

May 27–June 2: Mosiah 25–28, “They Were Called the People of God”

The people with king Limhi (who were in the land of Nephi) and the people with Alma had been freed by the hand of the Lord from their captures and returned to Zarahemla. King Mosiah caused their records to be read to all the Nephites in Zarahemla.

Alma Organizes the Church

Alma becomes the Chief Priest, organizes a church, baptizes the people of Limhi, and ordains priests and teachers over every congregation.

Mosiah 25:19-23

19 And it came to pass that king Mosiah granted unto Alma that he might establish churches throughout all the land of Zarahemla; and gave him power to ordain priests and teachers over every church.

20 Now this was done because there were so many people that they could not all be governed by one teacher; neither could they all hear the word of God in one assembly;

21 Therefore they did assemble themselves together in different bodies, being called churches; every church having their priests and their teachers, and every priest preaching the word according as it was delivered to him by the mouth of Alma.

22 And thus, notwithstanding there being many churches they were all one church, yea, even the church of God; for there was nothing preached in all the churches except it were repentance and faith in God.

23 And now there were seven churches in the land of Zarahemla. And it came to pass that whosoever were desirous to take upon them the name of Christ, or of God, they did join the churches of God;

What made it possible for them to be “all one church” even though they assembled together in different congregations?

(every priest preaching the word according as it was delivered to him by the mouth of Alma
there was nothing preached in all the churches except it were repentance and faith in God)

Lauri Hlavaty

“The Church is the same wherever you go! I grew up hearing this from returning vacationers and from missionaries reporting their missions. And I understood what they meant.... They meant the gospel felt the same wherever they went. This resulted from the presence of the Holy Spirit, which is the universal way we recognize the things of God. It's the same when you learn something new or see something from a new slant, and suddenly it all makes sense. You know it's right, because it feels right and is consistent with other glimpses of truth that you've had.” (Book of Mormon Symposium Series, 1988, pg. 105)

A number of the rising generation did not understand or believe the words of king Benjamin

Mosiah 26:1-4

1 Now it came to pass that there were many of the rising generation that could not understand the words of king Benjamin, being little children at the time he spake unto his people; and they did not believe the tradition of their fathers.

2 They did not believe what had been said concerning the resurrection of the dead, neither did they believe concerning the coming of Christ.

3 And now because of their unbelief they could not understand the word of God; and their hearts were hardened.

4 And they would not be baptized; neither would they join the church. And they were a separate people as to their faith, and remained so ever after, even in their carnal and sinful state; for they would not call upon the Lord their God.

What was it that kept the rising generation from understanding the words of king Benjamin?

(because of their unbelief they could not understand
remained... in their carnal and sinful state; for they would not call upon the Lord)

Dieter F. Uchtdorf

“Spiritual darkness can draw a veil of forgetfulness around even those who once walked in the light and rejoiced in the Lord.... In the days of Alma there were many who struggled to accept spiritual things, and ‘because of their unbelief,, God’s light and truth could not enter their souls ‘and their hearts were hardened.’” (CR, Oct. 2017)

Alma prays to the Lord concerning members who sinned and sought to destroy the church

Mosiah 26:6,13

6 For it came to pass that they did deceive many with their flattering words, who were in the church, and did cause them to commit many sins; therefore it became expedient that those who committed sin, that were in the church, should be admonished by the church.

13 And now the spirit of Alma was again troubled; and he went and inquired of the Lord what he should do concerning this matter, for he feared that he should do wrong in the sight of God.

Let's read the Lords reply.

Mosiah 26:29-32

29 Therefore I say unto you, Go; and whosoever transgresseth against me, him shall ye judge according to the sins which he has committed; and if he confess his sins

before thee and me, and repenteth in the sincerity of his heart, him shall ye forgive, and I will forgive him also.

30 Yea, and as often as my people repent will I forgive them their trespasses against me.

31 And ye shall also forgive one another your trespasses; for verily I say unto you, he that forgiveth not his neighbor's trespasses when he says that he repents, the same hath brought himself under condemnation.

32 Now I say unto you, Go; and whosoever will not repent of his sins the same shall not be numbered among my people; and this shall be observed from this time forward.

What did the Lord tell Alma to do with those members who would not forsake their sins?

