



FROM THE FIELD

# AARON, AMMON, AND ME

BY LESLIE A. REES



*We all had struggles in our missionary work, but with Christ on our side, we could do all things.*

It was early in the morning, and I sat in our small apartment trying to study. I had been serving as a missionary in Atlanta, Georgia, for the past six months. The first few months of my mission had been good, but that morning I felt hopeless and discouraged. I had been transferred to a hard area, and we were not teaching many people. We would go from door to door, day after day, but with little success.

As I tried to read my scriptures, my mind wandered. “Why do I have to serve in this area?” “Why is it so hard?” “What are we doing wrong?” There were so many questions going through my mind, but I did not know the answers. I only knew that I was ready to quit.

I sighed and tried to return to my studies, but it was no use. “What’s the point?” I thought. “There doesn’t seem to be anyone to teach in this area anyway.”

In desperation I knelt and began to pray. I had read in the scriptures about crying to God, but I did not really understand what it meant until that moment. I prayed hard and fervently, pouring out my heart. I asked God to help me get through my mission and to help us have success. I asked Him to help me so I would not be discouraged and to give me the strength to go on. I asked Him to help me study, because I knew I could gain something from the passages of scripture I was trying to read.

I closed my prayer and tried to read again. This time the scriptures opened up to me, and I felt intrigued by the story I was reading. It was in Alma 26. I realized the story was about missionary work. Aaron and Ammon were missionaries who had challenges that were more severe than what I was experiencing. They were put in prison, beaten,

laughed at, threatened with their lives, and condemned for their beliefs. Their faith was tried also. They did not give up. Instead, they were faithful and strong through all their trials. I then realized that if Ammon and Aaron could endure all their trials, then I could endure mine too.

I read more of the story and saw the blessings that Ammon and Aaron received. They saw thousands of people experience a change of heart, repent, and be baptized. Their trials eventually brought them indescribable joy.

When I finished reading the chapter, I noticed a plaque that hung on the wall above our desk. It read, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13). I had never really noticed that plaque until then. Reading the verse left me with a wonderful feeling. Christ was my strength because He knew what I was going through. He suffered all things. He even knew what it was like to be a discouraged, frightened young missionary serving in Georgia.

After I went through the trials, I did see the blessings. We were teaching one woman who was truly prepared to receive the gospel. She told us she wanted to be baptized. I grew to love her as a daughter of God, and when I saw her baptism, I felt the same joy that Aaron and Ammon felt—pure, indescribable joy.

Throughout my mission I saw many others come into the gospel. I saw miracles. I never forgot that scripture: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Whenever I felt discouraged or afraid, I would think about that scripture and remember that Christ was my strength and that He would not leave me alone. I knew that with Christ on my side as my strength, I could do all things. **NE**