did not lose a single man, and only about 50 of the Nephites were wounded. (Alma 49:23) Twelve years later (64 B.C.), these young boys, now considered to be "young men," would go to war, protected with the shield of faith which was firmly planted by their mothers.

I have a desire to share the above comparison with anyone who might benefit from this research. Please feel free to use this analysis to bless the scouting program in any way that you desire and please don't acknowledge it as my work, as it really isn't. The inspiration came from the Lord who knew this long before I did.