(whosoever will not repent of his sins the same shall not be numbered among my people)

Harold B. Lee

“When we let members lead a double and destructive life, instead of doing them a favor as we suppose, we damage them, sometimes, irreparably. We must let the light of gospel standards shine fully, and not try to deflect the penetrating rays of its standards. The gospel is to save man, not to condemn them, but to save, it is sometimes necessary to confront and to discipline as the Lord has directed us. When individuals are on the wrong path, our task is to redirect them lovingly, and not to watch idly from our vantage point on the straight and narrow path.” (The Teachings of Harold B. Lee, pg. 117-8)

As Alma the Elder struggles diligently to organize, strengthen, and teach the church he receives a great blessing from the Lord

Mosiah 26:14,20

14 And it came to pass that after he had poured out his whole soul to God, the voice of the Lord came to him, saying:

20 Thou art my servant; and I covenant with thee that thou shalt have eternal life; and thou shalt serve me and go forth in my name, and shalt gather together my sheep.

What great covenant does the Lord make to Alma?

(I covenant with thee that thou shalt have eternal life)

Compare this with what the Lord said to Joseph Smith

D&C 132:49

I am the Lord thy God, and will be with thee even unto the end of the world, and through all eternity; for verily I seal upon you your exaltation, and prepare a throne for you in the kingdom of my Father with Abraham your

father.

This great blessing given to Alma the Elder is something to keep in mind as read about how the Lord answers his prayers regarding his son in such a dramatic way

Alma the Younger

Mosiah 27:8-9

8 Now the sons of Mosiah were numbered among the unbelievers; and also one of the sons of Alma was numbered among them, he being called Alma, after his father; nevertheless, he became a very wicked and an idolatrous man. And he was a man of many words, and did speak much flattery to the people; therefore he led many of the people to do after the manner of his iniquities.

9 And he became a great hinderment to the **prosperity** of the church of God; stealing away the hearts of the people; causing much dissension among the people; giving a chance for the enemy of God to exercise his power over them.

How does Mormon describe Alma's son?

(very wicked and idolatrous, a man of many words, did speak much flattery)

What impact did his wickedness have on the church?

(he became a great hinderment to the **prosperity** of the church)

“prosperity” - Alma didn't hurt the church as such but hurt the growth of the church and as such he inhibited the ability for the church to bless and strengthen the people

In the next passage we read the angel gave Alma the message, “This is my church, and I will establish it; and nothing shall overthrow it, save it is the transgression of my people.”

An angel appears to Alma and the Sons of Mosiah

Mosiah 27:11-16

11 And as I said unto you, as they were going about rebelling against God, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto them; and he descended as it were in a cloud; and he spake as it were with a voice of thunder, which caused the earth to shake upon which they stood;

12 And so great was their astonishment, that they fell to the earth, and understood not the words which he spake unto them.

13 Nevertheless he cried again, saying: Alma, arise and stand forth, for why persecutest thou the church of God? For the Lord hath said: This is my church, and I will establish it; and nothing shall overthrow it, save it is the transgression of my people.

14 And again, the angel said: Behold, the Lord hath heard the prayers of his people, and also the prayers of his servant, Alma, who is thy father; for he has prayed with much faith concerning thee that thou mightest be brought to the knowledge of the truth; therefore, for this purpose have I come to convince thee of the power and authority of God, that the prayers of his servants might be answered according to their faith.

15 And now behold, can ye dispute the power of God? For behold, doth not my voice shake the earth? And can ye not also behold me before you? And I am sent from God.

16 Now I say unto thee: Go, and remember the captivity of thy fathers in the land of Helam, and in the land of Nephi; and remember how great things he has done for them; for they were in bondage, and he has delivered them. And now I say unto thee, Alma, go thy way, and seek to destroy the church no more, that their prayers may be answered, and this even if thou wilt of thyself be cast off.

What reason did the angel give for appearing to Alma and demonstrating “the power and authority of God”?

(the Lord hath heard the prayers of his people, and also the prayers Alma, for he has prayed with much faith concerning thee)

Orson F. Whitney

“The Prophet Joseph Smith declared—and he never taught a more comforting doctrine—that the eternal sealings of faithful parents and the divine promises made to them for valiant service in the Cause of Truth, would save not only themselves, but likewise their posterity. Though some of the sheep may wander, the eye of the Shepherd is upon them, and sooner or later they will feel the tentacles of Divine Providence reaching out after them and drawing them back to the fold. Either in this life or the life to come, they will return.” (CR, April 1929)

What do you think Elder Whitney means by “the divine promises made to them for valiant service in the Cause of Truth”?

