

Lesson Highlights

- *Limhi's and Alma's people join Mosiah's people in the land of Zarahemla.*
- *Many Church members are led into sin by unbelievers.*
- *Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah are visited by an angel.*
- *Alma and the sons of Mosiah dedicate themselves to preaching the gospel.*

A study of this lesson will inspire us to continually apply the principle of repentance, become converted, and share the gospel.

Next Week:

Lesson 21:

"Alma ... Did Judge Righteous Judgments,"
Mosiah 29,
Alma 1-4

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Introduction

Are you a convert? We often use the term "convert" to refer to a person who was baptized into the Church after the age of eight. In another sense, however, each of us should be a convert. Each of us, no matter when we are baptized, must acquire his or her own testimony of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For some people this conversion is sudden and dramatic, but for most it is a subtle, gradual process. Some people become converted easily, while others must struggle to develop this testimony and commitment. Lesson 22 further discusses the process of becoming converted. This lesson discusses five young men who, despite being the sons of strong and faithful Church leaders, had to experience their own conversions to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Limhi's and Alma's people joined Mosiah's people in the land of Zarahemla.

Mosiah 22:11-14; Mosiah 24:20, 23-25

Limhi's people and Alma's people joined the people of King Mosiah in Zarahemla. There were now four groups united in Zarahemla under King Mosiah:

- a) Limhi's people, who were descended from Zeniff and the others who returned from Zarahemla to the land of Nephi.
- b) Alma's people, who had broken away from the group descended from Zeniff during the reign of Noah.
- c) The Nephites who had remained in Zarahemla.
- d) The Mulekites, the original residents of Zarahemla.

All these people now called themselves Nephites (Mosiah 25:12-13).

Mosiah 25:5-6 Mosiah assembled the people in Zarahemla and read the records of Limhi's people and Alma's people to them.

Mosiah 25:7-11 The people of Zarahemla responded in a variety of ways to these records. They were filled with wonder and amazement, rejoiced that their brethren were free, sorrowed for their slain brethren, gave thanks to God for delivering Alma's people from bondage, and anguished over the sinful state of their Lamanite brethren.

Many Church members were led into sin by unbelievers.

Mosiah 26:1-4 Many of the "rising generation" refused to join the Church because they did not believe the tradition of their fathers, they were unacquainted with the teachings of King Benjamin, they did not believe in the resurrection or the coming of Christ, they hardened their hearts, and they lived as a separate people indulging in sin and carnal pursuits.

Older generations can help youth gain testimonies of Jesus Christ and His gospel by teaching gospel principles early, living an exemplary life, and bearing sincere testimony as moved upon by the Spirit.

Their responses demonstrated their charity because they felt such sorrow for their sinful brethren and such gratitude for God's blessings.

Mosiah 25:14 After Mosiah finished reading the records, he invited Alma to speak.

Mosiah 25:15-16 Alma spoke about repentance and faith in the Lord, reminding those who had been freed from bondage that it was the Lord who rescued them.

It was important that the people remember who had delivered them out of bondage so that they could express their continuing gratitude and strengthen their testimonies.

Mosiah 25:17-18 Alma's teachings had an immediate effect on Limhi and his people as they accepted Alma's teachings and desired to enter into the baptismal covenants.

Mosiah 25:19-20 Mosiah authorized Alma to "establish churches throughout all the land of Zarahemla".

Mosiah 25:21-24 The people were able to remain "one church" after being assembled into different congregations by teaching the same doctrine of repentance and faith in God in all churches, following the prophet Alma, and being led by the same spirit.

Think of how their example can help us today as we face the challenges of remaining "one" in a worldwide Church.

Pause a moment and consider carefully how older generations can help youth feel God's love and understand their relationship to Him. The unbelievers led many members of the Church into sin.

Mosiah 26:6-8 Alma's responsibility was to speak for the Church in admonishing the Church members who had sinned.

The Lord has placed that same responsibility on Church leaders today to help members who have committed serious sins and get them on the road to full repentance and forgiveness.

Mosiah 26:10-14 Alma consulted the Lord when Mosiah declined to judge the people who had sinned.

Elder Orson F. Whitney: *"You parents of the wilful and the wayward: Don't give them up. Don't cast them off. They are not utterly lost. The shepherd will find his sheep. They were his before they were yours-- long before he entrusted them to your care; and you cannot begin to love them as he loves them. They have but strayed in ignorance from the Path of Right, and God is merciful to ignorance. Only the fulness of knowledge brings the fulness of accountability. Our Heavenly Father is far more merciful, infinitely more charitable, than even the best of his servants, and the Everlasting gospel is mightier in power to save than our narrow finite minds can comprehend."*

(CR, Apr 1929, p110)

Ponder how you have received guidance in your responsibilities when you have turned to God in prayer.

Mosiah 26:29-30, 32 The Lord told Alma to forgive the people who had sinned if they confessed and repented, but that those who refused to confess and repent should be excommunicated from the Church.

Confession is an important step in the process of repentance because we cannot feel godly sorrow, ask forgiveness, make restitution, or choose to live righteously if we refuse to admit our mistakes or evil choices.

Mosiah 26:31 This scripture reminds us that it is important to *"forgive one another"* because all of us have sinned or transgressed at one time or another, so we all need forgiveness for sin.

Ponder how you have been blessed by forgiving someone or by having someone forgive you.

Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah were visited by an angel.

Even after Mosiah had issued a proclamation forbidding persecution, some unbelievers continued to try to destroy the Church. These unbelievers included Mosiah's own four sons and one of Alma's sons (Mosiah 27:8-9).

Mosiah 27:8-24 details the events that led to the conversion of Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah.