To Alma the Elder: Mosiah 26:20

Thou art my servant; and I covenant with thee that thou shalt have eternal life; and thou shalt serve me and go forth in my name, and shalt gather together my sheep.

Boyd K. Packer

“Alma knew personally the pain of punishment and the joy of repentance. He himself had once greatly disappointed his own father, Corianton’s grandfather. He rebelled and went about ‘seeking to destroy the church.’ He was struck down by an angel, not because he deserved it but because of the prayers of his father and others.” (CR, April 2006)

Why do you think Elder Packer emphasizes that the angel appeared to

Alma but “not because he deserved it”?

There seems to be no desire from Alma, and no attempt from the angel, to change his heart. The faithful prayers of his father and others resulted in a visit to Alma. Initiate change was going to still be up to Alma

What event in Alma’s life does the angel remind him of where Alma witnessed the unmistakable power of God?

(remember the captivity of thy fathers in the land of Helam... and remember how great things he has done for them)

What does the angel warn Alma will become of him if he continues to fight against the things that he knows are true?

(thou wilt of thyself be cast off)

Mosiah 27:17-20

17 And now it came to pass that these were the last words which the angel spake unto Alma, and he departed.

18 And now Alma and those that were with him fell again to the earth, for great was their astonishment; for with their own eyes they had beheld an angel of the Lord; and his voice was as thunder, which shook the earth; and they knew that there was nothing save the power of God that could shake the earth and cause it to tremble as though it would part asunder.

Again, that was made abundantly clear to Alma was the power of God

Born Again

His father and the church continue to pray for Alma. But now they pray that he will recover and witness the power and goodness of God

Mosiah 27:19-24

19 And now the astonishment of Alma was so great that he became dumb, that he could not open his mouth; yea, and he became weak, even that he could not move his hands; therefore he was taken by those that were with him, and carried helpless, even until he was laid before his father.

20 And they rehearsed unto his father all that had happened unto them; and his father rejoiced, for he knew that it was the power of God.

21 And he caused that a multitude should be gathered together that they might witness what the Lord had done for his son, and also for those that were with him.

22 And he caused that the priests should assemble themselves together; and they began to fast, and to pray to the Lord their God that he would open the mouth of Alma, that he might speak, and also that his limbs might receive their strength—that the eyes of the people might be opened to see and know of the goodness and glory of

God.

23 And it came to pass after they had fasted and prayed for the space of two days and two nights, the limbs of Alma received their strength, and he stood up and began to speak unto them, bidding them to be of good comfort:

24 For, said he, I have repented of my sins, and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold I am born of the Spirit.

What did Alma mean when he said that he had been “born of the Spirit”?

Bruce R. McConkie

"The new birth takes place only for those who actually enjoy the gift or companionship of the Holy Ghost, only for those who are fully converted, who have given themselves without restraint to the Lord. Thus Alma addressed himself to his 'brethren of the church,' and pointedly asked them if they had 'spiritually been born of God,' received the Lord's image in their countenances, and had the 'mighty change' in their hearts which always attends the birth of the Spirit. (Alma 5:14-31)." (Mormon Doctrine, pg. 101)

The state of being born again appears to have happened quickly to Alma and some others we have discussed. But for almost everyone it is a process that takes time

What needs to take place in order for us to be born of the Spirit?

Mark E. Petersen

"That birth of the spirit means something more than most of us normally realize. Through proper teaching, a conviction is born in our soul. Faith develops. Through it we see how important it is to become like Christ. We see ourselves as we are in contrast to a Christlike soul. A desire for a change-over is born within us. The change-over begins. We call it repentance. Through our faith and as part of our conversion or change from one state to another, we begin to see sin in its true light.... We strive with all our souls to become like the Savior." (Address to seminary and institute of religion personnel, BYU, July 11, 1956)

Being born again is a never-ending, on-going process

Neal A. Maxwell

“The very process of being born again spiritually is not a one-time occurrence. Hence, Paul said that he died 'daily' (1Cor 15:31). Such is the process of putting off the old self as one becomes a woman or a man of God. Quick change artists are rare. I have not seen many put off the old and put on the new very rapidly.” (BYU Fireside, Dec. 2, 1984)

Let's read how Alma describes what it means to be born again

Mosiah 27:25-29

25 And the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters;

26 And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God.

27 I say unto you, unless this be the case, they must be cast off; and this I know, because I was like to be cast off.

28 Nevertheless, after wading through much tribulation, repenting nigh unto death, the Lord in mercy hath seen fit to snatch me out of an everlasting burning, and I am born of God.

29 My soul hath been redeemed from the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. I was in the darkest abyss; but now I behold the marvelous light of God. My soul was racked with eternal torment; but I am snatched, and my soul is pained no more.

How does Alma describe what it means to be born of the Spirit?

(changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God

And thus they become new creatures)

Dallin H. Oaks

"The miracle of forgiveness was wrought in his life, and the bitter pain of sin was replaced by the sweet joy of redemption...."

"Alma learned the eternal truth that the pain and misery that come from sin can only be erased by repentance. Physical pain ends with death. Spiritual pain, or misery, is everlasting, unless we repent." (CR Oct. 1991)

The Sons of Mosiah

Alma and the Sons of Mosiah began to teach and testify of their conversion and the power of Christ

Mosiah 27:35-37

35 And they traveled throughout all the land of Zarahemla, and among all the people who were under the reign of king Mosiah, zealously striving to repair all the injuries which they had done to the church, confessing all their sins, and publishing all the things which they had seen, and explaining the prophecies and the scriptures to all who desired to hear them.

36 And thus they were instruments in the hands of God in bringing many to the knowledge of the truth, yea, to the knowledge of their Redeemer.

37 And how blessed are they! For they did publish peace; they did publish good tidings of good; and they did declare unto the people that the Lord reigneth.

How is it clear that Alma and the sons of Mosiah had experienced “a mighty change of heart”?

Robert D. Hales

"His joy came because of his contrite repentance. From that time forth, Alma and all those who were with him, including the sons of Mosiah, went about trying 'to repair all the injuries which they had done to the church, confessing all their sins' and bringing souls unto Christ.

"Only by repentance and asking for forgiveness of the Lord was Alma able to put his pain behind him and receive of the joy and light of the gospel. The Lord taught the Nephites that knowledge of the truth, diligent faith, and true repentance bring about a change of heart. Alma experienced a mighty change of heart." (CR, Oct. 1998)

The Sons of Mosiah express their desire to teach the Lamanites

Mosiah 28:1-4

1 Now it came to pass that after the sons of Mosiah had done all these things, they took a small number with them and returned to their father, the king, and desired of him that he would grant unto them that they might, with these whom they had selected, go up to the land of Nephi that they might preach the things which they had heard, and that they might impart the word of God to their brethren, the Lamanites—

2 That perhaps they might bring them to the knowledge of the Lord their God, and convince them of the iniquity of their fathers; and that perhaps they might cure them of their hatred towards the Nephites, that they might also be brought to rejoice in the Lord their God, that they might become friendly to one another, and that there should be no more contentions in all the land which the Lord their God had given them.

3 Now they were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble.

4 And thus did the Spirit of the Lord work upon them, for they were the very vilest of sinners. And the Lord saw fit in his infinite mercy to spare them; nevertheless they suffered much anguish of soul because of their iniquities, suffering much and fearing that they should be cast off forever.

What caused the sons of Mosiah to have such a strong desire to teach the gospel of Christ among the Lamanites?

(they might cure them of their hatred towards the Nephites
that there should be no more contentions in all the land)

(that they might also be brought to rejoice in the Lord their God)

(they could not bear that any human soul should perish)

Carlos E. Asay

"This and other scriptures describe a marvelous phenomenon which occurs among men when the light of the gospel illuminates their lives. Almost instinctively, it seems, that light of truth sparks a desire to share. When our minds are expanded by new knowledge, we want others to know; when our

spirits are elevated by heavenly influence, we want others to feel; and when our lives are filled with goodness, we want others, particularly those whom we love, to enjoy similar experiences." (CR, Oct. 1976)