Alma, Arise-Walter Rane

Commissioner of Education, **Jeffrey R.**

Holland said: *"Perhaps no anguish of the human spirit matches the anguish of a mother or father who fears for the soul of a child. ... [But] parents can never give up hoping or caring or believing. Surely they can never give up praying. At times prayer may be the only course of action remaining...but it is the most powerful of them all"* (*"Alma, Son of Alma,"* Ensign, Mar. 1977, 80-81).

Mosiah 26:37-38; Mosiah 27:1 Although the Church *"began again to have peace and to prosper,"* members of the Church were often persecuted by unbelievers.

Mosiah 27:1-5 When Church members complained about persecution to King Mosiah, he issued a proclamation that religious or class-conscious persecution should stop and all should live in harmony, each working to provide for their own support unless sick or afflicted.

Some Church members are persecuted today by bigots and intolerant individuals and groups who disagree with our beliefs and write, publish, or speak defamatory words and demonstrate hateful behavior.

There are some productive ways to deal with persecution and all of those ways involve demonstrating tolerance, forgiveness, and love to our persecutors.

There are many ways the Lord sends help in response to the prayers of the righteous for loved ones who have strayed. The Lord will not always send an angel, as He did to Alma, but He sends help in countless other ways. He may send a sensitive leader or friend, dedicated home teachers or visiting teachers, or an inspired sermon to affect the lives of those for whom we pray.

Ponder this: Have you seen the power of prayer help in a situation that appeared to be beyond remedy?

Mosiah 27:13-17 The angel told Alma the Younger that he was persecuting the church that God had established, that the Lord was answering the prayers of the righteous to bring Alma the Younger to a knowledge of the truth, that he was there to convince Alma the Younger of the power and authority of God, that the power of God could not be disputed, that he should remember God's blessings and protections to his predecessors, and that if he did not cease persecuting the Church he would be cast off.

Mosiah 27:18-19 Alma the Younger was unable to speak or move after the angel departed.

Mosiah 27:20 Alma responded with rejoicing when he heard about his son's experience with the angel because he knew that the experience was in answer to his prayers and that God had sent a strong message to his wayward son.

Alma 36:6-24 Years after his conversion, Alma told his son Helaman about the experience. If we examine the accounts in Mosiah 27 and Alma 36, we can contrast Alma's feelings before and after he was forgiven.

CONTRAST ALMA'S FEELINGS BEFORE AND AFTER HE WAS FORGIVEN

BEFORE	AFTER
Carnal and fallen, to be cast off (Mosiah 27:25–27; Alma 36:11)	Redeemed of God, born of the Spirit (Mosiah 27:24–25; Alma 36:23)
Wading through much tribulation (Mosiah 27:28)	Snatched out of an everlasting burning (Mosiah 27:28)
In the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity (Mosiah 27:29)	Redeemed from the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity (Mosiah 27:29)
In the darkest abyss (Mosiah 27:29)	Beheld the marvelous light of God (Mosiah 27:29)
Racked with eternal torment (Mosiah 27:29)	Soul pained no more (Mosiah 27:29)
Harrowed up by the memory of his many sins (Alma 36:17)	No longer harrowed up by the memory of his sins (Alma 36:19)
Felt exquisite and exceeding pain (Alma 36:20–21)	Felt exquisite and exceeding joy (Alma 36:20–21)
Soul racked with horror at the thought of being in the presence of God (Alma 36:14–15)	Soul longed to be in the presence of God (Alma 36:22)

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on this lesson. Are you keeping a record on "small plates" or that which contains those things of greatest value?

- How can we better remember what the Lord has done for us?
- How can we bear the pain of seeing a loved one stray?
- How can we increase our desire to share the gospel?

Alma 36:17-18 Remembering the teachings of his father and asking for God's mercy led Alma to be delivered from his suffering. In considering how Alma's experiences can be compared to our own experiences in becoming converted, **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** said:

Alma and the sons of Mosiah dedicated themselves to preaching the gospel.

Mosiah 27:32-37 After their conversion, Alma the Younger and the sons of Mosiah demonstrated that they were truly converted by enduring persecution from unbelievers, seeking to repair the harm they had done to the Church, confessing their sins, publishing the things they had seen and heard, explaining the prophecies to all who desired to hear them, consoling the Church, confirming their faith, and exhorting others to keep the commandments.

As we repent, our actions reflect the sincerity and depth of our conversion.

Mosiah 28:1-3 The sons of Mosiah and their companions wanted to preach the gospel among the Lamanites to impart the word of God, bring them to a knowledge of God, convince them of their fathers' iniquity, help the Lamanites overcome their hatred of the Nephites, promote peace, and declare salvation to them that they might not perish.

Conclusion

Each of us must experience his or her own conversion. Though it may be more subtle and gradual than the conversion experienced by Alma and the sons of Mosiah, it will have the same results. Read Mosiah 27:29. Through repentance and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, we can receive forgiveness so our souls will be "pained no more." Then we can become instruments in the Lord's hands to bless the lives of others. Remember to continually apply the principle of repentance, become converted, and share the gospel.

"Alma serves as a pattern. The horror for sin that engulfed him should be felt by every wayward member of the kingdom; then repentance would be forthcoming, as it was with our Nephite friend" (A New Witness for the Articles of Faith [1985], 229).

Mosiah 28:6-7 Promises the Lord gave King Mosiah regarding his sons' missionary efforts included success in having their contacts believe their teachings, and protection from their enemies.

Elder L. Tom Perry said: *"After conversion comes the desire to share...not so much out of a sense of duty, even though that responsibility falls on the priesthood, but out of a sincere love and appreciation for that which has been received. When such a 'pearl of great price' comes into our lives, we cannot be content just to admire it by ourselves. It must be shared!" (Ensign, May 1984, 79).*

Consider how, once you have been converted, you can increase your commitment to sharing the gospel.