Mary Ellen W. Smoot

"Our own conversion must come first. The most important conversion for any of us is our own. If we are to bring the light of the gospel into others' lives, it must shine brightly in our own. Once converted, the sons of Mosiah labored without ceasing to share the gospel with others, 'for they could not bear that any human soul should perish' (Mosh 28:3). Only when we are converted to the Lord Jesus Christ are we in a position to strengthen others. And only then do we begin to understand that our lives truly do have meaning, purpose, and direction, and that as sisters united in our devotion to Jesus Christ our calling is to be a light to the world." (CR, Oct. 2000)

King Mosiah was afraid for his sons. The Lord gave him this promise:

Mosiah 28:7

And the Lord said unto Mosiah: Let them go up, for many shall believe on their words, and they shall have eternal life; and I will deliver thy sons out of the hands of the Lamanites.

Seer

Recall that the people of Limhi had found a record of 24 gold plates among the remains of a people who had been destroyed

Mosiah 28:12-17

12 And this he did because of the great anxiety of his people; for they were desirous beyond measure to know concerning those people who had been destroyed.

13 And now he translated them by the means of those two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow.

14 Now these things were prepared from the beginning, and were handed down from generation to generation, for the purpose of interpreting languages;

15 And they have been kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he should discover to every creature who should possess the land the iniquities and abominations of his people;

16 And whosoever has these things is called seer, after the manner of old times.

What do we learn about the Urim and Thummim in these verses?

(two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow
prepared from the beginning
handed down from generation to generation
for the purpose of interpreting languages)

verse 15: And they have been kept and preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he should discover to every creature who should possess the land the iniquities and abominations of his people;

Specifically, so people who live in this land can discover, understand and learn from the iniquities of others who have lived here

(whosoever has these things is called seer)

They may have been the two stones given to the brother of Jared by the Lord.

Ether 3:23-24

23 And behold, these two stones will I give unto thee, and ye shall seal them up also with the things which ye shall write.

24 For behold, the language which ye shall write I have confounded; wherefore I will cause in my own due time that these stones shall magnify to the eyes of men these things which ye shall write.

Not that he included the stones with plates

And maybe the same Urim and Thummim Joseph Smith had

D&C 17:1

Behold, I say unto you, that you must rely upon my word, which if you do with a full purpose of heart, you shall have a view of the plates, and also of the breastplate, the sword of Laban, the Urim and Thummim, which were given to the brother of Jared upon the mount, when he talked with the Lord face to face

JSH 2:35

Also, that there were two stones in silver bows--and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim--deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted "seers" in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book.

Mosiah translated the 24 gold plates. The plates were the record of the Jaradites written by Ether. Moroni abridged this record into what he have as the Book of Ether.

Mosiah 28

17 Now after Mosiah had finished translating these records, behold, it gave an account of the people who were destroyed, from the time that they were destroyed back to the building of the great tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people and they were scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth, yea, and even from that time back until the creation of Adam.

Ether 15:33

And the Lord spake unto Ether, and said unto him: Go forth. And he went forth, and beheld that the words of the Lord had all been fulfilled; and he finished his record; (and the hundredth part I have not written) and he hid them in a manner that the people of Limhi did find them.

Mosiah, not Alma, translated the record through the Urim and Thummim. What title does that give Mosiah?

(whosoever has these things is called seer (v16))

I find it interesting that Mormon knew that this account would be in the Book of Mormon since they were included by Moroni after he died:

(And this account shall be written hereafter; for behold, it is expedient that all people should know the things which are written in this account.(v19))

Fathers

One thought on the impact of fathers

Mosiah 25:12

12 And it came to pass that those who were the children of Amulon and his brethren, who had taken to wife the daughters of the Lamanites, were displeased with the conduct of their fathers, and they would no longer be called by the names of their fathers, therefore they took upon themselves the name of Nephi, that they might be called the children of Nephi and be numbered among those who were called Nephites.

Fathers can have a large impact on our lives. In the case of the wicked priests of Noah the impact was very destructive.

James E. Faust

“In many societies the world over, child poverty, crime, drug abuse, and family decay can be traced to conditions where the father gives no male nurturing. We need to honor the position of the father as the primary provider for physical and spiritual support. I state this with no reluctance because the Lord has revealed that this obligation is placed upon husbands. (D&C 83:2,4; 84:99; 29:48).” (CR, April 1993)